



Terry Richard snaps a photo of, from left, Yma Rodgers, Phil Phillips and Jelecia Rodgers at the KT Caribbean food stand, which offers its specialties Mondays through Saturdays at Buffalo State.

Buffalo News file photo

## Chartwells dining partners to offer 'pop-up' food vendors at Buffalo State

Last semester, Thai restaurant Nine & Night ran a pop-up food station at the Campbell Student Union at SUNY Buffalo State University. The small business is now on its way to opening a storefront restaurant on Amherst Street in Buffalo.

Taking its place at Buffalo State this semester is KT Caribbean, a food truck offering tastes of Trinidad and Tobago at the student union food court from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays through May 17.

The semester-long pop-ups are part of a partnership between Chartwells Higher Ed college dining service and the Westminster Economic Development Initiative, the small business incubator behind Buffalo's Downtown and West Side bazaars.

The partnership gives food industry entrepreneurs who have participated in WEDI a chance to gain experience in a busy campus environment “that could eventually lead to opening a brick-and-mortar location,” said Emily Scarsella, marketing manager for Chartwells.

KT Caribbean chef Terry Chiddick started her business under a pop-up tent in 2013 and was able to buy a food truck in 2021. Staffing a food court station at Buffalo State allows her to serve her Caribbean curries, meat patties, jerk chicken and other island favorites in the winter months and develop a following for her food among Buffalo State students and faculty, as well as the general public.

“WEDI's economic development program provides multifaceted support to aspiring and early career entrepreneurs through the West Side and Downtown Bazaar,” Scarsella said. “These bazaars act as small business incubators, and this partnership allows Buffalo State to act as one, too.”

Scarsella said this year's pilot at Buffalo State has gone so well that it will continue next year. Chartwells is hoping to extend the partnership with WEDI to some of the other colleges it serves, she said.