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On an unseasonably warm November afternoon, University of Dayton students, faculty and staff gathered near Stuart Field to dedicate and bless $6.3 million in major projects aimed at enhancing the quality of life for students. They ate sushi, too.

"It's a great day for the students," said Daniel J. Curran, president. "We keep using the phrase living and learning. This is what it's all about."

A $3.9 million renovation to the Virginia W. Kettering Residence Hall dining facilities created two theme restaurants offering a wide variety of cooked-to-order meals, borrowing some of the most popular trends in restaurants today.

Passports restaurant specializes in fresh foods from around the world, with options for students to select ingredients for a customized burrito, sushi or even a stir-fry prepared on a Mongolian grill.

The Grainary restaurant offers artisan breads, baked on site, with signature sandwiches and salads as well as an assortment of hot dishes and omelets. The multi-colored chairs in The Grainary are made from recycled plastic Coke products. Even the wood paneling is recycled wood.

The $2.4 million renovation to Stuart Field upgraded the heavily used recreational facility, host to many student intramural and club competitions. About half the student body is involved annually, making the University's recreational participation one of the most extensive in the country.

Stuart Field now features 5.6 acres of high-use, high-performance, multi-purpose fields that play and feel like natural grass.

More than 500 intramural sports teams with almost 4,000 students use the field annually to play softball, flag football and soccer. Another 11 sports clubs with 275 athletes use the field for practice.

"We love Stuart Field because it represents the community," said Ben Oren, a senior entrepreneurship and operations management major. "Flyers love to come together with friends to accomplish a common goal. Whether it's a class project, a service to the community or an intramural championship, we're most successful together."

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