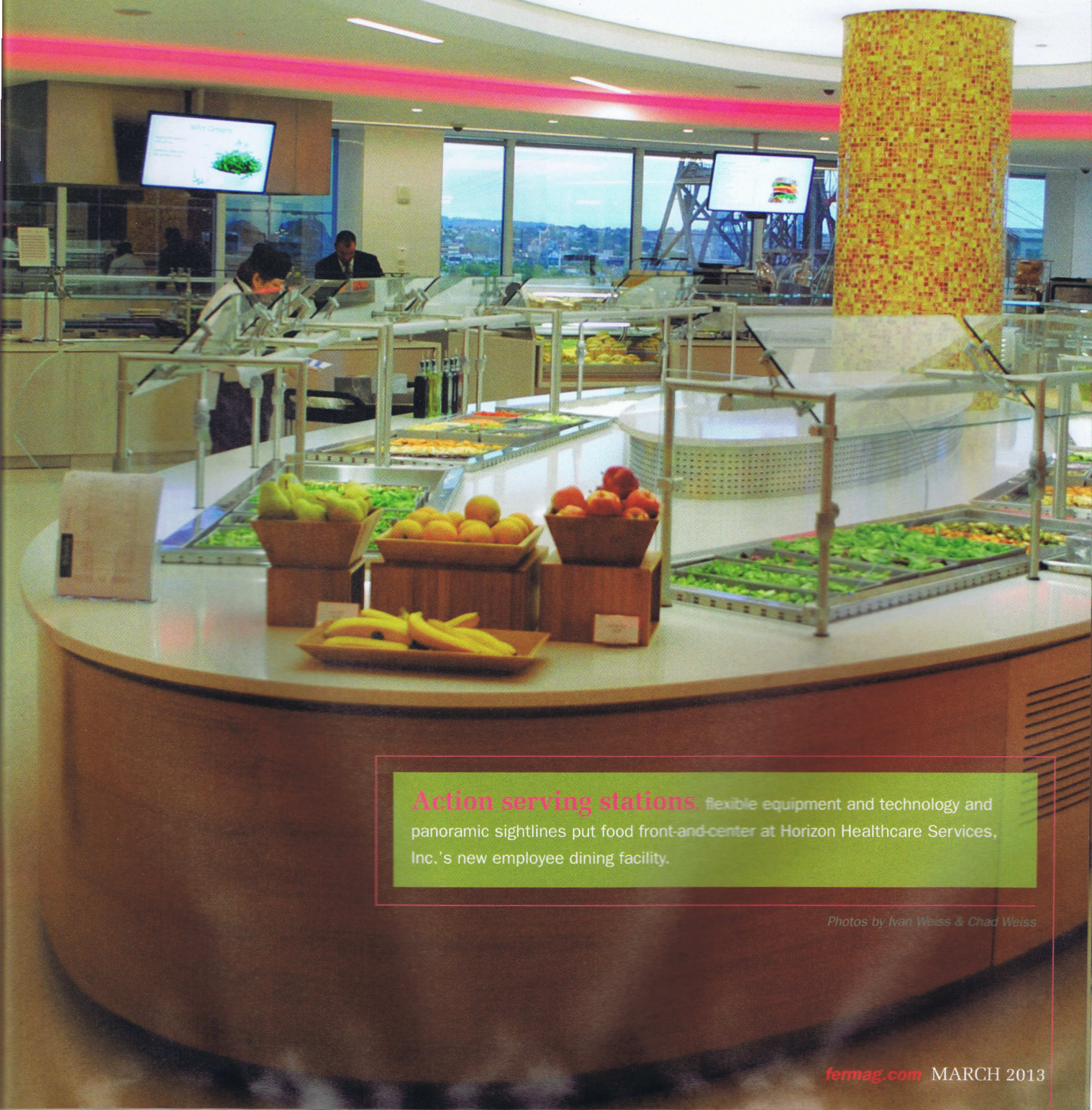


VIEW Finder



Action serving stations flexible equipment and technology and panoramic sightlines put food front-and-center at Horizon Healthcare Services, Inc.'s new employee dining facility.

Photos by Ivan Weiss & Chad Weiss

A total overhaul of the 5,875-sq.-ft. servery on the fifth floor of Horizon Healthcare Services, Inc., (HHSI) headquarters might seem like a foodservice designer's dream. But there's always a catch. In this case, it was two long walls of panoramic windows, opening out onto the vista of downtown Newark, N.J. The challenge: how to keep the view and servery, too.

"The existing facility was at least 20 years old," recalls Elite Studio e Executive V.P. Ivan Weiss, who headed up the HHSI renovation in conjunction with foodservice operator Eurest Dining, a division of Compass Group. Layout-wise, walls divided the old servery, surrounding its various stations. "It's a large footprint, but when you walked in, you couldn't see the windows, and you couldn't see all the stations at once," Weiss says. "It was almost like a maze."

The equipment showed its age with its institutional-style hot wells, cold wells and sneeze guards. "It was a scoop-and-serve operation with lots of stainless and Formica," Weiss continues. "Eurest added several Action stations when it took over operations in 2011, but the servery lacked any really modern foodservice technology."

Participation was way down, too. Employees could—and did—leave the building for nearby lunch options.

The Re-View Process

HHSI and Eurest's goals for the renovation were simple: better customer experience and healthier food offerings.

"Our objective with the new café was not only to improve the customer experience but also enable HHSI's 'Journey To Health' employee initiative," Eurest Operations V.P. Jim Colombaris says.

The Elite Studio e design team expanded the goals.

"We aimed to modernize the space, and make it more efficient and versatile from a culinary standpoint," Weiss says. "We also wanted to freshen up the food offerings by adding variety and capitalizing on new trends. And finally, we wanted to maximize the space—take advantage of the panoramic view, the windows, and really open it up."

HHSI's new servery manages to present healthy food options in a contemporary display cooking setting, while showcasing the building's dramatic panorama. The Deli [right] holds the coveted corner spot, while the Salad Bar is the focal point. Built-in shelves hold bowls for the Soup/Flex station [below].





SPECS

MENU/SEGMENT: Corporate dining

LOCATION: Newark, N.J.

FOODSERVICE OPERATOR: Eurest Dining Services, a division of Compass Group

BUILDING POPULATION: 3,000

COVERS/DAY: 2,600

SERVERY SIZE: 5,875 sq. ft.

COFFEE BAR SIZE: 1,500 sq. ft.
(includes seating)

NO. OF SEATS: 340

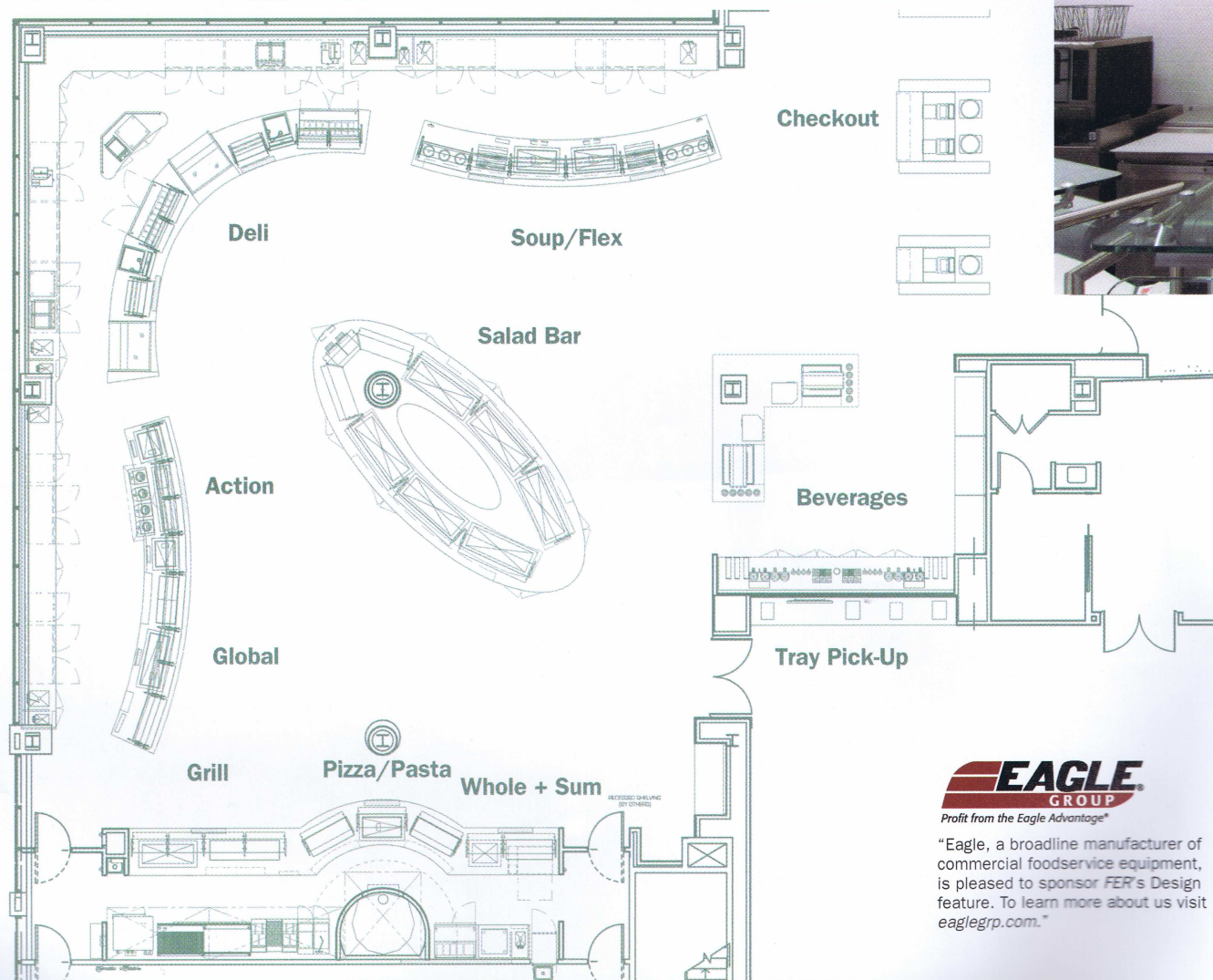
HOURS OF OPERATION: Servery, 7 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.; Coffee bar, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

EQUIPMENT & MILLWORK COST:
\$1.5 million

PROJECT DESIGN & MANAGEMENT:
Elite Studio e, Farmingdale, N.Y.

ARCHITECT: Gensler, New York

Horizon Healthcare Services, Inc.



EAGLE
GROUP
Profit from the Eagle Advantage®

"Eagle, a broadline manufacturer of commercial foodservice equipment, is pleased to sponsor FER's Design feature. To learn more about us visit eaglegrp.com."

EQUIPMENT

Whole + Sum

Continental pizza prep refrigerator
Hatco pass-thru heated holding cabinet
Piper drop-in thermal shelves
Regal Pinnacle air screen merchandiser, refrigerated drawers
TurboChef speed oven
Wells drop-in cold pans

Pizza/Pasta

Piper drop-in thermal shelves
Wells drop-in hot/cold pans
Wood Stone pizza oven

Grill

Blodgett combi oven
Continental refrigerated equipment stand
Everpure water filter system
Piper drop-in thermal shelves
Pitco fryers, pasta cooker
Southbend countertop charbroiler, countertop griddle

Action

Continental undercounter refrigerator
CookTek induction cookers
Metro undercounter mobile heated cabinet
Vollrath drop-in cold wells
Wells drop-in hot/cold pans

Global

Continental undercounter refrigerator
Metro undercounter mobile heated cabinet
Piper drop-in thermal shelf
Wells drop-in hot/cold pans

Deli

Alto-Shaam countertop carving stations
Berkel food slicers
Continental refrigerated sandwich prep unit
Continental undercounter refrigerators
Piper drop-in thermal shelves
Regal Pinnacle refrigerated deli cases



In addition to Ivan, the Elite Studio e Design team included Aaron Weiss, assistant v.p. in charge of design and installation; and Chad Weiss, project manager. From Eurest and HHSI, key people included Eurest's Colombaris and HHSI Foodservice Director Will Alfieri.

Planning commenced in late 2011, construction began in May '12, and the servery opened 10 months later in October. "Having the design team involved in the build-out ensured that all details were done properly, with no substitutions and no shortcuts," Colombaris says. "From our client's perspective, there was only one contract from start to finish to deal with. And from our perspective, it was a seamless transition from concept to final execution."

A View To Please

The resulting HHSI Riverside Café beautifully highlights on-the-spot food production in a setting that maximizes space, light and cleanliness.

For starters, about three-quarters of the food is now

The stone-hearth pizza oven, eye-catching with its colorful tiled exterior, was so large that it had to be delivered in pieces and assembled on site with the help of a special crane.

prepped and prepared in the servery in full view of guests, leaving the support kitchen mainly for soup production and catering. The café's stations feature equipment flexible enough to produce new and varied menus as food trends evolve. And the serv-

ery's overall design combines a contemporary minimalist look (stainless panels, white terrazo floors and white quartz counters) with the bounty of food—tied together by a color-changing neon-lit soffit reflecting the line of the stations below. Best of all, the wall-to-wall windows behind the stations provide an ever-changing backdrop for the culinary theater.

Reaction to the new servery was immediate and positive. "We're averaging about 41% participation at breakfast and 47% for lunch, up about 5% compared with the old servery," Colombaris says.

From a design standpoint, taking full advantage of the servery's windowed walls required that "we open up sight lines and keep all the stations low and arranged around the perimeter in order to take advantage of natural light and open the view," Weiss says. "The servery

Culinary action at the Deli's two carving station conveys the fresh/healthy message at a glance to HHSI employees.

Star panini presses
TurboChef speed ovens

Salad Bar

Hatco conveyor toasters
Wells drop-in cold pans

Soup/Flex

Continental undercounter refrigerator
John Boos maple cutting boards
Metro undercounter mobile heated cabinet
Wells drop-in hot/cold pans, soup wells

Beverages

Everpure water filter system
Fetco coffee brewers & thermal dispensers

Follett ice/beverage dispensers
Follett undercounter ice makers
Regal Pinnacle air screen merchandisers

Coffee Bar

Continental undercounter refrigerator
Fetco coffee brewers & thermal dispensers
Hoshizaki undercounter ice cuber with bin
Schaerer USA espresso machine
TurboChef speed oven
Waring blenders

Throughout

BSI LLC X-guard with heat & lights
CaptiveAire exhaust hoods



feels about four times larger.”

Designing in adequate food storage was a key consideration in maintaining the servery’s low-profile look. “We used lots of undercounter hot and cold storage,” Weiss says. “The extra storage saves staff from running all the way back to the kitchen during peak times.”

The café’s minimalist design also helps keep stations clean. Nearly all feature rectangular hot or cold units, inset into the white quartz countertops. The pans are easy to swap in and out, and they can all be transported and stored on identical racks. “With the ‘kitchen forward’ approach, flexibility is key,” Weiss says. “All concepts allow for trend changes and easy integration with the existing kitchen.”

One construction challenge came with the Action station, which was equipped with high-wattage induction cookers, a mobile heated cabinet, and drop-in hot and cold pans. “The hoods had to be in front so that the cooks would face forward toward guests,” Weiss says. The solution was to install custom fab, curved stainless covers in front of the rectangular hoods to match the curve of the counters below. “Ensuring that counter, soffits, hoods and hood fascia all aligned perfectly required a lot of coordination with the entire project team,” Weiss says.

Station Preview

Riverside Café guests can take in the entire space at a glance. The café’s food stations, all proven winners at Eurest corporate accounts, include the Salad Bar, Soup/Flex, Deli, Action, Global, Grill, Pizza/Pasta and Whole+Sum, a healthy food concept made up of three mix-and-match components—no complete dish adds up to more than 500 calories.

“We offer a lot more ‘theater’ cooking now,” Colombaris says. The existing support kitchen, which under the previous set-up was used to prep and produce more than half of the food offerings, now is mainly responsible for soups and traditional entrée production, catering orders and meals for the child development center.

Standing at the entrance, the immediate focal point is the Salad Bar and its matching-shape “skylight” above. To the left of the entrance, along the servery’s only solid wall,

At the POS stations, built-in display shelves and bamboo boxes filled with healthy options tempt customers with point-of-purchase add-ons.



are the Whole+Sum (chef’s table), Pizza/Pasta and Grill stations. Next, set against a backdrop of tall windows, comes the Global and Action stations, the Deli curving around the far corner and then the Soup/Flex stations.

Flat-screen monitors mounted above and in front of each station display menus, food photography, nutritional details and, on occasion, communications from HHSI.

Four Corners Café

Augmenting food and caffeination outlets for HHSI employees is a coffee bar and quick-service sandwich area called Four Corners Café. The mini-café, located next to the elevators in the lobby near Riverside (the lobby is on the fifth floor), covers about 1,500 sq. ft., including seating.

“The clients wanted the coffee bar to look like part of the lobby rather than, say, a Starbucks kiosk,” Weiss says. “Hanging elements and half-walls were used to define its space and house its equipment. And it has the same bright, eye-catching lighting treatment as the salad bar inside.”

The coffee bar features a well-rounded menu—grab-and-go sandwiches, pastries, cookies and snacks, plus the full gamut of specialty coffees, blended drinks and teas. The location is equipped with undercounter refrigeration, a speed oven, ice machine and blenders as well as espresso machines and coffee brewers.

A Look Ahead

While the HHSI Riverside Café and Four Corners Café are unique to the Newark building, the insurance company is using the renovated servery as a Journey To Health showcase to share its initiatives with employees systemwide.

“(HHSI) is committed to providing our employees with the support needed to make healthier choices and achieve better health,” says HHSI Clinical Initiatives Director Lori Leotta. “Our servery renovation enabled us to give employees on-site access to healthier food options and nutritional information at the point of service.”

fer