

For Immediate Release

## **THE greenest roof in New Jersey... in Newark!**

August 26, 2010 – Newark, NJ. Every inch of this roof is covered with green technology and innovation. It captures green energy, with a large solar panel installation, panels that dance the tango with the sun all day long, moving as the sun moves. Beautiful green grasses grow on the roof, cooling the campus center below and capturing storm water that would normally run off onto the streets. And as of today, it also grows greens in a new vegetable garden, created by Gourmet Dining Services, providing fresh vegetables to the cafeteria three stories below. This is the roof of New Jersey Institute of Technology's campus center in Newark, NJ, a shiny green example of what is possible in the middle of concrete and asphalt, when a vision for local food meets a passion for the environment.

Gourmet Dining, a leader in the food services industry, is going green, integrating sustainable solutions into the seven campus operations they serve across the state. They are partnering with two green businesses that are women owned, to achieve their sustainability goals: Native Green, who manufactures and sells, environmentally safe cleaning and maintenance products ([www.gonativegreen.com](http://www.gonativegreen.com)) and My Local Garden, who designs and builds vegetable gardens and provides educational services on how to grow food using organic practices. They are creating Gourmet Campus Gardens, living green classrooms, where students can learn about gardening and taste the fruits of their labor, for lunch. ([www.MyLocalGarden.com](http://www.MyLocalGarden.com))

Gourmet Dining will be engaging the students and faculty across a community of campuses, where information will be shared and experiments conducted in the vegetable gardens, for students to learn about diversity in the natural world and share the data they gather on plants, soil, insects, and more. The goal is to inspire students and have them experience first hand what it takes to grow food, building an appreciation for nature and fresh healthy food options. "Vegetable gardens provide an interdisciplinary approach to learning and practical life skills that can't be gained in an indoor classroom," says Julianne Aiello, Director of Sustainable Development and Marketing at Gourmet Dining Services. "Biology, Botany, Ecology and Environmental Science classes can all use the garden as their lab. Gardening is the latest and greatest and oldest technology. The answers we need today to solve our environmental problems will be found by observing nature, understanding natural patterns, and whole systems thinking." Ms. Aiello is a recent Colorado College graduate, where her experience with bringing gardening and sustainability to campus foodservice inspired her to bring a local food focus to her family-owned business.

**Gourmet Dining** is the premier food service company in NJ. They operate on-site food service management for educational, corporate and healthcare facilities. They are committed to bringing innovative sustainable solutions to campuses across the state.

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**NJIT**, New Jersey's science and technology university, enrolls more than 8,800 students pursuing bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in 120 programs.

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