



Oakland Community College Culinary Studies Institute

A Fresh Identity for Culinary Education

specs

Higher Education
Royal Oak, MI
78,000 sq. ft.
3 floors
New Construction

strategic partners

HED

solutions provided

Furnishings
Finishes
Space Planning

Oakland Community College's award-winning Culinary Studies Institute had a legacy of excellence, but its home no longer matched its reputation. Tucked away on the Orchard Ridge campus, the program was operating in a dated, segmented space that didn't reflect the energy or sophistication of today's culinary world. The college saw an opportunity not just for a renovation, but for a chance to reimagine what culinary education could be.

Transplanting the institute to a more urban home would directly connect students to a bustling restaurant scene that would represent their future workplace. Now situated in downtown Royal Oak, the new three-story facility brings classrooms, demonstration kitchens, offices, lounge areas, and a public restaurant together under one roof. Here, students can experiment, connect, and serve in spaces that look and feel like the settings they'll work in after graduation.

As a longtime partner of Oakland Community College (OCC), NBS was trusted to help translate that vision into a dynamic, student-centered environment. Working alongside architecture firm HED, NBS provided space planning, furnishings, and



featured products

- ERG Raven Lounge
- National Fringe Banquette
- National Grin Table
- OFS Lona Lounge Chair
- Steelcase Campfire Lounge
- Steelcase Tenor Chair & Stool
- Steelcase Verb Table

finishes that balance aesthetics, comfort, and durability. Together, we created a versatile space where instructors bring lessons to life, students gain hands-on experience, and the community comes together.

"I've worked with NBS for over 20 years and have always been impressed by the results," shared Pamela Ryals, Facilities Manager at OCC. "The team at NBS assists with what is needed to make the institution flexible for all using the campus."

Each floor of the Culinary Studies Institute tells its own story. The first floor is home to offices and retail spaces where students can sell their creations to the public, while the second floor features classrooms, a student lounge area, and additional offices. At the top, a 2,600-square-foot restaurant provides panoramic views of downtown Royal Oak, offering creative inspiration to students to refine their craft and welcome guests for fine-dining experiences.

Every piece of furniture was chosen with intention: mobile desks, chairs, and whiteboards to support active learning, lounge seating that invites collaboration, and finishes that can handle the pace of a busy culinary program.

Today, the Culinary Studies Institute stands as a symbol of OCC's evolution, an open, vibrant hub that merges education with experience. It's a place where students gain not only technical skills but also the confidence, creativity, and professionalism that define the next generation of culinary leaders.

Learn more about the OCC Culinary Studies Institute:
oaklandcc.edu/culinary/

