



## Fastlane® Turnstiles Spare Hungry Students Long Wait at New Dining Facility

Robert Casarez, the Senior Business and Technology Specialist for Auxiliary Operations at the University of Notre Dame, oversees technology and strategic processes for a division that is responsible for a variety of departments and locations across campus, from the conference center to laundry facilities to dining halls. Casarez used a planned dining hall renovation as an opportunity to solve several design challenges. “It was important to us that any changes we implemented would allow students move in and out of the building quickly and efficiently. Indiana winters can be tough! We also needed to make sure that the solution was consistent with our vision for the interior update.” He turned to Fastlane turnstiles with integrated access control for the solution.

### Challenge

The primary challenge was improving throughput rates at the entrance to the dining hall. Several full-time employees were stationed to welcome students and verify access by swiping their cards. Since the process was all done manually, it was slow—bottlenecks often caused a line of students to stretch well outside the dining hall, even in winter.

Their first idea was to hire a second set of employees to move traffic more quickly, but Casarez and his team realized that it was smarter financially and functionally to solve the problem with technology—specifically, a turnstile-based access control system. “The seemingly



### Customer Profile

#### Client

- University of Notre Dame

#### Location

- Notre Dame, Indiana

#### Enrollment

- 8,425 (undergraduates)

#### Product

- Fastlane® Glassgate 150

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obvious solution was to throw more people at the problem, but a technology solution like a Fastlane turnstile gave us more flexibility with our resources. We were excited that the use of this equipment would allow us to deploy personnel in a better capacity and result in overall savings. In addition, the ease of use was very important. We wanted to avoid training student workers and staff on anything complicated that added undue stress to their already hectic jobs. Thankfully, the turnstiles turned out to be very intuitive and well-received.” The timing of the dining hall renovation was already aligned with an upgrade to contactless cards, so it was the perfect opportunity to update the hardware too.

Interior design was also a factor. They wanted a modern look that would go with the new, contemporary décor— something sleek.

#### Solution

Casarez knew that he needed something that would work with the new access control system. He researched online and contacted other colleges to find out what products they use. A major state university told him about Smarter Security Fastlane turnstiles. The sleek stainless-steel-and-glass look of Smarter Security Fastlane Glassgate 150 turnstiles would blend well with the rest of the dining hall’s modern design, even with turnstile barriers added for extra security. The Fastlane turnstiles are also designed to be space efficient, so the space constraints were not an issue. With a throughput/minute rate of up to 60 people, and a positive reputation for customer service and product reliability, Smarter Security landed the deal.

Their timeframe was tight—only eight months to find and implement a solution—but Casarez found the procurement process easy. Once the product arrived, the installation went off without a hitch. “The installation turned out to be an incredibly smooth process. The user manual was easy to understand, the unit components were accessible and easy to assemble, and Smarter Security was just a phone call away. When we did have questions, we were able to contact support and get an answer quickly, which we appreciated since we were under incredible pressure to finish the installation on time.”

#### Result

The most unexpected result was the virtual elimination of the line. The turnstiles have such high throughput, food service often can't keep up. The university is now using the data from the access control system to adjust the food production schedules. Everyone



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can agree that's a much better problem to focus on, instead of students waiting outside in the frigid Indiana winter. "During peak dining hours, particularly at lunch when all the classes end at the same time, the lines would stretch out the door. In winter that meant standing in freezing temperatures and the dining staff setting up patio heaters to try to make the wait somewhat comfortable. Inside, we had one or two staff members taking the student's cards, swiping them on a terminal, and then the students entered through one set of doors. With the installation of the Fastlane turnstiles, we were able allow the students to tap their own cards on the readers and double the entrance size, thereby increasing the entry speed ten-fold and eliminating the line outside.

There were initial concerns from the dining hall staff and students about what would happen to the employees who greeted everyone and swiped the cards. In response to these concerns, they were successfully moved to ambassador roles in the dining hall and continue to work to make students feel welcome.

The new turnstiles are also linked in with the fire system for extra safety, which the fire chief was happy to learn. And the new install was a great incentive for students to get a new card to use in the dining hall, which sped up the transition to the new cards.

Casarez and his team thought that Smarter Security provided stellar service throughout the process. "We were in regular communication with our Smarter Security representative and their support team. Our timeline was set for when our students returned from summer break and Smarter Security understood our situation. They never failed to answer our questions and they even accommodated our custom request for the Notre Dame monogram to be screen printed on the glass gates within our timeframe." As questions arose, they made ample use of Smarter Security's phone support. They were always able to get in touch with a real person who helped them resolve any issues. They also plan to use the preventative maintenance program to extend the working life of the product and to preempt any issues downstream.

The team is looking at potential other locations to install Fastlane turnstiles. Other departments at the University, such as Athletics, now have a proven on-site installation to review as they assess options to improve their own facilities.



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