

Personality Profile

Port Sky, which is the only dining hall on campus for Penn State Altoona students, not only provides food for the 900 residents on campus but many students and faculty members get their food from there as well. It recently underwent a renovation making it newly modernized and a great spot to eat for students. The renovation took a little over a year with two new student lounges to eat at and since it was built from the ground up it is complete with seven different food stations. But what makes Port Sky run smoothly and a great atmosphere to eat at is the employees of Port Sky.

Most students and faculty don't see what goes on behind the scenes, people know that there are chefs, and people that help serve and prepare the food, but what about the others that make sure food is ordered, that everything stays in order and that the stock rooms are stocked with the correct food? That is where a humble, soft-spoken woman comes in and she goes by the name of Lillian Umholtz. Umholtz is a shorter woman with short light blonde hair. She is older in her mid to late 60s. Sydnee Cookerly, a student who works alongside Umholtz at Port Sky says, "Lillian is always willing to help and is a hard worker, she is very upbeat, on the go, and passionate about what she does."

Umholtz, who is a native of the Altoona area, is the grade A lead cook for Port Sky. She started out working at University Park for 20 years in the food services business and her passion for cooking and being in an atmosphere of students led her to take the job as lead cook here at Penn State Altoona's Port Sky. She has been with Port Sky for about three years and she loves what she does.

She is not only one of the lead cooks, being able to supervise Port Sky students workers and give them directions on what needs to be done, her job mainly consists of being in charge of catering, and making sure all the protein foods are made and ordered at Port Sky, and making sure students are up to safety codes, such as wearing hair nets and following health codes. She also makes sure all meals are prepared and out at the correct serving times for students. Umholtz enjoys her job for various reasons such as, the atmosphere of being around students.

"I can be the mean guy, the pusher, happy, and I'm a mom, so some days I can be someone's shoulder to cry on," she says. Just like with any job it can be stressful working with students Umholtz claims she has her good days and bad. But Penn State runs in her blood, not only does Umholtz continue to show that through her job but also her family. Her niece is a recent graduate and she spoke about how she enjoyed getting to see her everyday at Port Sky, and her grandson she hopes will plan to attend Penn State Altoona as well. Umholtz says that she has many reasons for working at Port Sky, "the benefits, great money, and a good atmosphere making it a great place to work," Umholtz says she is a simple woman who just loves working at Port Sky.

Her dedication to making sure students get meals on time is important to help make Penn State function properly. But Umholtz is more than just an employee of Port Sky, she is a mentor to students, someone they can talk to when they are stressed with classes. Her dedication and kindhearted nature help bring out the best in the Penn State students. She loves her job and working with kids and being there for them, and that is what the Penn State family is all about. Umholtz plans to be at Penn State for as long as she can, making a difference not only in the good food she helps get out to the students but also in the importance she plays in the students lives and the community of Penn State.