Some of the friends I made at UCLA are really into hackathons, so they asked me to join their team for LA Hacks 2021. We chose the weeklong track and created an app and RFID scanner that improves the existing UCLA dining hall swipe system. I was the UI/UX designer, but I ended up spending most of my time styling and using expo to help develop the frontend of the app.

**What we built**

The TasteBuds system would allow students to view where their friends are eating and the menus of each dining hall. Our app had users log in using their school’s gmail account and store their information in our Firebase database. The first time they swipe into a dining hall they pair their account to their bruin card by scanning a QR code generated by our hardware system. They then can see where their friends are eating and what food the dining halls are serving. Each user has their own personal QR code that other students can use to add them as friends. You can check out our devpost and github if you want to know all the nitty gritty details. Besides the app and hardware, we also created a video that I created the shot list and cinematography for.

Here’s the demo video. Check out my cheesy acting at the end :D

App flow

**What I learned**

This was one of my first times developing a product with a team, so I think the most important thing I learned was how to work on a complex project with a team of specialized individuals. Most of my work revolved around how the app would be used and how our product was presented so there was a lot of communication between me and the rest of the team about the mechanics of our system. They are all much better at programing and electronics than I am, so I ended up picking up a lot of knowledge about mobile development, databases, rfid scanners, and Bluetooth.

**Tools I used**

Figma & Illustrator for the the wireframe and assets

React Native with Expo

A Nikon digital camera for the overexposed cinematography in our demo