

## **California College Campuses Lack Starbucks. Big Deal?**

In North Carolina, during the peak of the pandemic, Noah McMillan would wake up every morning, say good morning to his mother, then they would drive together to Starbucks to get them both a drink. His drink of choice was the mango dragon fruit lemonade with raspberry syrup and no ice and hers was a regular coffee. This became their daily tradition and started Noah on a path he would later find out is not sustainable but not because of finances but because of access.

“She liked Starbucks even more than I did” said McMillan, “when I developed that routine with my mom, that’s when it got a little bit unhealthy”

Noah now cannot go a day without getting a Starbucks drink in the morning. When he let himself pick up the tradition of getting Starbucks with his mother everyday, he didn’t consider that he would one day be in a city where the coffee giant would be limited. When he first moved to the Bay Area, he wrongly assumed that a Starbucks would be located close by to wherever he was just as it was in North Carolina. But he’s facing a problem keeping up with his routine. Since he moved to the California Bay Area to attend college at the University of California - Berkeley, Starbucks is not as accessible to him as it once was.

“It’s crazy because that I only see that out here. Like back home Starbucks is on campuses everywhere.” said McMillan

According to the 2018 data of Starbucks locations in the United States, California makes up 20.3% of all Starbucks locations, making it the state with the highest number of Starbucks in the US. California alone has 2,968 Starbucks stores with a high number of stores located in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, and San Francisco. Though California is saturated with Starbucks, colleges and universities campuses severely lack Starbucks locations. Among California’s highest enrolled schools of 20,000 students or over, there aren’t many Starbucks locations within a 1.5 mile radius of each campus. University of California - Berkeley has the furthest distance from a Starbucks with the nearest Starbucks 12 mins walk away at 0.6 miles.

Located on Shattuck Ave, the closest Starbucks to the University of California is currently one of just five in the city of Berkeley: two on Shattuck (one inside a Safeway), one on Oxford Street, opposite UC Berkeley, one in the Target on University and one on Solano Avenue. In December of 2018, a Starbucks within one mile of the University was shut down just one year after opening citing.

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Berkeley is known as a city that prioritizes small businesses over huge corporations. In recent years, there has been strong opposition by smaller business owners in the opening of Starbucks in Berkeley's neighborhoods. These small businesses fear that the presence of Starbucks will tank small businesses in the area.

Pamela Ostrada who lowered her starbucks intake because of medical reasons says that maybe students are better off without a coffee giant on campus.

"I think Starbucks has enough places everywhere and I think it would be take away from like all the little shops that are trying them like make", said Ostrada.

With over 5,000 small businesses in the city of Berkeley and hundreds of smaller coffee shops, UC Berkeley students have other alternatives to get their drinks of choice on campus because there are many mom and pop coffee shops around. With famous local coffee shops like Caffè Strada, Yali's Cafe, and Romeo's Coffee, students like Ben Derrico are not impacted by the lack of starbucks.

"I don't care that there's not a Starbucks on campus because I think there's plenty of good coffee options in and around the neighborhood, said Derrico

But students like Myah Overstreet, a graduate student, enjoys the assortment of options Starbucks has to offer and says that the University would benefit from having one here.

"I'm missing the fancy drinks. You know, I like any other place. It's like you get a vanilla latte or you get an Americano, a mocha." said Myah "But at Starbucks, you can get a toasted vanilla, you know, shake an espresso with the extra shot and with oat milk and cinnamon on top, you know" said Overstreet.

Noah too is a fan of the assortments of options Starbucks has to offer so he isn't going to let the lack of Starbucks on his campus stop him indulging in the assortment of drinks the coffee giant has to offer. Every morning, he plans a longer route to school from his Oakland apartment to get his Starbucks fix, causing him to be late most days.

"A lot of days I have to go out of my way to get Starbucks", said McMillin, "if the store was on campus, that would be fantastic."