

# FGCU Students Save with Bizzy App

**Violet Powell, Staff Writer**

For some students at FGCU, current food prices are keeping them from dining out. Cooper Aiello, an entrepreneurship student, experienced this firsthand and wanted to find a solution.

This led him to create Bizzy, an app for college students to access exclusive deals on food local to the FGCU community.

Released initially in November 2024, the platform is accessible to every FGCU student.

"If you sign up with your Eagle email to verify that you're a student, you'll have access to all the deals. It's just that simple," Aiello said.

In the few short months since the app's release, its popularity has grown significantly.

"We have over 2,000 FGCU students using it right now. We've saved them over \$10,000 just in the months that we've been running," Aiello said.

Aiello said competition to Bizzy like Student Beans, another college discount app, isn't local.

"Those apps are good for their purpose, but they offer small discounts for large brands," Aiello said.

Aiello said Bizzy prioritizes the community it serves.

"We work with local businesses around the college campuses," Aiello said. "We're made for students to use those big discounts at smaller, local places."

Local businesses including Poke Fusion and Kava Culture Kava Bar have collaborated to offer exclusive deals for college students since its release.

Scott Kelly, assistant director for FGCU's Institute for Entrepreneurship in the Daveler & Kauanui School of Entrepreneurship, helped mentor Aiello when he was first creating Bizzy.

"Cooper was in my innovation by design course when he came up with the idea," Kelly said. "He went through the process of testing and validating it using the design thinking process that we teach in that course."

As Aiello developed the app, he implemented feedback from customers.

"In the Runway Program, he was able to talk to real customers and got the app off the ground," Kelly said.



Lexi Harbach

The FGCU Runway Program is a free business incubator that is open to students and alumni.

For these local businesses, Bizzy has become the platform that allows students to easily access their deals.

"The businesses have deals to offer to the students, but there's no hub to find them," Kelly said.

As a senior at FGCU, Aiello believes the college experience for students can be improved by Bizzy.

"Living college for less is about enjoying your college experience without having to worry about your budget," Aiello said.

Currently, the app is available to download for free on iOS platforms.