

Robots will deliver food and drinks to George Mason University students

European startup Starship Technologies is bringing its six-wheeled delivery robots to a college campus in Virginia. The company announced Monday that George Mason University will allow students to use their meal plans to have select food and drink orders delivered by the robots.

Starship says it's providing George Mason with at least 25 robots, and orders from Blaze Pizza, Starbucks, and Dunkin' will be available at the start. More will be added in the "coming weeks," and each order will cost \$1.99 extra.

The delivery bots can carry up to 20 pounds worth of goods, and they've been tested in various cities around the world over the last few years, often in partnership with services like DoorDash or Postmates. Starship's robots are able to drive themselves on sidewalks, over curbs, and operate in rain or snow and at night, according to the startup. They navigate around people and other objects thanks to cameras embedded around the robot's exterior.

Students will be able to place their orders through Starship's mobile app, which is on both iOS and Android. They can drop a pin on the map to tell the robot where to go (the deliveries will be made "anywhere" on campus, according to Starship's press release), and they can monitor its progress throughout the trip. For students who are worried that someone will make off with their late-night snack, the robots have a locking lid that can only be opened by the person who placed the order. The trips are also monitored in real time by Starship

employees, who use the robot's cameras to keep an eye out for any foul play.

While Starship's robots have been operating for a while around the world, the company's not the first to trial campus deliveries. Rival startup Kiwi has had its robots roaming UC Berkeley in California since last summer, but ran into some trouble when one robot caught fire this past December.

<https://www.theverge.com/2019/1/22/18193391/robots-delivery-george-mason-university-students-dunkin-starbucks-blaze-pizza>