



The Mentors That Hound You

By Michelle Reilly

“Go Away. We don’t want you here. Go Away.”

These were amongst the first words I heard on Loyola's campus at the Summer Orientation's Core Talk. Needless to say, this aggressive mantra, of sorts, shocked me and, as the boy next to me began falling asleep on my shoulder, I eagerly wanted to know this professor's aim. Perhaps to see who truly wanted to be at Loyola? Yet, after Father Linnane's sincere and motivating “sponge” speech—which I have no doubt you have or will soon hear—my resolve only amplified. Hearing our current president promise our class that Loyola is dedicated to supplying the means for a smooth and worthwhile transition was so powerful. The main way this university fulfills that promise is through providing a vast support network of mentors, who help curtail the needs of individual students beyond the initial integration onto the campus-life.



Committing alone may have seemed like quite a stressor, but the active decision to stay and succeed will probably prove to be a more menacing. It is for this reason that Loyola especially incorporates Evergreens into your life from your first minutes on campus. My Evergreen, Daisy, always tells me that “whether it feels like it or not, [she’s] always watching out for us.” In fact, a friend of mine explained the effectiveness of this endless support that goes beyond getting situated those first couple of weeks. In an outburst of endless laughter, he emphasized that he would even go so far as to call his Evergreen “Dad.” “He’s 10 out of 10 dad material. I would be a son again. He’s super chill, it’s really easy to go up and talk to him.” Why was this quality essential and effective? Well, as this same friend specified: “Leadership requires initiative. Some people need to be confronted, and have you come to them. And it’s best that way. When you realize qualities you like about someone it attracts you to them, and causes people to flock to them.” The reality is that the Evergreen program itself *requires such an attitude* in order to fulfill the mission stated on their webpage: “to support students through their academic, social, and personal transition to Loyola.”

Another great example of Loyola's dedication to cater to individual needs is the ALANA Mentoring Program, affectionately known as “AMP.” (Yup, more Loyola jargon you’ll grow to love) This is a program within the ALANA (African, Latino, Asian and Native American) services that provides another conclusive link to students, but does so in an even more personal manner. AMP Mentors are paired one-on-one—a first-year and an upperclassman—and are comprised of mostly those who identify with one of the affinities mentioned above. This helps students more readily access resources and start a social connection with someone of similar mindset, so that each can readily relate and respond to distinct needs of the freshman. In a recent interview, Mickedal Pugh, the outgoing Graduate Assistant who directs AMP, discussed that while the program aims to provide ways in which the mentors and mentees can connect, it also attempts to have each mentor find ways to connect with their mentees in a way that is “most suited for the particular First-Year,” saying, “I consider personality, career goals, and background when I pair the mentors/mentees.” One student, who wished to remain anonymous, praised the program saying that her mentor specifically is “the best!” In fact, with a chuckle, she began dropping his name, wanting to make sure that his effectiveness as a mentor was known. When I inquired as to why he was so successful, she began, “He’s super fun, funny, and super cute.” Of course that last part was not the main reason, which is something she emphasized when she continued seriously, “No, he really tries to get to know you, and is straightforward—I like that. I could talk to him about anything.” So, again, that approachability is something already being exuded, encouraging students to really rely on these people.



Mentors Identified by Class of 2020

ALANA Mentors

Athletic Academic Advisor

Professors

Evergreens

Athletics “Big/Little” Program

(like Rowing “Big Sister”)

Managers at work

Upperclassmen

Senior Teammates

Resident Assistants (Graduate ones, too!)

Pre-Fall Leaders

Roommates. ROTC Instructors and Members

Big Brother

Man 2 Man, Sister to Sister

Mosaic Leaders and Moderators

ALANA Group mediators

CCSJ’s Service Coordinators and

Reflection Leaders

Messina Advisor and Mentor

+Google (If you’re still a little desperate)



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I don't know what your motivations are for coming to college, or what factors were important to you during this college process, but I am confident that, regardless, Loyola's mentors will make every effort on their end to make the experience fruitful and remain approachable so that you can turn to them for any difficulties you may be facing. The two mentor programs mentioned above are but a couple examples of the ample resources allotted at Loyola to help the transitions feel manageable. Whether given the formal title of "mentor" or not, there are a slew of people influencing your life here from multiple perspectives. The trick is surrounding yourself with positive influences akin to your way of life, and learning how to properly harness the messages coming your way. Nevertheless, you must not doubt that if you give Loyola your desire to fully improve, it in return will lift you onto its wings to keep you flying forward.

“THINK OF YOUR OPPORTUNITY
TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD INTO
A MORE BEAUTIFUL VERSION THAN
THE ONE WE KNOW TODAY”
-REV. BRIAN LINNANE S.J.