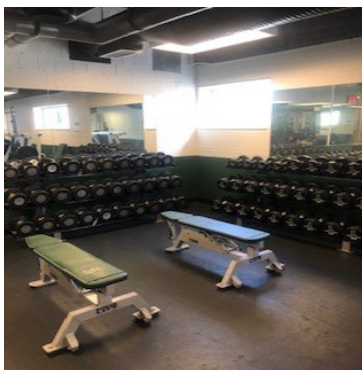


Lift room squat racks

“The combination of pretzels, muscle milk and yogurt is a great post-workout snack to help us recover.”
-Plavoukos '25



Dumbbells and barbell benches

Weight Room Warriors

By Jonah Goodman

Walking into a weight room for the first time can be an overwhelming event. You see machines you don't know how to work, weights you know you can't lift, and, of course, the person working out whose bicep is bigger than your head. It can all be exceedingly frightening. You may not even want to lift but it's required by your team. Well, all of those feelings are okay. In fact, I would be surprised if you didn't connect to any of those examples. You are entering an environment with robust objects that seem to be looking right at you. You see dumbbells, barbells, squat racks and they're all trying to intimidate you, even daring you to try and conquer them. However, this is a very big day in your life as an athlete and as a student. You will be tasked with making a choice that in reality is easy. You can either commit to the lifting process and get the most out of your time. Or, you can mess around and fail to reap the benefits of what lifting can do. In your eyes, the choice should be easy: applying yourself in the weight room will better your skills in your respective sport and make you a healthier student athlete.

The weight room is located to the left of the Ace Sushi stand and once you walk through the double doors you will be at the entrance. The main components to the weight room are six squat racks, two sets of dumbbells, four pull up bars, four barbell benches, four hyperextension benches, four treadmills, four Keiser pull through machines, and a leg press machine. The room is about 1600 square feet, which is a perfect space for every-

one to get their workout done. A significant addition to the room is the snacks provided for all athletes. We have access to muscle milks, chocolate milks, sun chips, trail mix, yogurt, apples, cheese sticks, peanut butter, pretzels, and other healthy snacks. I asked freshman athlete Alex Plavoukos his favorite part of the lift room, and his answer was “the snacks, the combination of pretzels, muscle milk and yogurt is a great way post-workout snack to help us recover.” While this answer may seem amusing, Alex knows the importance of recovery in the weight room and he takes advantage of the many resources it presents.

What To Expect

So, what does a typical “lift” look like? Well, there are multiple lift coaches and each is assigned to a certain team. You have the opportunity to connect with your lift coach and build a strong relationship with them. These relationships will help in and out of the weight room whether it's advice on sports, school, or just life. It's always important to have a person you can talk to. Your coach will take you through a warm-up to prepare your body for the workout. The classic ending to the warm-up is the “bridge series”: a series of planks to activate all of your core muscle groups. After the warm-up, you grab your lift cards and meet with your coach at the famous white board. This is where your coach will go through the various exercises and how to perform each of them correctly. While it may be 8 AM and you can barely keep your eyes open, by watching the exercises you will perform them better and get more out of the workout. The exercises are divided into power, strength, assistance, and core. Each area will focus on a different type of exercise that will benefit different parts of the body.

Why Put In The Work

Now that I've gone over the workout itself, it's time to go over why you should put your all into it. The first reason you should commit to weight training is the obvious benefit: the strength. Increasing your muscle mass will help your overall fitness and lead to success in your respective sport. Also realize that "By implementing strength training, it is possible to attain the most efficient balance of lean to fat mass and body composition" ([Kairos](#)). This balance is what the top athletes are able to obtain and it leads to success. Not only does this strength help you in the weight room, but it helps you with life in general. There are many ways lifting can be applied to your life outside of athletics and they all have positive impacts that better your standard of living.

Another great benefit is how lifting helps to keep you regimented. I have found that having a set schedule each day is crucial to maintaining a healthy lifestyle in college. No plan leads to procrastination which leads to writing papers at 3AM (and trust me it's not worth it). Having a schedule has also proven to increase your amount of sleep, your mood, and decrease your stress level ([Brennan](#)). Your lift time will remain the same over the week and this means you can have your day schedule around your practices, lifts, etc. Having a set time to work out is a huge plus and all athletes take for granted just how important it is towards success.

The final piece that many overlook as a benefit of weight train-

ing is the team atmosphere. Having a group of people by your side, struggling to get through a workout together, makes all the difference in the world. We all realize that it's possible to work out alone. However, you will never be pushed as hard as someone who has a partner or group by their side. Top sport agencies agree by explaining that "In a group training setting, athletes can feed off each other's energy and motivation to increase their own. A competitive team training session encourages everyone to dig deep and find the strength they didn't know they had to achieve more" ([Nook Sports](#)). This is what you'll see in the lift room on a daily basis. People are pushed by others and it all has a positive impact on the team and the individual members as well.

Loyola's Lifting and Values

So, while all of the reasons for why lifting is beneficial to your life are true, where does this all fit into Loyola's values? Well, one of Loyola's core values as a Jesuit institution is the constant challenge to improve. This value can be exhibited by the strides athletes make in the weight room mentally and physically. The main point of the mission is to "strive for improvement on an ongoing basis by holding out an ideal of personal wholeness and integration as the ultimate horizon of growth, while simultaneously recognizing that development and growth require time and sus-



Refrigerator and bowls for snacks and protein shakes

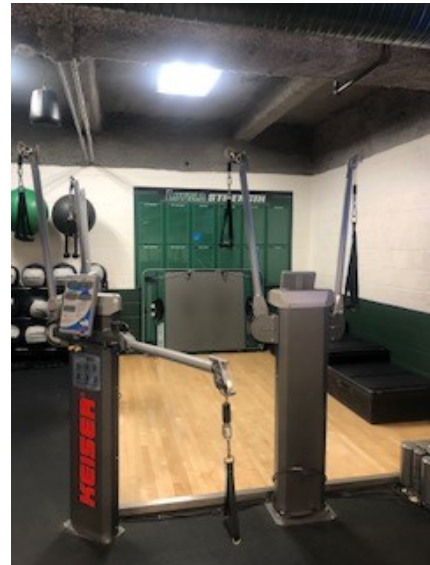


Hyperextension benches and green elastic band

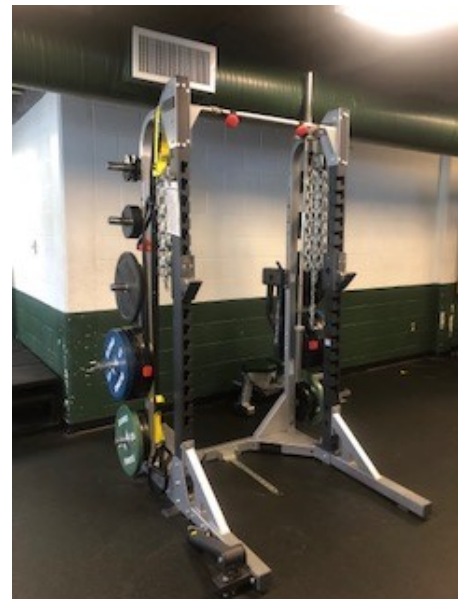
tained effort" [Loyola](#). This message is what the weight room represents. While it may take time and it will surely take effort, the benefits and growth made from your work will be substantial and impactful. You will become stronger, healthier and happier during your time in the weight room. Just give it your all and the work will do the rest.

Through this article, I hope that you have learned about the lift room and the multitude of benefits that it presents. If you enjoy weight training, that's great. If you're not the biggest fan, that's okay, too. The important point is that you put in the work to reap the benefits of your dedication. That's what makes you a weight room warrior.

The main point of the mission is to "strive for improvement on an ongoing basis by holding out an ideal of personal wholeness and integration as the ultimate horizon of growth, while simultaneously recognizing that development and growth require time and sustained effort" [Loyola](#).



Keiser pull through machines



Close up of squat rack and barbell weights
