



Boulder Garden Café



The Study



The Quad/Humanities Center

## Dining at Loyola

### By Chloe Hamilton

I can imagine walking into the dining hall after class, extremely mentally burnt out and ready to eat something for the first time that day. I see my friend and we get excited to look at the soup options and the for-the-day and the other options available. We sit down, talk about classes, laugh about stories from back home and enjoy the comfort of the dining hall. The food is honestly not what I expected when I came to Loyola. I had seen videos online about the school lunches being awful, and college students having to Door Dash or eat noodles for a living. Well, luckily, at Loyola that has never been the case for me! In addition, there is a large sense of community within the dining halls here in Loyola. You'll always find students in the dining halls, laughing with friends, enjoying great meals, and even just having conversations that fill the halls with great noise. Hearing that noise and conversation showed me the kind of community you'll get a chance to feel. Loyola's core values support this feeling of "togetherness," and it comes through from the dining hall as well as the staff, further emphasizing the core value of community within Loyola.

## Meal Swipes and Points

The first important thing to know is how important using either meal swipes or meal points is—it's such an effortless way to pay for your meals! All you must do is go up to the station in the dining hall, usually there are two people available at the stations, and they will help you swipe your card and that's it! It's so easy! It can sometimes be intimidating going up to the stations but paying for your food is an essential part of attending this university. These aspects of the dining at Loyola make me feel so comfortable, so I never have any reservations about going to Boulder. Depending on your meal plan and how many swipes or points you have left, you will figure out how you pay for your meal. The difference between when to use your points and swipes depends on where and what you are buying. You use all your meal swipes in main dining halls, such as Boulder Garden Café, Boulder 2.0, Iggy's Market and more on campus. You use your meal points for retail products at many more of the dining locations like Green Peel, Green and Grey Café, as well as other dining halls with retail options. Both are great ways to buy items and meals on campus!

I also had the chance to interview one of the friendly staff members, Torina Adams, who works at the meal swipe stand. I wanted to know about her experience working at Loyola: "I like working here because I'm a friendly person and I like to interact with people." I then asked her what her favorite part about working with Loyola dining was and why. Her response was riveting: "The students, because I've been working here for 13 years, and they've all been friendly, outgoing, outspoken!" I was pleasantly surprised by her answer! The students can make or break a staff member's experience at Loyola. Her answer assured me that she has very much enjoyed her experience. I always try to be as nice as I can to the staff because they are

there to help us and provide us with food. We need to be respectful of the staff, and I am proud to go to a university where the staff feel like the students are "outgoing and friendly."

## Boulder Garden Café

Once you walk into the dining room, you are instantly hit with the smells of hot meats, mashed potatoes, vegetables, macaroni and cheese, deli meats, and sauces. It is never ending! I would walk in with a friend, and she would walk right towards the deli line. You have many options in the dining halls—sandwiches, burgers and fries, salads, or vegetarian and vegan food. When I asked another student at Loyola, Tahlia Crowley '26, why she loves Loyola dining so much, she replied saying, "I think that the dining hall food is better than normal college life eating. Eating food from other schools like Springfield College showed me how good Loyola's food is. There is also a wide variety that can accommodate many people." Her perspective was of immense value to me because it showed me that other students also feel the comfortability that I feel when in the dining hall. Some of my favorite entrees to have in the Boulder Garden Café are the many soups. The loaded potato soup, beef, and turkey chili are just a few of my favorites.

The feeling of comfort I have when I enter the dining halls creates an instant sense of community. The staff smile and say, "hi," essentially welcoming me in, with an inviting feeling I believe is important even in a dining hall. Comfortability is often common in classrooms and halls but extending that into our dining halls gives students another place to find relief on campus. The dining hall also shows their commitment to students by helping with the team dinners for athletes. Continuing to supply food even after regular dining hours is extremely commendable and makes the dining here a source of comfort. I also asked one of the staff workers who mainly works in the pizza and pasta bar, Kesean Aaron, why she loved working at Loyola. She said, "I work at Loyola dining hall because I love it, I love working with pizza, I love making pizza and I love my staff." I felt a sense of confidence and nobility when she mentioned she loved working with her staff. I could feel her pride when speaking about working at Loyola and she loves the staff she works with. This sense of community is crucial.

## Boulder 2.0

This feeling of community that comes from the dining halls is also prevalent in another one of the dining halls, just above Boulder Garden Café, it's called Boulder 2.0. If the options in Boulder aren't my favorite that day or my favorite soup isn't available, I'll go to Boulder 2.0, which is directly above the Boulder Café. In the upper Boulder dining hall, there are even more options to choose from. Every day a specialty bar is made available in front of you! For example, the chicken wing bar is unbelievable. With the number of sauces available—barbeque, buffalo, and even garlic parmesan sauce—you can mix and match your wings to make one of your favorite meals at Loyola. They even have an omelet bar, which is my favorite because I have always loved a great omelet in the morning. The Chobani yogurt and Mediterranean salad bars are also favorite around campus because yogurt, to me, is all day breakfast; and that's always an advantage.

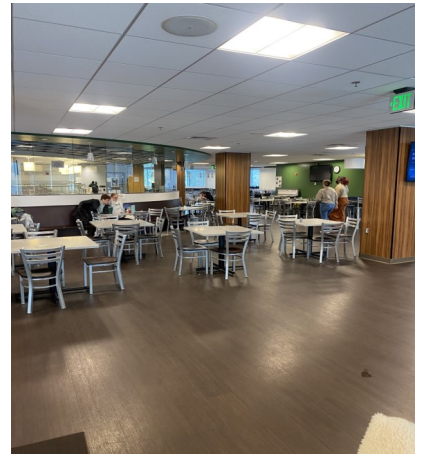


Green Peel/ Ace Sushi



Boulder 2.0 Market Café

One of the staff members working with flatbreads in Boulder 2.0, Adrienne Sherrod, talked with me about how she experiences community in the dining hall: "I like working with Loyola because I am a people person, I like to see people happy. Food always brings us together; it is a good thing for people to enjoy and it is a conversation starter." I think Sherrod had a perfectly correct point when she emphasized how food can be an enjoyable conversation starter. As emphasized before, teams can come together through food, or even just meeting up with a friend at a common place you both love—the dining room is there. A large place where many students meet each other and befriend their lifelong friends is in the dining hall. Some of my closest friends and I have the best conversations just about the dining food and I love that the dining staff noticed that as well.



Inside Boulder 2.0 Cafe

### Iggy's Market

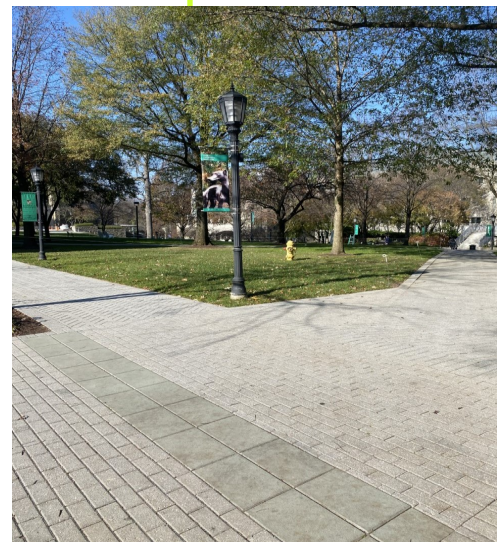
One of the last and my personal favorite dining halls is near the opposite side of campus compared to the Boulder dining halls. Near dorm buildings like Campion, Newman, and Southwell is another dining hall that is more of a convenience store and has many supplies for everyday use in a home as well. Iggy's Market can be seen as a smaller store to shop at with your meal points. The layout of many of the dorms surrounding Iggy's are apartment-style dorms, so the bleach wipes, detergent, mouthwash, and more are extremely useful. Not only can you buy household items from Iggy's, but they, too, have a deli and salad bar, as well as food bars like Boulder 2.0.

### Loyola's Mission on Campus

It's important to remember mutual respect and inclusion in our community, how we treat our staff and the people meant to help us, and how they treat us shows us the type of community represented in Loyola. One of the [core values](#) here at Loyola, "In its ongoing commitment to hospitality and conviviality, which it expresses in many and various ways, Loyola recognizes a particular contribution of its Mercy heritage," Encouraging community and fellowship is a value never overlooked here and that is continuously prevalent in our dining halls and with our staff.

Talking with our staff gives me a sense of trust. We trust them to make our food and that it will provide us with the nutrients we need. After asking only a few of our staff members about their experience working at Loyola, I already feel so much more comfort in my food, the dining halls and Loyola as a community.

The dining at Loyola is beyond flawless. The warmth and well-being I feel when I enter a Loyola dining hall is an indescribable feeling. You instantly smell all types of food that tickle your nose and activate your taste buds when you enter any of the Boulder dining halls. The staff welcome you in as you swipe your card and then you're free to pick one of the great meals available. Even if you need toilet paper and some extra toothpaste, Iggy's Market has your back. These dining halls are here for us and at our disposal, to feed us and support us. They are an essential community-based asset here at Loyola University.



Student Quad