



People coming together

"Between community service and engagement experiences, you get acquainted with members of the community outside Loyola while still creating connections within the groups you will be working."

## Spiking Interest

By Nora Gilmore

### Why Join a Club?

Adjusting to college can be tough, but when you find your people, it gets a little easier and a lot more fun. Clubs are a huge part of Loyola. Loyola offers over 100 clubs reflecting many different interests. During the first few weeks of school, Loyola hosts a club fair on the quad, where you can talk to club leaders, learn about club goals and activities, and figure out if you want to join. It is a great resource for translating your interests into a fun and social outlet for meeting new people and getting involved. Clubs help students connect with their peers by bringing together students with similar interests meanwhile still allowing individuals to express themselves.

### Club Lists

Coming to Loyola, I knew I wanted to join a club, but which club? Scrolling through the [club list](#) online can help you gain a little bit of insight on the clubs Loyola has, but do not limit yourself to a computer search. When you are walking through campus, keep a lookout for flyers, tables, and other signs. If you want to find an event that piques your interest, The Bridge is also very useful. You can check the calendar or scroll down to see what events are happening each day, read through the description, and see where the event is located and at what time. Today, I can attend Chinese Painting at the Chinese Club, or walk to Newman Towers for a movie night.



The Quad, where the Service Fair is held in September.

### CCSJ

The Center for Community Service and Justice (CCSJ) is another valuable resource Loyola offers students. CCSJ gives students an opportunity to serve the community while meeting new people. Between community service and engagement experiences, you get acquainted with members of the community outside of Loyola while still creating connections within the groups you work in. At the beginning of the semester, CCSJ sets up a [service fair](#) where you can get oriented with a few different community partners and learn about upcoming events. If confusion arises when attempting to locate clubs, try attending Loyola's Women's Center. Although The Women's Center is not a club, events pop up every day.

## Women's Center

If you are looking for a club, but are unsure which one, [The Women's Center](#) is a great resource. Clubs collaborate with The Women's Center daily. The events include fun art projects, volunteer opportunities, and movie nights—I have been to multiple events at The Women's Center from watching movies to making sticker books. According to Harper Wade, a freshman, "The Women's Center is an important service-based organization on campus. By partnering with many different clubs on Loyola's campus, they can introduce their members to a resource that we have on our campus for everyone, not just women. By advocating for students on campus and creating a safe space for students to talk about their experience with any sort of issues and/or sexual violence that they may have experienced, the Women's Center makes sure that our Loyola students are very well taken care of."

The Women's Center creates a safe and welcoming environment where students can go if they need help with anything. Whether you are looking to find a club, advocate for women's reproductive health, or need to discuss any issues, The Women's Center is an incredible resource! also regularly look on the Instagram page to see what ways I can support women in our community. Check it out.

## Hounds Helping Hounds

One of the clubs that I joined this year is Hounds Helping Hounds. The club hosts a few events each month. Recently, I went to an event where we painted pictures of animals in a Baltimore shelter to spread awareness about animals that need homes. Getting to paint and hang out with the other club members was so much fun. Although I came with my friends, I got to introduce myself to other members of the club as well. Even if you don't have someone to go with, you can almost always anticipate that you will meet and connect with at least one other person at the event. Knowing that I can make a difference in these animals' lives while working with some of my closest friends is amazing. Kat Shannon, a sophomore, shared that the club is dedicated to helping animals in Baltimore. While it was created to support students in the Pre-Vet program and help them gain experience and hours, anyone is welcome. Even if you are not in Pre-Vet, there are plenty of ways to get involved. For instance, they organize lots of crafting events and share the crafts that they created with area shelters.

## Joining Multiple Clubs

Working with a variety of clubs and organizations is appealing to many students. Sydney Eichel, a senior, told me about her experiences in multiple different groups on campus. Sydney shared that she is part of the Evergreen Players, Loyola Belles, Buddies, and is a Greyhound Ambassador. Best Buddies, "[a] club dedicated to friendship, inclusion, and fun!" ([The Bridge](#)), gives you a chance to meet and hang out with individuals with and without disabilities. Greyhound Ambassadors are campus tour guides. They are constantly walking around campus giving tours. Being an ambassador means that she is required to do a



Painting Shelter Animals

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Sydney attending a Greyhound Ambassador event with her friends

certain amount of community service each semester. To fulfill the requirement, you must go to the [York Road community service day](#) or go to an event that speaks about bettering our community.

## Connections

Learning about various clubs presents challenges without understanding what resources are available to you. Awareness is especially important when moving to college. Watching out for posters hanging around campus informs you about when and where meetings take place. If you have trouble finding information on clubs, visit The Women's Center and see what events are happening throughout the week. You can also check [The Bridge](#) for a list of groups and events.

Even more importantly, I am incredibly grateful for all the friends I have made by stopping by club meetings. Sometimes instead of only focusing on what the club activity or event is, think about how it gives you an opportunity to get to know other students. Once I started attending any club that sounded engaging, I expanded my friend group. While it is important to think about whether a club is focused on service, or another interest you may have, it is also important to understand that it is an amazing way to meet people.



People with different abilities next to each other.

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