

Adventure Awaits!

By Katie Vitale



GET EXCITED!!

All change comes with some discomfort, but being okay with the uncomfortable is the only way to grow. College is a wonderful chance to explore who you are, become independent, and take a look at the world around you. University of Loyola Maryland is the place to become who you truly are meant to be and figure out your place in the world.

Moving to Baltimore has been such a great experience! For off-campus independence, exploring the surrounding neighborhoods is always a fun activity to do with friends. Sightseeing in new areas further helps the move-in process to feel like home faster. There are endless possibilities to submerge yourself in new experiences off- and on-campus. Joining clubs is a wonderful idea to use this new independence and embrace the boundless opportunities to learn and people to meet.



EXPLORE THE BALTIMORE AREA

The location of campus makes it easy to walk around downtown Baltimore or a peaceful trail in the woods. Baltimore's neighborhoods are easily accessible. The city bus is only \$2 charge, one way. Always go with a friend. [Hampden](#) is a hippie neighborhood that is walkable from campus. The park across from Newman brings you to a trail, and it runs 2 miles until the main street in Hampden. There are cute boutiques, thrift stores, delicious restaurants, and a famous ice-cream store—[The Charmery](#) (I 100% recommend!). During the winter, there will be shuttles that drive students to Hampden to see homes all decked out in Christmas decor.



A few other fabulous places to visit include [Fells Point](#). There you will find historical buildings, farmer's and flea markets, and lots of boats out on the water. The area next to the water is walkable and easy to navigate. You can always count on Fells Point to be vibrant with energy and people. Alexis Grotell, a current sophomore at Loyola exclaimed, "Fells Point festival was my favorite adventure!" Furthermore, you could enjoy a celebrative dinner at [Little Italy](#) with your friends!! There you can discover many cute and cozy restaurants with a true taste of Italian cuisine. Lia Ilagan, a freshman at Loyola, commented that she loved [Belvedere Square](#): "I love being able to go into the quaint shops and they have so much great food too—plus it's only 6 minutes away from campus." Last but not least, the Inner Harbor has all your go-to stores and fast-food restaurants on one street. As you walk west towards the water, the shops will slowly become upscale, and the city noise will start to diminish. I could list a trillion options to explore in downtown Baltimore, but the real experience is better! Do not be afraid to ask a friend and check out somewhere you've never been! The more places you explore around campus, the easier it will be able to feel at home and become independent.

GET OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE ON CAMPUS

Loyola has a remarkable number of clubs to join. I recommend going to the club fair in the fall. The first semester, I signed up for every club I thought I would enjoy. Even if you are not sure what your interests are, this is the time to explore your options! I joined tennis club, InterVarsity, and the Speech-Language, and Hearing Sciences club. I recommend joining something that resonates with a different aspect of your overall interests. For instance, tennis is a fun way to move my body and be a part of a community. Intervarsity is an amazing community to grow my faith and experience new aspects of spirituality. Additionally, the Speech-Language, and Hearing Sciences club helps me learn about my future career and adds to my resume. Julia Marks, a senior at Loyola, declared that her favorite experience that truly got her outside of her comfort zone on-campus was performing in the Battle of The Bands. There are hundreds of clubs. Do not be afraid to go to one alone! You have already made the hard journey of coming to college alone, so why not try talking with new people for 30 minutes to see if you enjoy the club? My roommate, Keira Schoffler vocalized that "I joined Ultimate Frisbee for something to do in my free time, but I ended up loving my teammates and thriving on the field!! I found great upperclassman friends on the team, and they have help to guide me throughout my first here at Loyola."

Furthermore, take the risk of applying for internships or jobs on campus that you think could benefit you or that you would find interesting. The most challenging step is starting to application. In Beatty Hall, [The Career Center](#) is there to guide all students with their resumes, job applications, and interview tips. Loyola students and faculty are all here to support you and encourage you to figure out how to make a positive impact in the community and embrace your independence.

This is your opportunity to try new things and explore life with an open heart and mind! The world is truly your oyster. College can feel intimidating and scary at times, but know that you are never alone and everyone at Loyola is here to help you. Find ways to get outside your comfort zone on and off campus so you can make the most out of your freshman year of college. This time of change won't be constant throughout your life, so enjoy the journey and embrace it as an adventure! Baltimore truly is a wonderful city with endless places to explore! The countless opportunities that Loyola has to offer can help you to pursue your passion and create bonds with other students like no other. Focus on freedom, not fear. Trust yourself that you can do hard things and become a version of yourself that can expansively make a positive impact for your community. College is the time to take adventure head on. Let this new form of independence guide you to express who you want to be in this world and do not be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone.

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