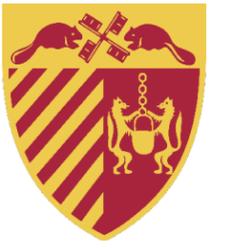




The Blazer



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Fiat Veritas

So You Say You Love The Poor ... NAME THEM

A CITY OF LOVE AND HOPE, CAMDEN IS STILL GREATLY IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE

By Eleni Vasiliades '21

A New Jersey city across the Delaware River from Philadelphia, Camden is a place where I can leave everything behind and be myself, the real and true me. Although I have only been to Camden twice, I consider it to be a home away from home, and I intend on going as many more times as I can. It's hard for me to describe our trip to Camden. From the outside it appears to be a service trip to one of the most poverty and violence stricken cities of the United States, but the real Camden, the city that is able to change you, is much more.



Students working to clean the Camden Shipyard and Maritime Museum. Photo courtesy of Ms. Morano, Director of Christian Service at Loyola

Last year, as a Freshman, I signed up with hopes of making a change, quite a vague intention, but that was really all I expected the trip to be. The reality is it is nearly impossible to make a lasting and effective change in just a few days, however it is possible to let Camden change you. Earlier this month, from October 5th through 8th, I went to Camden for the second time. It was truly an experience I will never forget.

One of the service sites we volunteered at was a

residence for people with disabilities in wheelchairs, called the Inglis House. While I was there I was lucky enough to connect with almost all of the residents. In particular I grew close with a man named Ty, one of the most bubbly and charismatic people I have ever met. He politely asked if one of us would mind helping him out with his artwork—I volunteered. I proceeded to help him with what I thought was only a simple task or favor but, to him, it seemed to mean the world. Shortly after helping him out, he brought all of us to

see his artwork.

We walked into his room and it was filled with artwork from the ceilings all the way down to the floor. Now this was not just any mediocre artwork, his paintings were out of this world. They were truly breathtaking to look at. He used so much detail and told us the meaning behind each drawing.

His next sentence broke my heart. After showing us photos of himself when he was younger, before he developed MS, Ty called himself a monster and not a human. It was a moment I will never forget.

Although he was not able to use his hands to paint the way he used to, he never gave up. Ty was a literal example of Camden. He had to deal with so many problems, and not the silly problems that we tend to complain about, but serious, devastating health issues. And still he never gave up, just like Camden.

If you ever get the chance to go to Camden, you'll see a city that by the naked eye may seem depressing and forlorn, but once you share an encounter with the people there—whether it's those working at the Romero Center, the people at the different service sites, or just the day-to-day passers-by we met on the streets that would help out of the kindness of their hearts—that is Camden. Camden is hope, it's prosperity, it's a city that society has kicked aside and forgotten, but it is a city that is able to survive because of its people—people like Ty. If you're interested in stepping out of your comfort zone, finding yourself, finding God, if you're committed to doing justice, then Camden is the place for you.

WHY SHOULD YOU COME TO CAMDEN?

By Amelia Magel '21



Two Juniors playing games with the residents of Inglis House. Photo courtesy of Mr. Daley, Theology teacher at Loyola

Many students, when presented with the word "Camden," will wax verbose on the dangers and poverty of this particular New Jersey metropolitan area. While these problems are real, most do not care to try to fix these instabilities or the devastating poverty. This same mentality is applied to all issues in the world today. It is all well and good when you are talking about how miserable an issue can make you, but when presented with the choice to actually do something about the it, many will make some sort of excuse and pass the problem onto someone else. We're all guilty of this. And it's OK, because we still have a lot of time to go on as many service trips as possible can before high school ends!

At Loyola, it's so easy

to sign up. The application is short and simple, almost begging you to come along. Especially for Camden. It is one of the most important service trips I've ever gone on. Conveniently located in nearby New Jersey, it takes one single car/bus/train (or possible Uber) ride, which is a great bonding experience! And the people who run the Romero Center are so kind and facilitate the best discussions. The service you do is fulfilling and eye opening, while the activities, discussions, and reflections are interesting and passionate. Hopefully, coming from a fellow student, this recommendation will spur you to action and ignite the flame of service within you! Just kidding. Kind of. Sign up for January Camden soon because the spots are going fast! You can thank me later.

FEELING '22: INSIDE THE FRESHMEN'S FIRST MONTH

By Grace Coppes '22, Sofia Pastore '22, and Katie Spillane '22

The first month of school has flown by. It feels like just yesterday we were soaking up the precious last rays of summer sun. We kicked off our school year with a two-day Freshmen Orientation where we learned the ins and outs of Loyola School—complete with a dress code fashion show put on by the Seniors. Even though most of us still could not figure out how to open our lockers, we jumped right in to our classes. We have looked at newsprint under a microscope in Biology, studied Hammurabi's Code and Sumerian art in Global Studies, done an in-depth study of the life of St. Ignatius Loyola in Theology, studied a variety of short stories in English, and created our own stories and games through coding in STEM. We're still working on opening our lockers though.

"Beware of the cafeteria." Family, friends, and

other people who have survived their freshman year gave me this warning. I have heard this so many times, that on the first day of school I thought that the cafeteria would be similar to a haunted house. People snatching chairs as fast as a bat. People being exclusive like zombies when they are eating brains. Everyone was totally overreacting. The cafeteria was where I met some of my great friends. Everyone is so nice and non exclusive. You don't have to only be friends with a certain group of people. You don't have to sit with the same people at lunch everyday. I am always making room for people at the lunch table. On the first day of school there were 30 girls sitting at a table for ten. I also have friends who are upperclassmen. Everyone is so enthusiastic about learning and the teachers are so enthusiastic about teaching. There is no pressure in

classes that your question or answer will be judged by your peers.

One of the highlights of the year so far was Spirit Week at the end of September, where we had the chance to go on two field trips. The first trip we took brought us to Ellis Island, which was an incredible experience. We took the ferry down, and saw the Statue of Liberty on the way. Once we got to Ellis Island, we did a scavenger hunt. I found the dormitory rooms to be the most interesting part of the island because I found it really cool to see how the immigrants slept. The second trip that we went on was to The Natural History Museum. I especially liked the New Senses exhibit because it was hands on. We also went to the biodiversity exhibit where we had to complete a scavenger hunt. It wouldn't be a school trip without a few worksheets! On Friday of that week,

we had a student life day. There were multiple activities including another scavenger hunt, Gaelic football lessons, friendship bracelet design class, and 3v3 basketball. At the end of the day there was a school-wide dodgeball tournament. Unfortunately, my team did not win, but I still had a great time.

While classes may be challenging and our lockers may not open, I can speak for my class when I say that our first month as Freshman has been a success. The teachers, upperclassmen and the members of our grade are all so nice and welcoming. The cafeteria is not as scary as I thought, and going to school at Loyola is amazing. Whether you are talking with your friends in the Commons or playing basketball in the Jug yard, you cannot seem to shake the sense of love and community for which Loyola is known.

HISTORY CLUB JOINS THE FRAY!

By Alex DelFranco '20

Last year the Loyola History Club made its debut inside the school to a resounding welcome. With weekly meetings to practice and learn, we are able to prepare for city-wide competitions against other local schools. Last year demonstrated an inviting and enjoyable structure to the club, allowing us to focus more competitively this year.

Early last March we competed in our first History Bowl competition of the year. As we were a late entry, only four students were able to represent Loyola. Entering Yeshiva High School in Queens, the number of other schools was intimidating. How could we possibly compete against seniors who have been preparing for years, practicing and plotting our demise? Fortunately we met a fellow first-year team

from Riverdale Country School and we both dived in together.

After a long day of trivia, buzzers, and fleeting answers on the tip of our tongue, our final match drew to an end. Our score, while impressive for us newbies, could in no way, in our minds, stand up to seasoned veterans. Then, in a dramatic announcement of eight advancing playoff teams, we heard the surprising name of Loyola School! We placed and moved on to compete for Nationals!

Following our strong performance last year, we hope to return faster and more focused than ever to blaze our way to the nationwide stage. Come join History Club once a week after school! For more information contact Ryan Hogan '20, Caroline Adams '21, or Alex DelFranco '20!

WHY WE SHOULD BE CRUELTY FREE: A CASE AGAINST ANIMAL CRUELTY

PUZZLE COLUMN

By CAROLINE ADAMS '21

When talking about the issue of animal testing, a preface is necessary. I understand that this an issue that a majority of people are either unaware of or do not care about. The purpose of this article is not to fault anyone for their actions in relation to this issue. Misunderstanding and unawareness are the main opponents when it comes to the issue of animal testing. In this article, I simply wish to enlighten and educate. So, what exactly is animal testing? Animal testing is any experiment conducted in the name of scientific research on a living, breathing animal, which often results in the animal's distress and suffering. Animals subjected to testing are purposefully harmed, and often killed upon conclusion of the experiment. Such experimentation is required in the development of many products, from cosmetics to pharmaceuticals. Over one hundred million animals each year are killed in U.S. laboratories alone, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In these laboratories, experimentation includes exposing animals to ra-

diation, forcing animals to inhale toxic gasses, injecting and force feeding animals harmful substances. Animals upon which researchers conduct tests are often bred for the purpose of experimentation. They are denied proper living conditions, often confined to small, cold cages, and forced to live without the companionship of fellows. These animals die regularly as a result of experiments upon them.

Laboratories conduct animal experimentation in order to prevent the harming of humans. In theory, this practice ensures the safety of people while still producing effective medications and non-dangerous products. Animal testing, however, has been proven to be ineffective, wasteful, and unnecessarily cruel. Researchers have found that treatments developed on animals rarely are as effective on human test subjects, according to The Journal of the American Medical Association. Diseases artificially induced in laboratories are never identical to those that naturally occur in human beings. For example, despite the fact that over

85 percent of HIV/AIDS vaccines were successful in monkey studies, not a single one was effective at preventing the disease in human beings. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, nine out of ten experimental drugs fail in clinical studies because we cannot accurately predict how they will behave in people based on laboratory and animal studies. The true reason the researchers and companies test on animals is because it is cheap. It costs far less to test a product in an animal than it does to pay a human to test products on them. In fact, as taxpaying U.S. citizens, our tax dollars go to funding animal testing. Despite the sickening injustice that is animal testing, many countries have virtually no regulation for their protection from distress and suffering. Clearly, tackling this issue on a global, national, or even a state-wide scale is a daunting and arduous process. While that is a goal that I hope we as a society will be able to reach at some point, I would like to end this article by outlining a way that we, as individuals, can fight animal

testing.

The easiest way to fight animal testing is simply to be an informed consumer by buying from brands that do not test in animals. Each of us uses some form of personal care item, whether it be deodorant, hairspray, toothpaste, or makeup. While many brands that produce these products test them on animals, plenty do not. It can be difficult at first to change our shopping habits by finding such brands, however the moral benefits of buying cruelty-free make the struggle more than worthwhile. By refusing to buy from companies that treat animals with cruelty, we take a stand against injustice. We acknowledge that the living things with which we share this Earth possess the dignity afforded to all of God's creation. With an action as simple as changing the brand of deodorant or mascara you buy, you can help take a step toward creating an industry that does not profit from suffering.

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DIFFICULT

ROBOTICS CLUB HAS LAUNCHED!

By MOLLY MARESCA '19

Last October, in our Junior year, Lola Staff '19 and I, noticing a lack of STEM-based extracurriculars at school, approached Mr. Howell to start a robotics team. He enthusiastically agreed to act as our moderator—despite his hectic schedule—and our desire to start the club began to solidify, although a multitude of questions remained. For instance, what competitions would we take part in? Would we receive the necessary funding for such an endeavor? Would students from Loyola even be interested in the time-consuming activity, which meets at least twice a week after school and has a schedule comparable to that of a varsity sport? Fortunately, our fears were met with the support of the school administration and the addition of now Junior Cara Mulrooney and Technology Director Mr. McDonnell to our leadership team. After extensive research and a visit to a robotics competition, we decided to register for the First Tech



The Robotics Club soldering with Physics Teacher Mr. Howell
Photo courtesy of Mr. McDonnell, Director of Technology at Loyola

Challenge.

FTC is a nationwide organization whose primary mission is to “inspire young people to be the science and technology leaders and innovators, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life.” They hold numerous competitions throughout the city and assign a new challenge annually, with the one this year referred to as “Rover Ruckus”. Finally, we were prepared to share our plan with the Loyola student body.

Towards the end of the school year, we announced our first meeting, discussing our plan to officially begin in September 2018.

To our delight, at least 15 students expressed gen-

uine interest, and have attended our current Tuesday and Thursday meetings after school very consistently. Of course, robotics is new to Loyola, so our first few weeks have been an orientation of sorts. Mr. McDonnell, for example, has been teaching the basics of coding while Mr. Howell has been more focused on the mechanical aspect. Already, our members have become familiar with block programming, 3-D printing, and soldering. Additionally, they have split into groups to program Finch robots, which were built by Carnegie Mellon University to reinforce the overarching concepts of all coding languages. The Robotic Knights' enthusiasm and persistence are admirable, and our goals for this club are now closer than ever before!



The Blazer

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The Blazer is the official newspaper of Loyola School, produced and published by the students of the school for the Loyola School Community.

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Students are encouraged to contribute to the school newspaper at any time by sending their articles to:
19eknapp@loyolanyc.org.

Students should be aware that their contributions, if printed, may be edited to fit the available column space of The Blazer. Content may also be edited to conform to newspaper norms.

The staff of The Blazer holds monthly meetings to plan upcoming issues. Students are strongly advised to attend these meetings to get a sense of what articles need to be written. We are most in need of straight-reporting articles about school life. We are least in need of editorials or other opinion pieces.

Articles of general interest not specifically related to school life will also be considered but will be printed at the discretion of the staff. Such articles include, but are not limited to, movie reviews, book reviews, horoscopes, editorials, and humor. All decisions made by the staff regarding the suitability of an article are final.

STUDENT LIFE DAY

BY SARAH ADDISON '19 AND ARIEL LAFORST '19

At the end of September, around the fourth week of school, Loyola hosted our annual Student Life Day. Following two field trips for each grade on the previous day, the Freshmen through Juniors spent a day exploring different topics and ideas. Although the Seniors were enjoying themselves on their Kairos retreat, the rest of the school came together to grow in a closer environment. The following week we interviewed our Guidance counselors who organized the event. Ms. Gilfillan and Ms. McDermott both put a lot of work into making the experience unique and exciting for everyone.

Q: What is Student Life Day?

Gilfillan: The idea originated in the early 2000s when Kairos was planned during PSAT week and the seniors would be out of the building. The guidance department wanted to engage the students in a creative

way through programming on topics that would not usually be discussed in the classroom. Substance abuse, body image, healthy relationships, and bullying are some examples of topics we have focused on in the past.

Q: What was the theme of the 2018 Student Life Day?

McDermott: The school partnered with the One Love Foundation to discuss healthy relationships through escalation workshops. One Love focuses on educating young people about healthy and unhealthy relationships and galvanizing them as leaders of change.

Q: How did you decide on this theme?

Gilfillan: We had One Love Foundation come about three years ago and received positive feedback from the student population. We like that the organization expanded from romantic relationships to

all forms of relationships - friends, family, etc. We have decided that this topic is important to teach our students and plan to rotate this topic every three years.

Q: How did you prepare for this day?

Gilfillan: We communicated with the One Love Foundation, brought alumni facilitators to lead workshops and discussions, trained the facilitators through a webinar designed by One Love, and reached out to students and faculty with regards to interest in afternoon activities.

Q: Were you nervous this topic would be unsettling for some students?

McDermott: We think it is important to talk about issues before necessarily personally dealing with them. It is important to enforce the ideas of consent and healthy choices at a young age. Also, knowing that the workshop focused on all relationships, not just romantic, allowed us to feel more



Two Juniors playing games with the residence of Inglis House. Photo courtesy of Brian Daley, Theology teacher at Loyola

comfortable with the idea.

The student response to One Love was truly extraordinary. After listening to the presentation, the students broke into small groups to review and reflect on the day. Although there is always a chance of some not taking the day seriously or ignoring the bigger picture, almost every group we heard from reported not

only an enjoyable reflection but one flanked with keen observations and motivating discussion. Not only did the students respond well, they learned from the conversations, and left with a greater understanding of how to build healthy relationships in their family and life.

Q: What activities did the day entail?

Gilfillan: In the morning, students watched a movie, discussed their views on the movie with mixed grades, participated in a workshop and mentor reflection, and asked questions in the gym with a focus on action.

McDermott: In the afternoon, we had activities set-up including 3v3 basketball, billiards, friendship bracelets, chess, 80s/90s trivia, scavenger hunts, Gaelic football, and dodgeball.

Q: In what ways was Student Life Day a rewarding experience?

McDermott: Seeing students and faculty happy and having fun while at school was very rewarding considering the amount

of work Ms. Gilfillan and I put into this.

Gilfillan: Also, students are more willing to come to us with relationship questions as they now have the vocabulary to have a discussion on such a topic.

Q: If you could have added on/changed any aspect of Student Life Day, what would you have done differently?

McDermott: I would have wanted more alumni facilitators and allocated more time to allow students to participate in more activities.

Q: What were your personal favorite segments of Student Life Day?

McDermott: Having people chanting and cheering for fellow students during the dodgeball tournament was my favorite part.

Gilfillan: Hearing kids were dancing and singing to '80s dance music with Ms. Kusk and Ms. Ferran sounds amazing!

Overall the school agreed that Student Life Day was a major success and we can feel the excitement building for next year!



A Speaker from One Love presenting to Freshmen, Sophomores, and Juniors during Student Life Day. Photo courtesy of the Loyola Yearbook

VENOM: A MOVIE POISONING THE MARVEL UNIVERSE

BY DYLAN BOUSQUETTE '20

This has been a great year for superhero movies: from Marvel Studios' Infinity War, to the upcoming Captain Marvel we are certainly having our fill of the good guys. That's why so many were excited to hear about a Venom movie. Audiences were expecting a gritty, intense version of the classic Spiderman villain that would amount to a new take on the world of a superhero. Unfortunately, I would have to say that Venom didn't really follow through with these promises. Venom was delivered as an action-packed movie that, despite having massive potential, never really settled on a theme or plot line.

My first and foremost issue with this movie was the characters; they just were not likable. I expected to be rooting for an anti-he-

ro or at least understanding a complex, dark person. What I received instead was an annoying journalist who ruined his whole life in a way that ended up appearing petty and unnecessary. I acknowledge that the acting was good and Tom Hardy did the best with what he was given, but I think the script just made him seem unreasonable. I also wanted a villain that was truly malicious and maniacal, especially in a supposedly "dark" movie, but audiences got something very different. The "villain" was a tech billionaire whose goal was to understand alien life forms so that the human race may evolve and survive past our time on earth. While it is made abundantly clear that he is a "bad guy," his motivations make him one of the more respectable char-

acters.

Strangely, I found one of the only likable characters to be Venom himself as he is the only character who is a victim of circumstances.

My other issue is the plot. So much material exists in the world of symbiotes and Spiderman, none of which was used. The plot centers on how our protagonist, Eddie, has been connected with an alien symbiote called Venom who has escaped from a lab testing him. Venom's goal is generally unclear—other than the occasional human snack. He makes it clear that he dislikes humans and that his race plans to devour them once they are contacted. This plot, while pedestrian, makes sense and can be followed. What doesn't make sense is the end of



Venom Movie Poster promoting the release on October 5, 2018. Photo courtesy IMDB

the movie which features Venom suddenly deciding to save earth and abandon his entire species. This

choice seemed so forced as a plot device that I wasn't interested in the final conflict even a little bit.

Finally there is the issue of the genre. I've already referred to this movie as a superhero movie, which isn't incorrect but also isn't what you should be expecting when you walk into the theater to watch Venom. It begins like a science fiction movie, as you are introduced to aliens and spaceships. The movie then quickly turns into an action movie with car chases and bullets flying all over the screen. Only in the last 15 minutes would it be identifiable as a superhero movie.

In summation, the movie was not what I was hoping for. There was a lot going on that could've turned into exciting experiences for audiences everywhere but instead just fell flat. Overall, I believe the movie was flawed and did not live up to expectations.

The Knightly News

BUMP, SET, SPIKE!

BY LEXA HONECK '21 AND AMANDA MCGREAL '21



The Varsity Lady Knights celebrating a comeback win at home

The Varsity Lady Knights Volleyball team is back with some new faces who will help the team during their 2018 fall season!

The girls played their fourth game on September 21 against Trevor Day at home. They demonstrated great teamwork by working to form a solid defense. The Lady Knights made sure to successfully communicate with each other,

enabling them to play their best. Although our opponents had great serves, the Lady Knights dived for every ball. Sophomores Sophia Griffo, and Regina Potenza, as well as Junior Alex Deramo, were fast on their feet, portraying good dives for the ball. Freshmen Michaela Spero and Nina Talamo were both very powerful on the court exhibiting great setting and spiking. Annette Se-

brell, a Junior, showcased many forceful spikes. Seniors Emily Knapp and Natalie Suozzi played fearlessly and in the third set the two worked together to play the ball off of the net. Natalie saved the ball by setting it up in order for Emily to spike it and earn the team the point. The whole team operated like a well-oiled machine, displaying teamwork in the best way possible.



A planter on the rooftop garden, ready for harvest

FALL HARVEST

BY DANIELA PIERRO '19

Do you ever wonder what chocolate mint tastes like? How about fresh hot peppers? Have you ever wanted to plucked a carrot straight out of the ground, ready for eating? That is exactly what the Garden Club has been up to, along with much more! The club braved frigid temperatures on October 18, gathering on the rooftop for our first Fall Harvest. Basil, planted last spring, had sprung into little trees over the summer. Uprooting basil “trees” and trimming countless leaves was a tough job, but the Garden Club went at its task

with enthusiasm and grace. All summertime plants were harvested to make room for winter crops such as lettuce. Along the way, garden club members learned about herbs, perennial flowers, and purple kale, and brainstormed ways to use the plants we harvested: making pesto sauce from basil, trying fresh mint tea, or even a baking a miniature carrot cake! The club is deeply grateful to Alex, who joined us from the Philadelphia-based sustainable urban farming organization, Urban Creators. He has helped the Garden

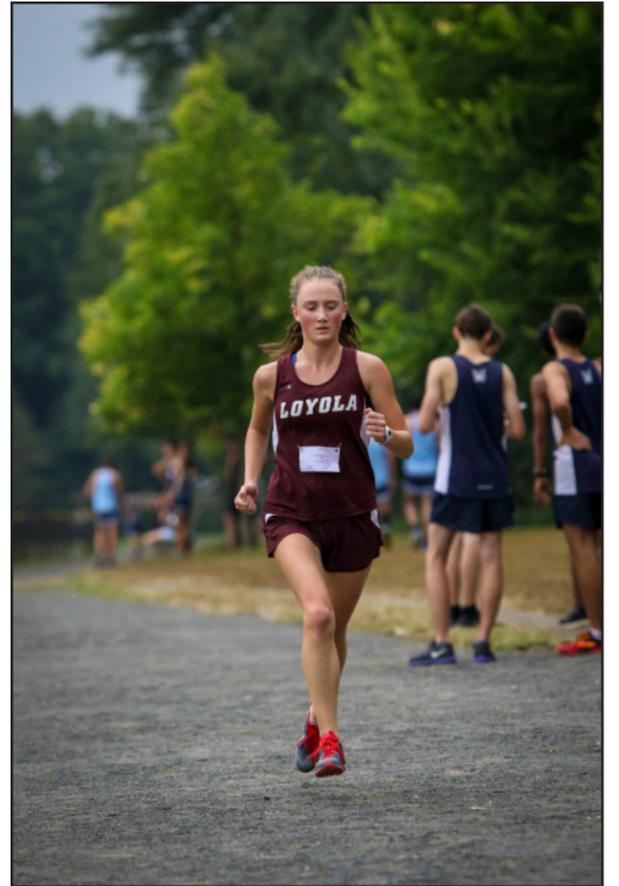
Club to construct, plant, and harvest from Loyola’s rooftop garden. Despite the chilly weather, it was a fantastic first harvest, and the Garden Club is excited for more to come. The club especially looks forward to spring planting season, after a short hiatus in gardening activity during the coldest winter months. Garden Club is always open to new members, and to all suggestions for how to best use our shared garden space, promote sustainability, and create a beautiful rooftop space in which nature and creativity can thrive.

RUN HARD! RUN SMART!

CHELSEA CAMPOS '21 AND VALENTINA MARINI FICHERA '21

Loyola’s Cross-Country Team is coached by Mr. Donacik and Coach Janec. The team has practice after school at Central Park every day. The practices vary each day of the week so that the runners can challenge themselves in different ways. “Hard” workouts consist of jogging for two miles to a track on the West Side, sprinting up a hill multiple times, and jogging two miles back to school. On “easy” days, runners jog for thirty to forty-five minutes on the Central Park Bridle Path.

In cross-country, it is believed that pain is inevitable and suffering is optional: if you do not feel any pain while running then you did not perform your best. Although the workouts are rigorous, they make each and every member of the team a better runner and push him or her closer to mastering stotanism. Stotan is a portmanteau word, coined by Percy Cerutti, that combines the adjectives stoic and spartan. Stotans accept the challenges of training, injuries, races, and disappointments without complaining because they understand that simply by continuing to work hard, they will get better and stronger. The fundamentals which Mr. Donacik’s



Hannah Cavanaugh-Gouvea, our star runner, crossing the finish line
Photo courtesy of the Loyola Yearbook

Cross-Country Team follows are based off these ideas—that setting goals, working hard, and challenging yourself are crucial to becoming a better athlete.

Cross-country meets typically occur most Thursdays and Saturdays of the season, where Loyola runners compete with runners from other schools in Freshmen races (1.5 miles)

or Junior Varsity and Varsity races (3.1 miles). The daily training and weekly meets prepare the runners for Champs, which closes the cross-country season. Loyola is currently holding the status of being a two-year consecutive winner of Champs, and the Cross-Country Team is working toward a third year win. Run Hard! Run Smart! Go Loyola!



The Cross Country Team relaxing after an exhausting race



The Garden Club meeting on the rooftop to harvest myriad vegetables