

The official student-produced guide to our school, city, and life in medical school

The *Dis-Orientation Guide* offers valuable insight that you won't find anywhere else — because it's written by our first-year medical students.

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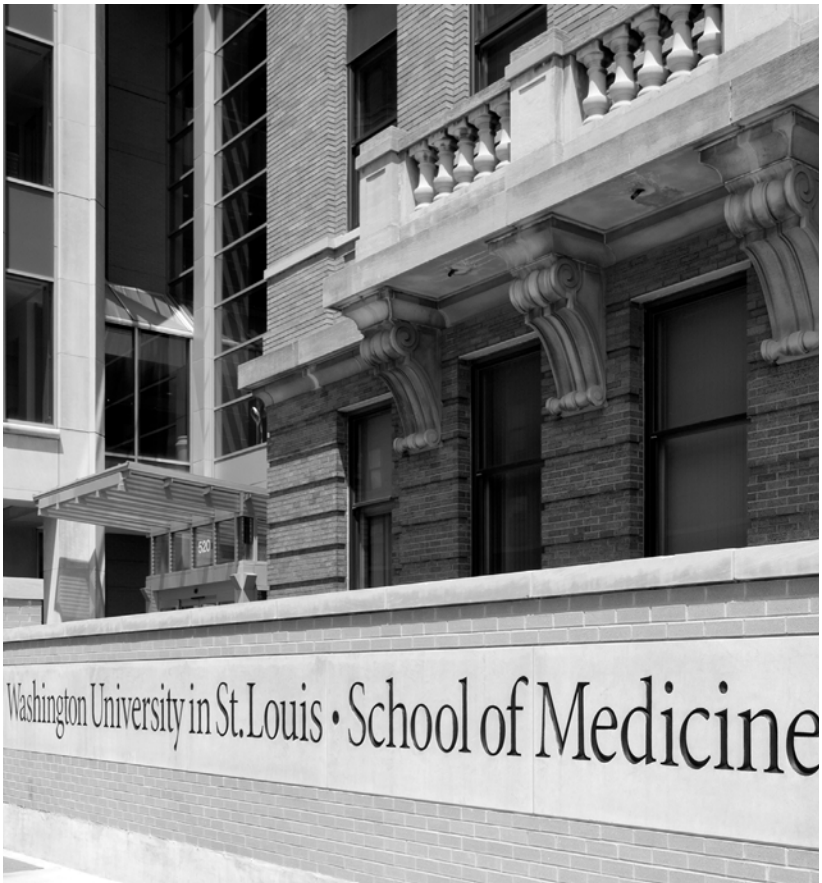
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Welcome

Welcome to Washington University School of Medicine! As you prepare to enter the next chapter of your life, the *Dis-Orientation Guide* will introduce you to the ins and outs of life as a medical student. Before you enter the guide, take in some words of wisdom from the Dean of the Medical School, the Dean of Admissions, and the medical student editors of the *Dis-Orientation Guide*.

Dear Members of the WUSM Entering Class of 2020,

Welcome to Washington University School of Medicine.

You were each selected from a highly gifted pool of applicants based on what we believe is your potential to be one of the health care leaders of tomorrow. But just as importantly, you chose us. We are extremely fortunate that you have decided to begin your medical career at our school, where you'll find a medical program designed to support your unique talents and goals.

The school's mission — to conduct groundbreaking research, provide skilled and compassionate patient care and prepare the next generation of leaders in biomedicine — is complex, and its success requires the dedication of the community of scholars of which you are now a part.

As you experience the challenges and rewards of medical school, you'll be surrounded by a diverse group of peers with extraordinary talents and abilities, as well as distinct perspectives. You will learn with them and from them as you form connections that will influence your personal and professional pursuits for years to come.

One of the School of Medicine's greatest strengths is its faculty, whose members have an impact that reaches far beyond our school, into our community and communities around the world. They have chosen Washington University, as well, as the institution where they work to promote the mission of health care by training the next generation of physicians and scientists.

Mentorship is one of the hallmarks of the school, and students consistently cite their interaction with faculty as a highlight of their experience here. As you take your place within our collaborative learning environment, you'll be encouraged to use your talents and time to advance science and serve others.

Like the school itself, the city of St. Louis is rich in culture and history, and it serves as an ideal location for you to gain an understanding of the challenges of modern medicine. Step outside familiar learning spaces and immerse yourself in the city's diverse communities, many affected by disparities in health care.

You have chosen to begin this significant chapter of your life at an institution committed to helping you acquire the knowledge and skills you'll need to achieve your full potential. I first chose the School of Medicine as a faculty member, and now I'm honored to lead this exceptional institution. Together, we will shape the future of medicine.

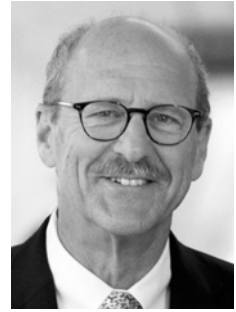
Best wishes,

David H. Perlmutter, MD

Executive Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs

Spencer T. and Ann W. Olin Distinguished Professor

George and Carol Bauer Dean, School of Medicine



David H. Perlmutter, MD

From Dean Valerie Ratts

Welcome to the *Dis-O Guide*—a document written and designed by our students to give you an inside perspective of Washington University School of Medicine (WUSM) including its culture, its philosophy, and its people. Our mission statement calls for us to advance medicine... “through the education of tomorrow’s leaders in biomedicine in a culture that supports diversity, inclusion, critical thinking and creativity.” Clearly, our students are at the core of our mission and we are prepared to provide them an unparalleled education. At WUSM, we are building on our strengths through our scientists, our educators, and our physicians to create a new future of medicine.



Valerie S. Ratts, MD

The *Dis-O Guide* has been produced annually by students since 1987 to present the many facets of our school, our students, and the city of St. Louis. As you read this, you may be an applicant wondering how WUSM might fit into your interests, passions, and career goals, or you may be a matriculated student waiting to move into the Core and thinking, “What’s next?” The *Dis-O Guide* will show you how much WUSM, our medical students, and St. Louis have to offer. Who else are better able to give you “insider advice” on entertainment, housing, food, and life than our amazing students? Uniquely this year, we are on the precipice of innovation in medical education as we unveil our new Gateway Curriculum in 2020. So in addition to the tips on life outside of medical school, we are also featuring information on the Curriculum.

What advice can I give you? 1) Get to know your classmates. They are super interesting people who like you want to make a difference. 2) Never lose your enthusiasm to change the world. You are starting down a pathway that requires diligence, sacrifice, and hard work, but the rewards of a medical career and the satisfaction of making a difference in a patient’s life are worth it. 3) Rely upon the skills and characteristics that have brought you to this point. You are amazing. There are so many people at WUSM who wish to mentor, support, and grow young physicians. Join us. At WUSM, we hope to make a difference in medicine and in our community.

Valerie S. Ratts, MD

Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Associate Dean for Admissions

From the Editors

Dear Entering Class of 2020:

We, along with our 2020-2021 *Dis-Orientation Guide* (“*Dis-O*”) Editorial Staff, are honored to be among the first to officially welcome you to Washington University School of Medicine. Congratulations on your acceptance! We hope you take a moment to reflect upon and appreciate your accomplishment.

We both have strong ties to Washington University, in roles that range from undergraduate alumnus to research scholars, law school alumnae and even patients. Our myriad of positive experiences with this institution as a whole and the many brilliant, inspiring people who make up its engaging community are what compelled us to continue our stories here, this time as medical students. It is our love of Washington University and the vibrant city of St. Louis that motivated us to volunteer as the stewards of this year’s *Dis-O*. We both felt we could serve our classmates and you, our readers, by aggregating our peers’ voices and perspectives so as to provide you with a glimpse of the breadth of possibilities to grow and explore that exist for you in this dynamic city and at this storied institution.

The *Dis-O Guide* is an entirely student-run publication; the M1 students alone decide its content. Faculty voices, even that of Chancellor Martin, are included solely at our invitation. *Dis-O* is our class’s opportunity to showcase to you why we choose to call WUSM and St. Louis home and to demonstrate some of what makes us who we are. In each year of its more than 30-year history, the *Dis-O Guide* has provided incoming students with an insider’s look at St. Louis and WUSM.

The challenge of properly introducing you to WUSM and what it’s like to be a medical student here is greater than in years prior. As you are aware, you will be the inaugural class to matriculate under the new Gateway Curriculum. Prior years’ *Dis-O Guides* leaned heavily on student voices to explain the day-to-day realities of coursework at WUSM, but our class’s experience under the legacy curriculum differs substantially from what you can expect for your own curricular endeavours. To tackle the challenge of properly introducing you to your curriculum, we enlisted the help of key students, faculty and administrators from the Curriculum Planning Committee to paint an accurate picture. We also included our M1 classmates’ voices to speak to the many aspects of the WUSM experience that will remain relevant as you commence your studies.



Kristin Pfeifauf



Vinay Penna

Of course, *Dis-O* offers more beyond the nitty gritty of your coursework, which you'll read about in the **WUSM Experience** section. You will also find:

- Helpful guidance from students and faculty in **Advice**.
- Essays articulating what attracted some of our outstanding students and faculty in **Why WashU**.
- Detailed apartment and house hunting tips in **Housing**.
- Candid personal narratives highlighting classmates' diverse attributes and talents in **Perspectives**.
- An introspective delve into what it means to truly engage through service and community action in a city that is ripe for innovative, groundbreaking solutions in **In St. Louis, for St. Louis**.
- A comprehensive guide to life in this amazing city in **Life in the Lou** (like a travel guide but for living here)!

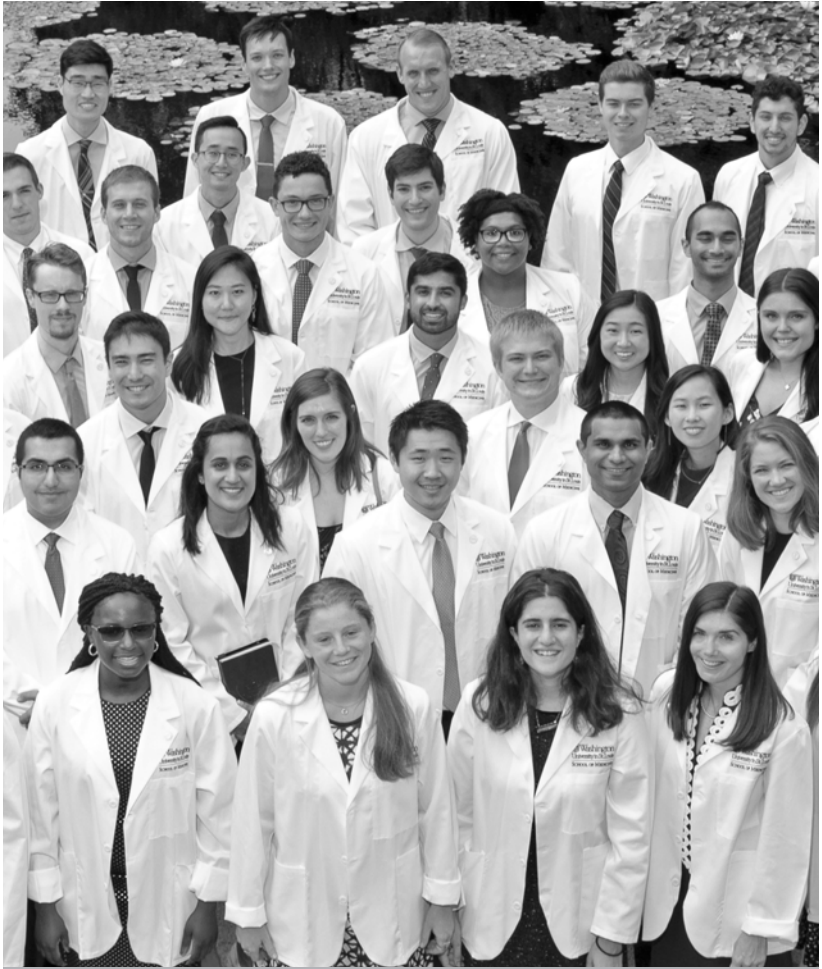
Given that our class has a diversity of ideas, talents, personal experiences, identities, and viewpoints, we embarked on this *Dis-O* endeavor with the philosophy that to truly demonstrate to you who we are, what there is to love about WUSM and St. Louis, and what our community looks and feels like, it was imperative we include as many classmates' voices as possible. We are thrilled to report that 96% of our classmates contributed to the guide this year. Still, for every thought and suggestion included, there is an order of magnitude more to say; we are excited for you to have the opportunity to immerse yourself in this school and this city and explore all that is offered beyond what you read in *Dis-O*.

Sincerely,

Kristin Pfeifauf & Vinay Penna

Editors-in-Chief

2020-2021



Why WashU

Every year, about 100 students choose Washington University School of Medicine. Here, see some of the reasons we chose WUSM.

SECTION EDITOR: COLLIN NADARAJAH

From Aaron G., M1

From the pre-interview dinner to interview day to Second Look weekend, at no other school had I interacted with so many current medical students — and not just the obligatory M1's, but M2's, M4's, and even one magical M3 in the midst of his Medicine rotation. For me, it was a testament to the fact that WashU students had: (1) free time, (2) a constant stream of free food, and (3) a genuine interest in applicants coming to their school to share (1) and (2). Now as an M1, I've realized these three points were downstream effects of something deeper: a structure that provides space for students to be more than Anki-smashing robots. Yes, WashU has great educators, incredible research, and offers diverse hospital opportunities, but these aren't what make it unique. It's the empathetic and deeply invested administration that pushes the class to build its own community starting from day one: an intentionally small class size, an extended orientation, support for dozens of student groups, frequent faculty and student mixers, and a curriculum that doesn't incentivize competition because it knows every student will be excellent. Students here aren't chained to grades or cutthroat tactics, and it frees time and energy to build relationships, pursue interests, mentor and be mentored, and explore enough of the city to realize living in St. Louis isn't so bad. Or perhaps it's the hospitable Midwestern spirit that permeates the air and seeps through the skin making everyone friendlier. Whatever the reason, WashU gives the space for students to be happy.



Aaron G.

Maybe you're looking for a good interview answer. Maybe you've been accepted and managed to convince the admissions committee that you want to live in St. Louis, even if you haven't really convinced yourself. Maybe you're sitting on multiple great acceptances and need an Excel sheet, two tables, and a figure with p-values before you can press the "Commit" button. Or maybe you've already made the leap and just want some external reassurance. Wherever you are in the process, I wish I could tell you that Washington University in St. Louis is objectively the best school for any future medical student; however, the frustrating, corny truth is that the "why" is different for everyone. Instead, I hope I've convinced you why WashU is the best place for me, and I sincerely hope it'll be the best place for you too.

From Kwasi E., M1

For me, the journey of applying to medical school happened throughout 24 countries on an international a cappella world tour. In between writing apps 36,000 feet in the air, eating street food on the ground, and blowing out my voice in concert halls, I started thinking about what would really matter to me forty years down the line when I looked back at my choice of medical school. I actually had not even considered WashU until one of my fellow singing friends from Yale, now an M3, told me if I truly wanted to be in a warm, friendly environment for medical school, I should apply. My East Coast-born and raised mind said, “Yeah ... we’ll see.”



Kwasi E.

Six months later, I missed my flight to St. Louis, arrived on campus about 30 minutes before my first interview, changed rapidly in the FLTC atrium’s bathroom, and was welcomed by smiles across the admission’s staff faces when I told them about my blunder. Then, I spent two hours talking to physicians about my dreams in medicine, how I wanted to play a role in changing patients’ ability to access and pay for health care across the country, and about my favorite destinations for food across the world. And they listened. And laughed. And challenged my thoughts along the way.

Maybe that was why I thought WashU felt like home? Maybe it was the gourmet lunch of tacos, enchiladas, tostones, and more on interview day? Maybe it was the glee I felt when this top medical school gave me a financial aid package that blew my other offers out of the water? I am not sure how to put my finger on it, but I knew WashU genuinely cared, and I took a leap in accepting their offer. They cared to give us the torturous history of WashU and St. Louis over orientation. My professors, who challenge our nation’s government on how to prevent gun violence or make health care affordable, care to spend time with me in school, in their offices, and in their homes. My classmates give each other caring looks when we inevitably fumble over clinical vocabulary and drop tools in Anatomy lab, acknowledging that we’re witnessing the humble beginnings of future leaders in medicine. I think it’s that feeling of faith that we are going to make great strides in providing, transforming, and teaching care, which made me realize “Why WashU” is home.

From Alison Snyder-Warwick, MD, FACS

*Director, Facial Nerve Institute of St. Louis Children's Hospital
Assistant Professor of Surgery, Division of Plastic and
Reconstructive Surgery, Washington University School of
Medicine, MD '04*



**Alison Snyder-Warwick,
MD, FACS**

The answer to “Why WashU?” is, for me, immediate and simple ... the people. While other medical schools may also provide exceptional training and consistently appear at the top of the rankings, WashU sets itself apart by the culture that is created here by its best resource, the people. Upon visiting WashU for medical school interviews (now 20 years ago!), I was impressed by the way the students gushed about the school. Students didn’t seem stressed; they were inspired and obviously happy! WashU’s leadership also gave a clear message of caring about student input and changing curriculum, policies, etc., based on valuable student feedback. The resulting atmosphere was incredibly positive — students and administration alike were excited about the future, and it was clear that the Institution is incredibly proud of its students. I did not encounter that same atmosphere on any other interview.

Upon matriculating to WashU, my instincts did not steer me wrong. The atmosphere has always been supportive. You feel that people care for you, want you to succeed, and have big expectations for your future. Students work as a team and make each other better as a result. My medical school experience was demanding, but rewarding, and absolutely enjoyable! While I never originally intended to stay in St. Louis long-term, I realized at the time of residency interviews that I did not want to leave the culture here. Everyone is treated with respect and as a valuable contributor to the team. Being treated with respect through demanding surgical training was important to me. Although I trained outside of WashU for fellowship, I joined the WashU faculty for similar reasons. The people here are world-renowned experts in their respective fields, yet they are generous with their time and ideas. It is exponentially productive to collaborate with other exceptional physicians and scientists who are passionate about their fields, yet humble, honest, and excited to consider new ideas. Because of this environment, WashU has, and always will be, a leader in innovation. The recipe of exceptional people who are passionate about their work, incredible teammates who share similar ideals, and a supportive work environment fosters productivity and discovery. It is a great place to be!

From Maggy B., M1

During my undergraduate and master's years, I'd learned to exist in a particular kind of academic environment that didn't really work for me. I thought that the experience of undergraduate and graduate training was necessarily a little bit isolated and independent, where you provide most of your own support system, and the search for mentorship was largely driven by luck.

As a result, I started my med school application process believing that my experience at any given school would be much like that and so the only factor that mattered in choosing a school was ranking. That pretty much held up through most of my school visits and interviews. WashU was my last interview, and knowing the stellar rankings and reputations that WashU possessed, I expected that I knew all I needed to know about WashU coming into my interview day.

However, in my brief visit to WashU, the faculty certainly, but especially the students, conveyed such warmth, generosity, and a genuine enthusiasm about WashU. Everywhere else I'd visited, it was clear that students were proud to have gotten in to each given institution, but here they seemed so proud of the institution itself: Proud to be a part of what WashU offers and excited to share the way they'd been affirmed and supported in their time at WashU. I remember the names of nearly every student I met at WashU because each one was so invested in our interaction; they really seemed to care that I got the information I needed to find out whether WashU was the right fit for me.

At WashU, I realized I was interviewing schools as much as they were interviewing me. I concluded that I wanted to train somewhere I would be happy and supported, where faculty go out of their way to affirm my interests and offer me opportunities individually, where students work with each other and bond rather than just studying in parallel, and living in a city in which I could afford to enjoy the world around me. Since arriving, I constantly find myself appreciating how much the culture at WashU has allowed me to thrive in medical school in a way I never did in my undergrad or graduate schools.

From Tirth P., M4 MSTP

I graduated from UCLA and came to WashU in 2011 (before Edison invented the light bulb), drawn primarily by the academic strength as well as the opportunity to live in a different part of the country. It didn't hurt that, as an MD matriculant, I received a generous financial aid package. During my first year I became interested in doing research, and I subsequently transferred to the MSTP as an internal applicant. I figured I had nothing better to do with my time, and my twenties was the right decade to spend in the lab.



Maggy B.



Tirth P.

What initially began as a four-year commitment to this institution became a nine-year extended stay. The biggest strength of this place is the kind of people it attracts, nurtures, and supports. In my time in the lab and in the hospital as a third- and fourth-year student, I have received spectacular mentorship, unparalleled support, and virtually limitless access to resources to pursue my goals. Our MSTP community is huge, which means you are never alone when you hit that inevitable impasse (the scientist's block, if you will) in lab. I have been on the neurology residency interview trail, crisscrossing the country for the past two months, and it has given me an even greater appreciation for the vibrant and brilliant community of physicians, scientists, and others that we have here. I came to WashU as a wide-eyed 21-year-old; I will be a grey-haired 30-year-old by the time I graduate in May 2020. I formed many meaningful friendships here, lived through their breakups, marriages, and the births of their children, and I am excited to see what my friends accomplish in the future. Virtually my entire twenties was spent here at, and I can't imagine having spent it anywhere else. I learned how to be a meticulous scientist, an empathetic physician, and a conscientious human being at WashU, and I am incredibly proud to be associated with this institution.

From Vera T., M1

I applied to schools all over the country and I was incredibly fortunate to interview at a number of fantastic institutions. I quickly went from worrying about whether I would get in anywhere to how I could possibly choose. As I weighed my options, I had two major concerns. The first was obvious: to get into a strong program that would set the foundation for the rest of my career and provide me the most opportunities possible. The second emerged as I travelled around the country interviewing and often staying with student hosts. I started out imagining that I would sacrifice anything to make my ambitions a reality, I'd live in a shoebox, eat ramen every day, live the most frugal possible existence, if that is what it took to go to the best school. Then I looked at my real life. If I'm stressed about money, it's hard to focus and learn. Living in a tiny place would mean giving up hobbies and re-homing pets. I get sick if I eat ramen too often. I started looking at schools in terms of how I would live my whole life while being a student there — academics and career a big part, for sure, but supported by all the rest of it. When I came to interview at WashU I had been reflecting on this and worrying that I'd have to sacrifice going to the best school in order to live comfortably enough to be the best and most effective version of me in medical school. I knew about the low cost of living in the Midwest, but being here and seeing how well WashU would support me in all the career goals I have while also seeing that I could live well here — I had this moment of “Oh my gosh, this is it, I can have both.”



Vera T.

From Juliane Bubeck-Wardenburg, MD, PhD

*Division Chief, Pediatric Critical Care Medicine
Donald B. Strominger Professor Researcher, Pediatric
Research, Washington University School
of Medicine, MD/PhD '01*

Why WashU – twice? As a WashU undergraduate, the medical campus was just across Forest Park, and seemed like a good place to have a lab job for one aspiring to become a medical student. The job I found initially afforded an opportunity to apply my skills at making solutions, but ultimately became a vantage point from which to see the collaborative research environment at the School of Medicine, and to appreciate the vast amount of medically-relevant scientific inquiry here. I chose to pursue my combined MD/PhD training at WashU as I was consistently impressed with the rigor of the scientific environment and the way in which graduate students were an integral part of ongoing research, and the focus of incredible investment by the faculty. As a student, it was simply exciting to be surrounded by discovery in both the clinical and research domains of the School of Medicine, but perhaps more importantly, by a cadre of physicians, scientists, and educators who were passionate about every aspect of their ‘work’.

Some 15 years after completing my MD/PhD, I returned to WashU as a member of the faculty. I returned for the exact same reasons I pursued my initial training here – the vibrant scientific environment, the spirit of inquiry that permeates the clinical and research arenas, the collaborative nature of the people, and the dedication to the next generation. When I was a student, I could not envision a better program in which to train as an MD/PhD; now as a faculty member, I cannot envision a better place to be a practicing physician scientist.



**Juliane Bubeck-Wardenburg,
MD, PhD**



Community Engagement: In STL, for STL

Community engagement has always been an essential part of the medical student experience here at WUSM. Students have worked with a variety of organizations focused on helping many different populations, including the uninsured, victims of trauma, youth, and many more. In order to better serve those populations and the larger community, the way in which we engage with them is undergoing an evolution. Here are some of the ideas and visions, contributed by both leadership and students, our institution hopes to implement and achieve as we strive to be in St. Louis, for St. Louis.

SECTION EDITOR: LANE PARMELY

A Letter from Washington University Chancellor Andrew D. Martin

When students and faculty at Washington University School of Medicine share their “Why WashU” stories, they often cite our uniquely supportive community. Here at WUSM, you’ll meet friends and mentors who will cheer for your success, look out for your personal well-being, and over time, become like family. But as we seek to make the most impact, I’m calling us to expand our definition of community beyond our university relationships – to be “Washington University In St. Louis, For St. Louis.” This means extending our values of excellence in education, research, and patient care into the broader community, doing the most good for all St. Louisans.



Andrew D. Martin

St. Louis is often called a “hidden gem” of a city, with eclectic restaurant offerings, a lively arts culture, inspiring architecture, and a “hopping” craft brewery scene. Tragically, though, we also have segregation, housing concerns, malnutrition, and gun violence. We have educational, income, and health inequalities that are unacceptable. By choosing to study at WUSM, you have a unique opportunity to enjoy one of the world’s great cities while helping to solve some of the world’s most pressing social challenges, starting with our closest municipalities and neighborhoods. As a university, it’s our moral imperative to show up for this community; so, too, are we strengthened by seizing that opportunity. This city, our university, and our people must grow together.

At WUSM, you’ll have opportunities to work alongside globally-renowned leaders from all facets of the university to address health disparities and improve the well-being of some of our most vulnerable populations. You’ll work to build synergy with a diverse array of dedicated researchers to create promising solutions to problems that have remained unsolved for far too long. When we are “In St. Louis, For St. Louis” and find science-based interventions that work here at home, those interventions can be applied in other communities around the world.

And when you do it alongside those who are equally committed ... well, that’s when “community” becomes transformative. That’s our “WashU Compact,” and I look forward to seeing the contributions you’ll make during your time here.

A Letter from Laurie Punch, MD, and Audrey Coolman, MPH

Health equity is an elusive and still urgent goal in the modern practice of medicine. Health is largely determined by where we live, work, learn, and recreate. Effective health care requires an active understanding of these determinants of health and the ability to navigate the complexity of health care systems to deliver that care. The new Gateway Curriculum seeks to provide students with opportunities to gain those skills of navigation, or structural competency in medicine, through an integrated approach which includes social, clinical and basic sciences. This competency requires an understanding of both the internal and external communities which drive health care, including professionals from many different disciplines and people with a diverse range of identities and experiences.

Community engagement within the Gateway Curriculum is being structured to allow students deep understanding and lived experience in social and structural determinants of health. Led by faculty champions, small groups of students within the Gateway Curriculum will progress through stages of community engagement, in partnership with organizations, to address one of the key community health needs. Community partnerships in research will be another featured element of the experience.

Well beyond the scope of service learning, this longitudinal exploration of social and structural determinants of health will allow students to truly grapple with the forces driving health inequity. Through aligned and longitudinal work, the student body will be positioned to impact health outcomes in the St. Louis region where there is greatest need. While this content represents a challenging body of knowledge, students will be given time and space to deconstruct these concepts to better understand the St. Louis region that they will serve throughout their medical education. This robust community engagement curriculum will help address the identified needs of the St. Louis region throughout all three phases of medical education. Washington University School of Medicine is in St. Louis, for St. Louis, an experience which will prepare students for ongoing community engagement, wherever their career trajectory may lead.



Laurie Punch, MD



Audrey Coolman, MPH

Community Engagement, Now and Later

If you haven't already, the Delmar Divide is something that you will certainly hear about during your time in St. Louis. Delmar Boulevard is a physical landmark that represents the complex history of St. Louis — a city filled with rich culture yet marred by racial division and inequality. This difficult past carries profound consequences on St. Louis communities, in particular health care and medical access. Although the disparity in health care is a result of several factors, like socioeconomic status and local geography, social and structural determinants of health have left communities uncared for and unheard.

In the face of such foundational barriers, local organizations and institutions have manifested to offer a chance for the underserved. In our first weeks of school, WashU acknowledged and educated us on the scarred city landscape, motivating many of us to use our education, training, and privilege, to make a difference. As a volunteer and coordinator for the Saturday Neighborhood Health Clinic (SNHC), WashU's student-led free clinic, we witnessed firsthand the medical impacts of St. Louis's dark past on present St. Louis patients. As WUSM medical students, volunteering at the clinic offers not just an opportunity to practice clinical skills on real patients, but more importantly be part of a team that provides medical care for the uninsured. As clinic coordinators, we learned to lead and manage clinic operations and connect patients to community organizations and primary care providers that offer affordable longitudinal care. Ultimately, however, free clinics such as SNHC are only a bandage in the process of healing St. Louis.

In response to these inequities, WUSM has committed on an institutional level to increasing and improving medical student involvement in the community via the community engagement curriculum, one column of the upcoming Gateway Curriculum. Led by trauma surgeon and anti-violence community leader Dr. Laurie Punch, this new curriculum integrates community-based learning longitudinally throughout the pre-clinical and clinical phases and aims to teach students how to engage constructively and responsibly in St. Louis. Just as importantly, this curriculum aims to connect dozens of community organizations with missions ranging from health care access to food insecurity to violence. After learning from experts in the field about the various health care obstacles that St. Louis faces, first year students will leave the classroom to actively work with partnered community organizations on a socioeconomic topic that caters to individual interests. Ultimately, we



Aaron G.



Anthony W.

hope that even as a student, you can begin to meaningfully contribute to the improvement of communities in the city of St. Louis. Social determinants of health — the ways we live, work, and play — account for over 80% of health outcomes, and as medical students in the Gateway Curriculum, you will learn not only how to serve patients in the hospital, but outside of it as well.

– **Aaron Guo, M1, and Anthony Wang, M1**



WUSM Experience

Before you start medical school, you will likely have thousands of questions about what it is like to be a medical student. We have answers written by people who know best — actual medical students.

SECTION EDITOR: KATIE CARBONELL AND KELSIE KODAMA

Academics

Anatomy

As a disclaimer, I should inform the reader that I am interested in surgery, so there is a bias when I say that Anatomy lab will be the most engaging class that you take at WashU. Despite the bias, I think it is fair to say everyone enjoys getting a break from what can feel like a constant barrage of lectures. You start with a completely intact cadaver and eventually dissect every square inch, which admittedly is very intimidating. However, there is truly no better way to learn anatomy. At the same time, you also get the opportunity to practice your motor skills (shout out to any incoming hopeful surgeons) and solidify your understanding of the various physical exams you learn in POM.

But every medical school has a cadaver lab (right?), so what makes the WashU experience unique and better than the rest? That is an excellent question that is difficult to articulate in words, but it comes down to two things: your lab mates and the professors. Each cadaver is assigned four students, and each group forms a bond that lasts throughout your medical school career. I did not realize how much fun I would have each time in the lab just hanging with my group mates as we tackled the daunting task of dissecting a cadaver. Honestly, while dissecting is enjoyable when you get used to it, being a part of an Anatomy group and interacting with your team is what makes Anatomy lab worthwhile. I firmly believe that other school's Anatomy groups don't form the bonds with each other like those that are formed here at WashU.

Okay, so now let's talk about the second thing: the professors. They are incredible. You can point to any little artery or vein or nerve (they seriously all look alike) and the professors can almost always identify it in two seconds. There are also always professors wandering around, so I rarely felt like I had to wait a long time for a professor to come by and answer a question. They are also very willing to set up appointments with you outside of lab time to review Anatomy. Any of them will do this for you, but I would highly recommend setting up an appointment with Dr. Ritzman before the exams. You'll thank me later (again, it should be noted that you can do this with any professor and they are all equally great)! Finally, you haven't lived until you've had a Dikranian Dissection. I honestly can't even describe how Dr. Dikranian does it, but I don't think I'd know heart anatomy if it weren't for his help. I guarantee you'll never get to experience the sheer awe of a Dikranian Dissection anywhere else.

— Thomas B., M1

Anki

One of the biggest strengths of the WashU curriculum is the ability to customize your education towards your specific learning style. If you're an Anki fan or you're open to learning about the power of spaced repetition, you're in luck at WashU. During our year, we had a classwide initiative to identify class-relevant Anki cards from Zanki. This helped us synthesize the information, retain it for the long term, and gave us a sense of what may be important for future board exams. The teamwork and collaboration present at WashU is fantastic and you can use this dynamic to excel in your education. Good luck pressing the spacebar as you embark on your journey to spaced repetition success!

— Faisal A., M1

Not Anki-ing

Anki is a powerful study tool, but don't worry if it doesn't fit into your study routine! This flashcard-based system is beloved by many, but rest assured that more traditional study methods, such as lecture outlines, notes and group study, are more than sufficient for your medical school classes. You will cover an abundance of material in class, thus spaced repetition of lecture concepts is imperative for retaining information. You can do this with Anki, or just as easily by periodically reviewing your notes, quizzing yourself on lecture objectives, or scheduling weekly group study sessions. We all learn differently, so feel free to use the study method that works best for you!

— Haley S., M1

Pass/Fail Curriculum

Having a pass/fail curriculum has without a doubt improved my medical school experience. The transition to medical school can be overwhelming: there is always more to learn, and studying can become all consuming if you let it. With a pass/fail curriculum, however, there is no need to be anxious about grades. Because the scores for passing range from 65% to 70% depending on the class, you can rest assured that you will do just fine as long as you are confident with the bulk of the material. This means that you don't need to spend every spare minute studying, and instead you can invest some of your time into the other things you are interested in, whether that's volunteering, conducting research, spending time with family and friends, or even just relaxing. Not having the pressure to get straight A's or to be top of the class allows for a great work-life balance. It also allows for collaboration, as there is no incentive to compete with your classmates. In my class, people are constantly sharing resources they've discovered and study guides they've created, and everyone genuinely wants to see others succeed. While some people might worry that it will be harder to motivate themselves without the extrinsic motivator of letter grades, I have not found that to be the case. Personally, I have found that I still put in the same effort that I did when I had a grade point average to worry about, I just don't have the

worry that came along with it. The pass/fail curriculum helps to create a great atmosphere at WashU where test scores are important, but they aren't everything, and I think this leads to a much happier student body.

— Ann I., M1

Studying at Home

While there are some mandatory labs and lectures in medical school, a large majority of your time is open for you to study in whatever way works best for you. I choose to spend most of my study time at home because I like the flexibility that it gives me. When I'm at home, it's really easy to make myself a quick snack or to go to my apartment gym without having to plan things out in advance. Of course, it's also really easy to get back in bed and watch Netflix, so studying at home might not be the best for you if you are easily distracted. Overall though, I really like being able to largely set my own schedule and study where I am most comfortable.

— Ann I., M1

Studying in the Library

The Becker Library is a versatile study space due to its multiple floors that each has its own “studying culture.” On the first floor is an open space that contains many large tables where groups of people can work, which leads to opportunities to meet and study with classmates. Although quieter discussion is possible, there is still an underlying agreement to keep an environment that is conducive to studying. As you climb the floors, there are more options for more private studying with personal carrels and even private studying rooms. These areas generally are silent studying spaces, so for those that require absolute silence, you will thrive here. Finally, there is the basement, which is, personally, where I love to study. There is a mixture of open tables, so groups of people can congregate, and individual carrels for those who prefer to study alone. There is even a skylight so one can see small glimpses of the outside world and a couch that is highly coveted for napping. Overall, if you are either looking to try out library studying for the first time or already a library veteran, you will probably find all you need at Becker (there is even an office that provides free coffee and candy for when you want to take a step back from stuffing your brain with material).

— Anthony W., M1

Extracurriculars

American Medical Association (AMA)

WashU's American Medical Association (AMA) chapter is a great way to get involved with medical and scientific policy on the regional, state, and national level! I personally wanted to learn more about how policies are enacted and be involved in the process myself, since I had no previous experience in this sector. The AMA is a great way to meet medical students and physicians that care deeply about the political context in which they practice. If you have any interest in learning and even writing your own policies, please join the AMA and attend their conferences.

— Reyana C., M1

American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)

I knew I wanted to get involved in the American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) when I heard the lunch talk given by the M2 leaders during the first few weeks of school. The scope of the organization really impressed me: AMWA raises money for the American Heart Association, organizes volunteering for community organizations that benefit women, fosters mentorship, and advocates gun violence awareness, just to name a few of AMWA's functions. I joined the mentorship team because I had been mentored by a phenomenal female WashU physician and wanted to help other students find great women mentors at WashU. So far this year we've organized small group breakfasts with medical students and female faculty from different specialties. We also paired women in our class with female mentors in specialties they are interested in. Being on the AMWA mentorship committee has been a great way to connect with other women in my class and the M2 class, as well as advocate for women in the medical field.

— Elizabeth C., M1

Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association (APAMSA)

WashU's chapter of the Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association (APAMSA) provides opportunities for students of all backgrounds to promote health advocacy and outreach to the Asian Pacific American populations of St. Louis. APAMSA regularly hosts health screenings via Chinese Clinic or health fairs that are run together with Saint Louis University School of Medicine APAMSA. At these health screenings, students get to practice taking vitals, taking a history & physical, as well as brush up on their medical vocabulary in Chinese. Don't know Medical Chinese? APAMSA has got you covered – Medical Chinese classes are offered all year long. Want to take a break from it all? APAMSA has you covered on that as well! APAMSA hosts Asian Pacific cultural festivals for Diwali in the fall and Lunar New Year in the winter, at which you get to watch fantastic student

performances while indulging in some great free food. If you're interested in learning more about what you can do to help the underserved Asian Pacific American community, APAMSA is definitely the place for you.

— Marina N., M1

Histones

Histones is WUSM's very own a cappella group! We rehearse weekly and perform a variety of concerts every semester for patients, families, friends, and faculty. In addition to being a group to de-stress with, Histones is a hub for medical students to connect with the occupational therapy, physical therapy, and DBBS students throughout the medical school campus. It's been exciting to continue my musical engagement in medical school, and I hope to see some new M1 faces in the fall!

— Ryan W., M1

Intramurals

Intramurals are a great way to get exercise and bond with your classmates. WashU has a plethora of sports ranging from soccer, flag football, and basketball to sports like badminton, cornhole, and even e-sports. Most sports are held over on the Danforth Campus, but people are always willing to carpool if getting there is ever a problem. Relax and destress with a little friendly competition with or against classmates!

— Wyatt R., M1

Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA)

LMSA is the Latino Medical Student Association chapter at WashU. There are plenty of ways to get involved, and everyone is welcome regardless of personal identity or cultural background. LMSA hosts monthly charlas where students and faculty get together to practice their Spanish over a meal and facilitates volunteering opportunities by organizing bi-monthly health screenings at El Torito (a local Latin American supermarket). Among many other things, LMSA also participates in other community-organized events, runs a class that teaches students how to successfully engage with Spanish-speaking patients, and coordinates outings to various Latinx venues, events, and celebrations. Whatever your interests are in working with and/or being a part of the Latinx community at WashU and St. Louis, we'd love for you to reach out!

— Marina P., M1

Med School Musical

I thought age 24 was too old to pick up musical theatre as a new hobby ... and then I came to WashU. Each year, the med school puts on a full-length Broadway musical cast entirely of students in the MD, PhD, OT, PT, and AuD programs. The time commitment is manageable — three hours once/week — and while prior

music or dance experience is helpful, everyone who auditions is guaranteed a part. You can also get involved by playing in the pit orchestra, building the set, or making costumes. This is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

— Angela C., M1

Medical Student Government

Medical Student Government (MSG) represents the students' voice on various committees to promote student interests in medical education, admissions, student affairs and wellness, diversity, interprofessional education, alumni relations, career development, facilities and more. MSG meets regularly with the administration and faculty to support the needs of the medical student body and provide student input in decision making. Each medical school class elects a president, Organization of Student Representatives (OSR) of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), a medical education representative (MER), a representative to the Washington University Graduate Professional Council (GPCR), an IT Liaison, and four social chairs. As Class of 2023 President, I have the opportunity to help organize various academic, social, and professional events to enrich the medical school experience, including the Anatomy Body Donor Remembrance Ceremony, the Class Show, Diversity Week, and the M1 and M4 mentorship dinner. It has been an incredible honor to advocate for my class and work with the administration to ensure we have a fulfilling medical school experience. I'd recommend getting involved with MSG if you are interested in having a say in the decisions that affect your class and building strong relationships with our administrators.

— Alex K., M1 Class President

Serving the Spanish-Speaking Community

One might not initially expect St. Louis to be densely populated by Spanish speakers. However, step no further than Cherokee Street in the city or El Morelia Supermarket in the county to find a bustling Hispanic community. A great way to interact with this community is to volunteer either as a medical interpreter or community worker. Perhaps the most streamlined way to get involved with the Spanish-speaking community is to contact the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA), which has a volunteer coordinator who organizes several volunteer opportunities. For example, LMSA performs health screenings at El Torito, a grocery store on Cherokee Street. Another rewarding experience is to volunteer as a medical interpreter at Casa de Salud, a medical clinic serving those who are underinsured and uninsured in the Latino community. I have been an interpreter at Casa de Salud since 2014 and have found it very rewarding to facilitate interactions between patients and their providers. Whatever your interest with the Spanish-speaking community is, reach out to other classmates or upperclassmen who are involved to see how you can get involved yourself!

— Alex C., M1

Sling Health

I never expected St. Louis, of all places, to be fertile ground to start a new company — but now I'm doing that through Sling Health! Sling is a startup incubator funded by WashU that provides access to local mentors, the Cortex (a large hackerspace replete with whiteboards, free coffee and food, and conference rooms), and a bit of funding to get your medical startup idea off the ground. It's a great interdisciplinary experience that lets you meet many people outside of medicine — business students, undergrads, people from the College of Pharmacy, and even Saint Louis University students! It also provides the right structure to keep you on pace and disciplined enough to keep your forward momentum. You can either lead a project or join one, depending on what you want to work on, but Sling takes you through a full cycle from ideation to demoing a product.

Even though I plan to practice clinical medicine, working in an entrepreneurial context has greatly improved my leadership, communication, and organizational skills. You will use all of those skills in leading a care team. And if you do decide to make the leap into entrepreneurial medicine, Sling is a great place to start.

— Matt M., M1

Professional Development

Hospital Conferences and Grand Rounds

Morning conferences and grand rounds are always super welcoming to preclinical students. It's a great way to check out different specialties, see the variety of procedures they cover, and meet the faculty and attendings. A lot of times, during the lecture portions for the residents, the speaker will lob you a softball question they know you can answer with the little first-year knowledge you have, and there's always a nice intern who leans over and explains complicated stuff to you. I really enjoy going because it's a fun way to ground the preclinical "textbook" stuff we're learning in our classes in actual clinical problem-solving.

— Maggy B., M1

MSTP

The Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) at WashU is a huge draw to the school in my (admittedly biased) opinion. First of all, the class is huge! We average around 25 MSTPs per year. Not only is this the largest class of MSTPs in the nation, we are also 20-25% of each incoming medical school class at WashU. This helps us have an incredibly supportive atmosphere — there are a large number of people going on the same path as you! It is great to have others to talk to about choosing rotations, seminars you are interested in, smart ways to use your stipend (Roth IRA anyone?!?!), or any other MSTP specific thing. We also have journal clubs for each class of MSTPs to help you get to know each other and your various research

interests. None of this is to say that we are in any way separate from the medical school class – on the contrary! The MD and MSTP classes are very well integrated – it is just as easy to make friends with MD students as MSTPs, and you will make many as you progress through the preclinical years.

Besides your peers, you have a large support network from the MSTP itself. We have weekly MSTP talks with students from all years – dinner is provided! This is a great opportunity to talk to higher years and get their perspectives on classes, research, finding mentors, or life in general. Also, your TAs in the preclinical years are 3rd year (G1) MSTPs just entering the graduate years – they are great resources for you to talk to! When you inevitably are looking at labs to join, chances are one or more students is either in the lab or has rotated through the lab. They can provide you with a valuable student’s perspective to help you decide. Furthermore, the MSTP office with Dr. Wayne Yokoyama, Brian, Linda, Liz, and Christy are excellent at handling administrative tasks and making your life as smooth as humanly possible in all situations.

— John W., M1

Mentorship

Mentorship is an important part of the WashU experience, and before you even set foot on campus, you will be set up for success with easy access to student and faculty mentors. All entering M1’s receive a “Big Sibling” in the M2 class who is an excellent resource for questions about how to approach particular classes or for recommendations for a new restaurant to try. In addition to your M2 “Big Sibling,” every student is matched with at least one M4 clinical mentor who will be your guide through your first clinical experiences and patient interactions. These M4 mentors are experienced but not so removed from the M1 experience that they don’t remember what it was like going into the hospital with a white coat for the first time. This connection means they provide excellent advice and help the M1’s immensely when it comes to navigate those early clinical experiences!

On the faculty side of mentorship, WashU could not provide better resources for the students. Before matriculating, M1’s are matched with an advisory dean who will help to make sure you are on track academically. Something you will quickly learn at WashU is how genuinely interested faculty members are in interacting with students. This is great for students when it comes to mentorship as meeting with a physician in a particular specialty of interest and getting shadowing or research set up is as easy as sending a quick email or talking to the physician after they deliver an excellent lecture.

— Joseph B., M1

Research Opportunities

If you have an interest in research, WashU is definitely the place to be! WashU is known for being a world leader in basic biomedical research, but also has significant clinical and translational projects across every major medical subspecialty. The vast majority of M1 students will choose to engage in funded research through the Summer Research Program, which allows students to spend 8-12 weeks working on projects in anything from global health to immunology to medical education to clinical outcomes. Many M1 students will choose to join a research group sometime during the school year (no pressure to do so, of course) and the Office of Medical Student Research serves as an extremely valuable resource for finding mentors, funding resources, IRB information, etc. Most faculty at WashU/BJC participate in research and have mentored medical students in the past; they tend to be quite receptive to students publishing or co-creating their independent research project. If medical research isn't a burning passion of yours, many WashU students will choose to instead do a Primary Care Preceptorship, global health work, or public policy internships throughout the summer or school year!

— Gopika H., M1

Shadowing

It's hard for me to imagine a school where people care as much about medical education as they do here at WashU. Even physicians you may otherwise not even meet until your clinical years are eager to mentor and work with first-year medical students. As busy as they are, most, if not all, physicians at WashU will either allow medical students to shadow them or connect us with other physicians in departments that may interest us. On top of that, I've found that the administrative processes we have to go through to shadow are way faster and simpler than what you may have experienced as an undergrad. For example, when I wanted to start shadowing, I contacted a surgeon I was interested in working with and the next week, I was in the OR watching my first open-heart surgery!

— Steven Y., M1

Social Life

Free Food

There's nothing better than free stuff, whether that's scrubs for Anatomy, tuition to attend our great school, or FOOD! We get so much free food that I didn't have to cook a meal until about my third week of being on campus. During orientation, the school treats us to breakfast, lunch, pre-dinner snacks, and dinner from local restaurants such as Salt + Smoke (barbecue), Mission Taco (Mexican), and Sameem's (Afghani). The fun continues into the school year with lunch talks. These are usually after morning classes and are held by faculty, residents, and older medical students discussing their career paths, specialties, and extracurricular organizations, respectively. During these talks, we are fed more food from around St. Louis such as Rasoi (Indian), Snarf's (sandwiches), and the Vine (Mediterranean) to name a few. On top of that, almost all of the extracurricular organizations that you'll have the option to join will have either weekly or monthly meetings that will also have catered food. The Student National Medical Association (SNMA), a student group for minority students in health care, has treated us to Porter's (southern) and Raising Cane's (comfort), in my personal experience. It's honestly kind of crazy, I bought about 10 pounds of frozen meat during the first weekend we came here. It's still not finished. Thank you, thank you, WashU.

— Kwasi E., M1

Social Corner

Social Events During Orientation

It's 6 p.m. during orientation week, you've just finished setting up some IKEA furniture, your M1 GroupMe chat is blowing up with memes from names you can't associate to faces, but most importantly, your roommate is looking into your cold, empty fridge with despair. Fret not, friends. WashU's M2 social chairs are here for YOU with so many social events in prime Instagrammable bars across St. Louis that your college friends and family will really question if you're in medical school or senior year part two. Each night, we'll throw socials at places such as ITAP, Molly's in Souldard, Moonrise's Rooftop Terrace, Updown Barcade, Bar 101, and Pieces. And if that's not your vibe, every night will also have hangouts where we'll play sand volleyball downtown, gorge on Mission Tacos, whoop new friends in board games at Pieces, or just get nice at Ping-Pong in the Core Apartment Residences. Whatever you choose to do, we just want you guys to have fun! Medical school can be hard, but four years really won't feel long if you make some solid "day 1" friends to enjoy the journey together.

Social events during the year (SNHC Gala, Anatomy Party, Club Night, Darty)

It is so important to take a step away from studying and hang out with your classmates. We're here for a long time and a good time. Before the year began, we went on a float trip on the Meramec River. Imagine floating down the river with you and your classmates and maybe some beverages — simply amazing. We also had an M1/M2 mixer early in the school year with abundant food and beverages for all. This was a great way to meet many more of our classmates and the M2s. The party after the first Anatomy exam is a tradition at WashU. In addition to these larger, planned events, you and your classmates will likely plan trips to nearby wineries or cities, such as Chicago or Nashville. We have found that while the studying and tests continue in medical school, the parties and social events continue too. Your classmates, WashU, and St. Louis certainly have enough to offer to keep you social and entertained.

— Kwasi E., Riley M., Rachel R., Janessa S., Class of 2023 social chairs

Societies

On the first day of class here at WashU, we're divided into three academic societies, called Cori, Lowry-Moore, and Erlanger-Graham. Each society has a signature color and crest, and societies become a part of each person's unique identity at WashU. The purpose of societies is to introduce us to a group of friends, involve students in wellness activities, and facilitate connections between students and faculty.

Throughout medical school, societies hold events that are open to anyone in the society to attend and are free for society members. Past society events have included a trip to TopGolf, a night at a wine bar, a carrel holiday decorating competition and a cooking class. Faculty are invited to these events as well, which make the events great networking opportunities. These free events are also a chance to take a break from studying and indulge in some fun without having to worry about additional costs.

The societies are a great vehicle for mentorship and advising. Each society has a society dean, a faculty member who advises members of the society. Throughout medical school, the society dean meets with students to guide them through their journey at WashU. Also, all of the M1s receive an M2 "big sib" who is in the same society, and these mentors have helped us prepare for classes, adjust to living in St. Louis, and can recommend fun places to check out in the city. I definitely have many friends from all of the societies, but the bond with my fellow Lowry-Moore society members is one that I really treasure.

— Allie L., Lowry-Moore, Society Leader for the Class of 2023

Student Resources & Wellness

CORE Gym

The CORE gym is an incredibly well-equipped, well-maintained and convenient place to work out. The facility includes all the traditional amenities, such as plenty of cardio machines (e.g. treadmills, ellipticals, stationary bikes, rowing machines and stairmills), as well as weight machines and free weights. The CORE gym also has some more unique amenities, including punching bags, deadlift platform and monkey bars. Besides the equipment, I enjoy working out at the CORE gym due to its convenient location by the medical school, its 24-hour access, and its in-house showers and lockers. It is very easy to workout before, after, and in between classes, or whatever time works for your schedule! The gym is fairly busy around 9am and 5pm, but even during peak hours, I never have trouble using equipment or finishing my workout. All in all, I would highly recommend checking out the CORE gym!

— Haley Sherburne, M1

Learning Specialist

Although I only took one gap year before coming to medical school, adjusting to studying again was one of my biggest concerns before starting. While the school did a great job of easing us into the curriculum, I knew that I wanted to streamline my study habits moving forward in my education. Within a week of emailing our learning specialist, Dr. Sarah Fowler-Dixon, I had the chance to meet with her to discuss my current studying style and how I could become more efficient. She initially had me fill out a short quiz to classify my studying style and then gave me pointers for how I could modify my current study habits to learn better and save time studying. As I've slowly implemented her suggestions, it's become easier for me to understand how I learn and how I can help myself to learn better.

— Kelsie K., M1

Mental Health

Medical school can be overwhelming and is inevitably a big life transition for students. Fortunately, WashU knows this and has resources in place to help you navigate school and life outside of school. The health center has a Student Health Services Counseling Staff consisting of three psychologists (one who is a sexual violence prevention therapist) and a psychiatrist. Each class also has a Student Wellness Representative who coordinates with the Office of Student Representatives (OSR) to provide group wellness activities for medical students. Faculty at WashU also know that other circumstances can interfere with school and that students are under a lot of stress and will generally be understanding as far as deadlines, missing class, and anything else that might come up. Lastly, WashU has many groups or facilities for wellness activities and encourages everyone to continue doing what they are passionate about and what keeps them healthy.

— Madeline D., M1

Student Health Services

Nestled in a corner of the third floor in 4525 Scott Avenue (right behind the FLTC), Student Health Services is truly a hidden gem for medical students like you and me. In terms of access, cost, and friendliness, I dare say that WashU Student Health has no equal. During the first few days of orientation, you will be given a short talk from the inimitable Dr. Karen Winters, the director of Student Health Services, who will tell you all about the wonders of student insurance and introduce you to the fairly straightforward logistics. Appointments are easy to book, and walk-ins have fairly short wait-times, so if you wake up one day with a sore throat or mysterious pain, all you need to do is walk right into the office. Referrals to specialists are easy to obtain (including vision and dental), and you can get most, if not all, of your services at an on-campus location — a huge pro for people who might not have cars. (Small caveat is that your appointments might be booked a bit farther into the future due to longer wait times.) While it is recommended that you keep your primary insurance, for those whose plans don't cover non-emergent services in the Midwest, rest assured that WashU's student health insurance will more than suffice. Copays are low (\$10 for specialists), and physical therapy is free. Yes. Free. There is no out-of-pocket payment for physical therapy. Furthermore, Student Health can be flexible, and Dr. Winters will work with you if serious health crises arise or if special services are needed — just make sure to call and communicate with her. Additionally, the staff is always friendly and very happy to address any questions or concerns that you might have. Medical school can be a tough transition, and oftentimes health becomes a forgotten element during this time, so it is immensely comforting to know that in times of need, you will have a great student health program to fall back upon.

— Amy R. Z., M1

Sumers Recreation Center (Danforth Campus)

The Danforth Campus recently built a state-of-the-art fitness and recreation facility, the Sumers Recreation Center, that is available free of cost to WashU med students! You can do individual cardio and strength training or attend a group exercise class like yoga, kickboxing, spin, or Zumba. The gym isn't too crowded, so I've never had to wait more than a few minutes to use the machine or weights that I want. The amenities are excellent — there are lockers available free of charge (you don't even need to bring your own lock) and a towel service! There is also an indoor track, an indoor pool, basketball courts, racquetball courts, and massage therapy available.

The Danforth gym isn't quite as conveniently located as the CORE, but it's still easily accessible. There is parking available for free in front of the gym from 5 p.m. – 7 a.m., or the MetroLink can drop you off a short walk away. It takes about 10 minutes to drive or 20 minutes to ride the MetroLink to the gym from the medical campus. It's worth it for all the facilities, plus I prefer having a bit of time to myself each day to work out without all my classmates around. The Danforth gym is an insanely nice facility and makes keeping up with my workout routine hassle-free.

— Jessica C., M1

WUMS Well

Students at WashU have really taken ownership of their own wellness and are enthusiastic about supporting each other. One of the resources we created was the WUMS Well page on Canvas. We have modules with resources pertaining to all aspects of wellbeing – physical, social, spiritual, financial, mental, and academic. Short videos provide information on everything from sleep hygiene to relationships in medical school. One of my favorite parts is a series of short videos from past medical students with advice for M1 and M3 years.

— Patrick W., M1

What to Wear

Class: Feel free to wear whatever you like to class (within reason). Most people show up in pretty casual clothes: jeans/leggings in winter and shorts in warmer seasons.

Shadowing: The general rule for shadowing is business casual with your white coat and stethoscope unless told otherwise. This usually means slacks or skirt and a button down or an appropriately long dress. For some shadowing, you will be wearing scrubs, but usually they will tell you in advance, and they will provide the scrubs and a place to change.

Operating Room: Students are given scrubs to wear.

Anatomy: Students are given two pairs of scrubs for the semester of Anatomy. Since the floor can get kind of grimy over the semester, most students also dedicate a pair of old tennis shoes for Anatomy use only (whatever footwear you choose, it must be closed-toed). If you have your own scrubs, you are more than welcome to wear those into lab as well.

Emergency Department (ED): Students rotating through the ED are given scrubs to wear. For ED shadowing, they recommend wearing your white coat with either scrubs or over business casual attire.

Standardized Patient (SP) sessions: For the SP sessions, students are supposed to dress like it is a “real” patient encounter, which means business casual with their white coat and stethoscope.

Clinical mentoring sessions and clinic: For clinical mentoring sessions, students are expected to wear business casual with their white coat and stethoscope.

— Gideon H., M1

The Gateway Curriculum

Curriculum Overview

Several years ago, members of WUSM leadership decided that WashU should pursue a revamped curriculum to meet the evolving education needs that are inherent in a rapidly-changing medical landscape. Formal renewal efforts began in 2017, when outlines for the project scope, goals, and timeline were developed. Additional work was dedicated to determining the core competencies that define the success of WashU graduates, and the underlying principles that would guide curriculum design.

In 2018, two faculty teams were commissioned to design two novel curricula based on a study of other institutions’ curricula and an understanding of educational best practices. Over the course of six months, these teams presented elements of their curriculum proposals to an advisory board. Recognizing that input from current students was vital to fully understanding the impact of the proposed changes, this advisory board contained 10 student representatives representing both MDs and MSTPs at various stages in their training. This advisory board provided feedback on the proposed architecture and the smaller structural elements contained within each idea. In November 2018, a team comprised entirely of students was tasked with putting together a third proposal with elements that had been discussed at advisory board meetings. These three proposals were presented at the curriculum retreat attended by students, faculty, and staff. Qualitative and quantitative feedback from over 150 faculty, 25 staff and 50 student attendees was collected and used to guide future decisions.

In January 2019, the Curriculum Architecture Consensus team comprising deans, faculty, and students began meeting weekly to integrate the existing proposals and retreat feedback. It was this team that decided on the final overall architecture of the new curriculum by incorporating elements of the three proposals presented at the retreat. The result was an exciting modern curriculum based on educational best practices that could be flexible enough to accommodate individual student interests and robust enough to evolve alongside the field of medicine. The end product was also designed to maximally leverage the clinical and research strengths that WashU has long had as an institution.

The resulting structure will have three phases, outlined briefly below:

(1) **Phase I** begins when students matriculate in July of the first academic year. Included in the 16 months of Phase 1 content are 12 months of foundational sciences instruction, three one-month clinical immersions, and one month of total break time. It is during phase one that the students will experience the majority of their didactic learning, which will take the form of lectures, small group activities, and other educational techniques. The three month-long clinical immersions will also give students the opportunity to apply their foundational knowledge, develop basic clinical skills, and gain familiarity with different clinical environments.

(2) **Phase II** begins in November of the second academic year, and lasts 12 months. Phase II is broken into six 8-week clinical modules covering the traditional clerkship disciplines (Internal Medicine, Surgery, OB/Gyn, Pediatrics, Neurology, and Psychiatry.) Each 8-week module contains between 4-6 weeks of clinical clerkship experience and 1-3 weeks of additional foundational science content. Each module concludes with one week for assessment, reflection, and passions development (see information about the “EXPLORE” curriculum, below).

(3) **Phase III** begins in November of the third academic year, and will include a variety of curricular elements including clinical electives and sub-internships. There is also additional elective time for students to explore passions in teaching, research, advocacy, and global health. Students will also be able to choose from a menu of Keystone Integrated Science courses that will represent transdisciplinary ‘deeper dives’ into important topics in medicine. These month-long courses will be assembled by a group of faculty with a shared interest in a particular topic.

For example, a Keystone course centered around the opioid epidemic might include:

- A discussion of opioid pharmacology
- Instruction on the neurological basis of addiction
- Case studies examine psychiatric effect of addiction on patients and families
- Exposure to a naloxone clinic or opioid treatment program
- Journal Club discussions on emerging therapeutics

Relative to the traditional two years preclinical plus two years clinical curriculum structure, this new curriculum has a variety of exciting advantages:

- Approximately 30% of foundational science content and boards-style assessment instruments are distributed throughout the clerkships, decreasing the latency between foundational learning and clinical application.
- Most topics are revisited multiple times in a helical learning model to ensure that students can continue to grow their knowledge base and comfort with material.
- Flexible clinical time for electives and sub-internships beginning early in students' third year allows students to explore clinical interest in greater detail before having to select sub-internships and begin the residency application process.
- Throughout the curriculum, there is built-in time for students to develop their professional identity and explore passions that will help guide their choice of career upon graduation.

Of course, the curriculum renewal work is far from over. Curriculum development teams are currently designing the foundational science modules and clinical immersions that will occur during Phase I, and will soon begin work on the Phase II clerkship blocks. These teams will continue to incorporate student input as part of their fundamental design process. Just as importantly, a dedicated team of faculty will remain focused on ongoing program evaluation and continuous quality improvement to ensure that student feedback continues to be taken into account and acted upon appropriately. WashU students have an extensive history of innovation and influence in curriculum decision-making, and that will continue under the Gateway Curriculum. The curriculum renewal process has been a busy but rewarding experience for the students that have been involved in the efforts. Although the new curriculum will certainly not be perfect (no curricular are), we are enthusiastic about the direction the curriculum is taking. We are excited for the future generations of WashU students who will be able to experience the Gateway Curriculum, and for the opportunity they will have to shape the direction of the curriculum moving forward.

EXPLORE Curriculum: The pathway to finding your passion

EXPLORE is an exciting new elective career development curriculum that provides students with longitudinal and immersive experiences in four academic pathways: research, education, advocacy, and innovation. This curriculum expands upon the already outstanding opportunities afforded to current students, with the goal of enhancing structure and formalizing support for your career development as an academic physician. This longitudinal experience begins during Phase 1 of the Gateway Curriculum and continues throughout medical school.

Early in Phase 1, the EXPLORE curriculum will introduce key elements, within all four pathways, that we believe are essential for all WUSM students to learn. These early experiences will provide a basis for students to make intentional and informed decisions regarding their further explorations. Also in Phase 1, students will have the opportunity to spend four weeks in an immersive experience relevant to their academic career interests. Toward the end of Phase 1, and throughout Phase 2, students will be able to explore more deeply the knowledge and skills that are important for any future physician, and especially for those with a passion for one or more of the academic focus areas. Students with strong interests in a specific career area may also defer up to 16 weeks of Phase 2 to do a focused project. Finally, during Phase 3, students with a specific interest in one or more of the academic pathways can complete electives and scholarly projects in that area. In addition, several dual degree and yearlong programs will be available for those students who want to do an even deeper exploration into their area of academic interest. Examples include MPH, MBA, yearlong research, and public health internships among others. Throughout the process, academic coaches will advise students and provide guidance. The EXPLORE curriculum will serve as a launching point, helping each student find their own path to a successful career in academic medicine!

— **Avery Strong (M4) and Maren Loe (M2)**

SAMPLE WEEK 1*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00	Intro/Waiting Room #1	Unscheduled Time	Unscheduled Time	Mechanisms of Glomerular Injury	Predict the Clinical phenotype given a specific mechanism of injury
8:30	Anatomy Overview	Nephron Structure and Functional Overview	Glomerulus: Filtration Barrier	Predict changes in filtrate given different forms of damage	
9:00			Clearance: Concept and Markers		Predict GFR Changes in CV Disease
9:30	Anatomy Lab	Control of GFR/Autoregulation		Integration with RAAS	Hematuria/Proteinuria
10:00	Explore	Unscheduled Time	Unscheduled Time	Unscheduled Time	Explore
10:30					
11:00	Unscheduled Time	Clinical Skills	Unscheduled Time	Community Engagement	Unscheduled Time
11:30					
12:00				Coaching	
12:30					
1:00					
1:30					
2:00					
2:30					
3:00					
3:30					
4:00					
4:30					

SAMPLE WEEK 2*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00	Unscheduled Time	Unscheduled Time	Volume Control	Acid-Base	Propose disease mechanisms that would distort renal handling of H ⁺ /K ⁺
8:30	TBL No1	Tubular History	Potassium Handling	Predict volume/BP Response with tubular transport mechanisms	
9:00			Transport Mechanisms		Predict Renal Response to water
9:30		Concentration/Dilution		Hypo/ Hypertatremia	Secondary HTN/Diuretics
10:00	Explore	Unscheduled Time	Unscheduled Time	Unscheduled Time	Dyskalemias
10:30					
11:00	Unscheduled Time	Clinical Skills	Unscheduled Time	Community Engagement	Unscheduled Time
11:30					
12:00				Coaching	
12:30					
1:00					
1:30					
2:00					
2:30					
3:00					
3:30					
4:00					
4:30					

*This sample week is intended to give you a picture of what a typical week will look like. That said, there will be significant variability across modules. You should expect some weeks to look quite different from the samples depicted here.



Jessica C., Mari G., and John W. study on the first floor of Becker Library.



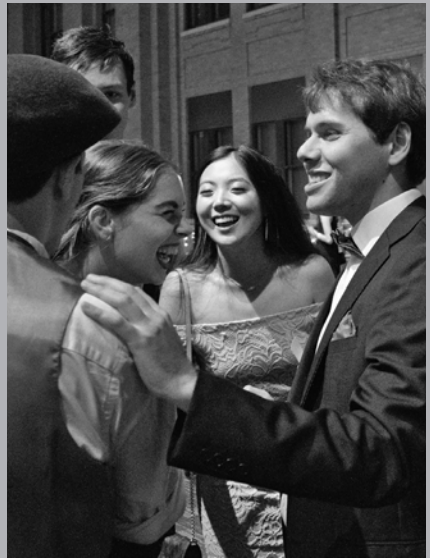
The Histones wishing everyone a happy holiday season.



Intramural Volleyball team photo.



Scenes from Anatomy lab.



Scenes from social events.





Perspectives

Delve into the unique perspectives of our diverse student body, including cultural background, relationships, and religion, and see how they impact the study of medicine.

SECTION EDITOR: EMMA PAYNE

Our Hobbies

On Biking

I grew up biking in California and then Utah during college. I love road biking, and St. Louis doesn't disappoint! There are countless trails to explore and safe roads where you can drop the hammer and spin to your heart's content. A personal favorite is following Conway Road west. By no means is it flat (even though everyone will tell you St. Louis is flat) and it's especially beautiful in the fall. It is noteworthy that Conway Road doesn't have a bike lane, but it's not a busy road and the cars have always been courteous. Other great trails include Grant's Trail, the Riverfront Trail, Madison County Schoolhouse Trail, Des Peres Greenway, and the Katy Trail. The Katy Trail is a compact gravel trail (my road bike does fine on it) that has a lot of branching trails to explore. A classic, easy ride is through Forest Park with interlocking trails and fun sights. If you're looking for a bike, WashU has a bike rental service called Bears Bikes that provides mountain, hybrid, and single speed bikes. I love cycling here. Come find me if you have any questions about riding. Also, join the Krebs Cyclers if you're looking to ride with a group.

— Adam O., M1

On Dancing

Dance has always been a part of my life. Between supporting my sisters during competitions or performing myself, dance is basically ingrained in my DNA at this point. During undergrad, I tried a belly dance class and completely fell in love. While the moves are relatively simple individually, I enjoy the physical and mental challenge that comes with layering movements on top of each other and connecting them seamlessly. You truly have to clear your mind of distractions in order to master a move, and when I finally overcome the "ugly duckling" phase that comes with layering correctly or getting down a finger cymbal combination, it is such a rewarding feeling.

When I chose to come to WashU, I was a bit concerned about finding a studio, but with some help from my previous instructor and the internet, I discovered that St. Louis has so many options for belly dancing: traditional Egyptian, Salimpour style, and tribal fusion. I started out with the Egyptian format, and in block two, I'm going back to my belly dance roots and adding on Salimpour style. Maybe, if I'm crazy enough and can find the coin, I'll eventually tack on tribal fusion because I really want to balance a sword on my head. So basically, don't worry if your hobby is niche because St. Louis will have it, and I apologize in advance when (not if) you catch me practicing my undulations in public.

— Ashley A., M1

On Playing a Musical Instrument

Performing as a cellist continued to be an integral component of my lifestyle throughout college, and I had no plans to put the instrument down in medical school. Luckily, WashU is incredibly accommodating to rehearsal and performance. The Core, adjacent to the medical school, has a practice room (furnished with two high quality electric pianos!) open to all medical students at any time. Several student groups set up opportunities for musical performance: Music in Medicine organizes weekly concerts in the BJC south lobby, the Geriatric Outreach Group held a concert in a retirement home, a coffee-house performance series is held in the FLTC hearth...the list goes on and on. For those missing the experience of performing in a large orchestra/band, the university has a symphony orchestra, wind ensemble, and jazz band open to any students upon audition. Please don't hesitate to bring your musical talents and share them with the WashU medical school community!

— Ryan W., M1

On Playing Ultimate Frisbee

Like many young athletes that missed the mark for varsity college athletics, I started playing Ultimate Frisbee at the beginning of the freshman year of undergraduate. By the time I decided to move to St. Louis for my gap year, I knew that I would maintain Ultimate Frisbee as a primary part of my free time. What I didn't know, or expect, is that St. Louis Ultimate is a vibrant and close-knit community that not only welcomes but encourages and nurtures players of all abilities and experiences — from players that have never touched a frisbee before to players who have competed on the national club and professional levels.

For me, Ultimate provides me with a community outside of the medical school, because, while I love my class dearly, I do sometimes benefit from the company of people who don't know what the acronym MFM stands for. As a club and a league player, I commit a lot of my time (especially in the summer) to Frisbee, and I am still able to balance my school work and med school social events, but the different levels allow you to do as much (or as little) as you want! Frisbee has been a huge stress reliever for me, and I encourage everyone to give it a try!

— Lizzie T., M1

On Running

As a former collegiate distance runner, running has long been a constant in my life. With so many things going on in med school, it would be easy to rationalize skipping my run, but I've come to realize that running gives me a sense of consistency and balance. It provides a time for me to step away from the craziness going on around me and re-center. Whether it's an early morning run towards the Arch, an afternoon run towards Tower Grove, or an evening run in Forest Park, I try to get a run in almost every day, but I also don't beat myself up if I take a day off.

It's always nice to run with friends, and running has been a great way to get to know my incredible classmates. I've also discovered a strong running community in St. Louis, and I'd definitely recommend checking out the Go! St. Louis running club — they have a really awesome training group (if 6 a.m. runs are your thing) and they also organize a ton of great races on the weekends.

— Emma P., M1

On Sewing

Sewing is one of my more time-consuming hobbies. I thought I'd have to drop it when I started medical school due to time constraints, but I've totally had time to indulge during my first year! St. Louis has access to a bunch of workspaces and cute little sewing shops, and it has been such a nice mental break to have something creative to focus on. I ended up sewing a whole elaborate anatomy-themed Halloween costume and still had time for school and other stuff, so you can and definitely should take your hobbies to med school with you!

— Maggy B., M1

On Weightlifting

Coming into med school, I was convinced all of my gains from undergrad would vanish, but boy was I wrong. I'm hitting personal bests on all lifts (except squats) thanks to my M1 gym bros keeping me accountable. The gym at the Core is super convenient; you can get a great pump right after class and look jacked when you head back to Becker/carrels/your favorite study spot to procrastinate and pretend to study for the rest of the day. The gym at the Core has all the essentials for lifting/cardio and is only really busy around 5 p.m. It is shared with other professional students, which I find nice because a workout environment with only people you know is kind of strange. If you want to see more people in undersized tanks covered in chalk, you can head to the Danforth Campus gym, which has been recently built and contains more racks, platforms, and machines. I recommend the Danforth Campus gym for deadlifting since the Core gym does not have the best platform. Most days, though, you can find me in the Core gym, making underwhelming jokes connecting our physiology course to lifting.

— David L., M1

Our Identities

On Abstaining from Alcohol

I feel confident in my lifelong decision to abstain from drinking — largely influenced by understanding my own personality and family history — and have never felt held back from social events because of it. No matter your rationale, I promise that you will find your amazing WashU classmates to be very supportive and mature. My biggest advice is to not feel daunted about making your own choices! You will not be alone. Just remember to focus on being together and enjoying each other's company rather than passing judgment. Whether it's post-exam partying, weekend clubbing, or late-night kicking back with friends, bonding with your classmates will be a major highlight of the first year.

— Bruin P., M1

On Being a Person of Color (POC)

On August 28, 2017, the NAACP issued a travel advisory for the state of Missouri. Still reeling from the fatal shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed African-American man killed by a white police officer, my father, brothers, and sister-in-law instructed me to strike WashU from my application list. But I resisted. The institutional racism, health-care disparities, and microaggressions prevalent in Missouri are present in every state, county, and city in our country. Its saliency in St. Louis has not discouraged me from living and studying here. It has motivated me to become an advocate for change. I do not feel any more unsafe here than I did in my hometown of Chandler, Arizona. I do, however, feel a greater sense of urgency to engage in community activism. Both WashU and St. Louis have a vibrant POC community, of which I am proud to be a member. Between SNMA, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and community organizations for POC, I genuinely feel welcome and heard here.

— Jazmine M., M1

On Being Asian-American

As a California Bay Area Asian-American, I admit that I had some trepidation about attending medical school in Missouri due to the fact that it had a lower population percentage of Asian-Americans than I was used to. However, now that I've moved here, I'm glad that I didn't let that hesitance deter me. Yes, if you grew up in California, for example, we are a smaller percentage here by comparison. However, perhaps because of that, it's been a great opportunity to be involved with a solid, tight-knit community of Asian-American students and faculty members here at WashU.

Also, let me just preemptively address one of my major concerns coming here: Yes, there is good Asian food AND boba here. In fact, there's even a Kung Fu Tea here now, so have no fear! Is there as much variety as you might be used

to, depending on where you're coming from? Perhaps not. However, I would encourage you to see this instead as an opportunity to learn how to make that one dish that you love — you might even want to share it with your peers who've never tried it before!

— Marina N., M1

On Being Buddhist

Though I was raised Buddhist by my parents, my own exploration of Buddhist thought and philosophy coincided with my interest in pursuing a career in medicine, both of which blossomed during my sophomore year of undergrad. Compared to other religions, Buddhism can have somewhat less of a community aspect, but the monastery just outside of my hometown was essential to my practice, knowledge, and development. As with most cities in the United States, there is a small but active Buddhist community in St. Louis; Wat Phrasiratanaram is the main Theravada center, and there are more Mahayana options available if those are of interest to you. The humanism and compassion intrinsic to the teachings of Buddhism lend themselves very well to a career in medicine and were undoubtedly influential in my choice to make medicine and research my career; the tenets of medicine align very well with the Eightfold Path, and there are few other careers that are so inseparable from science while being simultaneously based on generosity, virtue, and compassion. I'm not very vocal about my upbringing or practice due to the fear of being exoticized or categorized as “new-agey,” but if any of you reading this are curious about Buddhism or just want to talk, feel free to reach out to me, as I really enjoy talking about it!

— Colin M., M1

On Being Catholic

My faith life has always been very important to me, and I've had a tremendous experience continuing to grow my relationship with God while here at WashU. The Catholic Student Center (CSC) on the Danforth Campus does a lot of work with the graduate schools and offers tons of events for students to attend. Whether you're looking for faith retreats or just a chill happy hour with other students, the CSC has you covered! In terms of finding a church, St. Louis has so many fantastic options. The Cathedral Basilica is an absolutely breathtaking building (seriously, go tour it even if you aren't Catholic) with traditional services offered daily. St. Francis Xavier Church (SFX) over at Saint Louis University is another great option. SFX is another gorgeous chapel and has a VERY socially engaged church. Whether it's fighting racism, helping the homeless, or addressing church conflicts, SFX takes these issues head on and offers so many ways to get involved. I personally attend mass at the CSC on the Danforth Campus. This is a much smaller church and definitely has a 'college' vibe to it, but I've never been to a more welcoming parish in my life. I love going there each week, and I usually see several other med students and a handful of faculty members there too, so you

certainly won't be alone in your faith here at WashU! It's also great on Holy days that the medical school will host masses in a conference room so it's not hard to attend in between classes. If WashU is your home next year, please reach out and let's go to mass sometime!

— Sam C., M1

On Being Christian

St. Louis has a large Protestant Christian community with many churches within just a few miles of campus. I attend The Journey church located in Tower Grove, which has many young people that attend, including other Wash U students, and averages about 1,000 people per weekend. Other churches within a couple miles of campus that some WashU Med students attend include the Central West End church and One Family church, both of which have a relatively young congregation and are very welcoming. For those wanting to get involved in a Christian group on campus, there is a Christian Medical Association (CMA), which includes not just med students but PT and OT students as well. Although the group is relatively small, it's very active with weekly meetings and occasionally dinners at the homes of Christian faculty. Even though practicing faith in medical school can be challenging with the demands of school, it's a great opportunity to grow and connect with people in the community, outside the WashU bubble.

— Elizabeth C., M1

On Being Conservative

Like most universities, most WashU students and professors seem to lean blue. Several student groups and events promote single-payer health care, pro-choice, and similar ideas. And you'll learn about the gender spectrum in Genetics and Anatomy. There currently aren't many student groups for conservative ideas. That does not mean WashU is not welcoming to conservatives though! Your peer group will come from all around the country and the world. This broad range of students includes many viewpoints, including some that will have similar views as you. In my infrequent political discussions with classmates, I am often surprised by how much we agree.

Missouri is currently a red state (although nowadays being red doesn't necessarily mean being conservative). St. Louis has had a Democrat mayor since 1953 and is predominantly blue. But you'll see plenty of Trump bumper stickers on the freeway and there are pro-life marches and similar civic events throughout the year. WashU makes an amazing effort to teach you about St. Louis's history. During orientation, we learned of the failed attempts by the government to help its poor/disadvantaged. Nearly all of the government's attempts failed or even made living conditions worse for the people it aimed to help. I lived in Baltimore for two years and St. Louis feels very similar. The historically left-leaning city government has struggled to fix some issues. Don't get me wrong, I love living here. It's a great city, but its history is instructive to me regarding certain policies and their effects.

My fellow conservatives and I could certainly do more at WashU to make our voices heard in the form of student groups, events, etc. Even so, the primary focus of everyone at WashU is helping students become excellent physicians. Most days, at school and at social events, politics are not discussed. When I have discussed politics with classmates/professors, each discussion has been civil and respectful. If only our politicians could behave similarly.

Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions when you get here!

— Austin H., M1

On Being Hindu

St. Louis has a pretty large Hindu community for a smaller-size city. The biggest Hindu temple is a traditional South Indian temple in Town and Country, which is about a 20-minute drive from campus. It is a great place to worship. They have many events there throughout the year, and if you get on their mailing list you will be informed of most Hindu things going on in the area. If you go there around lunchtime on the weekends, they usually have a meal for prasadam as well. There is also a Chinmaya Mission Sunday School in Kirkwood on Sunday mornings, close to the temple. Their community is quite tight-knit, but it is mostly for children.

There is also an ISKCON temple near Saint Louis University, about a 30-minute walk down Lindell or 20 minutes if you use the MetroLink and get off at the Cortex. This is a wonderful community that is very welcoming. At their Sunday Feast program held on Sunday evenings, they have a full hour of kirtan, a full hour of lecture from various scriptures, and dinner prasadam. Many devotees here are heavily involved, so if you're looking for a serious weekly congregation, this is the place you'll find it. The ISKCON community also does a lot of home programs in families' homes in the suburbs as well, which are wonderful and can really provide you with a family here. A Swamiji visits fairly often (I think four times a year) as well, and gives lectures in the temple and in people's homes. I come here regularly, so I would love to introduce any newcomers to the community. There are many people in the community that are willing to give you a ride to/from the temple or any of the home programs if you need it.

— Kushi M., M1

On Being Jewish

WashU overall has a strong Jewish community. The Jewish community within the medical school itself is relatively small, but there's always at least a few people to go to High Holidays services or Shabbat dinners with. Chabad Central West End, located near campus, does a fantastic job of creating a warm and engaging community focused on local graduate students and young professionals. The rabbi and his wife are really welcoming and will provide you with food/coffee/moral support/Talmudic advice whenever you need it. They host events all the time, from happy hours to game nights to holiday meals, making it a great way to

meet Jewish people from other graduate programs or working in the area. There's also the Jewish Medical Students Association which helps organize events for just the medical students. Barnes-Jewish is a great place to be Jewish!

— Rachel B., M1

On Being LDS

As a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), I've loved living in St. Louis. The local ward has been very welcoming and friendly. My wife and I have made good friends through church already (since many in the ward are grad students either in med school at WashU or Saint Louis University, or PhD students, it's easy to connect). Coming from Utah, it's nice because it feels like there are more missionary opportunities out here; it has been fun to go to church and have investigators (people considering joining the LDS Church) to talk to and make friends with. I've honestly enjoyed the community much more than in previous wards I attended. All in all, I have nothing but positive feelings towards the local church.

— John D., M1

On Being Latinx

I grew up in Latin America and didn't come to the U.S. until college, so my experience with being Latinx might be a little different, but I have found St. Louis to be much more diverse and welcoming than I initially believed it to be. There are plenty of great Latin American restaurants scattered across the different St. Louis city and county neighborhoods, including a couple of spots within the Central West End like El Burro Loco. There are clubs that have Latin music nights where you can dance your heart out, such as Club Viva. Lastly, but equally if not more importantly, there are plenty of volunteering opportunities to give back to the Latinx community, including volunteering as an interpreter at Casa de Salud, performing health screenings at El Torito, and volunteering with children at the multitude of after-school programs designed to get young kids interested in science and medicine!

— Marina P., M1

On Being LGBTQ+

I'm a gay man originally from rural Tennessee, and while I loved all the simpler aspects of living there, my partner and I were both very excited about the possibility of moving to a big, exciting city like St. Louis for at least the next few years.

Upon arriving here over the summer, I quickly realized that there is actually a very vibrant queer community here in St. Louis. There are a ton of different gay bars across the city, including several within the Grove neighborhood, located within walking distance just south of campus. The city's Pride festival was a blast made even more fun by the fact that WashU medical students, faculty, and

administration march in the parade. The Advocate, America's oldest running LGBT publication, recently included St. Louis on its list of Queerest Cities in the United States. The Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index, a measure of a city's laws, policies, and services that support LGBTQ+ people, awarded the city of St. Louis a perfect score of 100. A lot of people don't know it, but St. Louis is a great place to be LGBTQ+!

As for the school itself, I have found WashU to be a great place for LGBTQ+ students. From working with LGBTQ+ Med, a student-run interest group that advocates for LGBTQ+ health issues, to OUTmed, a networking and mentorship program that brings together queer-identifying physicians, residents, scientists, and students, I've always felt that my identity here as a gay man is celebrated as important and that this isn't a place where I have to hide my personal life from my classmates and professors. In fact, I've felt this place is preparing me to be a health-care advocate for all gender and sexual minorities, and I really love that. In summary, my partner and I are so happy to call this place home, and we think you will just the same!

— Lane P., M1

On Being Liberal

Having spent most of my life in liberal bubbles in the northeast, I was unsure of what to expect when I moved to St. Louis for medical school. Although St. Louis itself is relatively blue, Missouri is a red state, and this is an especially contentious time in both Missouri's and the nation's politics when we consider issues like abortion rights, gun control, and Medicaid expansion. Two major themes I've experienced since moving here are that there is room for an open dialogue between diverse perspectives in both the medical school and in St. Louis at large, and that being a medical student (and eventually a physician) puts us in the unique position to be heard by lawmakers about political issues that relate to health care.

To the first point, WUSM has exposed me to a great deal of geographic diversity, and my medical school class is full of people from different backgrounds and parts of the country that I've had little exposure to. Ever since orientation, it has been really interesting and educational to hear about my classmates' experiences that have contributed to their world views and political beliefs. Though I personally lean to the left, I have never felt disrespected or overlooked in conversation with classmates that disagree with me. Hearing other perspectives in respectful dialogues has helped me gain a more nuanced view of my own beliefs on topics such as abortion access. Though I have had unpleasant encounters with anti-choice protestors outside the clinic where I volunteer, the number of constructive conversations I have had far outnumbers these negative experiences.

Beyond just feeling comfortable having conversations about political issues relevant to health care, being in medical school and living in St. Louis has made me feel more empowered than ever to get involved with the issues I care most about.

There are student groups dedicated to these issues, such as Medical Students for Choice and the Gun Violence Reform Task Force, that have brought in policy makers to speak with my classmates about relevant laws in Missouri. Beyond student groups, there are plenty of opportunities in the city to get involved with initiatives you care about. I have had the opportunity to volunteer as a clinic escort at the local Planned Parenthood clinic, the last remaining abortion service provider in the state of Missouri. In that post, I have met many like-minded individuals who have been attending rallies and writing to legislators and local newspapers for years in support of reproductive health services, and who have encouraged me to become more politically engaged. While this state faces plenty of problems relevant to health care because of its legislation (and while this is a frustrating reality), there is huge room for improvement, and we as medical students can play an active role in efforts for improvement. In sum, living in St. Louis as a liberal has turned out to be an empowering experience that has motivated me to become more politically engaged and actively involved with organizations like Planned Parenthood, in greater capacities than I ever had before beginning medical school at WashU.

— **Kaamyia V., M1**

On Being Muslim

Coming from a Catholic undergraduate institution, I spent four years before medical school hyperaware of being a Muslim minority, especially because of the hijab I wear on my head. However, these four years were critical in developing my religious identity and in my learning how to “be Muslim” in a setting where there were not many other Muslims around me. These are the experiences I brought into WashU with me, but being Muslim here at WashU is very different from being Muslim at a Catholic university. Of course, with such a large medical center, there are people of all different religious backgrounds walking around campus, and that’s something that the institution recognizes. For instance, there are multiple interfaith chapels — one in the hospital and another right by Moore Auditorium lecture hall — where students can pray (prayer rugs included). There is also Friday prayer in the hospital chapel every week, which is a great opportunity to meet other Muslim students and faculty. There are multiple mosques around the city, including one right on the Saint Louis University undergraduate campus, about a mile away from FLTC. The Islamic Foundation of Greater St. Louis is a large mosque that has a very active community, and there are plenty of opportunities to get involved if you wish to do so. In addition, the CAIR Missouri branch is active and always puts on events around St. Louis, so that is another opportunity to work with the greater Muslim community. All in all, WashU does a great job of accommodating Muslim students, and St. Louis has a Muslim community that is not only welcoming but dedicated to their work in the city and the surrounding areas.

— **Arwa M., M1**

On Being Orthodox Christian

I have been pleasantly surprised by the vibrance and diversity of the Orthodox community in St. Louis. Knowing how uncommon Orthodoxy is in the U.S. in general, I was concerned about moving for medical school. I grew up Georgian Orthodox and have gone to a Russian Orthodox church my entire life. I went to college 40 minutes away from home in a large city, so I was able to both be heavily involved in the Orthodox Christian Fellowship on campus and still attend my home church. Starting from scratch in St. Louis has definitely been challenging for me, mostly because it is my first time actually moving, but there are plenty of churches to find a new spiritual home. I have only been to one of them so far, but I hope to change that as the year progresses!

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church is right across the medical school campus in the Central West End (a five-minute walk from my apartment!) and is a lovely parish. The congregation mostly consists of families and older people, but there are some young people as well. The services are in English, so it is very accessible for non-Greeks like me. Father Michael and Father Doug are great, and individual members of the congregation were very quick to welcome and introduce me to everyone as soon as they noticed that I was new at coffee hour. Vespers is held in a different building that is a 20-minute drive away, so I have yet to experience that.

The other churches in the area are not walkable but are within a 10-30 minute drive. They represent many of the various Orthodox traditions, both Eastern and Oriental. Among the Eastern Orthodox churches, there is another Greek parish (Assumption Greek Orthodox Church), a Russian parish (St. Basil the Great), a Serbian parish (Holy Trinity), a Romanian parish (St. Thomas the Apostle), and a couple of OCA parishes (St. Michael the Archangel, Christ the Good Shepherd). Among the Oriental Orthodox churches, there is an Ethiopian Tewahedo parish (St. Mary and St. Gabriel), a Coptic parish (St. Mary and St. Abraam), and a Malankara Syrian parish (St. Mary's).

— Mari G., M1

On Being South Asian

The beautiful diversity of WashU lends itself well to having something for everyone. Growing up on the East Coast, there was never a lack of Indian restaurants, stores, and events. Luckily, WashU and the surrounding STL community has all of this as well! In terms of restaurants, Rasoi and Gokul are just two of many tasty and affordable options in the area. There are also various international grocery stores nearby, such as Jay's International Food Co. and Bombay Bazaar, so you can stock up on your chutneys and masalas. Additionally, WashU medical students also host an annual Diwali celebration, that brings everyone together for dinner and incredible performances. But most importantly, we are lucky to have incredible classmates that are often down to watch (and sing along to) Bollywood films together.

— Avan A., M1

Our Relationships

On Being in a Long-Distance Relationship

Long distance is tricky for any relationship. The key advice that I believe works for me and my partner is to keep up the communication any way you can. For instance, I make it a point to call him whenever I go grocery shopping or when I am walking to school. We even find it nice to keep each other on video chat while studying in the evenings. Although we don't have very engaging conversations, it is nice to see each other over video while still being productive with schoolwork. It is also crucial, though, to have times where we can give each other our full attention. We plan weekly video calls where we promise not to do any work or will sync up Netflix and 'watch together', even though we were states apart. One thing that particularly helps me is planning trips well in advance to visit one another. The pre-planned trips serve as a nice timestamp to look forward to and seeing each other as often as we can makes the long distance feel less daunting.

— Laura B., M1

On Being Married

Medical school brings about many changes. In my short time in medical school, I have appreciated having the consistency of my relationship with my wife. Many married couples have hobbies that they developed together early. My wife and I like to run and bike. We also enjoy cooking and eating together. We have managed to continue these activities pretty consistently throughout the first semester of medical school, though we have definitely had to simplify cooking some due to time constraints. Thankfully, my wife has been through Physician Assistant school and understands the pressures of classes and clinical rotations. There are several students in our class who are married or partnered, and I've enjoyed getting to see the spouses and partners meet each other at extracurricular and informal events. Having a supportive spouse in medical school can be a big advantage and certainly can add a lot of enjoyment to the process.

— Kevin N., M1

On Being Partnered

My partner, Naomi, and I met in 2015, and since then we've moved twice together – including to St. Louis! We share a 2-bedroom apartment in DeBaliviere, and we designated one of the bedrooms as an office. I try not to work too much at home, but when I have to, I'm able to keep my “work vibes” in there and be fully present otherwise. It's so refreshing to come home and not feel pressured to talk about school – in fact, she helps me remember that there's a world outside of WashU. She encourages me to not worry too much about school, and it's great to have someone to explore the area (read: try new restaurants!) with. She's often able to help with things like grocery shopping or cleaning if I'm having a particularly crazy

week, and vice versa, since we're on different schedules. While we're not married, she's been allowed to come to all of the "+1" events like the Dean's Welcome Party, and even club activities — basically, we've received nothing but support from everyone we've met so far!

— **Caroline S., M1**

On Being Single

Maybe you've always been single. Maybe you survived an airport breakup on the way to orientation. Maybe your long-distance relationship was great ... until it wasn't anymore. Whatever the reason, you're in good company. Trying to meet someone? Hinge, Tinder, and Bumble are populated with business, law, and PhD students at WashU and nearby Saint Louis University, with local engineers, accountants, and entrepreneurs, and with the full range of health-care professionals employed and/or training at the hospital.

There's also something to be said for embracing the single life at this particular point. Our lives are busy with meaningful work (lots of it!), many extracurriculars, and close relationships with classmates. And whether you want to go abroad, try out for the musical, start a study group, go out on weekends, or stay up half the night with new friends, being unpartnered can leave space and time to say "yes" to living your best life in other ways.

— **Angela C., M1**

On Dating Someone in Your Med School

Wow! You started medical school AND you're in a new relationship — think of what a field day your family is going to have asking more questions than you want to answer! But in all seriousness, dating someone in your medical school class leads to a uniquely positive medical school experience. Having someone by your side who understands the ups and downs of medical school makes the downs that much more bearable, and the ups that much more enjoyable. However, there are two things we think are important for success in your relationship and in medical school. First of all, make sure you're on the same page with regards to both studying together and making time for your relationship outside of medical school. Everyone is different and respecting those differences is important for success both in coursework and your relationship. Second, it is critical to invest in friendships and relationships outside the one you share with your partner. Medical school is a marathon, not a sprint, and the bigger the team the better off you will be! Unfortunately, being in a relationship in medical school does also mean that your "partners" will occasionally sign you up to write stuff like this without asking first — but that's okay because we support them in everything that they do xoxoxo <3<3<3.

— **Lucy S. and Cole P., M1s**

On Dating Someone Not in Medical School

Dating someone who isn't a medical student can be totally refreshing, but also a little challenging. It's nice to be able to complain about classes, professors, Anatomy, and more to someone who is totally removed from it all. However, you might feel like they don't fully understand at times. It's also nice to have someone to cook you dinner or order you food and take care of your dog when you're cramming for an exam. Prior to medical school, I worked very flexible jobs, so I wasn't used to being away from home so much when I went back to school. Now, I really try to find a schedule for studying and spending time at home so that I can see my partner. My advice is to try to stick to a study schedule, but also be flexible when needed, plan date nights in advance, and openly communicate your expectations and needs on both sides!

— Jackie H., M1

On Having a Family

Medical school at WashU is amazing. The professors, students, and entire med school community are talented and kind. However, I always hurry home each day to hold my daughter and kiss my wife. Before getting married, I thought being a doctor would help lead to a happy life. After becoming a husband and father, I know doctoring is a great career, but still only a career. While in medical school, I prioritize family time, but I've learned that flexibility is key. On a typical school day, I make sure to feed my one year-old daughter breakfast before school. At school, I call my wife to say hi. After school, we eat dinner together and I don't study again until the baby is put to bed (normally by 7:30 PM). Most nights, I don't need to study and my wife and I will have friends over or watch Netflix. WashU and St. Louis are great places to have a family!

— Austin H., M1

Our Furry (and Scaly) Friends

On Having a Cat

I adopted my cat, Lola, right when I moved to St. Louis. She's the cutest, best, most wonderful kitty in the world (I swear). A cat is the perfect pet for a med student — they're low-maintenance, inexpensive, and make great study buddies. I spend less than five minutes per day taking care of Lola. I scoop her litter box once a day, which takes about two minutes, and give her food and fresh water twice a day. I also have to vacuum pretty frequently because she tracks litter around the house. The rest of the time I spend with her is pure enjoyment. She cuddles me every night, follows me around the house, and brings me her toys when she can tell I'm stressed. Cats can also be left alone for the entire day if necessary, so I can stay at school or with friends as long as I want.

I adopted Lola from the Humane Society of Missouri when she was 12 weeks old. They have older cats as well, if you'd prefer a more mature companion. Her adoption fee was \$85 and the process took about two hours. I still take her to the vet at that facility; they're great and really affordable. I spend probably \$20-\$30 a month on food and litter and I've spent less than \$250 for all her vet care, which is more than most because she injured her eye running into something (goofy kitty). Another cost to keep in mind is pet rent — most apartments charge a pet deposit and pet rent. If you qualify for an emotional support animal (ESA), these fees are waived. WashU's mental health service providers can write letters for ESAs.

Overall, I highly, highly recommend getting a cat, especially if you live alone. Raising Lola has been one of the best parts of med school so far, which is saying a lot because med school is pretty great.

— Rachel R., M1

On Having a Dog

As a dog owner, I have loved living in St. Louis! So far, the city has been much more dog-friendly than where I lived before. There's literally an endless supply of city parks (i.e. Forest Park, Tower Grove, Lafayette, just to name a few), hiking trails (Laumeier Sculpture Park, Babler State Park), and more! Boarding is pretty affordable here too; I usually take him to daycare twice a week, and he loves it. All in all, I couldn't be happier to have brought my dog here to St. Louis.

— John D., M1

On Having Various Exotic Pets

When I was choosing a med school, there were so many factors to consider, but one that played a not small role for me was where I could house my exotic pets. This was me at various schools in cities on the coast:

Me: Where do most students live? How do you keep things affordable?

Student host: Oh, we all mostly live in student housing, it is subsidized.

Me: Does student housing allow pets?

Student host: Oh yeah, you can get an emotional support animal letter and submit it.

Me: ... (visualizes trying to explain why a seven-foot long boa constrictor named Muffin is essential for emotional stability while in med school).

It's not just the boa constrictor though; my fiancé and I also have a ball python, iguana, and about eight tanks full of all kinds of fish (another one might have snuck in since the last time I counted). While presenting these as an official accommodation might be straight up funny, it's absolutely the case that each and every one of our pets is a valued source of support to my fiancé and I. My fiancé deals with PTSD from his military service and there is just something healing about the presence of animals and the day-to-day rhythm of taking care

of them. When I'm feeling stuck in a loop of stress about school or something else in life, taking a break to watch our pets go about their life is one of the best ways to snap out of it. Does the iguana let a looming Anatomy exam stress him out? Absolutely not. He's got his mouth stuffed with leafy greens and everything in his world is lovely.

One of the really great things about living in St. Louis is the housing market is reasonable, so there are lots of affordable options to rent or buy a place without relying on student housing, which might have a lot of restrictions about what pets you can have. My fiancé and I bought a house, and we were able to get one that fit us exactly and has space for every one of our exotic pets, plus some new ones. Our new yard came with a chicken coop, and during orientation week we welcomed three tiny fluffy ducklings. They lived in our mudroom for the first few weeks and now live in the coop in our yard. In another month or so, they should start laying eggs!

— Vera T., M1

School

On Being Average

You've lived your whole life by the doubled-edged sword of comparative metrics. You've never even seen the bottom half of a normal curve. But now you've just had your first exam and found yourself squarely within a single deviation of the mean. The neurotic pre-med devil on your shoulder whispers in your ear, "You just spent the past four-plus years developing a CV that would make any freshman gunner drool. How are you supposed to match into orthopedic cardiothoracic brain surgery by being AVERAGE?"

This was my introduction to being an average medical student at WashU — statistically, it's likely to be yours too. Every year, the admissions committee curates 100 of some of the most talented, intelligent, and driven individuals from across the country. Being an extraordinary student at WashU then becomes the average, yet the average student here is no less extraordinary. The beauty of a true pass-fail curriculum is that 71% is the same grade as a 99%: Canvas might say otherwise, but the average grade isn't a percent, it's a P. As hard as it is to internalize, being average is empowering — a chance to explore and expand on the interests that make you not better, but different. With classmates who've published in *Nature*, played in the NFL, and graduated college as teenagers, it's both unreasonable and unfair to compare yourself with others anymore. Instead, take pride knowing that you're constantly surrounded by such outstanding people, and that you're right there with them.

— Aaron G., M1

On Being in a Lot of Extracurriculars

Medical school allows ample freedom for students to engage in extracurricular activities. A myriad of school and community organizations provide volunteer and leadership opportunities. I am an SNMA board member, an HPREP leader, a Schnucks leader, a NICU cuddler, an SNHC coordinator, a Beyond Housing tutor, and an eGFR founder and leader. These activities are time-consuming, yet incredibly rewarding. I understand this may be my final opportunity to engage with such varied community organizations. I encourage everyone to pursue their interests before they enter the rigorous practice of medicine full-time. Cultivating passions and engaging with local communities are essential components of maintaining a well-balanced life.

— Jazmine M., M1

On Knowing What Specialty You're Interested In

I came into medical school knowing that I was interested in emergency medicine, and I've found that WashU has tons of ways to further explore that field. From shadowing to interest group meetings to clinical skills practice sessions, you can find both exposure and applicable clinical knowledge at every turn for the field you're interested in. However, I'd recommend still keeping an open mind — most people change their minds about their specialty interest at some point in medical school, so don't be afraid to branch out and try new specialties. Whatever field you end up in will be awesome (although EM is definitively the most awesome and you should for sure go into it).

— Jack B., M1

On Mental Health

Medical school is stressful. It is difficult going from 0-100 at the beginning of the semester, and as the content and Anki reviews begin to pile up, it is easy to get overwhelmed, anxious, and apathetic. One of the keys to having stability is to have a system for when things get rough, and because you are likely starting in a new place with new people and new content, those systems will not necessarily be stable when you are in need. However, this doesn't mean that there is no hope in starting the next chapter of your education. Arguably one of the best things that you can do is recognize your strengths and weaknesses in the difficult times you've experienced in the past and work to develop and nurture the skills and tools to work through predicaments. Some people like meditation. Some prefer exercise. Others like setting everything aside and taking time to immerse themselves in hobbies or passions outside of the classroom. Whatever it is that works for you, find it, and work to nurture and strengthen it before starting school so you can have that system in place while you are working to build up the other support systems.

— Colin M., M1

On Not Knowing What Specialty You're Interested In

One of the most important choices you'll make in medical school is what field you'll be going into. So, as someone who had no clue what that would be, I was apprehensive coming in — especially since as soon as I was accepted, everyone I knew was asking me. However, when I arrived, I quickly found out that I was far from the only person who didn't know. Further, all the mentors I talked to stressed that even if I thought I knew, I would probably change my mind half a dozen times before the end of my third year. That's not to say I haven't been able to narrow it down though; thanks to mentors, interest groups, easy shadowing opportunities, and just talking with my classmates, I feel like I've learned a lot about the breadth of medicine and the areas I might want to pursue. Most importantly, in addition to showing me everything I could do, what the WashU community really did for me was to give me peace of mind knowing that I will be able to do whatever I end up deciding on, whenever I end up deciding on it.

— Garrett C., M1

Where We've Been

On Being a Veteran

Unlike many students in med school, when I graduated high school I had NO plans of going to college. Instead, I enlisted in the Air Force and served on active duty for six years. At the end of that tour of duty, I started thinking about medical school and finally returned to college to get my undergraduate degree at the University of Arizona. There is a lot that has been said and written about how challenging being in the military is, but what got me was how challenging it was to transition back and try to be a regular person. I felt like I had to create a new identity — there was the version of me that used to be in charge of people, that ran combat missions, and now there was this new version that went to school and worried about my math homework. I even had to buy new clothes, it turns out Under Armour shirts and Oakleys aren't exactly the thing to wear on a college campus. I was fortunate that the University of Arizona had a well organized and supportive veterans center, and I was able to find connections there. Still, though, it sometimes felt like there was a gulf between me and some of my classmates. Many of them were great people, they just had their own social thing going on, and I wasn't a part of it. I was often closer in age to my professors than my fellow students.

When I started the process of applying to medical school, a concern that was at the front of my mind was finding an environment where I could fit in and truly connect with my classmates. I didn't want to sign up for another four years of having friendly acquaintances instead of friends. I wanted to be surrounded by people who would value the experience I had to offer, while also challenging me to learn and grow. If I've learned anything, it's that it isn't just what you know but

who you know that matters. One of the greatest assets I hope to get from medical school is a strong network of fellow doctors I can reach out to for the rest of my career. When I came to Second Look at WashU, I was anxiously looking at all my possible future classmates — would these turn out to be people I could find a place among? What I found was a group of people who are some of the nicest and smartest people I have ever met. Every one of my classmates I have gotten to know has maturity and has engaged in the kinds of substantive experiences that build character. I have consistently felt included since day one, and I could not be happier to have chosen to come here.

— Vera T., M1

On Being an International Student from Canada

I grew up in Western Canada, attended college in Montreal, and this is my first time studying in the U.S. WashU is probably one of the most Canadian-friendly medical schools, and that is reflected in our class (three Canadians and many dual citizens). I think even for students coming from the U.S. coasts, St. Louis bears a distinct identity. Its culture and demographics are definitely different from those in Canada; the difference here is greatly attributed to the historical racial and socioeconomic divide in the city.

Depending on where you are coming from, St. Louis might be considered a relatively small city. However, even if you are accustomed to living in a major metropolis like Vancouver, Toronto, or Montreal, there are surprisingly just as many activities to partake in here in St. Louis and ample restaurants to try. If you are a fan of good barbecue (this is non-existent in Canada), then you're in luck! Living and eating in St. Louis is also more affordable than other big cities.

I have been told it gets cold during the winter and hot in the summer. So far though, it only snowed a few times and then somehow became 20 degrees Celsius in December (probably like 70 degrees Fahrenheit, I still have no idea how freedom units work). I have only seen one person wear Canada Goose on campus, and I have still yet to bring out my toque and gloves. This lack of snow can either be a pro or a con. Hockey is still a thing here, and the St. Louis Blues won the Stanley Cup last year. (The Blues winning is probably a con.) Overall, St. Louis has been great so far, and I am excited to continue learning about and living life in the U.S.

— Tim K., M1

On Being an International Student from China

As someone who grew up in Beijing, I have to say that St. Louis has exceeded my expectations in providing a feeling of home. Although St. Louis doesn't have the largest Asian population or the biggest selection of Asian delicacies, it provides everything I need. From the Asian markets on Olive Boulevard, to the broccoli beef in Central West End, the bubble tea at Kung Fu Tea, and the noodle soup at Cate Zone, I have been very well fed whenever I am craving Chinese food.

However, most importantly, I was able to find my home here in my communities. Through WashU's APAMSA (Asian and Pacific American Medical Student Association), I have participated in and organized many events that celebrated my culture. I had lots of fun making dumplings with my friends and preparing for the school-wide Lunar New Year celebration. I am also able to speak my mother tongue when I volunteer at the Chinese clinic run by WashU and Saint Louis University students. Although I didn't expect to fit in well in St. Louis as a native Asian, I am very happy about where I am after one semester. After all, home isn't about the physical location, but rather about who you are with, right?

— Clara (Jingxian) L., M1

On Being an International Student from South Korea

In 2012, I was a naïvely confident teenager who had just moved to St. Louis, a city 1/27th the population size and 1/3rd the area of Seoul, South Korea. Like everyone, I've been through various seasons of life for almost a decade in the U.S., making friends from different walks of life, and feeling melancholic loneliness and homesickness (sometimes blaming the 9-fold difference in population density!). Finding my group of people who have helped me better understand what it means to live as a sojourner in the U.S. has been great. I've slowly become aware of my liminality – a source of that awkward feeling of being a foreigner, but also of freedom and of realization that it is my choice to either be an outsider or fit within multiple groups. My outlook on life has changed; my views on interpersonal relationships have changed; my political orientation has changed. Maybe it's just me getting old (!), or maybe it's from being an international student, or maybe, it's a mix of both with many other factors. These experiences, thoughts, and feelings, however, have transformed into a single reminder: always to remember upon whose shoulders I stand and to not necessarily depend on nationality for my identity, but find and appreciate my communities for the sense of belonging and to becoming who I am!

— Ki Yun (Kay) P., M1

On Being from a Small Town

Many people say St. Louis isn't that big. That is false. It's a big city. I say this because I grew up in a small town in rural New Mexico. In eastern New Mexico, all of the roads are straight and flat and virtually abandoned. I definitely have had to focus hard on improving my driving skills since moving here. Granted, there are a lot of perks to coming to the big city. Not only do I get to come to an awesome medical school, but there is also quite a diverse range of cuisines, with many restaurant options. There are a lot of different neighborhoods, each with their own culture, vibes, and experiences — which can be fun to explore. St. Louis itself has some beautiful attractions and a diverse population, and the medical center is full of resources for trainees in the health sciences. Finally, I live right by Forest Park, which

is a massive city park with museums and a free zoo! I've heard that it's bigger than Central Park in NYC. On a nice day, Forest Park is full of people from St. Louis and beyond. St. Louis has a lot to offer!

— Kevin N., M1

On Being from a State School

It was strange coming to my interview and being the only student not from a top ten private school. Being from a large, Big Ten “party” school, I felt overwhelmed by the prestige and status of WashU in the medical community, so much so that I was initially hesitant to come here. What if my classes hadn't prepared me well enough to go to medical school at WashU? What if my peers looked down on me and my degrees? Though the imposter syndrome is real and won't go away regardless of where you come from and where you went to school, there is a reason that you were accepted: because you have the capability, qualities, and drive to be a great physician. My peers constantly astound and impress me, but all of my fears were invalidated once I met and spent time with them. Regardless of where we come from, we are all the same in our passions and desires to practice medicine and impact the communities around us.

— Colin M., M1

On Being from STL

After growing up in the St. Louis area, when the time came to apply to colleges I was ready to see another part of the country. However, after driving six hours back and forth, to and from school for breaks, I was much more open to the idea of staying in St. Louis when the time came to apply to medical school. While I didn't choose WashU because of its location, I have definitely come to appreciate being a little bit closer to home. I love being able to easily visit my parents for a home cooked meal, and it's also nice to be familiar with the area while starting a new experience like medical school. That being said, I still feel like I have learned a lot about St. Louis in my first few months as a medical student here that I didn't know already. I grew up about 30 minutes away from the medical school, so I wasn't as knowledgeable about this particular area as I am now. I've really enjoyed getting to visit new restaurants and go to new events with my classmates, and even places that I've been to many times before are fun to get to experience with a new group of people. If you are worried about being bored, don't be! Medical school will provide plenty of new experiences even if you are already acquainted with the area.

— Ann I., M1

On Being from the East Coast

Between growing up in D.C. suburbs, going to school at the University of Virginia, and spending my gap year in D.C., all I had really known prior to St. Louis was the East Coast. Moving here was definitely an adjustment in terms of it being a less dense city, but I have found that there is still enough to do in my free time. The city also has a very diverse population, which was comforting coming from D.C., where residents come from all over. And people here are so nice! Strangers will chat with you just to chat! It's cool and new to me being in an environment this friendly. It would be nice if the city had a few more hills (why is the Midwest so flat?), but it really has been a smooth transition to Missouri.

— Karim S., M1

On Being from the Midwest

I'm originally from Huron, Ohio, which is a small town in northern Ohio. I went to college in the Midwest too, at THE Ohio State University. The city of St. Louis has so many fun things to do, which makes it feel like a brand new, exciting place to explore. At the same time, the pace of St. Louis feels familiar to me, which I think helped me to quickly get comfortable in the city. I also really like that I'm never too far from home, and with an hour flight, I can be in Columbus or Cleveland. Even though I'm from the Midwest, this is the first time I've been outside of Ohio, and the welcoming atmosphere at WashU has helped me to feel at home here.

— Allie L., M1

On Being from the South

I always pictured myself staying in the south for medical school after growing up and going to undergrad in North Carolina. Although I ended up coming to a school in a region not normally considered to be part of the south, I feel like in a way I stayed true to my original intentions. Everything that I considered integral to the true southern charm can be found in St. Louis, and there is an additional multicultural influence in St. Louis that really amplifies this charm in a way you may not find in the south. The St. Louisans in the Central West End area are super friendly, and there is a great feeling of hospitality both throughout WashU and in the whole surrounding community. Beyond the people, the prices are just as good as they are in the south, so you won't be breaking the bank with food or rent. The diversity in food is great, and southern staples such as barbeque are still incredibly popular throughout the city.

The only thing that requires adapting to is the weather. The St. Louis summer is quite similar to that of the south, but the winter is rougher. I had to upgrade my winter wardrobe following our first snow in October, but beyond that adjustments have been minimal and, it has been a great time so far in St. Louis!

— David L., M1

On Being from the West Coast

Transitioning to the Midwest, and St. Louis specifically, has been surprisingly smooth for me! As someone who was born and raised in Southern California, I was apprehensive about moving to a land-locked state in the middle of the country. When I moved here, I missed my family, the ocean, and the abundance of sunshine. However, the city of St. Louis has surprised me! Its incredible array of restaurants, the proximity of Forest Park, and welcoming community won me over very quickly. I miss Korean barbeque and quality Mexican food, but I am a huge fan of St. Louis barbeque (definitely check out Sugarfire) and toasted ravioli! There is no ocean, but Forest Park offers plenty of outdoor activities, including ice skating, sledding, soccer, paddleboarding and running. Finally, everyone at WashU and in St. Louis proper are incredibly friendly and open; you will have no shortage of friends here!

— Haley S., M1

On Coming from a Big City

Whenever I tell people where I am from, I am inevitably met by the following response: “Wait, you moved from New York City to Missouri?” While this is technically true, I like to say I moved from NYC to St. Louis – one city to another. There are many ostensible differences between NYC and St. Louis. For starters, I have seen more people crammed into one NYC block during the morning hustle to work than I think I have in all of the Central West End at any time of the day combined. Since NYC is truly the city that never sleeps, coming to St. Louis where restaurants and stores actually close before midnight was definitely an adjustment (read: I am learning how to cook).

With that said, I was taken aback by how many similarities there are between NYC and the Central West End. I happily traded my expensive unlimited NYC Metrocard for a free Metrolink pass. For fun, I can go to the Missouri Botanical Gardens, quality art museums, and the zoo, just like I would in NYC, except in St. Louis these activities are mostly all free. In addition, I loved going to concerts and events in Central Park, so I felt right at home in Forest Park, which is actually 450 acres larger than Central Park. I have attended concerts and community events, such as the Balloon Glow, and have had a great time here. These events have been more enjoyable because they are not inundated with people, which makes them more intimate.

I think what I liked most about coming from a “big city” was the constant cultural and intellectual stimulation. While St. Louis is definitely not a “big city” compared to NYC, WashU is equally as stimulating. I also immediately felt embraced by the welcoming, kind people in St. Louis. I feel a strong sense of community here, which I didn’t realize was lacking in New York City until I experienced it at WashU. While I will always be a New Yorker at heart, each day I become a little prouder to say I live in Missouri.

— Rachel M., M1

On Coming from WashU Undergrad

What drew me to the WashU medical school is the same as what drew me to the undergrad program: the people. The Midwestern charm is a real thing, as the people here are both astoundingly bright and exceedingly genuine. There are professors here who are at the top of their field and, yet, are perfectly willing to sit down and talk about their work. This has made extending my stay here in St. Louis an easy choice to make. Additionally, the freedom offered during med school has given me ample opportunities to see more of what St. Louis has to offer. The med school atmosphere is markedly different from the “WashU Bubble” that many experienced in undergrad. I have started to feel more like a resident of St. Louis than just a student who happens to be here.

— Collin N., M1

On Coming Straight from College

Coming straight from college can simultaneously be a smooth and crazy transition. Having been sitting in lectures just three months prior, the return to class was familiar. On the other hand, I was going from living in a dorm and eating in dining halls to having to cook for myself and living in an actual apartment. Although I was a bit nervous for this switch into semi-adulthood, I found myself feeling settled quite quickly — the friendliness of both my new classmates and the overall community definitely helped a lot. With medical school being a wonderful experience that bonds all of your classmates, you’ll notice that any age differences that may exist between you and your classmates are not apparent at all. Additionally, there are many students at WashU who are also coming straight from college so you’ll have lots of company in your 17th straight year of school. Overall, while medical school is more school, it’s vastly different from undergrad so you’ll both be prepared for continuing to learn while immersed in a completely new experience — enjoy!

— Amy L. Z., M1

On Taking Gap Years

I took a few years off before starting at WashU, and I was worried it would be hard to get back into school mode after working a normal job. I shouldn’t have been. A lot of job skills translated well to med school — 40 hour work weeks have given me great work ethic — but more importantly, once I’m done with work for the day I know it’s best to just relax and not worry about stuff I have to do tomorrow. Med school can sometimes feel overwhelming but taking it one day at a time has made it manageable. The best thing about taking gap years though is I got to experience normal 20-something life before starting school. It completely cured me of fear of missing out. People online like to romanticize this idea of med students sacrificing their youth to learn medicine, but I still spend just as much time hanging out with friends, seeing shows, and having fun now as I did during my gap years. I just get to learn cool facts about the body, and I don’t have to sit behind a desk for 40 hours a week!

— Dylan S., M1

On Taking (a Lot) of Gap Years

In 2015, I walked away from my career as a transactional attorney and set off on the long journey toward med school. My persistent worries of whether my dream of becoming a doctor would even work out fully subsided when I somehow landed a spot in the entering class at my dream school, WashU. As with all things in life, those fears and worries were soon replaced by new ones. Now, with med school upon me at age 35, I wondered whether I would have a place amongst my 99 extraordinary peers, almost all of whom were substantially younger than me. I worried that for what they lacked in life experience, they would make up by orders of magnitude with their brilliance and talents in science. I felt I would be uniquely disadvantaged to be a nontraditional student from a mostly non-science background. On top of that, I worried I wouldn't fit in and would spend the four years of med school feeling alienated from the people around me.

If this sounds like you, know that your fears are normal, and kudos to you for forging ahead in spite of them. It is true that my peers are brilliant, and they bring skills to the table that I do not. However, instead of this being the detriment I worried it would be, it has been such an asset. Placing bright, goodhearted people in a noncompetitive, pass/fail curricular environment has a way of creating a truly collaborative and exceptional culture. I have been able to learn from my peers, and their strong science backgrounds have only served to benefit my own academic growth. I have also managed to carve out a place for myself amongst my peers and contributing my unique background and business acumen has enabled me to find leadership roles that fit my strengths and interests (shout out Dis-O guide team!).

As for fitting in, I can assure you that your peers will get exactly zero of the cultural references from your youth. They haven't seen *Clueless* or the Big Lebowski. Our 9/11 is on the cusp of being their Pearl Harbor. You can choose to let this be a source of alienation or entertainment; I did the latter and am thankful that I have. I genuinely love my med school friends, and I feel welcomed, accepted and supported by my classmates. I encourage you to seek opportunities to form bonds with your peers, and embrace the ways they differ from you. Just as they can learn from you, you have something to learn from each of them; I challenge you to discover what that is...and if you need a fellow elderly med student with whom to wax poetic about Pete & Pete or play Pogs, I'm your girl.

— Kristin P., M1



Lizzie (right) giving it her all during practice.



Ryan playing his bass in a performance.



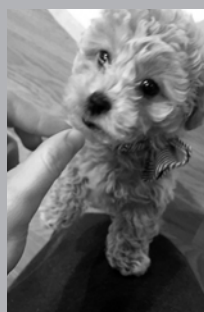
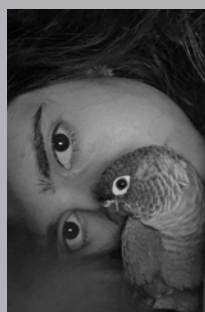
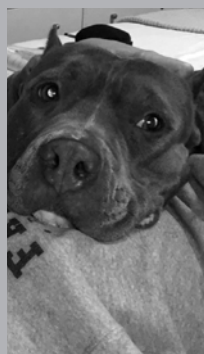
Adam enjoying a long ride with friends.



Maggy, wearing the jaw dropping GI tract Halloween costume she made herself, poses with anatomy professors Dr. Ritzman and Dr. Morhardt.



Caroline S. and Emma P. shopping for stethoscopes at the Medical Equipment Fair.



Our classmates' dogs, cats, bunnies, birds, geese, and even a snake.



Housing

Moving can be scary. Here we have valuable information that can help make your transition a little bit easier.

SECTION EDITOR: HALEY SHERBURNE

Arrangements

Buying a Condo

Since I am an MSTP student and St. Louis has affordable real estate prices for our living stipend, I decided that I would purchase a condo near the Central West End before I started school. I contacted a real estate agent in April and I was able to view several properties in May. I closed on a two-bedroom condo in the historic DeBaliviere neighborhood, a short five-minute MetroLink ride away from the medical school. This has proved to be a great decision and I'm happy to have made this smart financial investment!

— **Reyan C., M1**

Buying a House

During Second Look, my husband and I toured several apartments in the Central West End close to WUSM. While adequate, we were not particularly impressed with the cost/quality ratio. Considering that the housing prices in St. Louis are much more wallet friendly than what we were used to Northern Virginia, we decided we wanted to buy instead of rent.

Buying a house is an intimidating process, especially for the first time. What is even more intimidating is buying a house in an unknown city. We are indebted to our agent for all of her help. Our goal in the house buying process was to find a house under a certain price threshold, in a safe neighborhood and to move in before the start of school. It was a tall order that required a lot of groundwork. Beyond our agent's general guidelines, I spent several days driving through neighborhoods evaluating how people kept their houses and lawns, what businesses were nearby, and distance/traffic to school. In the process, I toured approximately 30 houses of varying size, age and neighborhood. One thing I really appreciated about our agent was her insistence on touring many different houses throughout the St. Louis metro.

Eventually we found a new house in South City, in the Princeton Heights/ St. Louis Hills neighborhood. One thing that should not have surprised me but did was the amount of money we spent beyond the initial down payment and move. Considering we previously only had a poorly furnished medium-sized apartment, we have invested considerable funds into furnishing, decorating and general housekeeping. Beyond the financial, getting a house running also takes considerable time. Overall, I am very proud of my house and am glad to own it, but if you are considering buying, line up your finances and do your homework on the neighborhood and house.

— **Brooke H., M1**

Finding a Roommate

If you are looking to room with another M1 but don't yet know anyone in the incoming Class of 2024, don't fret! Many of us are successfully rooming with peers we met at Second Look, through mutual friends, or through the housing spreadsheet.

Nikita and I (virtually) met via the housing spreadsheet that WUSM posts to the admitted students' Facebook group every April. The spreadsheet allows you to input things such as living preferences, hobbies/interests, and price/location ranges. It also contains information about housing options throughout the Central West End (CWE) and the Grove based on recommendations from current M1s and M2s. Nikita and I had similar interests and living preferences. Although we had not met before moving in, we talked on the phone before committing to live together and messaged back and forth over the summer to find and start furnishing a place. Most will be studios or one- or two-bedroom apartments. If you're looking to room with more than one person, a place outside the CWE may be your best bet. While finding a random roommate can be a gamble, just make sure you are clear about your living and studying preferences, and be willing to adjust to each other's needs. Living with another M1 can be a great way to find a lifelong friend and study buddy (and someone who will wake you up when that pre-exam alarm doesn't)!

— Nikita S. and Gopika H., M1s

Living Alone

I currently live alone in a studio, and I couldn't be happier! Specifically, I enjoy setting my own schedule and organizing my apartment according to my own preferences. For example, I am quite the early bird, so I like being able to study, cook, and clean in the mornings without worrying about waking up roommates.

If you are considering living alone, you may be worried about rent or meeting people. The cost of living in St. Louis is very affordable compared to most big cities and suburbs; I lived with four roommates in a small apartment in San Diego, and I actually pay less now for my studio in St. Louis! With respect to socializing and meeting people, I live in the CORE with many of my classmates, so it is very easy to hang out and make plans. If you are social and are concerned that living alone will hamper your interactions with your class, I would highly recommend living in a building that is popular among medical students (e.g. Montclair, Park Royal, Del Coronado, the CORE). In short, living alone can be great if you like having your own space, and it is very affordable in St. Louis!

— Haley S., M1

Living with a Medical Student

Before coming to WashU, I had always lived with a roommate, and it was definitely something I was looking to continue in St. Louis. I found my roommate through the Facebook group of admitted students, and I am so glad to be living with another M1. Especially during orientation, it was really nice to have someone to go to events with, and to always have a familiar face during those first couple of weeks. Even now, I'm able to come back home and have someone to talk about my day with or motivate me to study. Because we have a lot of overlapping friends and similar social schedules, we're able to host pre-games and movie nights all the time without worrying about bothering one another or taking up space. The only drawback I can think of is that sometimes when the two of us are dealing with exams at the same time we maybe aren't as on top of our chores as we should be ... but other than that, I would definitely recommend living with a medical student if you are looking for a roommate!

— Nikita S., M1

Living with a Non-Medical Student

While there's nothing wrong with living with another medical student, the alternative has its perks. It makes it much easier to develop friends outside of school, which can be surprisingly difficult. It's so nice to come home and not feel pressured to talk about school, and your roommate(s) can help you remember that there is a world outside of WashU/school in general (which can also be surprisingly difficult). Since they're not on the same schedule, they may be able to help you out (groceries, cooking, etc.) when you have a crazy week. It's always nice to have another perspective around!

— Caroline S., M1

Renting for the First Time

I'm not going to lie, renting for the first time was terrifying. I've lived at home, then went to the dorms, then back home again because I couldn't rationally pay to live in the same city as my house. The prices to rent in St. Louis are very reasonable, even if you are starting from scratch; I pay less than \$750/month and know plenty of classmates that pay less. I would recommend exploring apartments.com and realtor.com to find potential places to live, and if you're trying to save money, consider living in a place that is just an apartment, not an apartment community. Additionally, there are always people getting rid of furniture on Facebook Marketplace, so try checking it out before resigning to going for the "Apartment by Ikea" look.

— Colin M., M1

Apartments

Aventura At Forest Park

Price: \$1350 plus utilities for a one-bedroom; \$1700 plus utilities for a two-bedroom.

Pet Policy: Pets allowed, weight limit on dogs

Amenities: Full-sized in-unit washer and dryer, private patio/balcony with outdoor closet for storage, dog park, swimming pool, gym, free coffee brewed daily

Parking: Free gated parking, covered carports extra

Walk: Eight minutes (five if you take the shortcut), door-to-door

Buckingham Court

Price range: \$800 for a one-bedroom/one-bathroom; two-bedroom units also available

Pet policy: Pets allowed for a fee

Amenities: Basement laundry (free), water and gas included in rent, renovated kitchens

Parking: Free street parking; uncovered secured lot for \$100

Walk: 10 minutes, door-to-door

Del Coronado

Price range: There are options for both renovated and unrenovated apartments with the unrenovated running a few hundred dollars cheaper a month. \$930 for a studio; \$980/\$1280 for a one-bedroom; \$1280/\$1680 for a two-bedroom

Pet policy: Pets allowed

Amenities: Laundry machines on every other floor, gym, lounge area with a pool table, 24-hour attendant

Parking: Uncovered about \$80/month; covered about \$90/month

Walk: Less than 15 minutes, door-to-door

Lofts@Euclid

Price range: ~\$1200 for studio; one-bedroom and two-bathroom units also available

Pet policy: Allowed

Amenities: Hardwood floors and central air; shared (free) and in-unit laundry available; gym, on-site, grocery store, and rooftop courtyard with cornhole, hot tub, and grill available to all residents; cable and WiFi is \$35

Parking: Indoor parking available

Walk: ~20 minutes, door-to-door

Montclair

Price range: ~\$1,200 for a one-bedroom/one-bathroom; ~\$1,500 for a two-bedroom/one-bathroom; ~\$1,800 for a two-bedroom/two-bathroom

Pet policy: Pets allowed

Amenities: Gym and shared laundry located in building; rooftop terrace, study spaces and game rooms also available to all residents

Parking: Uncovered and covered parking available

Walk: 10 minutes, door-to-door

Parc Frontenac

Price range: ~\$1,000 for a studio; ~\$1,250 for a one-bedroom/one-bathroom; ~\$1,800 for a two-bedroom/two-bathroom

Pet policy: Pets allowed

Amenities: Basement laundry, gym, 24/7 doorman, open roof with lounge chairs

Parking: Ground lot ~\$50/month

Walk: 10 minutes, door-to-door

Park 44

Price range: ~\$850-900+ for a studio; ~\$1100+ for a one-bedroom; ~\$1400+ for a two-bedroom

Pet policy: Allowed

Amenities: Heating/AC, microwave and dishwasher, public courtyard for parties

Parking: Available, also free parking on the streets

Walk: 15 minutes, door-to-door

Parkway Apartments

Price range: \$800 for studios; \$975 for a one-bedroom (no two-bedroom option) (prices include utilities)

Pet policy: Pets allowed (two pets per unit; 20lb. limit per pet; \$150 fee)

Amenities: Basement laundry, gym, 24/7 doorman, shared laundry

Parking: ~\$50/month

Walk: 10 minutes, door-to-door

Philips Baron Realty

Price range: ~\$1076 for a two-bedroom/two-bathroom; studios and one-bedroom/one-bathroom units also available

Pet policy: Only cats allowed, for a fee

Amenities: Water and gas included in rent, central A/C

Parking: Free street parking; garage for \$75

Walk: 15-20 minutes, door-to-door

The Core Apartment Residences

Price range: Studios, the most abundant units, are about \$1,000; ~\$1400 for a one-bedroom; ~\$1700 for a two-bedroom/one-bathroom (less common)

Pet policy: One pet (25 lb. limit) is allowed per unit in the 718 building; \$200 deposit and \$100 fee

Amenities: Fully equipped, 24-hour gym; utilities, cable, and internet included in rent

Parking: Available through WUSM Parking and Transportation; 818 lot (uncovered, located in front of The Core) is \$84/mo. and Clayton garage (covered, five minute walk from CORE) is \$79/mo.

Walk: Less than five minutes, door-to-door

The President and Park Royal

Price range: ~\$900 for studios; ~\$1,000 for one-bedroom/one-bathroom; ~\$1,700 for two-bedroom/two-bathroom

Pet policy: Pets are allowed, deposit and recurring fees required

Amenities: Terrace and gym in the Park Royal is available to all residents; older units don't have a dishwasher or garbage disposal, coin operated laundry on first floor (\$1.25)

Parking: Garage parking ~\$80/mo, availability varies

Walk: 12-15 minutes, door-to-door

West End Terrace

Price range: \$900-1100 for one-bedroom/one-bathroom; \$1000-\$1200 for two-bedroom/one-bathroom

Pet policy: Pet friendly, weight limit

Amenities: On-site laundry and gym; central AC for all units

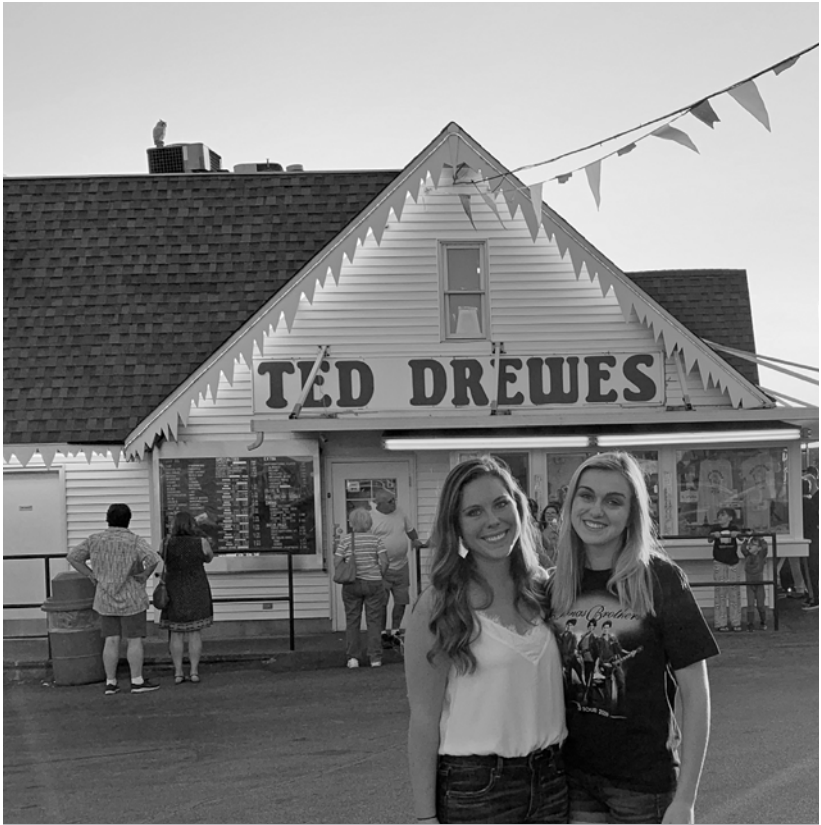
Parking: Free secure outdoor parking

Walk: 15-20 minutes, door-to-door

Neighborhoods We Live In

Residential neighborhoods most popular with our classmates:

- Skinker/DeBaliviere
- South City
- Central West End
- The Grove
- The Loop/University City
- Tower Grove/Shaw



Life in the Lou

Whether your idea of fun is cheering on the Cardinals at the next baseball game, dancing the night away, or catching a play at the Fabulous Fox Theatre, we have first-hand reviews of some of the best St. Louis activities.

SECTION EDITOR: ALLIE LENYO AND KARIM SAOUD



= WashU Hot Picks (WUSM M1 favorites, as reported by our classmates in the Annual *Dis-O Guide* Mega Survey)

Athletics: Fitness

Basketball

Pick-up games are never in short supply! Groups play regularly, often multiple times a week, on the court in the **Olin Hall** basement (right next to the FLTC). Additionally, games go on all weekdays on the Danforth Campus after 5 p.m. There are also intramural leagues to play 3 vs. 3 in the winter and 5 vs. 5 in the spring.

— **Karim S., M1**

Boxing

I had never boxed before moving to St. Louis, but wanted to find a fun workout space that I'd actually stick with when schoolwork got more intense. I found a place called **Ilovekickboxing**, which had a really cheap promo, gave me gloves and everything. I really like having scheduled classes that I feel like I have to be at every week, and the workout is amazing! The community is super supportive and fun — it's mainly 20-35-year-old women kickboxing out to My Chemical Romance and the Jonas Brothers, so it's a lighthearted, refreshing break from the med school grind!

— **Maggy B., M1**

Climbing

Though the Midwest may be flat, rock climbing culture is alive and well here at WashU. WUSM students can join the **ClimbRx** student group to get a huge student discount on memberships at the local indoor rock climbing gym, **Climb So Ill**. Located in what used to be the power plant of St. Louis City Hospital #1, **Climb So Ill** is just a 10-minute drive from school and features a 50-plus foot wall for top-rope and sport climbing, smaller walls for auto-belay, an extensive bouldering area, and a training area with hangboards, weights, and training wall. The student membership includes free gear rentals, guest passes, and shop discounts. Memberships are not required to climb at the gym, and students who climb at WashU range across all levels of expertise. They always welcome newcomers!

— **Aaron G., M1**

Dance

There are quite a few dance studios in the area, but **Central Studio** is just a hop, skip, and jeté away — that is, about 10 minutes from the FLTC. They offer adult classes in a variety of genres (ballet, contemporary/jazz, tap, and more), and you can either attend on a drop-in basis (\$16/class) or buy a class pack! Pro tip: Wait for their Black Friday sale, when you can snag a bundle for ~\$11/class. Most classes are offered in two levels, with Level 1 being geared towards beginner

dancers and Level 2 towards intermediate/advanced dancers. Ballet class is even more fun post-Anatomy — you'll find yourself intimately familiar with each and every muscle activated by that plié.

— Jennifer L., M1

Orangetheory

Orangetheory, located in the CWE, is a great workout option close to the medical school campus. The workouts consist of a combination of running, rowing, and weight-lifting. Participants wear heart rate monitors during the class and are awarded points when their heart rate is in the 'orange zone.' The goal is to get 12 or more points throughout the hour-long workout. The classes are great for anyone looking to be pushed to perform at their peak level!

— Julie S., M1

Ping Pong and Table Tennis

First off, let's get one thing clear: there is a world of difference between 'ping pong' and table tennis. Fortunately, we are primarily participants in the former, not the latter (though we do have a Division II tennis star from Croatia in our crew). While we did purchase our own equipment and frequently wrestle with the occasionally wet floors and sometimes moved plants in 818 (the Core Apartment Residences), the end goal of our pursuits is both skill and fun, not just one or the other. If you are interested in higher level play, there is a club at the Danforth Campus that plays on the South Campus on regulation tables every week. On the other hand, if you're interested in joining our eight-year pursuit of perfection, feel free to reach out or hang out around 818, as you're bound to see us pinging some pong eventually.

— Sam M., M1, Colin M., M1, and Borna N., M1

Running

The obvious choice for running outdoors for most students living in the Central West End, the Grove, and other neighborhoods surrounding **Forest Park** will be in and around Forest Park's 1,300 acres. The perimeter of Forest Park measures over six miles, and there are many beautiful roads and paths within that offer rewarding diversions from your daily route. **Tower Grove Park** is similarly large, well-maintained, and safe for students living nearby. Within a half-hour drive of the city, gorgeous trail running opportunities abound at **Creve Coeur Lake**, **Castlewood State Park**, **Cliff Cave County Park**, **Weldon Spring Conservation Area**, and countless other locations (all especially picturesque in the fall!). For those looking to compete, there are many races in St. Louis throughout the year, including the marathon in March/April.

— Beau S., M1

Shred415

If you're looking for some intense HIIT, or you're a runner looking for a good treadmill class to get you through the winter, **Shred** is a great solution. Dark rooms and good music will keep you in the zone throughout this grueling workout, alternating between treadmill runs on their top of the line Woodway treadmills and weighted/bodyweight exercises on your workout bench. You will leave drenched and shredded. Located right off the metro in Brentwood, so it's easy to get to from campus. Class packs are pricey but they offer student discounts.

— Kristin P., M1

Athletics: Outdoors

A Classmate on Getting Outdoors

If you like to get outdoors and explore, there are plenty of opportunities to do so in St. Louis; terrain and views vary widely, so you can really get a mix. Many of the hiking spots are also great locations for mountain biking and trail running, if that's your thing. Short on time? Forest Park is a 1,326-acre urban park, immediately west of the medical school campus and immediately east of the Danforth campus. What FP lacks in elevation, it makes up for in good people watching and proximity to campus. An easy stroll if you want to catch some fresh air or walk your dog between study sessions.

— Kristin P., M1

Castlewood State Park

This state park's trails wind along the banks of the Meramec, with gorgeous views from the bluffs overlooking the river. Expect woods, slick, rocky trails (trail shoes recommended), and lots of wooden steps. This is the closest legit hike you can get near St. Louis, and is a great place to see the fall colors turn.

Creve Coeur Lake

Creve Coeur Lake trails are mostly flat and paved, but you can hike up the trail behind Dripping Spring for some mild elevation (and if you do this, you'll see the zipliners swinging through the trees at Go Ape). The main trail (5.7 miles) encircles the lake, and here you'll have views of dinghy sailboats, paddleboarders, and kayakers.

Edgar M. Queeny Park

Queeny Park is a large expanse of land in suburban West County. Expect bucolic rolling hills and rocky, wooded trails (plus some paved portions). Queeny is incredibly dog friendly, and if you don't have a dog but need some puppy therapy, one lap around Queeny will give you your fix. You'll probably see some deer, too. The main loop is 4.4 miles, but there are quite a few shortcut trails.

Elephant Rocks State Park

Spend some time hiking the trails, but the main attraction here is the monstrous elephant-shaped boulders, formed from 1.5 billion-year-old granite. Leave the pups at home so you can enjoy a safe climb on the boulders and explore the various messages carved into their faces.

Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park

A "shut-in" is a term for a place where the river is narrowed by hard rock, and in this instance, the result is the creation of a natural water park. In the summer months, stop and take a dip in the shut-ins along your 10-mile (or longer) hike. Together with the adjoining Taum Sauk Mountain State Park, this area covers more than 16,000 acres.

Mark Twain National Forest/Hughes Mountain

Over 750 miles of trails. The Devil's Honeycomb Trail (1.6 miles) is a must-see — named for its clusters of polygonal columns of rhyolite, located at the highest point on Hughes Mountain.

Pere Marquette Park

Head over to Illinois to hike high along the banks of the Illinois River. Stunning views, particularly during early fall. Notable for being a nesting place for bald eagles in January and February, so if you're a bird lover, patriot or bona fide ornithologist, keep this on your radar.

Athletics: Sports

Extreme Sports in St. Louis

If you're an adrenaline junkie, there are still ways to get your fix here in St. Louis. Below are some of my top picks.

- **Off-Roading (\$5/day):** Located one hour from St. Louis, St. Joe State Park is an amazing location to enjoy off-road vehicles including dirt bikes, ATVs, UTVs, dune buggies, and more. Complete with forests, ponds, creeks, and even sand dunes, St. Joe State Park is a top location for off-roading.
- **Paragliding in Saint Louis (\$120/yr membership):** The St. Louis area boasts an active paragliding club with locations to cliff launch or to be towed into the sky. To enjoy this sport, you'll first need to purchase a paraglider and take lessons. The best seasons are spring, summer, and fall, although it's possible to fly year-round.
- **Hidden Valley Ski Resort (~\$40/day):** Hidden Valley, just 30 minutes from Saint Louis, is a great place to keep your skills up or to learn skiing or snowboarding for the first time.

— Austin I., M1

St. Louis Blues Hockey

The St. Louis Blues are the city's professional hockey team and play their games at the newly renovated Enterprise Center downtown. For the first time in franchise history, the Blues won the Stanley Cup in 2019 and the city could not have enjoyed the ride more. Whether you're a fan of the sport or just looking for a fun evening activity, Blues' games are always a blast. Enterprise Center is easy to reach via Metro and as a student, you can often get Student Rush tickets to games for as low as \$25!

— Joe B., M1

St. Louis Cardinals Baseball

Rejoice, sports fans! Not only is St. Louis home to the 2019 Stanley Cup Champions, it is also host to your 11-time World Series champions St. Louis Cardinals! Come join Cardinal Nation at beautiful Busch Stadium, a short 15-minute MetroLink ride from campus, and watch the Redbirds soar through the postseason as they embark on their journey towards another World Series!

— Sherwin N., M1

Explore: Arts

A Classmate on Jazz

Jazz at the Bistro (AKA Jazz St. Louis) is amazing! So classy and groovy! I've been twice so far and I'm dying to go back. The best part about it is the huge discount students get. I think normally a seat is \$30 or \$40 for an adult, but students get seats for around \$15. Both times I've been, the music has been incredible (I'd highly recommend going when the Funky Butt Brass Band is playing). The food is slightly on the pricey side, so if you're on a budget and want a fun night out, get a seat for \$15 and enjoy some drinks/appetizers with some friends while listening to some sweet jazz music.

— John D., M1

A Classmate on the Live Music Scene

For the many small local bands and touring acts that come through St. Louis, there are some great small to midsize venues to check out! The **Duck Room at Blueberry Hill** is a great place to grab dinner and then head to the basement for some music.

The Ready Room is the main concert venue in the Grove, making it an ideal spot to see a show and hit a bar or two after. **The Sinkhole** is the perfect place to grab a cheap Canadian beer and listen to some loud music. On cold nights, you can go and sit by a giant fire pit between acts at **Off Broadway**, then head inside to the spacious, high-ceilinged venue that provides tons of natural reverb.

— Evan M., M1

A Classmate on the Theatre Scene

My favorite thing about St. Louis is access to the same traveling Broadway shows that in theory I could have seen when I lived in D.C. — but in the Midwest they're affordable enough that I actually go. This year's lineup at the **Fox Theatre**, two miles from the med school, includes *Dear Evan Hansen* (tickets starting at \$49), *Hamilton* (\$89), *The Band's Visit* (\$30), *Wicked* (\$49), and *Rent* (\$29). Treat yourself!

— Angela C., M1

A Classmate on Outdoor Arts

St. Louisans celebrate the arts in all its forms, and during nice weather, one of my favorite things to do is to attend any one of the myriad, typically free outdoor exhibits and events going on each week. Many of my best fair weather experiences in St. Louis involve packing some food, wine or beer, and a blanket or lawn chairs and sitting on the grass with friends, socializing and enjoying the music or waiting for the movie to start.

— Kristin P.

Art Hill Film Series (Free!)

Pack your chairs or blankets and grab a seat on Forest Park's Art Hill any Friday in July. Movie selection is loosely centered around a central theme each year, and a schedule is available on the St. Louis Art Museum website. Live music and food trucks start at 6 p.m., and the movie starts at 9 p.m. Food truck lines can be long, so consider packing a picnic. Lifehack: Take the MetroLink to Mai Lee and order some inexpensive banh mi and a pork bun to-go, buy some wine and snacks nearby at Dierbergs before taking the MetroLink over to the park.

Big Muddy Blues Festival (\$) 🔥

Downtown on the Landing in late August. Featuring many types of blues and blues-inspired music, including delta, country, R&B, soul, and rock. Three outdoor stages, no picnics allowed.

Blues at the Arch (Free!) 🔥

Enjoy live blues on the Arch grounds on Friday nights in August. Local food and drink vendors will be there, or pack a picnic. The Arch is accessible by MetroLink.

Blues City Deli, Benton Park

This bomb deli celebrates St. Louis' Blues music heritage and often has live blues on weekends. While you're there enjoying the tunes, order a muffaletta or po'boy; their sandwiches are out of this world (expect a line, as Blues City Deli is a popular St. Louis mainstay and, not to mention, a great place to bring your out of town guests).

Broadway Oyster Bar, Downtown 🔥

Eclectic New Orleans-themed dive bar with great local blues, jazz, and jam bands. A lively, friendly scene on a summer Saturday night.

Delmar Hall, the Loop 🔥

Lesser known acts than at the Pageant, but same ownership.

Jazz St. Louis, Downtown

Intimate, Cabaret style space is a classic jazz club (one of the best in the country), and is dedicated to sharing the art of American jazz with the community. Brings in nationally recognized (i.e., Jazz at Lincoln Center group) and outstanding local (i.e., Funky Butt Brass Band) jazz musicians.

Joe's Café, U City

Want a truly offbeat music experience? Check out Joe's. It's a super funky bar with an incredible junkyard sculpture garden out back. Live music on Thursdays and Saturdays, usually, but to be in the loop, email joescafe.bigbill@gmail.com to get on their mailing list. Joe's strives to be under the radar, so they don't often publicize their calendar except by email listserv. Doors at 7, show at 8. \$15, cash only. Must be 25 and up. BYOB and BYO food!

Large Music Venues, Downtown, West County

Larger acts play at the Enterprise Center, Chaifetz Arena, the Fox Theatre, Stifel Theatre, Chesterfield Amphitheatre, and Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre. These are all located downtown, with the exception of Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre (an outdoor amphitheatre located by the casino) and Chesterfield Amphitheatre, both in West County.

Laumeier Sculpture Park (Free!)

Looking for some art in the park? Laumeier is worth a visit. The front portion features large fields with interesting sculptures, including a realistic giant eyeball that will give you Anatomy lab flashbacks. Follow the big line of boulders back into the woods for interactive, climbable art, including some unique dog runs.

Off Broadway, Cherokee Street

A music venue that used to be a garage, Off Broadway has a very homey feel to it.

Saint Louis Art Museum, Forest Park

Free (!!!) art museum in the heart of Forest Park (they also bring in a touring exhibit each season, for which you must purchase tickets). The building is gorgeous and the museum is world renowned, with a collection spanning 5,000 years of cultures and genres. Originally founded as an independent entity within WashU and housed downtown, it moved to Forest Park right after our famous 1904 World's Fair (see the movie Meet Me in St. Louis!), into the Palace of Fine Arts fair building. The museum

then separated from the university in 1908. An impressive collection of European masters, the world's largest Max Beckman collection, and ample artifacts, tools, clothing, weapons, and furniture from various cultures throughout history comprise the permanent collection. A perfect rainy day activity.

Shakespeare in the Park (Free!)

The only free outdoor professional theatre in St. Louis, Shakespeare in the Park runs for three weeks in June. Held in Shakespeare Glen in Forest Park (just south of Art Hill).

ShowcaseSTL (\$)

St. Louis' largest all-local music festival, held in the Grove each June.

Sinkhole, South City

A hole in the wall in South City, Sinkhole Bar is the best spot for punk in town.

St. Louis Art Fair (Free! Concessions and, of course, art available for purchase.)

Held in downtown Clayton each September, just off the Clayton MetroLink stop. Buy some drinks and local eats at the food tents before strolling the 170 tents exhibiting independent and emerging artists from around the country.

St. Louis Symphony Orchestra at Powell Hall, Downtown

A beautiful white, gold, and red velvet concert hall (a former vaudeville theater), Powell Hall is home to the internationally recognized and Grammy Award-winning St. Louis Symphony Orchestra (the nation's second oldest orchestra!). Classical music not your thing? Consider bringing your date to one of their movie nights (The Empire Strikes Back and Harry Potter have been recent showings); they project the movie on a large screen and the orchestra plays the score as the movie progresses. The building is rumoured to be haunted by a ghost named George, who plays with the lights and elevators.

St. Louis Symphony in Forest Park (Free!) 🔥

Don't miss out when the acclaimed St. Louis Symphony leaves their post downtown at Powell Hall to play a free concert under the stars on Art Hill each September. Pack a picnic, wine, and a blanket, and cozy up with your friends while the sunsets on an early September evening. Last year, the evening culminated in fireworks. Pro tip: Rent a paddle boat from the Boathouse and paddle down the reservoir to the stage, enjoying the show from the water (bring a camping light).

Stifel Theatre, Downtown

Bands, musicals, and nationally touring stand-up comics appear at the newly renovated Stifel Theatre downtown.

The Black Rep, U City

Originally located downtown, the Black Rep now performs in the Edison Theater on WashU's Danforth Campus. It is the largest professional African-American theatre company in the nation!

The Bootleg at Atomic Cowboy, the Grove 🔥

This outdoor venue in the back of Atomic Cowboy brings in a wide variety of quality acts (reggae, jam bands, folk, bluegrass, rock, and electronic), and the backyard ambiance can't be beat.

The Muny (Free – \$\$\$)

The St. Louis Municipal Opera Theatre, aka The Muny (pronounced "myoo-knee"), is a beautiful outdoor amphitheater in the heart of Forest Park. It seats 11,000 people, and offers 1,500 free seats at each performance (show up early to take advantage of that first come, first served offer, though ticket prices range from expensive to quite affordable). Each year, the season of musicals they perform runs from June to August. Pack a picnic to enjoy in the side yard before the performance, which starts at dusk. Check their website for musical schedule and ticketing.

The Old Rockhouse, between Soulard and Downtown

Independent and locally owned venue bringing in both national and local acts.

The Pageant, the Loop 🔥

The Pageant is the largest of a variety of Joe Edwards' Loop-based music venues. They bring in big music acts and well-known stand-up comics. Popular shows sell out, so get on their mailing list if you don't want to miss out.

The Ready Room, the Grove

The Ready Room attracts many touring indie acts as well as some smaller pop artists.

Twilight Tuesdays (Free!) 🔥

Held in front of the Missouri History Museum in Forest Park on Tuesdays in September. Bring food and seating, or buy food at the local food trucks. Music styles vary but usually include some jazz and Motown.

Venice Café, Benton Park

This interesting, eclectic bar is covered top to bottom in mosaics, and features funky art and sculptures. Rotating local acts of varying music styles play almost every night of the week. The schedule is available on their website. If you're a Grateful Dead fan, check out local favorite Jake's Leg.

Whitaker Music Festival (Free!) 🔥

Enjoy local bands under the stars, surrounded by the smells of summer flowers. Held at the gorgeous Missouri Botanical Garden every Wednesday from May to August. Music begins at 7 p.m. and the last entry is 8:30 p.m. You can pack a picnic and blankets, or purchase food and drinks there (just limit glass).

Duck Room at Blueberry Hill, U City 🔥

Located in the basement of the Blueberry Hill restaurant on the Loop, the Duck Room is an intimate space with acts ranging from blues to psych-rock.

Fabulous Fox Theatre, Downtown 🔥

Nationally touring musicals and some big name musicians. Even if you're not a musical theatre fan, the building is ornate and stunning, so consider taking a backstage tour (\$10 departing at 10:30 am T/Th/Sa; Saturday tours include a performance on one of two of the Fox's famous Wurlitzer organs).

Explore: Attractions

Anheuser-Busch Brewery

The 45-minute General Anheuser-Busch Brewery tour will not only show you the beer making process, you'll also get to see their world famous dalmatians and the Clydesdales. The tour is FREE and it even includes two sizable beer samples at the end (free tickets are available on a first come, first served basis, or you can reserve tickets ahead of time for a \$5 fee). Other more extensive tours are available for \$10-35, depending on the tour.

— Vinay P., M1

City Museum

The City Museum is hands down my favorite STL attraction, and a place I always bring my out-of-town visitors. This massive space was painstakingly created by a local artist, the late Bob Cassilly. Climb through small and cavernous spaces, slide down multistory slides, and challenge your fear of heights as you ascend a chicken wire tunnel, suspended in the sky high above the city, ultimately ending up in a gutted airplane. The best way back down from there is to climb through another chicken wire tunnel to the top of a two-story slide. It's difficult to describe to people how incredible this place is, you really have to experience it for yourself. They're open until 11 p.m. on Friday and Saturdays, and they have a bar on the premises. Wear clothing and footwear appropriate for climbing and crawling.

— Kristin P., M1

City Museum: It is a bizarre place, basically a multistory playground for adults that is simultaneously disgusting, intriguing, and exhilarating. Once you 'buy-in' to the style and premise, it becomes a wonderful time to play around with your new friends and get to know your peers better.

— Colin M., M1

Forest Park

Let's just say that if I could write a haiku worthy of Forest Park, I would. But counting syllables is hard, so here it is: Forest Park is one of the very best things about living in St. Louis. It is an absolutely massive park with beautiful trails, rivers, fountains, trees, bunnies, and more. No doubt you will have endless space to enjoy your outdoor activity of choice. And as the park is located just across the street from Barnes Jewish Hospital, it is always convenient and accessible. As if that's not great enough as is, the park has oodles of hidden treasures, like a 100% free Art Museum, the Missouri History Museum, Science Center, and Saint Louis Zoo. Word on the

street is that the not-100%-free golf courses and ice skating rink are pretty fantastic too. So needless to say, I would not blame anyone for choosing to come to St. Louis solely for the joy that is Forest Park.

— **Chance F., M1**

Missouri Botanical Garden

The Missouri Botanical Garden is the second largest botanical garden in North America and is one of the country's oldest. It has almost 80 acres of beautifully maintained gardens to explore and is open year-round, with a giant climate-controlled geodesic dome called the Climatron, where you can experience a tropical forest even in the middle of winter. The garden hosts great events, including seasonal light shows, gardening and cooking classes, cultural festivals and free concerts. St. Louis residents enjoy free access on Wednesday and Saturday mornings, and it's very affordable at other times.

— **Rachel B., M1**

Saint Louis Science Center

When you need a break from school, but still want some educational stimulation, there's no better place to go than the Saint Louis Science Center. The Science Center has a variety of exhibits and attractions ranging from a Mars Rover simulator to a fossil lab. It also has a hyperboloid Planetarium and a fancy Omnimax theater with a screen that wraps almost 360 degrees, making for an incredible movie going experience. The center also hosts monthly events such as Science on Tap (learn about science and explore the museum while sipping on some excellent local craft beer). The best part of the museum? Free admission!

— **Vinay P., M1**

Saint Louis Zoo

Lions, and tigers, and med students? Oh my! The award-winning Saint Louis Zoo (one of the top zoos in the nation) is home to over 17,000 animals coming from about 600 species. Lucky for us, it is only about three miles away from school in Forest Park, and admission is FREE. The best study breaks are the ones that involve hanging with the penguins and mongooses.

— **Avan A., M1**

St. Louis Union Station

Once one of the busiest railroad stations in the country, Union Station has gone through a renovation to become a shopping and entertainment complex. It now houses our brand new St. Louis Aquarium (13,000 animals, 257 species, and a 250,000-gallon shark tank), a minigolf course, mirror maze, ropes course with SkyRail, carousel and a 200-ft., climate-controlled ferris wheel! Starting in 2022, the new Major League Soccer arena will be located right next door.

— **Vinay P., M1**

The Gateway Arch

Situated along the west bank of the Mississippi River is the Gateway Arch, a 630-foot tall catenary arch that symbolizes America's westward expansion. The Museum of Westward Expansion, located at the base, features displays on the construction of the Arch and life in the 1800s. Also, take a four-minute tram ride (which includes a short documentary film) up to the top — you can see 30 miles away on a clear day! The museum is free and the Tram Ride to the Top is \$12-16.

— Vincent N., M1

Explore: Local Trips

A Classmate on Floating the Meramec

One of the most fun experiences I've had so far was the class **float trip**! Over half of the class went to **Ozark Outdoors** on a five-mile float trip on the Meramec River. It made for great class bonding and a chance to experience outdoor activities in Missouri.

— Janessa S., M1

A Classmate on Local Adventures

There is so much to do around St. Louis, and I encourage you to get out and explore! Need a car to get there? Consider WashU's **Carshare** program (see above), or make friends with your car-owning classmates.

— Vinay P., M1

A Classmate on Pumpkin & Apple Picking

Eckert's Farm is the place to go for your apple and pumpkin-picking needs. Go with a big group of friends, a significant other, or alone — you'll have a great time and come away with delicious, affordable produce! It's a bit of a drive away, so it's a fun mini-day trip, too. Plus, it's a great excuse to explore outside St. Louis! And for those who'd rather have a photoshoot than a bag full of fruit, there are few backdrops as beautiful and oh-so-typically fall as an orchard (but why not both?).

— Jen C., M1

Apple Picking, Berry Picking, and Pumpkin Patches (\$) 🍂

The largest option for all your apple, berry, and pumpkin picking needs is the expansive Eckert's Farm. Eckert's has multiple locations, with the Belleville location being the largest. Does apple picking make you crave cider donuts? Braeutigam Orchards is right down the road from the Belleville Eckert's, and they have hot coffee, frozen (or hot) apple cider, and their bakery sells incredible apple cider donuts, pumpkin donuts, and 'apple stick' pastries. They also have lots of cool farm animals (feed the baby goats!). You can definitely hit up both Eckert's and Braeutigam in the same day (we recommend stopping at Braeutigam first for snacks before heading to Eckert's to apple pick).

Cahokia Mounds (\$)

Pre-Columbian Native American mound city, located just outside St. Louis in Illinois. Cahokia Mounds, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is the largest, most complex archeological site north of Mexico.

Cut Down Your Own Christmas Tree at Eckert's (\$\$)

In the market for a tree this holiday season? Ted Drewes (South City location) sells them from their parking lot each year, but the real fun is in bundling up and heading over to Eckert's Farm in Belleville to cut down your own. Either way, there's nothing like the smell of fresh pine to make your place feel cozy and festive as finals approach.

Float Trip (\$\$) 🍂

River float trips are a tradition in Missouri. Take the lead on planning the unofficial M1 float trip, or get away with a small group of your friends, though this really is a more-the-merrier type of activity. You can rent inner tubes or bring your own. Ozark Outdoors Resort on the Meramec River and Sunburst Ranch on the North Fork River are both good options to look into.

Go Ape Zip Line & Treetop Adventure (\$\$\$)

Zip-lining tours near Creve Coeur Lake. Check goape.com for more information.

Kayak/SUP/Canoe Creve Coeur Lake (\$) 🍂

Rentals available during good weather. Check crevecoeurlakerentals.net for more info.

Kimmswick, Missouri (\$)

The main attraction here is the Blue Owl Restaurant & Bakery, which features the Levee High Apple Pie (one of Oprah's Favorite Things). Expect Midwestern homecookin' and waitresses in old timey dresses. If you're feeling twee, the town also holds an Apple Butter Festival the last full weekend of October.

Lambert's Café (\$\$)

If you want the best yellow rolls you've ever had thrown at your head, or if you're craving fried okra, sweet tea, and other Southern delights, take a road trip for lunch out to Lambert's in Sikeston. Expect long waits, full stomachs, and some laughs.

Old Town St. Charles (\$)

Go for the holiday lights and get some holiday shopping done in the many gift shops along the cobblestone Main Street. Or if you prefer, go during the warmer months and have lunch before renting bikes at the local shop and exploring this small portion of the enormous Katy Trail (a 240-mile bike trail that extends from St. Louis, almost to Kansas City).

Purina Dog Shows (\$)

Purina Farms is located just outside St. Louis, and their nationally televised agility shows happen here during the good weather months. If watching Border Collies and Aussies zig zag between fence poles is your idea of a good time, check out their calendar online.

Rent a Pontoon on the Mississippi River (\$\$)

Pack some food, a cooler full of drinks, and a car or two full of your classmates, and head to the river for a day of pontoon boating. Choose a sunny day, but in case your future derm classmates forget to remind you: wear sunscreen. Various pontoon rental companies can be found with a quick google.

Riverboat Cruises (\$\$-\$\$\$)

Dinner cruises, Blues music cruises, and short trips up the Mississippi. Visit the Gateway Arch website to buy tickets.

Six Flags and Hurricane Harbor (\$-\$\$\$)

Six Flags and their sister waterpark. Go for Fright Fest in October for additional scares in the form of haunted houses. Pro Tip: If you want to avoid the lines and support St. Louis Children's Hospital, go for Children's Hospital Night — tickets for the event are pricey, but you get dinner, a t-shirt, and unlimited, lineless coaster rides (they only sell 3,600 tickets).

Staycations (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$)

Looking to splurge on a getaway while still sticking around? Here are some hotel options worth checking out (keep a lookout for discounts because prices swing widely): Moonrise Hotel, The Cheshire, the Four Seasons, Lumiere Place, the Chase Park Plaza, Hotel St. Louis, the Inn at St. Albans, the Ritz-Carlton.

The Wineries (\$-\$\$) 🍷

Don't miss this. There are a number of winery regions on the outskirts of St. Louis, some with a higher winery density than others. If it's your first visit, the Augusta area wineries are the easiest to get to and are usually quite lively, but the Hermann wineries are also worth checking out (and reachable by Amtrak for \$20; once you get there, take the Hermann Trolley to the wineries for \$20/day). It's best to go any time the weather is tolerable, as most wineries are predominantly an outdoor experience, with pretty views and live music (check their websites for music schedules). Plan ahead and pick wineries that are near each other. Some recommendations include: Blumenhof, Chandler Hill, Montelle, Noboleis, Augusta Winery, Cedar Lake Cellars, and Stone Hill.

Top Golf (\$\$) 🏌️

Think bowling but golf. A bit of a drive to the western edges of West County, but totally worth it.

Explore: Road Trips

A Classmate on Nashville

I took a trip to **Nashville** with some classmates and it was a great time!

— Jessica C., M1

A Classmate on the Road

St. Louis is known nationally as the “Gateway to the West,” and it certainly does not disappoint in this regard. Centrally located as the hub of several highways, it is within five-hour drives of **Chicago, Nashville, Memphis, and Kansas City**. One of my favorite parts of being a medical student here are the road trips I have made with other students to **Chicago**. It is a wonderful mini-vacation after a round of exams, and they are so much fun. Often, the drive itself is one of the best parts, full of interesting conversations and classmate bonding!

— Jeffrey T., M1

Big Cedar Lodge

4-hour drive. A super fun, massive resort owned by Bass Pro Shops. Various types of fairly upscale accommodations, from hotel rooms to romantic cabins. Here you’ll find golf courses, a driving range, a shooting range, hiking, museums, caverns, a spa, and a massive lake with boat rentals and other fun lake activities.

Branson

4-hour drive. Home to ample kitschy live performances and the incredible Silver Dollar City amusement park. Its 76 Country Boulevard is lined with theaters which are homes to various diverse resident acts, including country music performers. Visit the Marvel Cave and Dolly Parton’s Dixie Stampede dinner attraction.

Chicago

5-hour drive. The Windy City! Chicago is a world-class city and home to exciting nightlife, top restaurants, amazing cultural attractions, and fun sports. Visit Navy Pier and the Shedd Aquarium, and shop along Michigan Avenue. If you want to make the most of the dazzling Lake Michigan, go during warmer weather and run or bike at the edge of the lake, rent a boat, or take a dip in the water.

Kansas City

4-hour drive. Home to the famous Kansas City barbecue! Known for its vibrant nightlife in the Power & Light District, be sure to visit! In celebration of its jazz music roots, Kansas City is home to the National Jazz Museum. It also has the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, a fantastic art museum, a brand new luxury Loews Hotel, and the Worlds of Fun amusement park. Reachable by Amtrak!

Louisville

4-hour drive. Whiskey fans can explore America's Bourbon Trail, and the gambling inclined can have a day at the races at the historic Churchill Downs racetrack. Maybe even go for the Kentucky Derby! Visit the Louisville Slugger Museum and the Mohammed Ali Museum, before partying all night on Fourth Street. Don't forget to try the hot banana pudding, derby pie, Kentucky hot browns, bacon-on-a-stick, and fried chicken (try it at Indi; Louisville is the birthplace of Colonel Sanders!).

Memphis

4-hour drive. The home of Rock & Roll and the Memphis Blues, go to Memphis for great nightlife and great music. Memphis is home to one of the four distinct barbecue styles in the U.S., so make sure to arrive hungry! Once there, tour Graceland Mansion (Elvis' home) and visit the Memphis Civil Rights Museum and the Lorraine Motel (where Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968) to reflect on the history of American civil rights.

Nashville

4.5-hour drive. Stay out all night hearing live bands on Music Row, eat hot chicken, and shop the boutiques the next morning (if you're still feeling up to it after your night out). In addition to its music scene, Nashville has a bustling foodie scene to explore. Visit the Grand Ole Opry, the Country Music Hall of Fame, the Johnny Cash Museum, and the replica Parthenon.

Festivals & Events: Fall

A Classmate on CWE Halloween

The CWE has everything you could ask for in a massive **Halloween block party**: fun, flirty, festive, and most importantly, free. All conveniently located right in our backyard: the Central West End.

— Janessa S., M1

A Classmate on Haunted Houses

The Darkness haunted house was the best I've ever been to — I've traveled hours for haunted houses way lower quality and this one is so close!!!

— Maggy B., M1

A Classmate on the Balloon Glow

The **Forest Park Balloon Glow** was one of my favorite FREE events of this fall! One weekend in September, over 50 hot air balloons fill the middle of Forest Park, which is just about a 10-minute walk from campus. As the evening falls, the balloons inflate and light up the park. My friends and I laid out picnic blankets and took in the beautiful views while we enjoyed food from some food trucks and music from local bands. Then, there were fireworks at the end of the evening! This was definitely a really unique event that was a good break from studying.

— Allie L., M1

Grove Fest, the Grove

Eclectic, independent street festival in the Grove (close to campus). Features street performers, live music, a drag show and art from local artists. Be sure to stop by to help paint the paint-by-numbers mural!

Halloween, Many Locations

In the morning, consider participating in the **Great GO! St. Louis Halloween 10K** downtown, which promises plenty of good people watching as you zip past other runners in their superhero costumes (or they zip past you ... looking at you, SpongeBob). At night, while many bars across town (like those in Soulard) will be hosting their own parties, the CWE is the place to be. The massive, legendary **CWE Costume Party** takes over Maryland Plaza and spills into adjacent blocks. It's a huge, debaucherous event, with a center stage for the hilarious costume competition (expect to see some elaborate costumes). This is definitely a can't miss event, and it's so close to the med school! (Free to attend, concessions for purchase!)

Looking for some scares this Halloween season? We have some of the best haunted houses in the country, with **The Darkness** in Soulard topping the list (you might pee your pants), followed by **Creepyworld**. Less scary options for the faint of heart with FOMO include **Fright Fest at Six Flags** (so fun!), the **Lemp Mansion Haunted Tours** (the Lemp Mansion is rumored to be actually haunted, like by ghosts ... so no jump scares here!), and **Haunted Hayrides at Eckert's Farm** (family friendly, for those of you with an exaggerated startle reflex).

Renaissance Festival, Wentzville

Party like it's 1499 at the St. Louis Renaissance Festival, held in Wentzville, Missouri every mid-September to mid-October. Also features the Kegs n' Eggs adult Easter egg hunt. Dog friendly (stipulations apply, so check their website before heading down there). Discount tickets available for designated drivers!

Festivals & Events: Spring

Cinco de Mayo, Cherokee Street

50,000 people descend on Cherokee Street each May 5 to celebrate the culture and arts of Mexico. Lucha Libre wrestling matches are held at 2 and 4 p.m., live music plays all day, there are bull rides, a climbing wall and, of course, drinks and music. (Free to attend, concessions for purchase!)

Earth Day, Forest Park

Late April (April 25, 2020). Earth Day is a dog-friendly event held in the center of Forest Park each year, near the Muny. Come enjoy the local food trucks (lots of vegan/veggie options!) and shop the many environmentally conscious vendors and organizations that have set up tents to sell their wares and raise awareness. The weather is usually beautiful, to boot! (Free to attend, concessions for purchase!)

Opening Day, Downtown/Ballpark Village

St. Louis is decidedly a baseball town, and the Cardinals are beloved here. Even non-baseball fans in the city still sport their Cardinals gear and root, root, root for the hometown team. For this reason, the day of the home opener for the **St. Louis Cardinals** is a big deal each year, and turnout is reliably good. People show up to the game early to catch the entire pregame celebration and see the Anheuser-Busch Clydesdales on the field. Try and get tickets to the game, but if you can't, you can still party with fans in Ballpark Village and witness the flyover.

Songkran Festival, North County

Thai food fan? Come to Wat Phrasiratanaram in Florissant for the spring Songkran Festival (Thai New Year). Local Thai restaurants' booths are interspersed with booths selling items cooked on site by members of the St. Louis Thai community. Inside the temple are elaborate dance and music performances, and even a beauty pageant. Have business with the Thai Consulate? They'll be there to help you out, too.

St. Louis African Arts Festival, Forest Park

Celebrate the many cultures of Africa at the World's Fair Pavilion in Forest Park each year. Local artists' exhibit their work, vendors and jewelry designers sell their wares, and live performers captivate. (Free to attend and sponsored by WashU!)

Festivals & Events: Summer

CWE Cocktail Party, CWE

The CWE is home to the first ever cocktail party on record, and the neighborhood celebrates this distinction every year by hosting an annual cocktail party in the streets. Hop from tent to tent sampling cocktails, watch the cocktail competition as local bartenders compete for the title Best Bartender in the City, and take in the street performers and live music. (Free to attend, concessions for purchase!)

Festival of Nations, Tower Grove Park

If you're a foodie or craving some international food favorites, the Festival of Nations is where it's at. See live dance and music performances representing many cultures and buy food at any one of 40 tents, each showcasing the cuisine of a different country. This is a well-attended event, so plan to take public transportation or parallel park on an adjoining street and walk into Tower Grove Park, where the festival is hosted in late August. Consider volunteering with WUSM to do health screenings at the event!

Fourth of July, many locations

There are various options for celebrating Independence Day in St. Louis, as most municipalities host a fireworks display. Some standout events are **Fair St. Louis**, and the **Webster Groves' Community Days** celebration. The historic, multi-day **Fair St. Louis** (formerly called the VP Fair) is held along the riverfront downtown.

They'll have a parade, live music performances by popular mainstream artists, many vendors, and of course, the **Boeing Air Show** (in addition to BJC, Boeing is one of the largest employers in St. Louis). The municipality of **Webster Groves** hosts a huge four-day carnival at their rec center and has great fireworks. Expect to parallel park on one of the adjacent residential streets and walk to the carnival.

Great Forest Park Balloon Glow and Race, Forest Park

One of the first events that will happen on a Friday night when you arrive in St. Louis for med school, the **Balloon Glow** is held at night, just west of campus at Central Fields in Forest Park. Over 50 tethered hot air balloons, inflated by their burners, light up the night sky. Stroll amongst the balloons, hear the live music on the main stage, and be sure to stop by the St. Louis Children's Hospital balloon. The glow takes place from dusk until 9 p.m. and culminates in a fireworks display. Then, Saturday in the early evening, come by to watch the balloons take flight as the **Great Forest Park Balloon Race** commences — the St. Louis sky will be freckled with balloons in the hours after launch. Into skydiving? Come watch the skydivers take off in the afternoon. (Free to attend, concessions for purchase!)

Greek Fest, CWE

Held right on the edge of campus each Labor Day weekend at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church. Greek musicians, Greek dancers and of course, incredible, affordable Greek food, are the reason St. Louis Magazine has named it amongst the best local festivals in St. Louis. (Free to attend, concessions for purchase!)

IndiHop, Cherokee Street, the Grove

Hop on and off the shuttle between these two iconic districts, sampling the beer from our many craft breweries. A ticket gets you a shuttle pass, tasting glass, and tasting of 50 or so beers. Live entertainment from local musicians performing at each stop.

Japanese Festival, Shaw

Held on Labor Day weekend at the Missouri Botanical Garden every year. Come celebrate culture; witness taiko drumming, bon odori dancing, and martial arts; take candlelit walks through the beautiful Japanese Garden as dusk settles in.

PrideFest, Downtown, the Grove 🔥

We love celebrating our LGBTQ+ community members here in St. Louis, and every year, **PrideFest** and the **Grand Pride Parade** get bigger and bigger. Don your rainbow attire and join the city in celebrating that love is love! (Free to attend, concessions for purchase!)

Q in the Lou, Downtown

Live music and 14,000 pounds of barbecue made by the best pitmasters from around the country are what you can expect at this annual St. Louis barbecue festival. Sample as much quality que as you can handle, then watch the pros stuff their faces at the Rib Rumble rib eating competition, where 12 contestants compete to eat the most ribs in five minutes. Festival held each September. (Free to attend, BBQ for purchase.)

Festivals & Events: Winter

A Classmate on Winter Events

The St. Louis government and business community really make the most of every type of weather here. One of the things I love about this city is that the list of things to do changes by the week, month and season, giving residents something new or nostalgic to look forward to, even as the temperatures start to drop. There are plenty of indoor activities open year round, like the Art Museum, the indoor portion of the City Museum, the St. Louis Aquarium and others, but the outdoor winter activities like ice skating and holiday lights really make the turn of the seasons feel like something to be savored and appreciated.

— Kristin P., M1

Anheuser-Busch Brewery Lights (Free!) 🔥

The most popular option for seeing holiday lights is to take a brewery lights tour at Anheuser-Busch brewery in Soulard. The brewery really goes out of its way to make the experience special.

Clayton Shaw Park Skating Rink (\$)

A bit larger than Steinberg, and close to the Clayton MetroLink stop.

Garden Glow (\$\$) 🌟

This beautiful lights display in the **Missouri Botanical Garden** will give you plenty of holiday lights photo ops for the 'gram.

Mardi Gras, Soulard 🌟

Second only to the New Orleans' Mardi Gras in size, the St. Louis Mardi Gras is a huge event held on the cobblestone streets of Soulard every year. Between bar stops, hurricanes and beers are available for purchase from street vendors. Expect a sea of people, chilly temperatures, debauchery, and lots and lots of beads. The weeks-long festivities begin on the Twelfth Night and end with the parade on Fat Tuesday. (Free to attend, concessions for purchase!)

Santa's Magical Kingdom (\$) 🌟

Unexpectedly fun and funny lights display. Located in Eureka, Missouri, in the woods near **Six Flags**. If you miss your childhood, you can even get your picture taken with Santa.

Sledding on Art Hill (Free!) 🌟

Buy a sled or inner tube ahead of time so you're prepared when St. Louis gets a big snow (we only get a few of these each winter, so don't miss out!). You're not truly a St. Louisan until you've experienced sledding down **Art Hill**. Expect a crowd of sledders blanketing the expansive hill, fire pits, and lots of makeshift sleds.

St. Louis Zoo Wild Lights (Free!) 🌟

Light displays, fire pits, animal exhibits, and live music on the St. Louis Zoo grounds.

St. Patrick's Day, Dogtown, Downtown

Just after you've recovered from Mardi Gras, the **St. Patrick's Day Parade** and festival rolls around. Bring your green hat and start the morning off right with the St. Patrick's Day Parade Run downtown, a five-miler which often gives participants their first taste of spring weather. If you're in the front of the heat, you'll be surrounded by other serious runners angling for a PR. The run/walkers in the back can expect to see plenty of green-themed costumes and some early morning holiday antics (e.g., a group of bros running the race while pulling their buddy and his keg along in a little red wagon). After the run, watch the

Downtown parade or head to **Dogtown** to pub hop during their annual **Irish Festival and Parade**. (Yes, there are not one, but two parades happening in town on St. Patrick's Day!)

Steinberg Skating Rink (\$)

Outdoor skating rink on the edge of campus, just inside Forest Park. There's even a large fire pit for marshmallow roasting and warming up. Definitely worth checking out.

Winter Wonderland at Tilles Park (\$-\$\$)

This drive-through lights display off McKnight Road is just south of Highway 40. Lights are dated but the Tilles lights display is a time-honored St. Louis tradition. Want to skip the lines? Reserve a horse drawn carriage — it's a classic experience, and a cozy date night idea.

Winterfest

Free, except skate rental. Downtown by the Gateway Arch, ice skate at the large outdoor rink, browse the Winter Market, or chill in Igloo Village.

Food: Coffee Break

A Classmate on Boba

Boba. Or bubble tea, depending on where you're from. As the sixth USDA-approved food group, it's a non-negotiable part of the student diet. There is a relative abundance of boba places in the city, and here are a few.

— Virginia H., M1

A Classmate on Sweet Treats

There is no shortage of dessert eateries in St. Louis, and there are actually many around the Central West End. The Cup is a gourmet cupcake shop in the CWE, and Jeni's Ice Cream is a scoop shop with some really interesting flavors. There is also a Hot Box Cookies and an Insomnia Cookies in the Central West End, which both offer warm cookies in-store or via delivery. There are also places nearby to get donuts, including Vincent Van Donut, which is just a few minutes away from campus in the Grove. Notably, a famous St. Louis frozen custard place, Ted Drewes, is about a 10-minute drive from campus!

— Allie L., M1

A Classmate on the Coffee Buzz

I tend to study in cafés; the list below includes some of my favorite coffee shops around town. I fell in love with Blueprint when they served their pour-overs in Erlenmeyer flasks. Northwest Coffee is my favorite place to read books and to hang out with friends. Sump is my coffee connoisseur friends' all-time favorite coffee shop, and Rise has good food (avocado toast is my personal favorite!).

— Kay P., M1

Bailey's Chocolate Bar, Lafayette Square (\$\$) 🔥

Hey, Cassanova. Date going well and you want to take it to the next level? Set the mood with a nightcap at Bailey's chocolate bar, where you and your soon-to-be boo can tuck into the Lover's Plate, decadent chocolate desserts, cheese boards, and dessert martinis (with names like "The Sexual") in just the right ambiance (think low lighting and red velvet curtains, the only thing missing is Marvin Gaye singing Let's Get It On).

— Kay P., M1

Becker Medical Library, CWE (Free!) 🔥

Free coffee, tea, and candy is available every day on the second floor of the med school's library.

Blueprint Coffee, the Loop (\$) 🔥

It's on the Loop, near the Danforth Campus. They also have tasty pastries.

Clementine's Naughty & Nice, Lafayette Square (\$\$)

Nice ice cream (try gooey butter flavor or Italian butter cookie) and naughty ice cream (boozy banana rum, anyone?).

Comet Coffee, CWE (\$) 🔥

Great coffee perched between the Science Center and Yoga Six's awesome hot yoga studio.

Crown Candy Kitchen, North City (\$) 🔥

A St. Louis mainstay since 1913 and one way you can support small business in North City. Malts, shakes, candy made on site, sundaes, and a massive BLT.

Cube Tea Studio, Olive Boulevard (\$)

A tiny place right next to Olive Supermarket. It's on the pricier side, but offers cheese tea (!) in addition to the standard boba fare.

Jeni's, CWE (\$\$)

Want a break from concretes or can't make it to Ted Drewes this week? This Columbus, Ohio scoop shop has a branch in the CWE, bringing their WOW-so-good, cow-to-cone ice cream straight to study weary WUSM students.

Kaldi's, on Campus in the FLTC and the MCC, on Euclid Avenue in the CWE (\$)

The FLTC location is right next to classrooms and carrels and is a popular meeting place. All locations are vegetarian friendly, and the FLTC location is fully vegetarian. The Euclid location is great for studying and has a mix of cozy/modern vibes. It's a bit crowded during the weekend but in general, a great place to hang out with friends and get some work done!

Kayak's, U City (\$)

Study-centric coffee shop on the corner of the Danforth Campus (right off a MetroLink stop), with cozy ski lodge vibes.

Kung Fu Tea, the Loop (\$)

The only chain that has made its way to STL. Great bubbles, good tea.

Missouri Baking Company, The Hill (\$)

Cannoli, wedding cookies, and other classic Italian sweets at this St. Louis institution.

Northwest Coffee, CWE (\$)

A bit of a walk from the CWE – Euclid, but their excellent coffee, laid-back atmosphere, and friendly baristas make it worthwhile.

Rise Coffee, the Grove (\$)

A great place to study and relax with friends. Fantastic ambiance with unique, artsy, liberal decors. Great coffee and food.

St. Louis Bubble Tea, the Loop (\$)

STL's first authentic boba establishment. Affordable boba and TONS of options. Also has some food if you're hungry.

Strange Donuts, Maplewood (\$)

The name says it all. Expect strange flavors like Puppy Chow, Rainbow Pony, Hot Honey, and PBJ.

Sump Coffee, Benton Park, (\$)

Sump is a bit out of the way from the medical campus, but it's a great excursion on the weekend.

Ted Drewes, South City (\$)

Summer isn't summer without a concrete from Ted Drewes. Concretes so thick they stay in the cup when it's turned upside down. Buy one and then sit in your car with the windows open, enjoying the lively scene while you savor your treat. Try brownie with butterscotch, Tedads with salted caramel, or one of their many listed combinations of concrete toppings. Dog friendly (but if your pup has a sensitive tummy, know their "dog cups" are made with human custard).

The Cup, CWE (\$)

Jilly's in U City may have won Cupcake Wars, but we still think the Cup has the best cupcakes in town.

The Fountain on Locust, Lafayette Square (\$\$)

A retro ice cream bar and restaurant in the former Sutz auto showroom. It's an old-school fountain parlor with adult upgrades, namely, ice cream martinis.

Vincent van Doughnut, the Grove, Clayton (\$\$)

Made from scratch, artisanal donuts with flavors like maple bacon, dulce de leche, and lemon lavender. Gluten-free donuts available on Fridays and vegan donuts baked weekly.

Food: Cuisines

A Classmate on Dim Sum

Even though you might not associate dim sum with St. Louis, you should definitely check out Mandarin House! The menu is authentic and expansive, serving everything from boba, to shrimp dumplings, vegetable soup, and orange chicken. Furthermore, the venue is quite large, so it's great for both small gatherings and large groups. If you want the full dim sum experience, I would recommend going for the weekend lunch special and make sure to order the steamed pork buns!

— Haley S., M1

A Classmate on Mediterranean Food

The Mediterranean might be thousands of miles away, but there are plenty of options for its food right here in town. The Vine is my personal favorite with its hot beef, soft pita, and creamy hummus.

— Vinay P., M1

A Classmate on Phở

Despite the fact that St. Louis is located in the Midwest, there is surprisingly a good variety of Vietnamese restaurants, specifically for phở. My current top two recommendations include Phở Grand and Phở Long for two separate reasons. On one hand, Phở Grand has a very diverse menu with many great dishes including, but not limited to, phở. The phở specifically has a flavorful broth and is priced reasonably for the quantity of noodles and meat provided. It will definitely quench your craving for phở without leaving you feeling unnecessarily full and/or greasy from the broth. Meanwhile, Phở Long has a smaller menu but really focuses on the phở. The broth itself is pretty flavorful, though somewhat lacking compared to Phở Grand, however the quantity of noodles and meat provided for the given price is higher than that of Phở Grand. Likewise, to note, the broth isn't very heavy with oil. If you are looking for phở that, at a very slight cost in quality, is cheap with large portions, I would highly recommend Phở Long.

— Anthony W., M1

A Classmate on Pizza

While I personally love Imo's, I assure you there's way more to the pizza scene in St. Louis than just thin crust and provol cheese. If you're craving pizza, you'll have many delicious options, no matter your pizza style preference.

— Kristin P., M1

A Classmate on Ramen

While BBQ and ribs are a staple of the St. Louis diet, if you're looking for something off the beaten path, ramen is a great refresher to your restaurant routine. My personal favorite ramen at Nami is the Original Tonkatsu.

— Mac E., M1

A Classmate on Southern & Soul Food

There are some great options for soul food that are pretty near to the medical campus! Grace Meat + Three is a restaurant in the Grove, which is about a five-minute drive from campus or a 15-minute walk. They have plenty of soul food options, like fried chicken, homemade macaroni and cheese, burgers, collard greens, and chicken and dumplings. This great local eatery is perfect for indulging in your soul food cravings.

— Allie L., M1

A Classmate on St. Louis Being a Barbecue Town

The single most important reason to come to St Louis! Just kidding, but the 'cue really is the best in the world. Here are the consensus best smokehouses around: Pappy's was voted best ribs in America by the Food Network — and I'm inclined to agree! The meat is unbeatable and the walls are covered in menus signed by celebrities. It's an iconic local establishment that absolutely deserves a visit from everyone. Try to get there early in the day before the burnt ends run out! Sugarfire was my parents' favorite when they visited for the White Coat ceremony. The best part is the sauces (upwards of eight different flavors), plus your food is served right on the spot. The Meat Daddy combo is easily my all-time favorite meal in town. Salt + Smoke and The Shaved Duck are honorable mentions for their great atmosphere and quality sides!

— Bruin P., M1

A Classmate on Tacos

Speaking as a Southern Californian and taco aficionado, I was pleasantly surprised by the number of taco places in St. Louis! If you want fast and cheap food, Mission Taco serves adequate food, but its main claim to fame is two dollar tequila shots and tacos after 10 p.m. If you are looking for okay tacos and excellent margaritas, El Burro Loco in the Central West End is also a good bet. But if you want authentic, out-of-this world tacos, go to Mi Ranchito in the Loop. The service is impeccable and the food is unforgettable!

— Haley S., M1

Addie's Thai, Creve Coeur (\$\$) 🍲

Don't go to Addie's, let Addie's come to you — they're a heavy rotation favorite at WUSM lunch talks.

Anything on the Hill, the Hill (\$) 🔥

You have to give St. Louis-style Italian a try while you're here, and besides Zia's, there are so many great options on the Hill. For more pasta, check out Cunetto's or Anthonino's. For St. Louis-style Italian sandwiches, try the hot salami at Gioia's or Adriana's. Not sure if you're craving Spanish or Italian? Check out Guido's.

Balkan Treat Box, Webster Groves (\$) 🔥

Incredible Turkish spot that offers contemporary takes on Old World Turkish classics.

Beast Butcher & Block, the Grove (\$\$) 🔥

The only restaurant we know of where you can try the St. Louis backyard barbecue classic, barbecued pork steak. Great sauces, rotating sides, and your meal comes with a tortilla!

Bogart's, Soulard (\$\$)

Memphis and STL-style barbecue, so you don't have to choose.

Byrd & Barrel, Cherokee Street (\$) 🔥

Fast casual fried chicken with killer nuggz.

Cate Zone, Olivette (\$) 🔥

A WashU undergrad and WUSM student favorite featuring inventive cuisine from the Dongbei region of northeast China.

Charlie Gitto's, Clayton (\$\$\$) 🔥

Fairly upscale Italian restaurant that is a favorite for special occasions for many St. Louisans. It's Hill-style Italian, but upgraded. For pasta, try the baked spaghetti with meatballs or the penne borghese, but their meat entrees are also delicious.

Corner 17, the Loop (\$) 🔥

Handmade dumplings, hand-pulled noodles swimming in soul fortifying broth, and quality boba, to boot. The perfect lunch spot to warm you up on a chilly day.

Dewey's, U City (\$\$) 🔥

Fresh pizza with lots of veggie topping options.

El Burro Loco, CWE (\$\$)

Close to campus and popular with WUSM students. Lively Tex-Mex with huge, affordable margaritas, and room for large groups. Plus, they'll give you a free tequila shot and let you wear one of the sombreros on your birthday!

Fork & Stix, the Loop (\$)

Northern Thai cuisine, and hands down the best Thai in the city — get the Khao Soi!

Grace Meat + Three, the Grove (\$\$) 🔥

Fried chicken, mac'n'cheese, burgers, barbecue, and collard greens. (The “three” means three sides.)

Guerrilla Street Food, The Hill (\$) 🔥

This Filipino restaurant started as a food truck and has really taken over with its multiple brick and mortar locations. You really can't go wrong here, but the Bicol Express is bomb.

iNDO, Shaw (\$\$\$\$)

If you can scrape together the coin then OMG go here. Upscale, novel Southeast Asian cuisine, plus the best sushi in town.

Imo's, Many Locations (\$)

Go-to pizza delivery option for many a St. Louisan, give Imo's Pizza a try while you're here. Order some salad with Imo's house dressing and t-rav while you're at it, if you want the full St. Louis experience. See STL Food Quirks for more info about St. Louis' unique, often controversial pizza style.

K-Bop Food Truck, WashU Food Trucks (\$) 🔥

Serving “cup bop,” Korean barbecue served over rice in a large froyo-style cup.

Katie's Pizza and Pasta Osteria, Rock Hill (\$\$) 🔥

Artisan Italian pizza (with fancy toppings), pasta, craft cocktails, watermelon/ricotta salata salad, and also a fried artichoke salad that is not to be missed.

Kim's Bakery, West County (\$)

The go-to Korean bakery for classic cakes, red bean buns, chicken curry buns, and light, fluffy Korean breads. Right next to Addie's Thai House.

La Pizza, U City (\$\$)

Craving killer East Coast-style pizza? Pick up a pie at La Pizza (carry out only).

La Vallesana, Cherokee Street (\$)

Cherokee Street is the hub for true Mexican taquerias. Stroll the small boutiques and Mexican grocers after you eat some street tacos and tortas at La Vallesana. Buy a homemade paleta or an agua fresca on your way out the door!

Layla's, the Grove (\$\$) 🔥

Burgers and shawarma close to campus.

Lona's Little Eats, Fox Park (\$) 🔥

Fresh Asian comfort food. Vegan-friendly. Make-your-own rice paper wraps.

Lulu Asian Kitchen, Olivette (\$)

More Olivette dim sum, plus other Chinese dishes.

Mai Lee, Brentwood (\$\$) 🔥

Right off the MetroLink. Incredible pork buns and banh xeo, belly-warming phở, and their banh mi are a steal at \$4. (Pro tip: Pick some Mai Lee banh mi before attending one of St. Louis' many free, outdoor picnic-style events). Qui (@phokingqui on insta — he has a sense of humor) and his family put their heart and soul into this place and his new venture, Nudo House.

Mandarin House, Olivette (\$\$) 🔥

The go-to for dim sum on a Sunday morning along this strip of Olive Street Road home to many Asian restaurants and grocers.

Mayo Ketchup, Lafayette Square (\$) 🔥

Fast-casual Puerto Rican, Dominican and Cuban food. Great rice bowls and Cuban sandwiches, plus bomb maduros y tostones.

Medina Grill, CWE (\$) 🔥

Fast-casual Mediterranean food, fairly close to campus in Maryland Plaza.

Mi Ranchito, U City (\$) 🔥

This Mexican dive in a random U City strip mall (tucked behind the Loop) is a hit with WashU undergrads. They have an extensive menu, the typical beans and rice sides, lots of gooey chihuahua cheese, huge but mediocre margs, and of course, the standard fare of tacos/fajitas/enchiladas/quesadillas/burritos. If you're craving Mexican but don't want to go full throttle on beans and cheese, the chicken enchiladas verdes are truly great (filled with chicken breast, fresh avocado, cilantro, and queso fresco).

Midtown Sushi and Ramen, Midtown (\$\$) 🔥

Five minutes from campus, east on Forest Park, for a closer bite.

Mission Taco, CWE, the Loop (\$) 🔥

Street tacos and excellent margs, popular with WUSM students. Late night happy hour specials include \$2 tacos and \$2 tequila shots after 10 p.m.

Nami Ramen, Clayton (\$\$) 🔥

A 10-minute drive from campus, with lots of seating and food options (including a renowned spicy ramen).

Nudo House, the Loop and Creve Coeur (\$\$) 🔥

Handcrafted ramen, with a broth informed by one of Japan's leading ramen chefs.

Olio, Shaw (\$\$\$) 🔥

Lovely date night spot by James Beard semifinalist Ben Poremba, offering upscale Mediterranean small plates on delicate china dishes, in a renovated 1930s Standard Oil filling station. In warm weather, sit under the string lights on their expansive but uncrowded patio. Try the smoked trout toast, hummus, roasted carrots, caponata, and freshly baked bread from their outdoor stone oven.

Pappy's, Midtown (\$\$) 🔥

Memphis-style barbecue worth the sometimes long line — a true favorite in STL.

Phở Grand, Tower Grove (\$\$) 🔥

Contender for best phở in the city with plenty of other non-phở options.

Phở Long, Tower Grove (\$\$)

Very phở-centric Vietnamese restaurant.

Pi, CWE, the Loop, Downtown, West County (\$\$) 🔥

This locally owned company is known for their deep dish, cornmeal crust pizza (though they also have gluten-free, whole grain and thin crust available, if deep dish ain't your thang). The Western Addition, the Kirkwood, and the Southside Classico are great options to try. Obama liked Pi so much on his visit to St. Louis in 2008, he personally called the restaurant and invited the owners to the White House to cook for the first family, making Pi the first restaurant to prepare food for the White House. This prompted the owners to open a branch in D.C.

Ranoush, the Loop (\$\$) 🔥

Sit outside and people watch passersby in the Loop while you enjoy shawarma, salad and rice, and hookah if you wish. Huge portions (coming from someone with a big appetite), so if you want to stretch your pocketbook, plan on eating half and taking home leftovers!

Rasoi, on Euclid Avenue (\$\$) 🔥

Best Indian food in town! Quite a bit fancier than the other options. Craving Indian buffet-style dining for lunch? Rasoi has you covered, and you barely have to step outside to get there from campus.

Salt + Smoke, U City, CWE (\$)

Tender brisket and great sides (popovers!); original location in the heart of the hopping Loop neighborhood, and now with a new location in the CWE.

Sameem's Afghan, Tower Grove (\$) 🔥

Delicious, affordable Afghani food with reliably good kabobs.

Sauce on the Side, the Grove, Clayton, Downtown (\$) 🔥

If you're not typically a calzone fan, Sauce On the Side will make you a convert. Tons of filling options, plus a rotating special (e.g., a turkey dinner-filled calzone called "The Mayflower" each November).

Seoul Taco, the Loop (\$) 🔥

Affordable, fast-casual, Korean-Mexican fusion, popular with WashU undergrads.

Southern, Midtown (\$\$) 🔥

Incredible Nashville-style hot chicken from the owners of Pappy's (which is right next door).

Sugarfire, Olivette (\$\$) 🔥

Great barbecue and incredible burgers. Tons of sauce options and rotating sides, so you'll never be bored.

Sultān, the Grove (\$)

Family-owned Kurdish restaurant serving sakuska, pilau, and life-changing dolmas. Jenar Mohammed, a longtime home cook, along with her family, opened Sultān, their first restaurant, to rave reviews last year.

Sweetie Pie's, Grand Center (\$\$)

The focus of the long-running show Welcome to Sweetie Pie's on the Oprah Network. Southern soul food served cafeteria style, known for their chicken wings and mac'n'cheese.

Taco Buddha, U City (\$)

The new kid on the block taking over the STL taco scene. The patio is the place to sit, and it's even covered and heated in winter months! Their frozen margs are just insane good, even if you typically don't order your margs frozen. Tacos are huge (you might need a fork) and include unique, slow roasted fillings such as green chile pork, chicken tinga, and Thai street beef.

Tai Ke, Olivette (\$)

Craving Taiwanese? Tai Ke, St. Louis' first 100% Taiwanese restaurant is incredible. Try the Gua Bao (pork belly bun).

Thai 202, CWE (\$)

Craving Thai? Don't want to leave CWE? The lunch talk was pizza? As your closest solution, Thai 202 will be your hero.

The Foundry Bakery, Maryland Heights (\$\$)

St. Louis' only Taiwanese bakery, which sells Taiwanese bolo buns, umami burst bread (with miso), naisu milk buns, and crispy orange buns. Also has boba, fruit milk, and coffee.

The Shaved Duck, Tower Grove (\$\$)

Brisket chili and burnt ends, served by a waitstaff, so you don't have to do the barbecue line cattle call.

The Vine, Tower Grove (\$)

The unofficial favorite lunch talk caterer here at WUSM, The Vine serves up beef and chicken shawarma, hummus, pita, baked eggplant, fattoush salad, taboul, and other cravable items.

Union Loafers, Shaw (\$)

Union Loafers is *the* place to buy a loaf of bread here in town (Companion Bakery is also locally owned!), but their pizza is to die for. Ian Froeb of the STL Today magazine describes it as, "New York-ish, but with an airiness and aggressive blistering more reminiscent of Neapolitan pies."

Wildflower, on Euclid Ave, CWE (\$\$) 🔥

Brunch and good happy hour specials a few blocks away. Roll out of bed with your hair a mess and enjoy a patio brunch here on a nice day.

Winslow's Table, U City (\$\$) 🔥

Farm-to-table, recently taken over by Vicia (previously called Winslow's Home). Beautiful space, and a shaded patio. A must-do on a nice day.

Zia's, The Hill (\$) 🔥

The true St. Louis-style Italian experience. Baked mostaccioli (mostaccioli al forno on the Zia's menu) is a St. Louis classic, and get t-rav as an app.

Food: Dietary Restrictions

A Classmate on Food Allergies

With my countless allergies including (but not limited to) peanuts, tree nuts, lentils, chickpeas, soybeans, and various fruits and vegetables, I have always found it difficult to find places to eat that had allergen-free options and that were flexible and accommodating. However, as someone whose primary hobby is trying new food, I have found several places that offer me a variety of options, and hopefully the list below can be helpful to you if you also struggle with food allergies! As a disclaimer, please always make sure to ask about ingredients in the food and potential cross-contamination. Happy eating!

— **Drishti S., M1**

A Classmate on Gluten Free Food

In my first few months in St. Louis, I've sampled my way through a bunch of gluten-free eateries. My favorite for casual breakfast and baked goods is New Day down the road in Clayton (dedicated facility; try the biscuits and gravy!), and Retreat has my vote for best restaurant in Central West End. Some other favorites are included in the list below. I'm always looking for new places, so let me know if you come across something great!

— **Chris D., M1**

A Classmate on Vegetarian Food

A good majority of STL restaurants have really great veg options! You won't go hungry, I promise. Here are some of the best places for almost every occasion. Lulu's Local Eatery is hands-down my favorite and always will be. I take all my friends and family there and everyone loves it. So many of my favorites are listed below!

— Jackie H., M1

Alta Calle (vegan/vegetarian/omnivore), Tower Grove (\$)

Upscale Mexican, but still pretty affordable. It only has a couple veg options, but they are really good! Amazing drinks!

Bombay Food Junkies Food Truck (vegetarian/vegan), WashU Food Trucks (\$)

Try the Butter "Chicken" with a dairy-free mango lassi!

Corner Pub Bar and Grill, Valley Park (\$)

Classic bar food for when you have fried food cravings.

Frida's (vegetarian/vegan), U City (\$\$\$)

They have vegetarian and vegan options and strive to be low-oil, low-salt type of food. The mushroom reuben, Impossible burger, Beyond Meat burger and the Frida taco are all hits. Many clearly designated gluten free options. Brunch on Sundays.

Gokul Indian (vegetarian/vegan), the Loop (\$)

Vegan buffet on Monday nights with dairy-free lassi!

Gooseberries (vegan/vegetarian/omnivore), Dutchtown (\$)

Weird, eclectic place, but serves food until 3 a.m. on weekends and always has awesome options.

Ice's Plain and Fancy, Shaw (\$)

It's fun to watch them make the nitro ice cream and they have a decent selection of dairy-free options.

Kaldi's, on campus in the FLTC and the MCC, on Euclid Avenue in the CWE (\$) 🍌

The FLTC location is right next to classrooms and carrels and is a popular meeting place. All locations are vegetarian friendly, and the FLTC location is fully vegetarian. The Euclid location is great for studying and has a mix of cozy/modern vibes. It's a bit crowded during the weekend but in general, a great place to hang out with friends and get some work done!

Kampai, CWE (\$\$)

Great sushi close to campus (ask for gluten-free soy sauce).

Lulu's Local Eatery (vegan), Tower Grove (\$)

Comfort food, but still vegetable-focused. They serve brunch on Sundays now!

Mango, Downtown/Washington Ave (\$\$\$)

Mango in downtown is another wonderful option for diners with allergies. The restaurant serves Peruvian food, with classics like lomo saltado and ceviche. Even if you have a seafood allergy, there are several other protein options available.

PW Pizza, Lafayette Square (\$)

East Coast-style pizza with gluten-free crust available, plus a gluten-free chocolate mousse as a dessert option.

Pastaria, Clayton (\$\$)

Gluten-free noodles can be substituted into any of their dishes.

Pizza Head (vegetarian/vegan), Tower Grove (\$)

Cool vibes and amazing pizza.

Pizzeoli (vegan/vegetarian/omnivore), Soulard (\$\$)

This is a great place for the family or a group to go since it has a lot of options.

Prioritized Pastries, Bevo Mill (\$)

They just opened up a storefront and their items are gluten-free AND vegan, but still somehow delicious!

PuraVegan (vegan/raw), DeBaliviere (\$\$)

This has a whole foods, plant-based style. Many raw options.

Retreat Gastropub, CWE (\$\$\$)

Unique offerings, great drinks. Outdoor seating available during nicer weather.

Rooster, Tower Grove (\$)

If you're semi-addicted to Sunday brunches, check out Rooster. Try the seasonal Apple Pie French Toast, which features caramelized cinnamon apples, crème fraiche, and a toasty pie crumble. While some of their menu items do feature nuts, they are very accommodating of allergies, and you should have no problem eliminating or substituting any allergens in your meal.

Small Batch (vegetarian/vegan), Downtown (\$\$\$)

Also a little pricey, but the chef and service are amazing. It's a perfect option for a nice dinner out. Also has great drinks!

SweetArt, Shaw (\$)

They have traditional, gluten-free, and vegan baked goods. They also have a great vegetarian/vegan breakfast and lunch!

Taco Circus, The Hill (\$)

While The Hill is known for its Italian eats, Taco Circus is a great find for those with food allergies who love Tex-Mex. They offer extremely filling tacos including al Pastor, carnitas, and grilled skirt steak which all can come on corn tortillas if you have a wheat allergy/are gluten free.

Treehouse (vegan), Tower Grove (\$\$\$)

A little bit pricey for the quality, but has a good atmosphere and a rotating seasonal menu. Great date night option!

Utah Station (vegetarian/vegan/omnivore), Benton Park (\$)

They have a vegan Big Mac and vegan Jack-in-the-Box tacos that taste just like the real thing.

Vicia, CWE (\$\$\$\$) 🔥

Vegetable-forward, upscale farm-to-table restaurant. The chef is James Beard semifinalist Michael Gallina. Beautiful dishes and atmosphere.

Food: Feeling Lazy

A Classmate on Class Food Events

The WashU community has a surprising number of budding chefs and bakers! As a student, I would highly recommend taking advantage of the class food events, such as **Friendsgiving** and **bake-offs**. Scheduled the week before Thanksgiving break, **Friendsgiving** is a wonderful opportunity to eat delicious food cooked by your classmates and ring in the holidays. The **bake-offs** are more frequent, often scheduled before exams, and are the perfect study breaks! Some class favorites include: homemade applesauce, skillet cornbread, bacon-wrapped stuffed dates and pumpkin cheesecake at Friendsgiving; carrot cake, chocolate raspberry macarons, buckeyes, apple turnover, and chocolate chip cookies were hits at the bake-offs.

— Haley S., M1

A Classmate on Food Around Campus (for when you're feeling lazy...)

There are so many great places to grab a bite when you need to stick around campus. Some great options are listed here, in no particular order.

— Bruin P., M1

Edison Café, on campus (\$)

Another cafeteria with a student discount and colorful ambiance in St. Louis Children's Hospital.

Pickles, on Euclid Avenue (\$) 🔥

Excellent hot pastrami sandwiches, Cubans, reubens, soup, and deli sandwiches.

PokeDoke, on Euclid Avenue (\$) 🔥

Quick fix for poke bowls, right across the street from campus.

Shake Shack, Euclid Avenue (\$) 🔥

Burgers, fries, and shakes from a company started by a St. Louis native.

Shell Café, medical campus (\$) 🔥

Solid cafeteria found in the same building as classrooms.

Food: Groceries

A Classmate on Farmers' Markets

The Tower Grove Farmers' Market is a favorite weekly stop of mine. There's a huge variety of vendors and it's really fun to try new foods and support local businesses/farmers.

— **Katie C., M1**

A Classmate on Groceries

There are plenty of grocery stores in St. Louis, so depending on what you are looking for, there is a store for you!

— **Haley S., M1**

A Classmate on Grocery Delivery

There are going to be some weeks when you feel like you don't have a second to spare, and then you will look in your pantry and discover you don't have something else: food. It is during these moments when I pull out my handy-dandy Instacart app and marvel at modern innovation as I order groceries and await their much-needed arrival from a random stranger. Granted, I don't always have my groceries delivered (those service fees add up!), but it's useful when times are dire (or you really can't bring yourself to go to Schnucks).

— **Ashley A., M1**

A Classmate on International Groceries

There are numerous international grocery stores throughout the city and the county. On the Delmar Loop, just a short MetroLink ride away from the Central West End, United Provisions offers a wide variety of international groceries as well as a grab-and-go section stocked with sushi, dim sum, and other delectable snacks. On Olive Boulevard, the predominantly Asian section of town, you can find Olive Supermarket and Seafood City along with many wonderful restaurants. Lastly, other international grocery stores include Jay International Food Co. on South Grand, Global Foods Market in Kirkwood, and Pan-Asia Supermarket in Manchester.

— Kelsie K., M1

Aldi, U City

Budget-friendly groceries from the same German family that brought us Trader Joe's.

Bob's Seafood, Olivette

The place to buy the freshest seafood here in STL.

Carniceria Latino Americana, Cherokee Street

Mexican market and butchery.

Dierbergs, Brentwood (closest, but many locations around the city)

Dierbergs is another local grocer located in the same area as Target and Trader Joe's. It has a great deli and a selection of in-house smoked meat. Similar to Schnucks but a bit more upscale, with more organic and locally grown options.

El Morelia Supermercado, North County

Mexican supermarket.

El Torito Supermercado, Cherokee Street

Mexican market.

Global Foods Market, Kirkwood

The OG of international foods here in St. Louis, owned by the same family that owns Jay's. Each aisle has a different country's flag, and they sell difficult-to-find food from all over the world.

Jay International Food Co., Tower Grove 🔥

Arguably the closest Asian market to campus.

Olive Supermarket, Olivette 🔥

Reliable Asian supermarket; cash required for purchases under \$10.

Pan-Asia Supermarket, West County

Largest Asian supermarket in Missouri.

Schnucks, CWE (closest, but many locations around the city) 🔥

Schnucks is the flagship grocery store of St. Louis; very cost effective and convenient place to get most major groceries.

Seafood City, Olivette

Asian grocer, selling plenty more than just seafood.

Seema, Maryland Heights

South Asian.

Soulard Farmers Market, Soulard

Every Saturday in Soulard.

Straub's, CWE 🔥

Straub's Fine Grocers is a local grocery store just a few minutes away from campus and most nearby apartments; great stop for quick purchases and some local tastes.

Target, Brentwood 🔥

Target is a short 15-minute drive from campus and is a convenient one-stop shop for groceries, household products, clothing, etc.

Tower Grove Farmers' Market, Tower Grove

Saturdays and Tuesdays in Tower Grove Park, with an indoor Winter Market during the colder months.

Trader Joe's, Brentwood 🔥

Trader Joe's is only a 15-minute drive from campus and contains tons of favorites. It's a great place for buying quick meals and snacks for those busy nights.

United Provisions, the Loop 🔥

Geared toward the college student set, you'll find Asian and South Asian provisions, plus tons of Asian convenience foods like frozen bao, frozen dumplings, noodle packets, chips, cookies, hot sauces, and drinks.

Whole Foods, CWE 🔥

There's a Whole Foods really close to campus; it's convenient but slightly more expensive for groceries. It also has great prepared foods and a hot bar for when you're feeling lazy.

Food: Occasions

A Classmate on Late Night Eats

St. Louis has some great spots for hungry night owls. There are the usual staples like McDonald's and Domino's, but there are also plenty of more exciting options. A few of our favorites are in the list below!

— Rachel B., M1

A Classmate on Where to Brunch

St. Louis has many great places for brunch. Rooster is a restaurant with indoor/outdoor seating, a great selection of brunch items and different types of mimosas.

The City Coffeehouse and Creperie has coffee drinks and sweet crepes and savory crepes. BBQ Saloon features a southern take on brunch and also has a bottomless mimosa special. There are plenty of brunch restaurants to satisfy any weekend morning craving!

— Allie L., M1

A Classmate on Where to Celebrate your Birthday

St. Louis has so many interesting and scrumptious restaurants, the hardest part about planning your birthday dinner is deciding which one to pick! Here is a list of a few of my personal favorite places to eat at for your special day.

— Jack B., M1

A Classmate on Where to Take Your Parents (or where they can take you...)

Lucky you, your parents are visiting, which means you finally have someone to bankroll your eating habits. There are plenty of places within walking distance from the medical school in the CWE for you to go, like Brasserie, a Parisian-style bistro complete with sidewalk tables that makes a perfect summer night dinner. A more expensive option is one of the most ambitious restaurants in town, Vicia, an experimental farm-to-table place that was a James Beard semifinalist and will definitely make the most of your parents' time in town.

— Garrett C., M1

BBQ Saloon, CWE (\$)

Comfort food with \$15 bottomless mimosas from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., in case you need some hair of the dog.

Billie Jean, Clayton (\$\$\$\$)

Stylish atmosphere with upscale Southeast Asian and American-inspired dishes by restaurateur Zoe Robinson.

Brasserie, CWE (\$\$)

French bistro with a great brunch.

Bulrush, Grand Center (\$\$\$\$)

This restaurant is getting tons of national acclaim right now for its inventive concept of Ozark-inspired, foraged food.

Cafe Osage, CWE (\$\$) 🔥

Adjacent to a beautiful nursery, if you want to buy some greenery after you eat.

Cinder House, Downtown (\$\$\$\$)

Another restaurant by James Beard Award-winning chef Gerard Craft. South American-inspired dishes and cocktails in the beautiful Four Seasons Hotel.

Courtesy Diner, South City, Tower Grove (\$)

This 24/7 diner will grill up pretty much anything you could want, from burgers to omelets to their famous chili slinger.

Dominic's, The Hill (\$\$\$\$)

A St. Louis classic for Italian fine dining, served on beautiful china dishes in a quiet and refined carpeted room.

Dressel's, CWE (\$\$\$)

A Central West End pub with a low-key atmosphere, great mixed drinks, and a phenomenal grilled cheese. It was featured on Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives, too!

Elaia, Shaw (\$\$\$\$)

On the edge of the Shaw neighborhood, you'll find Elaia in the upstairs of a remodeled home (downstairs is a converted filling station, which houses Elaia's fantastic sister restaurant, Olio). Tasting menus by James Beard semifinalist Ben Poremba are available at this AAA, four-diamond restaurant.

Farmhaus, South City (\$\$\$)

Farm-to-table New American in a relaxed environment.

Fiddlehead Fern Café, Shaw (\$)

Vegan and vegetarian friendly, stylish and airy hipster cafe.

Half & Half, Clayton (\$\$) 🔥

Amazing pancakes and french toast, plus they put a tempura fried pickle spear on their bloody marys, soooo....

HandleBar, the Grove (\$)

This fun bar in The Grove offers great pizza and bar snacks until 2 a.m. every night.

Insomnia Cookies/Hot Box Cookies, CWE (\$) 🔥

Late night hot cookies, delivered to your door.

J. Devotti, the Hill (\$\$\$)

Upscale American in a relaxed environment, with a focus on farm-to-table, local, organic and small suppliers. Make a reservation on their small patio during finer weather.

John's Donuts, Soulard (\$) 🔥

John's is a St. Louis institution, open from 11 pm through noon each day, so that John can feed the late night and early morning donut crowds. Get an apple fritter!

Kingside Diner, CWE (\$) 🔥

Good brunch, right in the heart of CWE's Maryland Plaza.

Kreis', Frontenac (\$\$\$\$)

The best steak and prime rib in the city. A non-pretentious setting, but don't be fooled — Kreis' serves the who's who of St. Louis, including weekly visits by Cardinals baseball legend and beloved hometown hero Stan Musial until his death in 2013.

Louie's Wine Dive, Clayton (\$)

Grapefruit, cranberry, or orange mimosas available (are you noticing a theme here?), plus some waistline-conscious food options (egg white avocado omelette FTW).

Olive + Oak, Webster Groves (\$\$\$)

Upscale American fare with great cocktails.

Original Pancake House, Clayton (\$\$)

Get in line via Yelp, and enjoy an expansive list of pancakes from this cozy Portland, Oregon chain.

Peacemaker Lobster & Crab, Benton Park (\$\$\$)

The freshest seafood in town, featuring lobster boils, steamed crab, lobster rolls, poboys, and fresh oysters in a chic but casual environment.

Peacock Diner, the Loop (\$)

Retro diner full of memorabilia, including an indoor carousel.

Polite Society, Lafayette Square (\$\$\$\$)

Folksy, upscale American in a stylish setting.

Sardella, Clayton (\$\$\$)

James Beard Award-winning chef Gerard Craft offers up new takes on Old World Italian, right next door to its more affordable sister restaurant, Pastaria.

Scottish Arms, CWE (\$\$)

Scottish pub with fantastic lox, French toast, and traditional Scottish breakfast, amongst other options. Bottomless mimosas for \$15.

Southwest Diner, South City (\$)

Incredible breakfast burritos, huevos rancheros, and sopapillas. Just what the (future) doctor ordered.

St. Louis Kolache, Creve Coeur (\$)

Instead of donuts, stop by St. Louis Kolache and pick up a few of these incredible Czech pastries for breakfast. Fillings include options like: St. Louis Pizza, Pappy's BBQ, Sausage/Egg/Cheese, Meatball, Apple Pie, Cherry/Toasted Almond, and Ann & Allen Goopy Butter Cake.

Steak ‘n Shake, South City (\$) 🔥

Famous for steakburgers, this Midwestern chain is a go-to late night food option for many St. Louisans. The Frisco melt, chocolate shakes, chili (best with oyster crackers and vinegar hot sauce), steak burgers, and cheese fries all hit the spot; drive thru or dine-in.

Sydney Street Bistro, Benton Park (\$\$\$\$)

A popular special occasion restaurant in St. Louis serving New American cuisine and a bomb bread service of savory beignets.

The 801 Chophouse/801 Fish, Clayton (\$\$\$\$)

Contemporary seafood and steak, right by the Ritz in downtown Clayton.

The Bridge Tap House and Wine Bar, Downtown (\$\$)

If you're looking for a slightly more upscale place to celebrate, you've found it. The Bridge is a cheese/charcuterie place with a massive wine/beer/cocktail list and seasonal entrees. It's quality food that doesn't break the budget for students.

The Capital Grille, Clayton (\$\$\$\$\$)

A well-known, upscale steak chain.

The City Coffeehouse and Creperie, Clayton (\$) 🔥

Delicious sweet and savory crepes. Coffee is so-so.

The Shack, Frontenac (\$\$)

The breakfast menu is massive at this popular, wacky write-on-the walls restaurant; tons of drink options if you're in the mood for a boozy brunch. Expect a wait.

Tony's, Downtown (\$\$\$\$\$)

Historically the go-to special occasion restaurant in St. Louis, long before our bustling foodie scene blossomed. At Tony's they'll treat you right.

Trattoria Marcella, South City (\$\$)

Just off The Hill, try this “Italian Soul Food” restaurant, with incredible, massive t-rav and a comfortable ambiance.

Food: St. Louis Quirks

#Know Your Food: St. Louis Food Quirks Edition!

St. Louis has many great restaurants and is truly a foodie paradise. We also have a long history of food quirks — unusual local dishes and traditions. As a native St. Louisan, I encourage you to check them out, if only for the fun of it.

— Kristin P., M1

Bagels Sliced Like Bread

Where to Try It: **St. Louis Bread Co.** (try a chocolate chip bagel sliced like bread and dip it into plain or lite cream cheese ... maybe it will make you a convert). A quick Google search will reveal the national controversy this tradition sparked a few years ago. Many of us St. Louisans grew up ordering our Bread Co. bagels “sliced like bread” or “bread sliced” (you call it Panera, but it is St. Louis Bread Co. here). This means the bagel is actually put in the bread slicing machine, and comes it out cut into many vertical slices (rather than the typical two horizontal slices). It’s great because you can dip your bagel slices into the cream cheese! Don’t knock it ‘til you’ve tried it. We really don’t understand what all the drama is about.

Baked Mostaccioli

Where to Try It: **Zia’s, Cunetto’s**. Commonly served at South City family events. Basically a lasagna made with mostaccioli noodles. It’s mushy but tasty.

Barbecue Pork Steaks

Where to Try It: **Beast Butcher & Block**. Traditionally, pork steaks (a steak cut from pork shoulder) have been a mainstay of every St. Louis home’s family backyard barbecue but have been unavailable at local barbecue joints. That’s changing.

Bionic Apples

Where to Try It: buy them in any local grocery store during the fall. Caramel apples with legit the best caramel.

Fitz's Root Beer Floats

Where to Try It: **Fitz's** in the Loop. Right in the Loop, Fitz's makes and bottles its own root beer, which you can order on site, topped with a heaping scoop of ice cream. You have to get through some of the ice cream before you even reach the soda.

Frozen Custard Concretes

Where to Try It: **Ted Drewes** (!!), **Silky's**, **Mr. Wizard's**. Similar to a DQ Blizzard but creamier and richer. Ted Drewes is a scene on a summer night, and a great stop off after a Cards game or a trip to the City Museum (make sure you go to the South City location). If you need some help ordering, we love Brownies with Butterscotch or Tedads with Salted Caramel.

Goopy Butter

Where to Try It: **Straub's** is a great place to buy it (they carry a few excellent brands); **Park Avenue Coffee** in Lafayette Square also makes great goopy butter. The Kaldi's in the FLTC has goopy butter sometimes but it's too much like coffee cake ... there are better options. Goopy butter is so good. A rich, sweet pastry square that will either be thin (arguably better because of the balanced ratio of topping to cake) or thick (more cake-like). Definitely try the original flavor before dabbling in the spin-offs like red velvet or chocolate chip.

Gus' Pretzels

Where to Try It: **Gus'** in Benton Park (\$5 minimum on credit cards). A St. Louis institution has been selling hand twisted soft pretzels since 1920. They'll even make party pretzels in large shapes and numbers for your special occasion.

Lenten Fish Fries

Where to Try It: **St. Pius V**, **St. Cecelia** (expect a line). Every Friday during Lent, Catholic churches around St. Louis open their doors to the public to serve up fried fish. Most serve traditional fish and chips, but head to St. Cecelia's church for tamales, refried beans, margaritas, beer, and traditional Mexican dances.

Lion's Choice Roast Beef Sandwiches

Where to Try It: **Lion's Choice**. This local fast food chain makes Arby's seem like raccoon food. Order a roast beef and cheese sandwich, and dunk it in their hot au jus. Life hack: dunk the fries in au jus, too (works best if you first bite the end off the fry). Tons of other sauces (horseradish, tangy BBQ, etc.) and the best crushed ice (great with a Dr. Pepper, which FYI was introduced at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis).

Provel Cheese

Where to Try It: On St. Louis-style pizza or salad (i.e., **Imo's**), or buy some at **Schnucks** or **Dierbergs**. Mention provel to newcomers and you will stir up some controversy. It's a processed cheese combination of cheddar, swiss, and provolone. It's tangy and mild in flavor. When baked, it becomes creamy (similar to béchamel) and when cold, it has a soft, buttery consistency. Locals (including me) think it's great on St. Louis-style salads and pizza; newbies are often disgusted. Keep an open mind ... it's better than nacho cheese, and people eat that without batting an eye.

Red Hot Riplets

Where to Try It: Buy some at **Schnucks**, **Straub's**, or **Dierbergs**. Spicy potato chips that are a favorite hometown product, but are sold nationally. If you prefer to be fancy, try St. Louis' Billy Goat Chip Company Kicker Chips (also spicy but crunchier and small batch).

Slingers

Where to Try It: **Eat-Rite Diner**, **Courtesy Diner**, **Rooster**, **Southwest Diner** (the first two are open late-night). A local hangover remedy and St. Louis original that consists of layered hash browns, chili, egg, cheese, and meat.

St. Louis-Style Italian Salad

Where to Try It: **Imo's**, **The Pasta House Co.**, anywhere on The Hill. Iceberg or romaine lettuce, pimento, artichoke, parmesan, provel cheese, and St. Louis-style, sweet Italian dressing. Goes great with St. Louis-style pizza or pasta.

St. Louis-Style Pizza

Where to Try It: **Imo's!!!** A thin, cracker crust pizza with provel cheese. A St. Louis tradition ... you'll be missing out if you don't give it a try. Read the Serious Eats article, "In Defense of St. Louis Style Pizza" for pointers — they suggest thinking of it as a pizza-flavored nacho. The article is a great introduction to St. Louis style pizza. Imo's is most St. Louisans' go-to but there are lots of other options, including Cecil Whittaker's and places on The Hill.

St. Louis-Style Ribs 🔥

Where to Try It: **Beast Butcher & Block**, **Sugarfire BBQ**, **Grace Meat + Three**. St. Louis-style ribs are barbecue spare ribs, which are flatter than baby back ribs, making them easier to brown; they're ultimately grilled (rather than smoked).

St. Paul Sandwiches

Where to Try It: **Mai Lee**. Truth be told, many of us haven't tried this St. Louis original. It's an egg foo young patty served on white bread with pickles, onions, mayo, lettuce, and tomato. It's never called our name but maybe it's calling yours.

Straub's Chicken Salad

Where to Try It: Buy it at **Straub's** in the CWE. Straub's is known for their homemade chicken salad and their chicken noodle soup. Have your roommate or bae pick some up for you next time you're feeling under the weather. The chicken salad is great on King's Hawaiian Rolls.

T-Rav 🔥

Where to Try It: **Mama Toscana's Ravioli** (or many other places on The Hill); for a more upscale option, the t-rav at **Trattoria Marcella** are the BEST (handmade, though larger than what is traditional). Everyone likes toasted ravioli, or "t-rav" as the locals call it. A breaded and fried ravioli (typically filled with meat or ricotta) that you dip in marinara sauce, it's ubiquitous here (often from frozen), but head to The Hill's Italian restaurants for the best fresh t-rav.

Telling Jokes for Candy on Halloween 🔥

Where to Try It: You're probably too old to trick or treat, but offer to help one of your classmates who owns a house hand out candy this Halloween! Here in St. Louis, kids must earn their candy when they trick or treat. When handing out candy, they're asked for their joke, and upon telling it, receive the candy as a reward. We St. Louisans grew up with this tradition but it really seems to blow people's minds when they learn about it.

City: Getting Around in St. Louis

Air Travel

Coming from the Los Angeles area, flying in and out of St. Louis is fairly easy! **Lambert International Airport** is average sized, with a quick and friendly TSA, a smaller number of gates and few delays (in my experience). The airport is about a 15-minute drive from the Central West End (around \$20-30 on Uber) or a 20-minute MetroLink ride (free for students). The only downside is that St. Louis is not a major flight hub, so direct flights are not always available depending on your destination, and flight prices can be higher than airports in big cities. But all-in-all, flying in and out of St. Louis is relatively painless and convenient!

— Haley S., M1

Carshare

St. Louis has various attractions and activities, but often times you'll need a car to get to them. If you don't have one, don't fret. WashU has a partnership with the **Enterprise Carshare** program, which allows students to rent cars for short periods of time. It's pretty cheap (\$5/hour) and only requires a student ID and a valid driver's license.

— Vinay P., M1

Rideshare Apps

For nights out on the town or for times when you don't feel like taking public transportation, St. Louis has both **Uber** and **Lyft**. Although Uber Pool and Shared Rides on Lyft aren't currently available, using rideshare apps is much more affordable in St. Louis compared to bigger cities.

— Kelsie K., M1

Public Transportation

Public transit in St. Louis includes the train (**MetroLink**) and the bus system (**MetroBus**). A perk of being a med student at WashU is that you can claim your **U-Pass**, which will give you free access to both throughout the year. You pick up your **U-Pass** from Olin Residence Hall at the beginning of the semester (keep a lookout for emails about this), and you will be prompted via email when it is time to renew. There is a MetroLink stop in the center of the med school campus, which makes it convenient for students who commute to and from campus by metro. Notable stops throughout the city include: downtown Clayton, Brentwood (right next to Mai Lee and walking distance from Target, DSW, Dierbergs, Petco, and Trader Joe's), the DeBaliviere neighborhood, the Loop, the airport and stops downtown by the Blues and Cardinals games, as well as other attractions. The

Metro does not service every area of town, so the bus system and ridesharing apps will be necessary at times if you don't have access to a car. To plan your trip, use the online Trip Planner on the Metro Transit website, or use **Google Transit**.

— Kristin P., M1

Biking

A lot of students live close enough to walk to school and some even choose to drive the half mile to get here. If you care about the Earth, your own health/fitness, and your wallet, you might consider biking to school. Worried about self care or finances during medical school? Save time by making your commute your exercise and save money on gas and parking! The med campus is very bike friendly. There are multiple open bike lock stations, as well as a handful of gated bike racks that you need to swipe in with your ID badge. I live about five miles west of campus, so half of my ride is through Forest Park, which is very safe for bikers and pretty. Making Forest Park part of your commute reduces a lot of the stress of bike commuting. If you have to ride in the dark (early or late) make sure you have a tail and headlight to increase visibility. And don't forget your helmet! If the weather is horrible (too wet, icy, or snowy) then I walk a half-mile to the MetroLink and take the train to school (free as a student!). Come find me if you have any questions about cycling for commuting!

— Adam O., M1

Parking on Campus

If you decide to drive to school, there are a couple of options for parking on or near campus. There is hourly parking but it can be difficult to find a spot and it is not very cost-effective if you plan to drive every day. The nearby **Clayton/Taylor Garage** is \$77/month (you can pay for this at the front desk in Olin Hall). If you are trying to save some money you may be able to find free street parking if you are willing to walk 10-plus minutes. Finally, if you arrive after 2 p.m. you can park in the Clayton/Taylor garage for free.

— Julia H., M1

Life Without a Car

My original plan was to bring my car up to St. Louis over winter break, but after a few months in St. Louis I have scrapped that plan and cannot see myself bringing the '05 Sequoia anytime soon. Walking to class is super convenient, and getting to places for lunch from school is quite easy on foot. Public transportation is easy and Uber/Lyft are affordable in St. Louis. The only time they get expensive for me is to get to the airport, and all students get free Metro passes which gets you to the airport in the same amount of time as an Uber/Lyft. For errands, you can go with friends with a car or just have what you need delivered (I use Instacart, which allows me to get all my groceries delivered for just \$99/year). On top of all this, think about how small your carbon footprint will be when you don't use a car!

— David L., M1

Life With a Car

I thoroughly enjoy having a car in St. Louis! The Central West End is fairly walkable, but if you want to explore downtown St. Louis, St. Louis County or the greater Midwest area, having a car makes travel infinitely easier. Gas is very affordable here, so road trips to Chicago, Nashville, and Memphis are not only short (less than five hours driving) but also budget-friendly! Day-to-day life is also easier with a car; for example, the more cost-effective grocery stores, as well as Target, Best Buy, and thrift stores are driving distance away. Parking is fairly affordable at most St. Louis apartment complexes, so if possible, I would definitely recommend having a car!

— Haley S., M1

Safety

With St. Louis appearing at the bottom or close to the bottom on national safety rankings, I think it's fair for prospective students to have questions about the important issue of their personal safety. First, keep in mind that many well known big cities rank close to us on these same lists but do not have the stigma and reputation we have acquired here (Fort Lauderdale, D.C., Philadelphia, Orlando, and Denver, to name a few). Second, the truth is that similar to these other cities, somewhere around two-thirds of the crime that contributes to these staggering statistics in our city is targeted violent crime concentrated in a small area of the city. Life as a WashU student means being in safe surroundings. While of course bad things can happen anywhere, especially big cities, if you are aware of your surroundings and make common sense choices (walk with a buddy after dark; lock your doors), you are statistically very unlikely to be a victim of a violent, stranger-on-stranger crime. I would, however, be mindful about theft, particularly vehicle break-ins in the CWE; keeping your car uncluttered and free of valuables can help.

— Kristin P., M1

Social: Bars & Nightlife

A Classmate on Dancing the Night Away

Club Viva is your friendly neighborhood spot for international music and tons of dancing. They have Latin nights (including salsa, bachata, and merengue) twice a week, reggae nights once a week, and monthly Bollywood and bhangra nights. Love dancing? It's the place for you! Want to learn? They offer free classes before each event. Best of all, it's walking distance from school, so there is never an excuse not to get your groove on! A bailar!"

— Avan A., M1

A Classmate on Going Out

Any night on the town at the bars is a fun experience.

— Thomas B., M1

A Classmate on Irish Pub Music

I really enjoy on a regular night going out to McGurk's and enjoying the music.

— Maggy B., M1

A Classmate on Live Music at Bars

I love how much live music there is at bars here. Some of the most fun I've had here is going out and dancing with my classmates!

— Jessica C., M1

Atomic Cowboy, the Grove

For when you want to dance your heart out.

Ballpark Village, Downtown

Hang before, after, or if you didn't score tix, during any Cardinals home game. Wear red if you want to rep the home team. If you're repping another team, you can expect Cards fans to still be very friendly, unless it's the Cubs, in which case, expect some moderate heckling.

Bar Napoli, Clayton

You'll likely see some supercars parked out front of this upscale Italian restaurant by day ("Café Napoli"/debaucherous night club by night ("Bar Napoli"). This downtown Clayton institution is best on a nice evening when the patio scene is lively. Dress cute, wear your dancing shoes, and expect some interesting people watching here at Napoli.

Blueberry Hill, the Loop

Music-themed bar and restaurant with great buffalo fries, fried pickles, chili, and burgers (including an Impossible Burger for the vegetarian inclined). Intimate live music venue called the Duck Room in the basement of the bar, where the father of Rock & Roll — and St. Louisan — Chuck Berry continued to play monthly until his death in 2017.

Club Viva, CWE

This global music and dance club across from the Up Down features theme nights. Wednesday is Reggae Night, Thursday and Saturday are Latin Night, and once a month (on a Friday) they host Bollywood Night.

Gezellig, the Grove

Craft beer tavern and bottle shop nestled amongst the Grove's many nightlife spots. 28 beers on tap, or you can pick from any of the nearly 700 bottled and canned beers in their refrigerators; they'll open it and pour it for you.

iTap, CWE, Souldard

International Tap House, or iTap for short, is a regular meeting spot for WUSM students and is just on the edge of campus. Featuring an extensive array of draft and bottled beers.

Just John, the Grove

LGBTQ nightclub where everyone is welcome. Self-described as the "gay 'Cheers.'" Dancing, friendly people, and several levels of music to suit your mood abound at Just John.

McGurk's, Souldard

Popular Irish pub featuring live music, including Irish and American folk. Chill on weeknights, rowdy with undergrads on weekend nights.

Molly's, Souldard

Huge outdoor patio, lively and boisterous in the summer months.

Moonrise, the Loop

Rooftop lounge with easy vibes on a summer evening.

Pieces, Souldard

Awesome, beloved board game bar in Souldard.

Pin-Up Bowl, the Loop

For when you're torn between tearing up the lanes and hitting the bars, Pin-Up is there so you don't have to choose.

Talanya's, South City 🔥

A truly bizarre 3 a.m. dive bar that becomes quite the liver-punishing scene in the wee hours. Disco balls, mirrored walls, neon lights, loud music, and lots of dancing make Talanya's a popular last stop for the night when you're just not ready to go home quite yet.

Taste, CWE 🔥

Ample craft cocktails and unique bites like wild boar meatballs and bacon fat carrots.

Tin Roof, Downtown 🔥

Live cover bands and a debaucherous scene. Close to Ballpark Village, so it's an ideal option for pre- or post-Cardinals game.

Up-Down St. Louis, CWE 🔥

Fun arcade bar with skee-ball, every arcade game you can think of, foosball, giant jenga, Mario Kart, and the ever popular Killer Queen. Up-Down also serves pizza until closing time, so you can refuel while playing your 80s arcade game of choice.

Urban Chestnut Brewing Company, the Grove, Downtown 🔥

Massive German beer hall with great food, great beer, and great attitudes.



M1s climbing their way through the City Museum during a WUSM Orientation event.



Riley M. outside the Planetarium at the Science Center.



Kristin P. climbs the rock wall at Upper Limits.



Students enjoying dinner in CWE.



Students enjoying apple picking.



Symphony in Forest Park.



Nikita S., Kamilah A., Gopika H. and Gideon H. in their Mario Kart group Halloween costumes.



M1 float trip down the Meramec River.



Adam O. biking toward the Arch.



Nikita S., Elizabeth C., Gopika H. and Amy L. Z. hike at Castlewood State Park.



Summer in St. Louis is all about Cardinals baseball.



M1s dancing to Lizzo in the choreographed “boy band dance” at the annual AMWA Red Dress Event.



Madeline D. brushing a goat at the Saint Louis Zoo.



WUSM students celebrating at Pride.



Advice

Adjusting to medical school can be difficult. Here, graduating M4s and some of our M1 class's most popular WUSM faculty share words of wisdom on how to make the most out of your time in St. Louis.

SECTION EDITOR: MARINA NGUYEN

**From Amy L. Bauernfeind, PhD,
and Kari L. Allen, PhD**

Directors of Anatomy

Dear Students,

Welcome to WUSM Anatomy! We hope you will enjoy your Anatomy experience as much as we love teaching it. Human anatomical dissection is a rare and privileged experience, and you will learn more from the process than from any textbook. Our body donors have given you an incredible gift from which to learn the geography of the human body and the variation therein. Take this gift seriously and honor their wishes, but enjoy the experience.

The Anatomy lab is a vibrant place where you will spend much of your time engaging with faculty and peers as you work through the structures assigned for that week. You will dissect as a team with three of your peers, exploring the material through tactile discovery. Although there is a huge amount of material in the anatomical sciences, try not to let this overwhelm you. We are training you to be doctors, not anatomists. You will not retain every detail of the subject, but you will become familiar with the language and concepts of anatomy with more immediacy than you may have thought possible. Work closely with your team and take advantage of the presence of the faculty and teaching assistants.

Remember that having fun is not incompatible with learning! We look forward to working with you in your exploration of the structure of the human body.



Amy L. Bauernfeind, PhD



Kari L. Allen, PhD

From Timothy T. Yau, MD

Course Master, Practice of Medicine I

For the last 4 years, I have been the director for the year-long Practice of Medicine course, where students learned all the “non-science” stuff that is necessary to becoming a great physician. With the exciting change around the new curriculum, I’m not quite sure how to introduce myself, but the advice remains the same.



Timothy T. Yau, MD

The qualities that will make each of you outstanding doctors is so much more than test scores, which all of you already are capable of. We’ll teach you all the things you expect – how to communicate with and examine patients, how to formulate diagnoses, how to interpret labs and tests. But you will also learn how to see your patients as individuals, how to involve them in patient-centered decisions, and how to navigate the complicated societal and structural barriers to their health. The amount of information you will learn in the next four years is both staggering and intimidating. But the learning will not end there, and you are not empty pitchers to be filled with knowledge until you are full. You will never stop learning, and you will have opportunities over the next four years to do things that you may never again do in your lifetime. I am a kidney specialist, but I still delivered plenty of babies as a third-year medical student! Learn for the sake of learning (rather than just to pass the test) and you will find the pursuit of knowledge more worthwhile, meaningful and longer lasting. Your individual path to fulfill your potential to be a great doctor will be decided by you. Faculty like myself are your mentors, role models, guides, and colleagues in this journey.

Lastly, we hope you are eager to learn, but also want you to ENJOY your medical school experience. Some of the strongest bonds are forged here, and you will need support from family, old friends, and the new friends you will make. Get outside, eat some good food, and have a drink to relax. Take time to enjoy things that make you happy, whatever they are! This advice sounds generic, but I live by my own words: I play traditional Irish music at least twice a week and enjoy competitive video gaming. Last year we even started the official WashU Gaming Club! I have two consoles and three instruments in my office to take the occasional break. You’re always welcome to stop by for a game of Smash or to play a tune!

From Lisa M. Moscoso, MD, PhD

Associate Dean, Student Affairs

Welcome! I can't wait to meet you! I am one of a team of people who are here to support you on the road to becoming a doctor. There will be many joys and challenges on this journey. As you begin medical school, it will be important to develop a community of support – to celebrate your joys and to team up with you in your challenges.

By all means, attend to the important business of maintaining relationships with your friends and family, but be sure to invest in growing relationships here as well.

What you have heard is true: medical school will be demanding. There will be stretches of time when balance will be hard to find. However, with a little attention, and assistance if requested, you will learn important tools and techniques to regain and maintain a healthy balance. Here are a few bits of advice that you may find useful:

- Build and maintain warm-hearted relationships. Quality is important here, not quantity. Remember that lifetime friends, colleagues, mentors and advisors surround you. Let them in!... the sooner the better.
- Remember what brings you joy and intentionally carve out time for it.
- Do what you love.
- Respect others in your actions and words.
- Assume positive intent in your colleagues. Doing the opposite takes too much energy.
- Stay connected to your family (or family of choice).
- Play. Outside when you can.
- Laugh as often as possible. Choose companions who multiply laughter.
- Read for fun.
- Notice something beautiful today.
- Be grateful for something or someone every day.

My staff and I are here for you. Ask for our support when you need it!



Lisa M. Moscoso, MD, PhD

From Koong-Nah Chung, PhD

Associate Dean, Medical Student Research

You will spend the next four plus years at WUSM with your peers, and they will be your lifelong friends and colleagues. Form strong bonds with your classmates, collaborate and support each other. Get to know the faculty, administration and staff. We are here to help you succeed. Find an advisor or mentor who takes an interest in you. Your mentor will help you navigate medical school, and if you're lucky, you may get a home-cooked meal out of it. Stay grounded by volunteering in the community. Have fun and stay sane by getting involved in school clubs and continuing with your hobbies. Get to know St. Louis; there is no shortage of entertainment, including the world-champion Cardinals, the world-famous Saint Louis Zoo, the Saint Louis Science Center, the Saint Louis Art Museum and the Botanical Garden. In addition, there is a world-class symphony, many music venues and plenty of nightlife. Pay attention to your academics. Take your basic science courses seriously. They will come in handy in later years, and your future patients will thank you. Don't worry about your residency match yet. Most importantly, get enough sleep, exercise and have fun. Oh, and if you want to do research, just email me (chungk@wustl.edu).



Koong-Nah Chung, PhD

From Will R. Ross, MD, MPH*Associate Dean, Diversity*

Welcome to Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis! On your arrival, the beauty, vitality and progressive spirit of the Central West End will captivate you, and most of you will decide to reside in this very charming neighborhood. However, several blocks from the medical center, you will find neighborhoods that have been unable to reach their full potential. The St. Louis region is not immune from the social ills that plague our nation's urban core: inadequate housing, high rates of joblessness or lack of livable wage jobs, underperforming public schools, insufficient support of public health. As one of the largest employers in St. Louis, we have a responsibility to be diverse, inclusive and responsive to the needs of our community. We stand by our efforts to create a workforce that can fulfill our mission of advancing human health in a culture that supports diversity, inclusion, critical thinking and creativity. We pledge that everyone – no matter his or her race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or sexual preference, national origin or disability and regardless of position – should feel welcome and appreciated as part of our campus community. We accept our unique urban enclave for all its glory and will not shy away from engaging with the St. Louis community to help eliminate the social factors that contributed to health inequalities. As an incoming student, you will be immersed in the fascinating world of scientific discovery and medical innovation, but you will not be allowed to forget that the true purpose of medicine is to uplift the human condition. We hope our service learning opportunities will compel you to become a force for good in the St. Louis region. Many of you will go on to become leaders and volunteers in the Saturday Neighborhood Health Clinic, Casa de Salud Health Clinic, the Nutrition Outreach Program and other student-run programs that collaborate with the St. Louis community. During your years in medical school, make sure you connect to the greater community and experience the tremendous personal satisfaction of service; acknowledging the marked difference you can make on the lives of those less fortunate. Allow yourself to be trained, in essence, in our medical center without walls. Your overall experience as a medical school student will then be much more rewarding at Washington University School of Medicine.

**Will R. Ross, MD, MPH**

From Lauren Behlke, M4

A lot of what I wish my M1 self had known going into medical school boils down to: **Know Yourself.**



Lauren Behlke

- Know your own **studying style** – in the first couple of years, it is easy to get caught up in how everybody else is studying or to get stressed that you may be studying wrong. Take the time to learn about your own learning, how you learn best and know that you can block out any other studying “buzz” that comes your way.
- Know your **unique strengths** – you have them! We all do! Learn them and appreciate them. Pull on them whenever you get the chance and share them with your classmates if you can use your strengths to help others.
- Know your **limits** – you have them! We all do! Learn them and listen to them. Reach out when your limits are being pushed. Your classmates have limits too. Your residents, attendings, mentors and patients have limits as well. Asking for help is a sign of maturity and strength.
- Know your **uncertainty** – Ok, getting to medical school has been your goal for a long time. You’ve made it! Now what? Sometimes it feels like we should have the rest of our career figured out early on in medical school. I assure you; you will finish medical school and still not have the rest of your career figured out. So, don’t stress about the uncertainty. Enjoy the learning process, immerse yourself in this incredible opportunity and try to take it one day at a time.

From Catherine Xu, M4

I feel incredibly thankful to have the opportunity to offer advice as an M4 in the Dis-O guide. From the days when I was an Editor for my class's Dis-O guide as an M1 to now, I can only say, WOW time passed by really fast!

Here are some things I found helpful along the way. One is don't give up on your interests. Whether it is hobbies (yes Netflix counts as a hobby), specialty, or research interests, you have plenty of time in the preclinical years to pursue all your interests! Really take advantage of pass/fail and make every day what you want it to be. You will never learn all the things (no matter how much you study), so if you accept that early, you can enjoy the learning process and save time for everything else. Second, make time to hang out with your friends, especially during those busy clerkships. I think I saw my friends the most during third year of medical school when weekends were few and far in between. We somehow all knew that it was important to get together, decompress and celebrate our shared experiences. Lastly, don't be afraid to change your mind about what you want to be! Explore everything as much as you want to, you won't know how you will like it until you try! Know that you will be well supported by the school every step of the way and won't have to figure it out alone.

Whether you feel excited or intimidated to begin your medical school journey, just remember that it truly goes by in a flash, so have fun and enjoy all the experiences and cool people you meet along the way!



Catherine Xu

