

Discovering my place on Campus

By Kayla Gullage

Approaching the end of the first few weeks of college, I realize college can be lonely, exhilarating, nerve racking and sometimes it's easy to find yourself feeling uncertain with your place and purpose.

Personally, I struggled with finding my place on campus with thousands of students. To put it into perspective, I felt like a spec, especially because I hardly knew anyone yet. It can be a harder challenge to find a place on campus for students who came out of state or internationally, leaving their friends, family, city, and country miles away to come to RIT. For me, connecting and finding my place started with campus events and clubs.

RIT hosts various [clubs](#) that host various events. It's a butterfly effect. During the yearly club fair, I met many different clubs, ranging from sports, sororities and fraternities, religious groups, culture-related groups, game clubs, hiking, Artist groups, international clubs, music clubs, Sustainability clubs, Engineering, and Robotics.

Most of the time was spent meeting all the different clubs, even if I had no intention of joining. I discovered the Outing Club which goes on trips every weekend. There were sports clubs such as Taekwondo, Swim, Hockey, Ice Skating, and Curling. A variety of organizations such as Reporter, our school publication, with a few faith-based organizations like the Cru. Regardless of my intentions of joining, everyone was inviting and welcoming. Curling club, although it wasn't for me, allowed me to hold a delivery stick.

You don't have to join every club to enjoy and experience them, by the end of the fair I had at least 20 clubs I wanted to join but I ended up lowering it down to three clubs. Swim club, The Cru, and Taekwondo.



Cru Large Group Capture the flag purple team showing off team bands for almost Friday post.

In these clubs I started to join communities as I met people who are passionate about similar things as me or learning something new and wanting to grow together. Whether it's excitement over new members joining the beginner lane in Swim Club where we spend our time learning more techniques and improving together. Or growing in faith together in Cru with fun community group activities and playing capture the flag after Large Group with Cru.

Being a part of groups like these helped me form a sense of community here at RIT. I've met amazing people who have become my friends, who continue to motivate and support me, and give me ample opportunities to connect with campus. I have gained a strong circle within the Cru

community beyond our casual group hangouts, I have the most fun with them before community groups and large groups. Often, we go to RITZ and get pasta for dinner, and after a large group meeting, we have fun games. My favorite so far has been capturing the flag despite being caught within the first 5 minutes. It was fun watching the others try to evade and escape as I waited to be set free from the designated "jail". Although my team struggled a bit in the beginning, we won the first round which was rewarding.

The swimming team continues to encourage me to push myself in a difficult set and with team spirit everyone continuously feeds off each other's energy. In lane one a true bond was formed and we looked forward to seeing each other. Sign language is also put into practice to communicate with other members of our lane. It was a challenge at first as we tried to grasp basic signs like "you're late" and how to spell words we couldn't sign. Most of us can now spell "trust", and our names, as well as sign a basic greeting in sign language. It's always interesting when members of the team are at opposite ends of the pool and attempt to sign a word or phrase very poorly to another member. In the end, everyone is confused. Every practice is truly something new. It's become a part of my day; I'm always looking forward to and excited to see who will join. So, I encourage you to stop by a club, give something new a try, and embrace it. You never know what you might enjoy or communities you might join, they might even become like a second family. College is lonely and full of uncertainty, but you don't have to be a spec, there's a place here for everyone.