



2020

BEST OF CAROLINA



blush.

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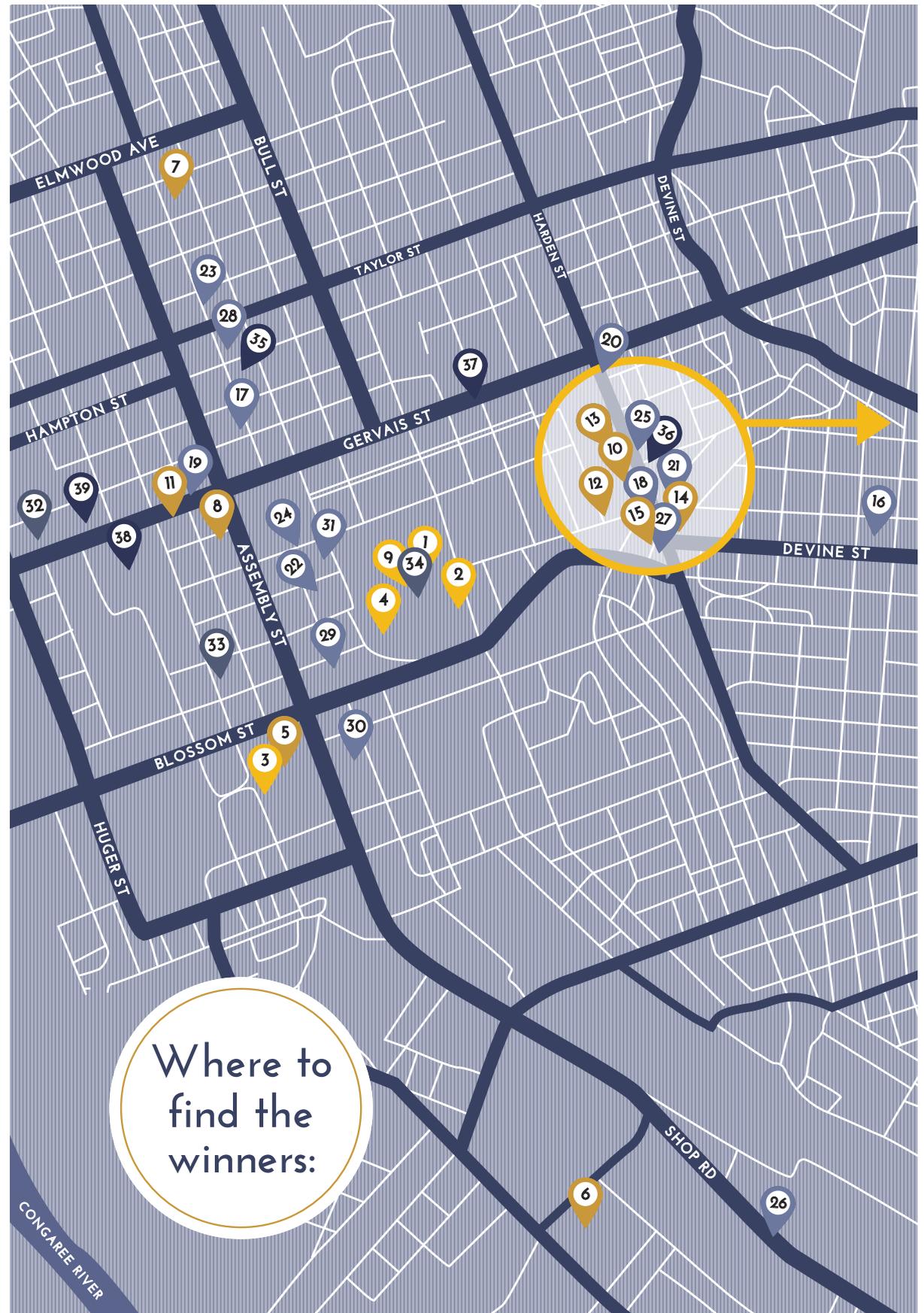
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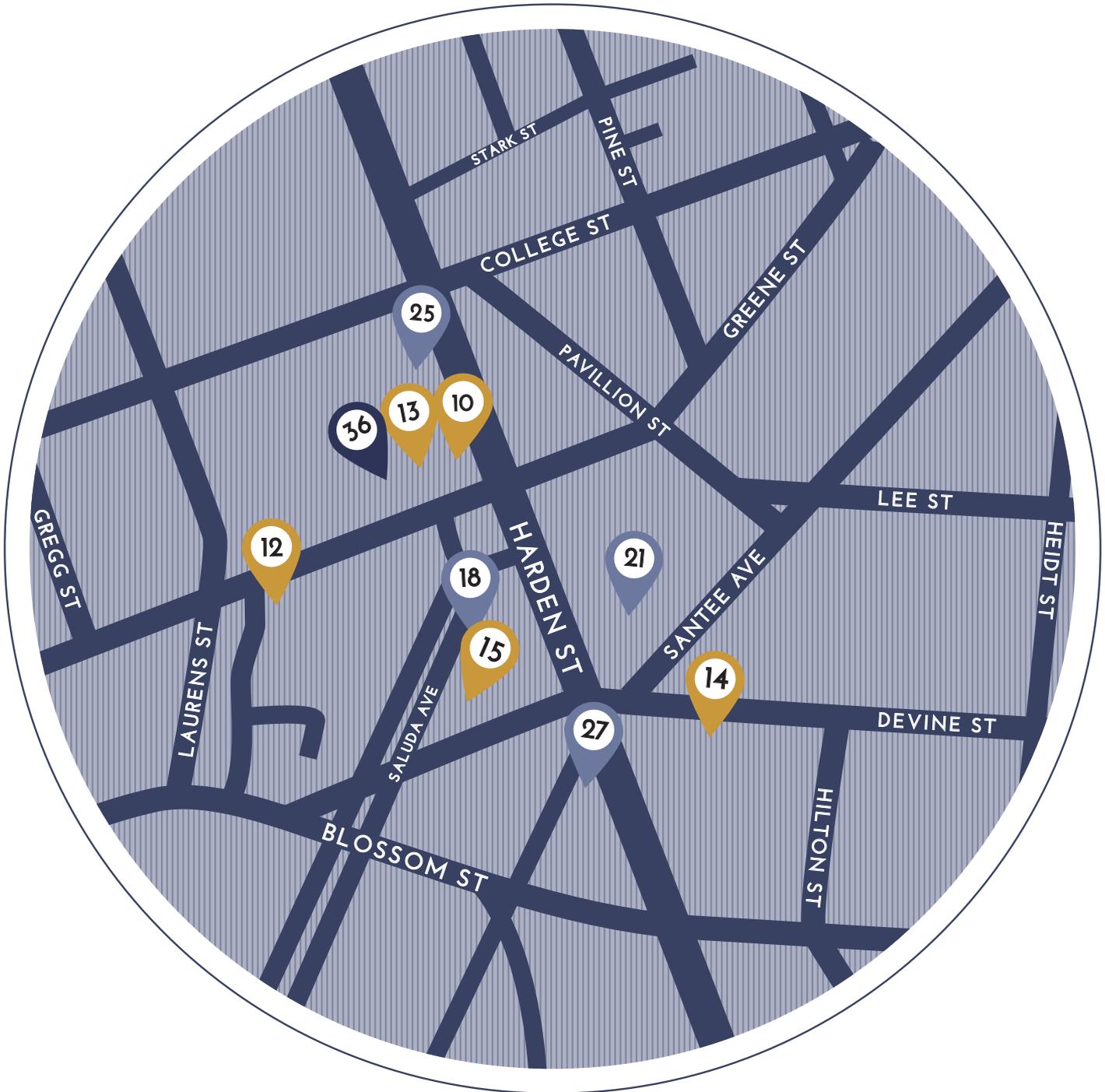
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FIVE POINTS



ON CAMPUS



Best On-Campus Eats

CHICK-FIL-A

Monday-Friday
Saturday

7:30 a.m.-10 p.m.
8:30 a.m.-10 p.m.

Located on the bottom floor of Russell House

Google Money Rating
With Meal Plan Options



Gracie Bryant

If you visit downstairs Russell House anytime between 12:30 and 2 p.m. you're bound to run into the extremely long Chick-fil-A line. While there are a multitude of restaurants across campus and housed within Russell House specifically, Chick-fil-A always seems to be a go-to for students.

Breakfast is served until 10:30 a.m. and meal plan students are able to choose from 'Chick-N-Minis' or a Chick-fil-A biscuit. Popular lunch and dinner menu items include the classic Chick-fil-A sandwich or nuggets which

are included in the several meal plan options listed at the line's entrance. If you're looking to splurge and treat yourself after a test or a hard day of classes, the milkshakes and cookies are highly spoken of – and the ice cream machine is almost never broken.



LAUREN BUSMAN



KATE GHARIB

Best On-Campus Housing

PATTERSON HALL

Gracie Bryant

Moving onto campus as a freshman brings a variety of mixed emotions, usually intense excitement and sometimes overwhelming fear. Two of the biggest questions freshmen face when preparing for their first semester are who they'll live with and where they'll live. While it would be impossible to name the best roommate, Best of Carolina voters have named the best on-campus residence: Patterson Hall.

Patterson Hall is located in central campus, across from both Bull Street parking garage and Russell House and a short walk to most academic buildings, making it a perfect home for incoming freshmen. It is a co-ed,

suite-style dorm, in which each suite includes two bedrooms and a bathroom shared between four people. Freshmen living here are typically members of the Galen Health Fellows or Visual and Performing Arts living and learning communities.

As one of the more recently renovated buildings on campus, Patterson Hall includes modern features and amenities. In the renovation, a kitchen was added on each floor with new appliances for students to use at any time. There are also cyber lounges and study rooms that overlook the city of Columbia and USC campus.

As of the 2019-2020 school year, Patterson Hall housed 544 students and rates averaged at \$7,760 for

the year, which is right in the middle range for typical on-campus housing costs, according to the University of South Carolina housing website. However, there's no denying Patterson Hall is far from average. The new building and central location allows students to enjoy their time living on campus and helped secure its selection as the best on-campus living option at the University of South Carolina.

Best Sorority

ALPHA GAMMA DELTA

Mardy Kramer

Colonized in 2012, Alpha Gamma Delta's Theta Omega Chapter calls the University of South Carolina home and has been making big waves for such a young chapter. It was recently recognized as one of the five "Greek" organizations that "exceeded expectations with distinction" by the university's Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

Fraternity & Sorority Life publishes the Annual Chapter Expectation's list every year, ranking chapters in the areas of "leadership and membership development, safety and accountability, community engagement, and academic excellence." Alpha Gamma Delta was one of three Panhellenic sororities to win such distinction.

Additionally, according to FSL statistics, Alpha Gamma Delta had the second-highest percentage of 4.0 GPAs in Greek Village and was fourth overall for GPAs in Greek Village. Their new member class of 2019 also had the second-highest GPA for chapters in Greek Village.

Nationally, AGD partners with Meals on Wheels and Feeding America, but chapters are also welcome to partner with local organizations that focus on fighting hunger. In the fall, AGD hosts Give Thanks, an all-day BBQ and live music fest with the proceeds going to hunger relief efforts. In the spring, AGD organizes the annual Strike Out Hunger event, a bowling tournament where all proceeds go to Feeding America. The 2019 Strike Out Hunger raised over \$11,000!

Alpha Gamma Delta also participates in on-campus fundraising efforts and raised the second-highest amount of money out of all organization teams for last year's Dance Marathon. And all that dancing paid off, as they were the 2019 Spurs and Struts winners during UofSC's Homecoming celebrations.



ELYSE PELLEGRINO

Best Fraternity

SIGMA PHI EPSILON

Mardy Kramer

Founded in 1904, the South Carolina Alpha Chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon has historic roots at the University of South Carolina. Commonly known as SigEp, the South Carolina Alpha chapter was the 12th chapter founded across the nation. It is now one of the largest fraternities in the country.

The fraternity's motto of "Building Balanced Men" is the core of its way of life, boasting continuous

development, high standards for accountability and equal rights and responsibilities for all initiated members. The non-pledging, non-hazing experience develops men for personal, academic and professional growth.

In 2013, SigEp selected Big Brothers Big Sisters of America as its main philanthropic project. According to the SigEp national website, there is a Big Brothers Big Sisters chapter within 40 miles of almost every SigEp collegiate chapter.

Since Columbia's Big Brother Big Sisters chapter is currently inactive, Sigma Phi Epsilon has found other causes to support, with a focus on food pantries this year. SigEp coordinated a three-day canned food drive on Greene Street, where it gathered over 600 cans for Gamecock Pantry and Harvest Hope Food Bank and raised over \$400 for Harvest Hope, too.

After reports of hazing came to light a few years ago, SigEp restructured and rebranded. It has since reformed itself under the values of virtue,

diligence and brotherly love. Since the reorganization, the fraternity has boasted one of the highest GPAs among Greek Life on campus. For the 2019 fall semester, Sigma Phi Epsilon had the highest GPA among all fraternities.

SigEp also has two members on the Interfraternity Council (IFC) executive board for the 2019-2020 school year. This is the second year in a row that Sigma Phi Epsilon has had two members representing them on IFC's executive board.

Through a long history and dedication to philanthropy, SigEp has certainly made its mark here on campus, earning it the reader-voted title of Best Fraternity 2020.

Best Professional Fraternity

ALPHA KAPPA PSI



Gracie Bryant

Professional fraternities are a solid opportunity for students looking to get involved on campus with people that will push them to develop themselves professionally and personally. While each professional fraternity generally focuses on a different area or industry and has their own strengths, Alpha Kappa Psi was voted by our readers as the best professional fraternity at the University of South Carolina.

The organization of Alpha Kappa Psi is established across not only North America, but Europe and Asia as well, giving members opportunities for global connections with their fraternity brothers and sisters. Despite a diverse membership, the organization strives

for consistent demonstration of its five core values: service, brotherhood, integrity, unity and knowledge.

Originally established on campus in 1958, Alpha Kappa Psi, commonly known as AKPsi, now has over 100 members across many majors and is the "premier developer of principled leaders" according to their chapter's description on the university's student organization platform, Garnet Gate. Throughout a student's time in AKPsi, many members have the opportunity to travel to events like the fraternity's national convention and the Principled Business Leadership Institute, while also taking part in mock interviews and hearing guest speakers. Despite the focus on building oneself, AKPsi also puts an emphasis on community

engagement and service. The South Carolina chapter of AKPsi raises money each year for the Ulman Cancer Fund, which raises "funds and awareness for those affected by young adult cancer across the nation," according to its website.

Through all of this, members enjoy their time together at various events, during weekend retreats and while competing on intramural sports teams. Through involvement in this professionally minded organization, members say they're able to push each other and themselves to become leaders and develop skills that they'll continue to use long after they've graduated from UofSC.

Best Service Organization

EPSILON SIGMA ALPHA



Gracie Bryant and Lindsay Stack

No matter what organization you're a part of here at UofSC, you've probably submitted community service hours or taken part in a Service Saturday. There's no denying that many organizations on our campus are focused on bettering the surrounding community and society as a whole, but Epsilon Sigma Alpha (ESA) takes it to the next level.

The Epsilon Sigma Alpha service sorority is strongly devoted to their sisterhood and providing service both locally and internationally through supporting charitable organizations.

Established on UofSC's campus in 1991, the Sigma Phi collegiate chapter of Epsilon Sigma Alpha takes an active role on campus. The organization furthers its reach on

campus by participating in events like Relay For Life, Dance Marathon, St. Jude Up Til Dawn, The Big Event, and USC Homecoming. ESA's main focus is to support their two philanthropies: St. Jude and Easter Seals. They host fundraising events to raise money and financially support their philanthropies. Every year the members volunteer for their philanthropy events such as the St. Jude Walk in Charleston, Easter Seals Walk with Me in Charlotte, and various Easter Seals events here in Columbia. The members are given a platform to serve in ways that are meaningful to them beyond the major events they participate in as a group, regardless of what their specific passions are. Everyone affiliated with Epsilon Sigma Alpha motivates and supports one another through their sisterhood and service!

PROVIDED BY EPSILON SIGMA ALPHA

Best Student Organization

DANCE MARATHON

Gracie Bryant

For five years in a row, Dance Marathon has been voted by the Carolina community as the best student organization at the University of South Carolina.

Dance Marathon takes place at schools and colleges across the country to raise money for over 170 pediatric hospitals, according to the Miracle Network website.

Here on UofSC's campus, Dance Marathon hosts a variety of fundraisers and events throughout the year to raise money for the Child Life Program at Prisma Health Children's Hospital. Since all of the funds stay local, the money raised by Dance Marathon all goes to help local kids and their families as they undergo serious health challenges.

Multiple large-scale fundraising events throughout the year lead up to the grand finale, Dance Marathon's Main Event, which is held in the spring. During the main event, students and Columbia residents join together for 14 hours of dancing and celebrating all that has been raised throughout the past year. If you choose to take part, be sure to wear comfortable shoes because no sitting is allowed!

According to Dance Marathon's Garnet Gate page, in the past 22 years, UofSC Dance Marathon has raised more than \$5.6 million to directly impact over 150,000 children across South Carolina. In 2019 alone, the organization raised \$1,038,156.

So, as you stop to get a cookie from the bake sale on Greene Street or

head to one of the percent nights held at restaurants across town, know that you are making a difference to a local child in need just by supporting your peers in a student organization



PROVIDED BY THE DAILY GAMECOCK

Best Study Spot

THOMAS COOPER LIBRARY

Lauren Busman

Thomas Cooper Library is the university's most popular study spot on campus. Open 24 hours during the weekdays and until midnight on the weekends, students, faculty and staff with a valid Carolina Card can enjoy the many amenities the library has to offer. With seven floors, there is ample space to find a quiet space to study.

Floors one and three offer individual study carrels, and floors one through four offer many desks and tables scattered throughout the stacks of books. If you need to collaborate on a group project, rooms are open for online reservations. The newly renovated fourth floor is perfect for groups because of the large open tables and glass-walled, temperature-

controlled spaces with large, interactive monitors, to which students can wirelessly connect.

The fifth floor features a technology lounge with computers, charging stations, printers and a technology rental desk. The career center is also on this level and is a great resource to help students prepare for interviews and get help finding a job or internship.

The main floor houses the circulation desk and its own Starbucks. At the circulation desk, librarians and student assistants will assist you in finding and renting books and materials. At Starbucks, you can order your favorite coffee or tea to help you power through a study session. Just past the Starbucks is the Hollings Special

Collections Library which features special rotating exhibits and collections.

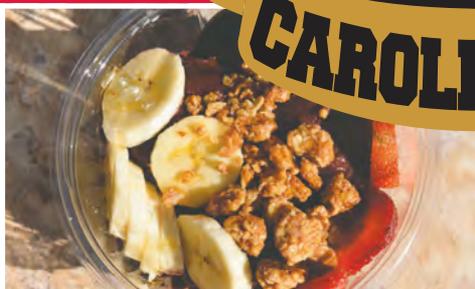
The mezzanine level is home to the Student Success Center, which is the go-to place for academic support and tutoring. The Student Success Center also offers workshops for money management, improving study techniques and more.

Whether you want to grab a cup of coffee or sit down for a long study session, "T-Coop" is the place to go. With its multiple floors and modern technology, the library is certainly the best place to study on campus.



LAUREN BUSMAN

CONGRATS
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ENTERTAINMENT

Best Recreational Activity Spot & Best Gym

STROM THURMOND Wellness and Fitness Center

🕒 Monday-Thursday: 6 a.m.-midnight
Friday: 6 a.m.-10 p.m.
Saturday: 8 a.m.-10 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-11 p.m.

📍 0.9 miles from the Horseshoe, 5-minute drive, 13-minute walk



Joshua Matthews

If you are bored and looking for something to do, look no further than Strom Thurmond Wellness and Fitness Center.

Strom is the perfect choice for any recreation interest you may have, with floors filled with everything from courts and workout equipment to a pool and rock climbing wall. With the multitude of options, there's something for everyone.

With Strom's plenty of machines and trainers – you might even get some tips from University of South

Carolina's President Bob Caslen – you are guaranteed to get into shape.

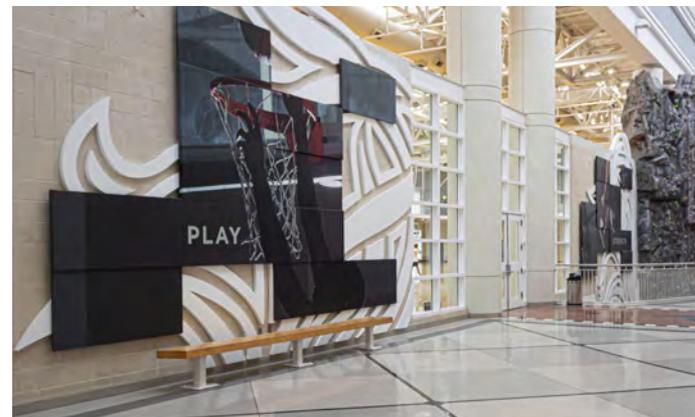
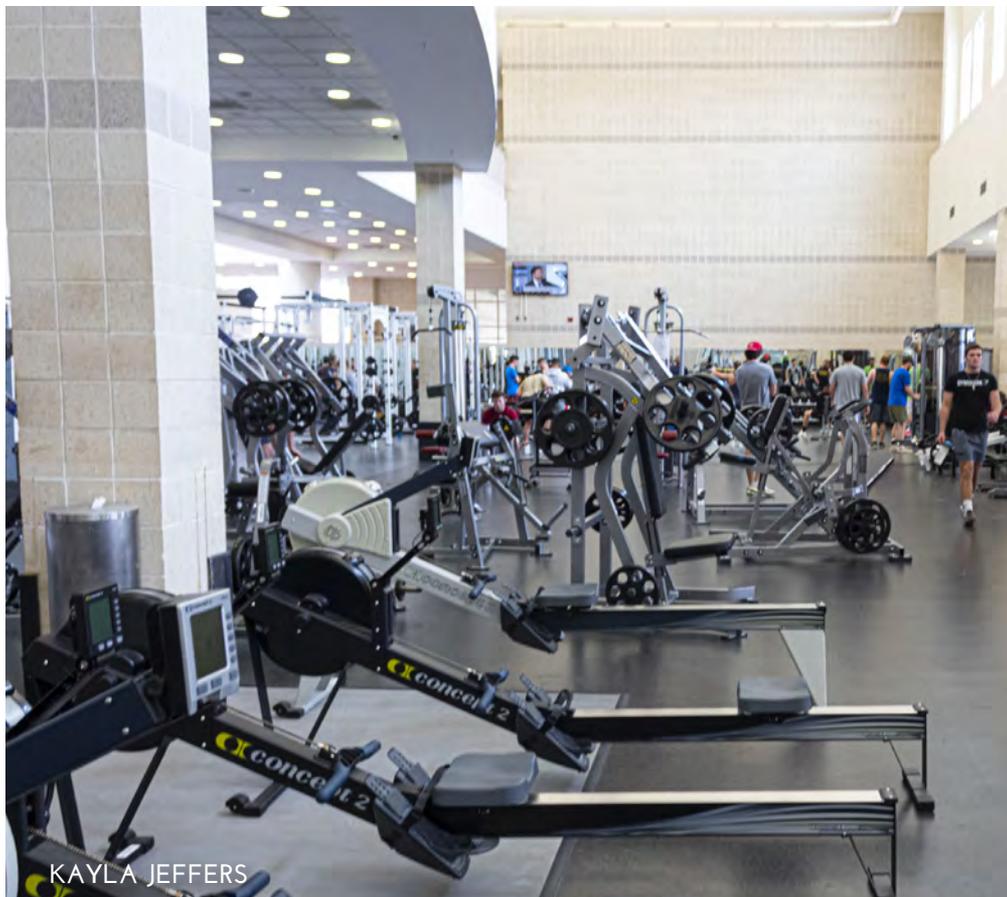
With the inside track you can ditch the treadmill and actually feel the breeze on your face as you get your miles in. While running on the track, you can check out any pickup basketball games that are going on in the courts down below.

If basketball is one of your favorite pastimes, Strom has more than four courts just on the top floor, so you are unlikely to run out of options easily.

On top of the pickup games and gym, Strom features a popular rock-climbing wall right beside the badminton and squash courts on the bottom floor.

Strom is open to all students for free with a USCID with a guest option for only \$10 a visit.

The Strom Thurmond Wellness and Fitness Center is a phenomenal place to go and have fun. With a variety of classes, workout equipment and courts, you'll have no trouble finding something that you like.



Kendall Hyman

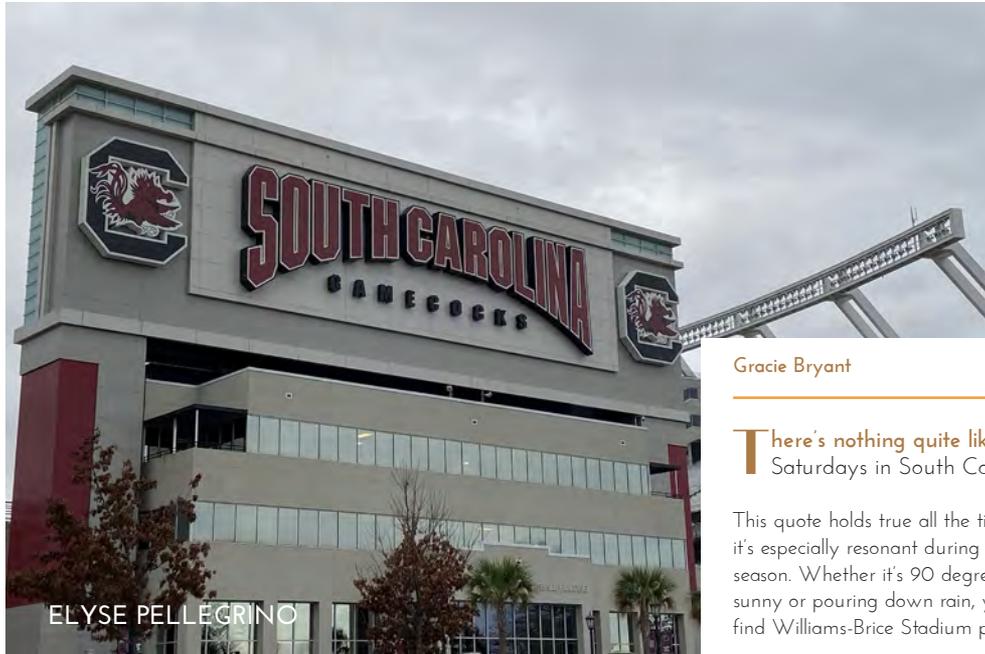
The popular on-campus gym, Strom Thurmond, has clinched the Best Gym spot. Located between main campus and south campus, Strom is easily accessible to all students. Strom Thurmond is not just your average gym, the inside contains basketball courts, a track, full sets of gym equipment and even an indoor rock climbing wall. The outside of Strom offers a full size pool, beach volleyball courts, and sports fields.

Strom also fosters group workouts and training sessions. Want one-on-one training? Strom has personal trainers that are willing to help you reach your goals. Want a group workout class any time of the day? Strom has a schedule and all you have to do is sign up for the class of your liking. The vast variety of needs that Strom's services can accommodate makes it the best gym in Columbia.

KAYLA JEFFERS

Best Sports Venue

WILLIAMS-BRICE STADIUM



ELYSE PELLEGRINO

Gracie Bryant

There's nothing quite like Saturdays in South Carolina."

This quote holds true all the time, but it's especially resonant during football season. Whether it's 90 degrees and sunny or pouring down rain, you can find Williams-Brice Stadium packed

full of students, alumni and avid Gamecock supporters, young and old, cheering on their football team and waving rally towels during Sandstorm. There is no denying that the energy within Williams-Brice Stadium is unmatched.

Since October 1934, when the doors to Williams-Brice were first opened, Carolina fans have used it as a stage to express their loyalty and have their voices heard, literally. According to ESPN, Willy-B, as it is affectionately known, is considered one of the loudest sports venues in the country. Carolina football games average 80,000 people in attendance, but the record was set in 2012 when over 85,000 people watched the Gamecocks beat the Georgia Bulldogs.

The magic of Willy-B is also shared throughout the community. High

school state championships, concerts and other events are held within the stadium as well.

If you've never been a part of a sandstorm within Williams-Brice Stadium or seen the fireworks explode above you after a Gamecock touchdown, put it on your bucket list. It's a chills-down-your-arms, surreal experience that you have to feel for yourself.

Tickets to football games are available for students through the Gamecock Rewards app, and additional information can be found online.

Best Local Festival

COLUMBIA'S GREEK FESTIVAL

Gracie Bryant

Each September, people of all backgrounds and nationalities come together in Columbia, SC to appreciate Greek culture. Columbia's Greek Festival is a three-day event consisting of a multitude of activities and events to introduce people to Greek heritage and history.

The festival is perhaps best known for the mouthwatering menu of authentic Greek and Mediterranean dishes, including gyros and souvlaki, roast lamb and broiled Greek chicken. If you're looking for something to satisfy your sweet tooth, the Greek

Festival vendors have you covered with a spread of pastries and dessert combinations like baklava sundaes.

In addition, the festival features performances from Greek folk dancers, live music and cultural opportunities like learning how to polka dance. Some of the vendors sell accessories, artwork and other items that are culturally meaningful. Though it has staple offerings and events that return every year, the festival also changes with every iteration in order to keep people coming back and learning more each time. During a visit to the Greek Festival, patrons can take

in presentations and discussions of Greek culture and history, as well as take guided and self-guided tours throughout the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral.

This event is family-friendly and tickets are not required. Times and dates have not yet been set for 2020, but more information can be found online at columbiasgreekfestival.com.



PROVIDED BY THE DAILY GAMECOCK

Best Live Music/Performance Venue

THE SENATE

 Box office: Tuesday-Thursday: 2 p.m.-6 p.m.
Hours vary Monday-Friday for events

 0.6 miles from the Horseshoe, 4-minute drive, 11-minute walk

 Prices vary, average \$20



FAITH WORRELL

Faith Worrell

When you want to jump up and down and jam to the smaller bands, this local venue is the place to visit. Bands and music genres vary but with a group of friends, going to The Senate will always make for a fun evening.

The Senate, formally known as "Music Farm," is only a short walk from the center of campus. If students choose to drive, there is limited parking at the venue, but there are street parking spots around the area.

The Senate offers a more personal music experience for the audience

while giving the artist a spotlight in South Carolina's capital. Performing artists tend to be more under the radar, but that's perfect for students looking to find new music or discover new artists. Large concerts are enjoyable, but it's easy to get lost in a sea of 8,000 or more people. At the Senate, you are one of 1,200, which allows you to have a more intimate experience with the crowd and the artist.

Given the environment and the venue size, attending a concert at the Senate comes with a milder hit to the wallet than a larger concert at Colonial

Life Arena. All tickets are available on the Senate's website along with their calendar of all their upcoming events. Ticket prices vary per artist but average around \$20. Location, new artists, special events and affordable tickets make the Senate a perfect option for a night out with friends.

UPCOMING SHOWS



| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| 06 MAR | THE MOTET | 20 MAR | RUNAWAY GIN A TRIBUTE TO PHISH | 31 MAR | DARK STAR ORCHESTRA | 21 APR | HISS GOLDEN MESSENGER |
| 07 MAR | CASH UNCHAINED THE ULTIMATE JOHNNY CASH TRIBUTE | 25 MAR | MINNESOTA | 03 APR | NEVERMIND THE ULTIMATE TRIBUTE TO NIRVANA | 22 APR | DABIN |
| 08 MAR | THE WEDDING BAND | 26 MAR | PARKER MCCOLLUM | 04 APR | COLAJAZZ FESTIVAL | 23 APR | MANCHESTER ORCHESTRA |
| 13 MAR | HERE COME THE MUMMIES | 27 MAR | THE LACS | 10 APR | THE DRIVER ERA | 24 APR | DYLAN SCOTT |
| 14 MAR | SHAMROCKS & SHENANIGANS BLOCK PARTY | 28 MAR | YOUNG M.A | 18 APR | RED NOT CHILI PEPPERS | 25 APR | SUSTO |

T H E S E N A T E C O L U M B I A . C O M

Best Movie Theater

RUSSELL HOUSE THEATER

Faith Worrell

For students without cars, living on campus can lead to a lot of streaming-based movie nights. While that is fine for students bingeing their favorite Netflix shows, going to the Russell House Theater is a perfect way to see new films in a movie theater environment.

Other than a few excellent throwback movie nights and events, Carolina Productions usually features recently released movies like "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood," "Knives Out," "Joker," "Queen & Slim" and "Frozen II." To find out what movies Carolina Productions is playing, students can find semester calendars on the second floor of Russell House or online.

However, this on-campus theater can be used for a wide variety of entertainment options other than just movie screenings. Holding up to 300 people, the venue can also be reserved for special events, organization meetings and lectures.

There are always events and shows going on, so students are encouraged to come to as many as they want. The best part for students is that all movies are completely free. That means that the Russell House theater is not only conveniently located with fun new movies, but the experience comes without a cost. What more could college students need?



Best Local Musician/Performer

DARIUS RUCKER HOOTIE & THE BLOWFISH

Gracie Bryant

Everyone thinks their shower voice could win "American Idol" and captivate fans from across the world, when really it's just giving a good laugh to your entire dorm floor. But for Darius Rucker, one time singing slightly too loud in the shower changed the course of his life.

When his floormate and future band member Mark Bryan heard Rucker singing in the shower, he suggested the two of them become a musical duo. After performing together for a while, the guys brought in two more members, Jim Sonefeld and Dean Felber, to create the wildly successful

band Hootie and the Blowfish. Hootie started off playing college bars in Columbia and across the state and eventually released six chart-topping songs – including "Hold My Hand" and "Only Wanna Be With You," and six albums.

After 19 years, Darius Rucker decided to go solo. He had several songs certify gold, become No. 1 hits and get everyone singing along, including the earworm cover of "Wagon Wheel" he released in 2013. Then, in 2019, the band joined together again for a tour that sold out arenas and an album that put the group on the charts once again.

Despite their fame, Hootie and the Blowfish occasionally returns to Columbia and the University of South Carolina to pay tribute to the place where it all began. The band's most recent performance was in 2017 – when members agreed to perform a free concert for students if the football team made a bowl game that season – but the most talked about was when the band made the Horseshoe its stage in 1996.

Though it's been years since Hootie and the Blowfish and Darius Rucker made the jump to stardom, the band and its frontman clearly hold a special place in the heart of the Carolina

community. No matter how many No. 1 hits they release, they'll always be "local" to UofSC.



Best Five Points Bar & Best Bartenders

BREAKERS BAR & GRILL



Monday-Wednesday 9 p.m.-2 a.m.
Thursday-Saturday 8 p.m.-2 a.m.



1.2 miles from the Horseshoe, 7-minute drive, 16-minute walk



Google Money Rating

Kendall Hyman

The popular student bar, Breakers Bar & Grill, has taken the prize for Best Five Points Bar. Breakers can be found packed with students no matter what day of the week it is, but especially Fridays, Saturdays and Tuesday karaoke nights -- so make sure you get there early to avoid the line.

The unique thing about Breakers is their multiple spaces. Breakers Bar & Grill has an indoor space with a bar and music pumping through the speakers. Connected to the indoor space is an outdoor patio. The patio has tables and chairs, and a bar with a TV, making it

the perfect space to socialize with friends when the weather is nice.

The final part of Breakers is called Breakers Live. This space is the largest of the three and has a bar that spans the middle of the building. The unique thing about Breakers Live is that there is a live band every night from 11:00 p.m. until at 2:00 a.m. Breakers is the perfect student bar located in Five Points and has multiple spaces to accommodate everyone's preferences.



Lindsey Stack

Whether it is a Monday evening or a late Saturday night, Breakers Bar and Grill is the place to be in Five Points! Both the indoor and outdoor patio bars offer top-tier service from trained and experienced bartenders that work hard to make exceptional drinks offered both on and off the menu.

The bartenders will create unique drinks of your choice and make them to perfection. Additionally, they allow you to customize any drink on the menu to your liking. Breakers has nightly discounts on mixed drinks and shots throughout the week. On "Thirsty Thursdays" they offer \$2 house vodka shots or \$2 mixed drinks with their house vodka. In addition to making you the best drinks in town,

the bartenders provide excellent food service to all of their customers.

They serve everything on their menu which includes hamburgers, sandwiches, pizzas, salads, chicken nuggets, tater tots, fries, etc. The bartenders will make sure each meal that is ordered comes out of the kitchen correctly before they serve it to their guests. If a drink or food order comes out incorrectly, they will take it back and re-make it to perfection as the guest pleases.

The Breakers Bar & Grill bartenders are friendly, knowledgeable about drinks, exemplify great memory and time management skill, and demonstrate situational awareness. If you're looking for a good time with superb bartender services Breakers Bar & Grill is the place to go!



FAITH WORRELL

Best Vista Bar

SOCIAL BAR & LOUNGE

 Monday-Saturday: 2 p.m.-2 a.m.
Sunday: 1 p.m.-2 a.m.

 1.0 miles from the Horseshoe, 8-minute drive, 18-minute walk

 Google Money Rating



FAITH WORRELL

Kendall Hyman

Social Bar and Lounge is the hottest bar in the Vista because it makes being social easy and is a great place to come and make new friends while dancing to their upbeat music.

This nightclub is one-of-a-kind and offers a dark atmosphere lit by fluorescent lights. It is the perfect dance spot located in the heart of the popular Vista area. Social offers multiple different rooms and spaces throughout the building. The main area has a stage where popular music acts often play. If you want a more relaxed atmosphere, head outside and

hang out on their patio. The patio spans the length of the building and is the perfect place to socialize on a nice night. Social also has a VIP room for rent within the building. This area is perfect for special occasions and parties.

Social is nearly always filled with University of South Carolina students, and student organizations often rent out the bar for events. If you are looking for an upbeat place to dance and hang out with friends, Social is, according to our readers, the place to be.

Best Sports Bar

SALTY NUT CAFÉ

 Sunday-Wednesday: 11 a.m.-midnight
Thursday-Saturday: 11 a.m.-2 a.m.

 1.2 miles from the Horseshoe, 7-minute drive, 14-minute walk

 Google Money Rating



CAIT PATEL

Gracie Bryant

Located just minutes from campus in Five Points on Greene Street, Salty Nut Cafe is well-known in the Columbia community for its tasty yet affordable menu and comfortable dining experience.

The Salty Nut menu has a variety of delicious options, from appetizers and salads to burgers, wings and wraps. Some of the stand-out favorites include appetizers like the popular buffalo chicken dip and fried pickles and the entrees include the "Homemade Pimento Burger," which is a burger topped with your choice of homemade pimento cheese or jalapeno pimento cheese.

Each Monday through Friday, Salty Nut features specials including "Mexican Mondays," pint nights on Tuesdays, trivia and wings on Wednesday, \$3 fireball on Thursdays and \$5 premium liquor on Fridays. On top of that, each weekday from 4 to 7 p.m., Salty Nut offers a happy hour to all customers, and on Tuesdays, they host a ladies night from 10 p.m. to midnight.

With these deals, you can enjoy Salty Nut's menu, its often-packed patio area and time with friends, even while on a budget.



Monday–Thursday: 11 a.m.–10 p.m.
 Friday–Saturday: 11 a.m.–11 p.m.
 Sunday: 10:30 a.m.–10 p.m.

0.8 miles from the Horseshoe, 5-minute drive, 13-minute walk

Google Money Rating



CAIT PATEL

Mardy Karmar

Popular Five Points restaurant Publico, featuring a Lat-Asian fusion menu, is a staple with UofSC students and Columbia residents alike. With a different special per night, there is always something new and fun to eat at Publico.

The Monday night special is aptly named the expectation-subverting “Taco Monday.” With \$2 tacos, \$2 tequila, \$4 margaritas and \$4 Micheladas, there are options for everyone. Wednesday’s special encourages state pride, with a dollar off all local South Carolina beer or liquor. If you love drinks on tap, whether that’s craft beer, sake, wine, or cocktails, Thursdays are for you!

Publico offers \$1 off all tap drinks Thursday nights.

If you’re looking for something to do over the weekend without breaking the bank, Publico is the place to go. Jello Fridays serve \$2 craft cocktail jello shots, and Saturdays are for “Pitchers and Pineapple,” or \$20 deals on 60-ounce sangrias, mimosas and margaritas with the special, Saturday-only pineapple margarita.

Whether you’re craving street tacos, Mexican street corn, Sunday brunch, poke bowls, or ramen, Publico has you covered. With vegetarian options, anyone can go and enjoy a nice meal at this upscale Lat-Asian restaurant and bar.



Best Patio

JAKE'S ON DEVINE

Monday: Closed
 Tuesday–Friday: 4 p.m.–3 a.m.
 Saturday: 4 p.m.–2 a.m.
 Sunday: 11 a.m.–2 a.m.

1.3 miles from the Horseshoe, 9-minute drive

Google Money Rating

Kendall Hyman

Jake's on Devine is located in the popular Five Points area. The patio located at the back of the building is expansive and contains picnic tables, string lights, overhangs, and even a small fountain. There are two bars located outside, in addition to the one inside of the building. Jake's on Devine offers a relaxed vibe and even serves delicious food made by Ripper's.

Jake's on Devine's patio is always packed on Wednesday nights. Students flock to the popular bar for \$2.50 draft beers on Wednesdays. Jake's On Devine offers a unique selection of locally brewed and other

craft beers. If you are looking for a place to try some beers that aren't offered everywhere while socializing with friends, Jake's on Devine is the place to go.

The thing that sets Jake's on Devine apart from the other numerous bars in Five Points is their weekly events. Jake's on Devine offers “Yappy Hour,” which takes place on their patio. Customers are invited to bring their dogs and eat and drink while the dogs are able to play and make new friends. Jake's On Devine — and especially their huge patio — is the perfect place to hang out with friends during Columbia's famously hot weather!



CAIT PATEL

Best Place for Trivia & Best Pizza

VILLAGE IDIOT

 Tuesday–Sunday: 11 a.m.–midnight

 1.1 miles from the Horseshoe, 7-minute drive, 15-minute walk

 Google Money Rating

Kendall Hyman

If you love trivia or just want a fun activity to do with friends, check out Village Idiot's trivia nights. Every Wednesday at 8:30 p.m., Village Idiot hosts trivia at its Five Points location.

People often arrive an hour or two early to secure their seat and use the time before trivia begins to eat a slice of pizza and drink with friends. On a typical Wednesday night in Village Idiot, you will see students and Columbia residents gathered to hang out with friends and try to guess the answers to every trivia question asked or guess the song being played. If you are looking for a fun, competitive game in Columbia, Village Idiot is the place to go!



Joshua Matthew

If you're ever in need of a slice of pizza, look no further than Village Idiot Pizza and Pub located on Devine Street. With a plethora of toppings and a variety of deals, this pizza place gives you the best bang for your buck.

This topping-judgement-free zone will let you try a pie with whatever you want – even if you enjoy pineapples on your pizza. Village Idiot has so many toppings that you're sure to find something that you like.

Hosting a party? Village Idiot also caters and will provide you with all the pies you could need to feed all of your guests. Village Idiot is also constantly hosting events for fraternities and various organizations across campus, so don't be surprised if you see some of your friends there.

During happy hour you can find great deals on anything you'd want – from \$2.50 for the slice of the day to a \$5 Bud Light pitcher. With Village Idiot's new "pie of the month" club you can even start earning rewards toward free slices. With deals like these you can affordably feed the family, your frat brothers and your friends.

Village Idiot is the best pizza in Columbia, and with its affordable options you can leave with a full stomach and full wallet.



LAUREN BUSMAN

NATALIE, 19



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Best Breakfast/Brunch The Devine CINNAMON ROLL DELI

 Tuesday-Sunday: 7 a.m.-2 p.m.

 1.7 miles from the Horseshoe, 9-minute drive, 30-minute walk

 Google Money Rating



FAITH WORRELL

Elyse Pellegrino

The Devine Cinnamon Roll Deli says it all in the name.

Located on Devine Street, the store front sits in the back of a dirt parking lot with bright orange umbrellas welcoming customers to the friendly atmosphere. Famous for being featured on Food Network for their Cinnamonster, the Cinnamon Roll Deli has become a hot spot for college students, families and foodies wanting to get in to see their delicious creations.

The menu provides a variety of items for everyone to enjoy, all completed with a complementary cinnamon roll to satisfy any sweet cravings.

Cinnamon Roll Deli also has created unique flavors to add some excitement to a normal cinnamon roll, including Wildberry Graham Cracker, Strawberry Cheesecake and Apple Cobbler. Popular items on the menu are their build-your-own breakfast sandwiches, paninis and University of South Carolina-inspired specialty sandwiches. To get a bang for your buck, I suggest getting their grits bowls. With a different flavor of grits everyday you get the experience of trying something new, and it comes with sourdough toast and a mini cinnamon roll on the side. However, every time I visit I catch myself staring at the dessert case that sits next to the counter that's packed with cakes, breads and brown-

ies that look just too heavenly to eat.

If you are looking for something new in town or a place to take your family members, make sure to stop by the Devine Cinnamon Roll Deli to meet their friendly staff members, delicious menu, and to, of course, take a few pictures of your beautiful tray to add to the 'Gram.

Best Local Coffee Shop

COOL BEANS COFFEE CO.

 Monday-Friday: 7 a.m.-midnight
Saturday-Sunday: 9 a.m.-midnight

 Across Sumter Street from the Horseshoe

 Google Money Rating



SHREYAS SABOO

Faith Worrell

Located across the street from the Horseshoe and providing a quiet space, Cool Beans Coffee Company is the perfect study spot for students on campus.

If you can't seem to focus in a more busy place like Russell House or Thomas Cooper Library, Cool Beans is by far a quieter and slower environment.

They also serve many healthy food and drink options to push you through your study session. Cool Beans has established itself in Columbia as more than just a coffee shop since their

menu includes salads, fruit, breakfast items, homemade cookies, cinnamon rolls, muffins, soups, wraps, sandwiches and paninis. The Cool Beans menu and brand could be described as a localized version of a combination of Starbucks and Panera.

The menu is affordable for students, as all of their menu items are \$11 or less. They offer a special for \$9, which includes your choice of any sandwich, wrap or panini and Sun Chips, garden pasta, side salad or fruit. The meal also includes tea or coffee, and a pickle. Coffee is, of course, the standard fare with both hot and cold beverages.

Prices range from \$1.50 for a plain bagel to \$10.50 for a soup, sandwich or panini combination.

The environment is friendly and welcoming for students or Columbia residents and the free WiFi is perfect for anyone looking to get work done. The atmosphere is conducive to study, conversation and filled bellies, securing the spot of Best Local Coffee Shop as voted by our audience.

Best Lunch

THE GOURMET SHOP

 Monday–Saturday: 9 a.m.–6 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

 1.1 miles from the Horseshoe, 6-minute drive, 15-minute walk

 Google Money Rating

Faith Worrell

The Gourmet Shop is one of the most popular lunch spots in Columbia. With their expansive outdoor seating, as well as their indoor tables, The Gourmet Shop is appealing to all. You can almost always guarantee the restaurant to be full, but don't worry, the wait never seems long. This is because the inside of The Gourmet Shop, attached to the Café, houses their store which offers knick knacks, an expansive wine room, cutlery and much more.

When you do get seated, The Gourmet Shop's menu spans from sandwiches to soup to cheese and

bread plates, but no matter what you order, you can never go wrong. They also offer a wide variety of drink selections, which encompasses sodas, wines, mimosas and coffee beverages. In addition to their large lunch menu, The Gourmet Shop offers brunch every day of the week. While their brunch menu is smaller than the lunch menu, it offers all the staples and favorites with creative twists.

Whether you choose to sit inside and hear the hustle and bustle of the kitchen or outside to get some fresh air, The Gourmet Shop is a lunch spot you can't go wrong with.



FAITH WORRELL



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- Friday: 4 p.m.–2 a.m.
- Saturday: Noon–2 a.m.
- Sunday: Noon–midnight

📍 1.0 miles from the Horseshoe, 7-minute drive

💰💰 Google Money Rating

Best Dessert

KAMINSKY'S



Kendall Hyman

Kaminsky's in the Vista has taken the cake for the best dessert in Columbia. Choose from their daily selections of cakes, pies and cobblers located in the case at the front of the restaurant, or order off of their full menu, which includes ice cream sundaes, milkshakes and some unique alcoholic drinks. Kaminsky's offers soft lighting and chalkboard walls that are always decorated with fun designs or specials.

A must-try is the Toll House Pie. A staple located in the case at the front of Kaminsky's, the Toll House Pie is made up of delicious, semi-melted chocolate chips and walnuts on pie crust. They even serve it with a dollop of whipped cream and a scoop of ice cream on the side.

For a lighter option, try one of their signature milkshakes. The Candy Bar Milkshake is perfect for anyone who loves a good candy bar. With your choice between Heath Bar, Butterfinger, or Reese's, the Candy Bar Shake can be customized to your liking.

Kaminsky's offers a variety of dessert items that will satisfy anyone's sweet tooth. Students and adults flock to Kaminsky's any night of the week and are able to enjoy their favorites in a relaxed, upscale atmosphere. If you haven't already, head over to Kaminsky's in the Vista and get yourself a slice of cake and a milkshake, relax, and enjoy. I promise it won't be your last time!



Best Late Night Eats

COOK OUT

 Monday–Thursday: 10 a.m.–4 a.m.
Friday–Saturday: 10 a.m.–5 a.m.

 1.0 miles from the Horseshoe, 4-minute drive, 19-minute walk

 Google Money Rating

Faith Worrell

After about 9 p.m. students' options for food at a cheap price becomes very limited. Most places still open are priced higher, leaving students struggling to find somewhere to get a late night snack. Cookout has established themselves as a college student's go-to late night restaurant because of their extended hours and affordable prices.

Located in Five Points off of Harden Street, it's not quite close enough to walk to from campus but it is only a few-minute drive. Cookout is ideal for anyone looking to satisfy that late night (or early morning, however you

choose to look at it) hunger for just a few dollars.

Menu options include homemade char-grilled hamburgers, char-grilled chicken breasts, corn dogs, quesadillas, milkshakes, hush puppies, barbeque and wraps. The best-selling "Cookout Trays" are just over \$5 for a large portion of food. What makes the tray the best option is the option to customize based off of your cravings. No two Cookout trays would have to be the same after students get to choose from an entrée and two sides of any of their most popular menu items.

However, if you're not quite hungry but need a pick-me-up, one of the most delicious options is the huge selection of handmade milkshakes. Their flavors include the classic chocolate, strawberry and vanilla, but also include options like pineapple, blueberry, cheesecake and cookies and cream and more if you're feeling adventurous.

So, if you're up late cramming for an exam or making your way home from a long night out and need some food – Cookout is my go-to option, and I highly recommend it.



Best Meal Special: Cook Out Tray

Kendall Hyman

Most of you have probably heard of Cookout, even if you haven't tried it. The popular fast food chain is located on the outskirts of Five Points and is always crowded with students. The thing that draws students to Cookout is their Cookout Tray meal special.

For only \$5.39, you can get an entrée, two sides and a drink. Entrees range from hamburgers to quesadillas to barbecue sandwiches and the wide variety of sides makes picking two a difficult choice. You can also upgrade your drink to one of their signature milkshakes for only \$1 more.

This \$5 deal has landed Cookout with the top meal special in Columbia and kept it packed with students at all hours of the night



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Best New Restaurant

HOME TEAM BBQ

🕒 Daily: 11 a.m.–2 a.m.

📍 1.3 miles from the Horseshoe, 8-minute drive, 18-minute walk

💰 Google Money Rating

Kendall Hyman

Home Team BBQ is the hottest new restaurant in Columbia. Located in the middle of Five Points, Home Team is a blend of a sports bar and southern barbecue restaurant. Students, families and locals flock to Home Team whenever there is a big sporting event on or just to relax and eat and drink with loved ones.

Home Team's menu is expansive and features classic barbecue items, such as pulled pork platters and sliced brisket sandwiches, but also gets creative and encompasses tacos and salads. Whatever you are craving, Home Team has something for you. Home Team is most notable amongst

students for their nachos. With your choice of pulled pork, pulled chicken, chicken chili, or black beans, these nachos have an option for everyone and are piled high with three different salsas, two different cheeses, jalapenos, guacamole and much more.

Home Team's drink menu has helped land them the Best New Restaurant Spot. Their signature drink, the Game Changer, is a frozen beverage containing rum, orange juice, pineapple juice, coconut and some nutmeg. This drink gets the job done and tastes delicious in the process.

Whether you are looking for a family friendly atmosphere, a place to watch

the big game, or something fun to do on a weekend with friends, Home Team is the place.



ETHAN LAM

Best Delivery

DOMINO'S PIZZA

🕒 Sunday-Thursday: 10 a.m.–3 a.m.
Friday-Saturday: 10 a.m.–4 a.m.

📍 0.4 miles from the Horseshoe, 4-minute drive, 7-minute walk

💰 Google Money Rating



FAITH WORRELL

Joshua Matthews

Everyone, myself included, loves the Domino's chain. With its delicious hand-tossed pizza and affordable options, Domino's offers the best delivered pizza for students across campus.

I already have my order saved so that all I have to do is re-place it, allowing me to get my meal quickly every time.

Domino's, unlike most restaurants that deliver, stays open until 4 a.m., providing you with delivered meals even into the wee hours of the morning.

And if you're not in the mood for pizza, Domino's offers wings, pastas and desserts, giving you the opportunity to satisfy any of your cravings.

With Domino's rewards, students have the opportunity to combine two of their favorite things: free stuff and pizza, making the loyalty to the brand worth it.

Domino's continues to be the best delivery in Columbia, not only because of its deals and great food, but because of its timeliness. As you walk down Assembly Street you'll see a

multitude of delivery cars rushing past to get orders to their customers in the shortest time possible, which is why they secured Best Delivery 2020.

Best Vegan/Vegetarian Menu Options

GOOD LIFE CAFÉ

🕒 Monday–Saturday: 7 a.m.–10 p.m.
Sunday: 9 a.m.–8 p.m.

📍 1.3 miles from the Horseshoe, 8-minute drive, 23-minute walk

\$\$ Google Money Rating

Faith Worrell

Eating healthy, especially in college, can be incredibly hard. Salads are always more expensive, and fast food tends to be far more convenient. Good Life Café fixes both of those problems with their vegan and vegetarian fare.

Located at 1614 Main St., the restaurant is welcoming and colorful, and the food is filling without making you feel weighed down. You get the sense this place is good for you the moment you walk in the door.

The menu options are healthy, rich in vitamins, minerals and color. They purchase local, gluten free, organic, kosher and fresh which is done with the intent of catering to those with specific dietary lifestyles or restrictions. While they are a vegan and vegetarian restaurant, their wide variety menu can be enjoyed by anyone. Their prices range from eight to 20 dollars and their menu includes cold-pressed cocktails, power bowls, wraps, sandwiches, salads and more.

Your student wallet may not be able to make it a regular habit, but

the prices are well worth it for the healthier, high-quality food. If you don't want an entire meal, Good Life Café also offers a wide variety of smoothies which can make studying there even sweeter. The refreshing environment makes it a perfect spot to meet up with friends to do homework or just hang out.

For anyone with any form of eating preference or dietary restriction, Good Life Café is a fun and fresh option that is under two miles from the center of campus.



FAITH WORRELL

Best Asian Food

HIBACHI HOUSE

🕒 Monday–Thursday: 11 a.m.–9:30 p.m.
Friday–Saturday: 11 a.m.–10 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

📍 0.5 miles from the Horseshoe, 5-minute drive, 8-minute walk

\$ Google Money Rating

Mardy Karmer

Hibachi House is a great location for a pick-me-up after a long night out or simply a long night studying. Located on the outskirts of campus, the restaurant has many large tables for you and your friends to sit down and enjoy some Japanese comfort food. With both take-out or dine-in options, the quick service is a hit for students wanting to satisfy their cravings.

This Japanese restaurant offers a multitude of dishes, including its popular rice bowls. Serving sushi,

noodles, salads, Teriyaki, rice bowls or Bento boxes, there are options for everyone.

All of the dishes come in big portions at extremely cheap prices. The most expensive dish on the menu, the Hibachi Triple with chicken, shrimp and steak, is just \$12.95. The plates are also served with fried rice, a side of vegetables and a salad. The rice bowls range from \$5.95 to \$6.95, depending on your choice of chicken, shrimp or steak. All dishes come with their house-made white sauce -- a slightly sweet and creamy topping that can be poured over anything. With

unbeatable prices and large portions, Hibachi House is a great spot to take a date, some friends, or to treat yourself with great food.



FAITH WORRELL

Best Burgers

PAWLEYS FRONT PORCH

🕒 Monday-Thursday: 11 a.m.-9 p.m.
Friday-Saturday: 11 a.m.-10 p.m.
Sunday: Noon-9 p.m.

📍 2.4 miles from the Horseshoe, 10-minute drive

💰 Google Money Rating



CAIT PATEL

Joshua Matthews

Voted as the best burger place by The State, Columbia Metropolitan, Carolina's Best, The Free Times and yet again, Best of Carolina, Pawleys Front Porch has clearly made a name for themselves throughout the Columbia community with burgers cooked to perfection and a smorgasbord of sides.

On Mondays your family can save money, with a "Kids Eat for \$1" special that goes from 4 p.m. to close. On Saturdays customers can get a Bloody Mary for only \$4 and on Sundays there's a 20% discount with

a valid student ID. They also have an amazing "Give Back" night where 10% of the night's revenue is donated to a local charity. Pawleys not only helps students, but also organizations within the community.

Along with their location in Five Points, Pawleys also has a mobile food truck where you can get your favorite burgers brought right to your tailgate, party, or business meeting and feed the whole hungry crowd.

If you're feeling extra hungry, Pawleys has an amazing challenge open to you. The challenge includes three 8 oz

patties topped with pimento cheese, jalapeño pimento cheese, Applewood bacon, jalapeño bacon, lettuce, tomato, onion and your choice of side. If you finish this in under 30 minutes, you win a free Pawleys T-shirt or gift card and you get to decorate a knife to hang on the wall.

Pawleys is great for students with their discounts, amazing contributions to the community and mobile catering. Consider this the best burger place in town.

Best Brewery

RIVER RAT BREWERY

🕒 Tuesday-Wednesday: Noon-9 p.m.
Thursday: Noon-10 p.m.

Friday: Noon-11 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-11 p.m.

Sunday: 10 a.m.-8 p.m.

📍 2.4 miles from the Horseshoe, 11-minute drive



CAIT PATEL

Gracie Bryant

As River Rat Brewery's website puts it, "great beer is the catalyst that makes everything better." This Columbia brewery strives to give you and your friends something new to try every time – from craft beers to tacos.

Whether it's enjoying a beer on the deck while soaking in a nice day outside or hanging out in the taproom, River Rat Brewery has been providing customers with a great place to relax after a long day of work since 2013.

River Rat's beer options cover a vast range of tastes. The seasonal beers, including options like the Winter Warmer Ale and the award-winning Bohemian Pilsner, provide customers with the chance to be on the adventurous side and try something new, while the brewery's "core beers," as they call them, also come highly recommended.

While they are the largest beer production company in Columbia, according to their website, the beer isn't the only thing that makes River Rat Brewery stand out. With both a regular menu and brunch menu,

there's no doubt customers can find the perfect dish to pair with their craft beer.

For customers looking to stay on budget but enjoy this staple of Columbia, River Rat offers different specials every day. With \$3 "Taco Tuesdays," \$2 off wings on "Wing Wednesday," \$1.50 off a pitcher of beer on Fridays and Happy Hour specials, there's a deal for every customer to enjoy.

Best Ice Cream Shop

THE BAKED BEAR

🕒 Monday-Friday: Noon-10 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday: Noon-11 p.m.

📍 1.1 miles from the Horseshoe, 5-minute drive, 16-minute walk

💰 Google Money Rating

Mardy Kramer

The Baked Bear, a Five Points ice cream staple, is uniquely simple in their approach to ice cream.

Simply pick a cookie type that you want as the top and bottom for your customized ice cream sandwich, select your favorite ice cream flavor, add any toppings and finally decide whether you'd like it warmed up or not. Opening at noon every day, the chain closes at 10 p.m. on weekdays or at 11 p.m. on weekends. With 11 different cookies, including special seasonal flavors, vegan options and a Baked

Bear original flavor, there are options for everyone at the Baked Bear.

While not a traditional Five Points late-night snack, The Baked Bear is a perfect place to take some friends, a date, or even your parents when they come into town. Nestled next to the Hootie and the Blowfish statue in Five Points, The Baked Bear offers a perfect Saturday afternoon stop.



KATE GHARIB

Best Soda City Vendor

THE BELGIAN WAFFLE TRUCK

🕒 Saturday: 9 a.m.-1 p.m. **📍** 1.0 miles from the Horseshoe, 7-minute drive, 20-minute walk

Faith Worrell

Soda City Market has a wide variety of vendors for every person wandering Main Street on a Saturday morning, but the Belgian Waffle Truck is no ordinary truck. They have Belgian waffles that can make your mouth water just by the smell that radiates in passing. With each waffle made with a brioche yeast dough and pearl sugar, these waffles are gloriously crunchy with every bite.

The appetizing array includes their signature "Strawwaffle" – a sweet waffle topped with fresh strawberries and whipped cream – but that's only

the tip of the waffle choices. There is the "Croque Monsieur", a ham, mustard and melted Swiss cheese waffle, and the "Oufiti Waffle", made with a goat cheese spread, lettuce, duck and chicken confit and onion jam. Looking for something less exotic? The truck offers a plain waffle, a breakfast waffle with sausage, fried egg and gravy, and even a vegetarian waffle made with a house garden burger, mayo, lettuce and red onion.

The food is not only delicious, but perfect for the classic "phone eats first" food pictures we all know we take. The cherry on top is that the prices won't deplete any of our broke college

student wallets. Each waffle ranges from \$5.00 to \$8.00, with fifty cent add-ons like Nutella, warm chocolate, peanut butter and homemade berry compote.

If you're spending your Saturday morning at Soda City Market, be sure to make a stop by the Belgin Waffle Truck to please your taste buds.



FAITH WORRELL

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Best Place That Takes CarolinaCash

MOE'S SOUTHWEST GRILL

 Monday-Sunday: 11 a.m.-8:30 p.m.

 0.6 miles from the Horseshoe, 3-minute drive, 8-minute walk

 Google Money Rating

Faith Worrell

While the University of South Carolina has provided students with a wide variety of high-quality food options across campus, students can easily get tired of eating at the same restaurants. However, the issue is most students don't have a way to pay for meals outside of meal swipes and Carolina Cash, which is where Moe's Southwest Grill accepting Carolina Cash comes in handy for students looking to switch up their lunch or dinner options.

Moe's is located across the street from the Honors dorm, making it a short walk for students, even close enough to grab in between classes.

Moe's offers a wide variety of food selections including burritos, nachos and quesadillas. Their main menu items range from \$7.00-\$13.00, but they offer a kid's menu that still has decent sized portions with even lower prices. If Moe's prices still seem like too much to spend Carolina Cash on, then students can go on Monday's for Moe's Monday. They offer multiple discounts on items such as nachos and burritos that include \$5 nachos.

Moe's Southwest Grill is a filling and local food option for any students looking to get away from Russell for a meal.



ETHAN LAM

Best Restaurant to Take Your Parents To

CALIFORNIA DREAMING

 Sunday-Thursday: 11 a.m.-10 p.m.
Friday-Sunday: 11 a.m.-11 p.m.

 0.6 miles from the Horseshoe, 5-minute drive, 13-minute walk

 Google Money Rating

Faith Worrell

When your parents are visiting, there is no better place to eat than California Dreaming. After a week of Russell House, ramen noodles and microwave mac and cheese, California Dreaming is a family friendly restaurant perfect for those special occasions. The menu is sure to satisfy any appetite with a wide variety of entrees including steaks, salads, chicken and more.

Their melt in your mouth glazed croissants come with most meals and you can always order extra to enjoy

as a sweet after meal treat or take home and reheat for breakfast.

Prices range from appetizers starting at \$5.95 to filet mignon for \$29.95. While it might be a more expensive restaurant, don't let the price scare you away. It is meant to be a special occasion restaurant for birthdays, dinner dates or celebrations. California Dreaming conveniently accepts Carolina Cash, which can help ease the impact on a debit card and even allow students to treat their parents to dinner.

The most beneficial part of California Dreaming is its location. Many students do not have a car on campus, so getting to restaurants means walking or taking an Uber. California Dreaming is conveniently located near Green Quad residence hall. That happens to be a short walk from the center of campus, which is an agreeable walking distance.

Between the wide variety of menu options and ideal location, California Dreaming is a great choice for a nice dinner with your parents.



ETHAN LAM

Best Place to Take a Date

CANTINA 76



Monday-Wednesday: 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m.
Thursday-Saturday: 11 a.m.-10 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.-9 a.m.



Main St: 0.7 miles from the Horseshoe, 5-minute drive
Devine St: 2.0 miles from the Horseshoe, 8-minute drive



Google Money Rating

Joshua Matthew

If your significant other is coming to visit you in Columbia, Cantina 76 is the perfect restaurant and bar to have a date night.

The restaurant is locally operated with two locations on Main Street and Devine Street.

Cantina 76 is a perfect place for a casual date as it provides a "fast yet satisfying dining experience in a casual,

upbeat atmosphere that encourages guests to hang out before, during and after dining."

The bar offers "Corona Fridays" with both Corona and Corona Light going for just \$2.50 on the last day of the work week, along with other specials throughout the week which are listed on its website.

If you want to take the enjoyment home, Cantina 76 also provides

catering services for any events. Details on catering are also listed on the website, where you can get in contact with someone that can help you decide on the perfect option for your guests.

According to Cantina 76, the menu is "full of fresh, unique ingredients and S.C. produce" and "includes a large assortment of imaginative tacos, as well as enchiladas, nachos, salads, quesadillas, chimichangas, soups and

sides, sauces, dressings and salsas are made in-house daily."

Cantina 76 is a great place to dine with friends, yet nice enough to take someone on a date as you enjoy good quality food in a fun atmosphere.

CANTINA 76

Best Mexican Food

Kendall Hyman

Cantina 76 has two locations in Columbia, one on Devine Street and the other in the middle of the city on Main Street. They offer authentic Mexican food in a fun atmosphere.

One of the most popular items on the menu is their "Trio." The Trio is the perfect shareable appetizer and comes with fresh salsa, cheesy queso and delicious guacamole. The menu

is expansive and offers items ranging from tacos to enchiladas to quesadillas and even salads, ensuring there is something for everyone. Cantina 76 always has taco specials of the week that are creative and unique if you're looking for something different. They also offer a selection of creative, fruity margaritas and a full bar inside.

Whether you choose to sit inside the dimly lit restaurant and listen to the

cooking in the kitchen or the patio outside, you're sure to have a delicious meal that will keep you coming back.

RETAIL



Best Grocery Store

PUBLIX

 Monday–Sunday: 7 a.m.–10 p.m.

 1.3 miles from the Horseshoe, 8-minute drive, 23-minute walk

 Google Money Rating

Joshua Matthews

Publix is a great place for students as their sales and BOGO deals will help you stay on that college student budget while stocking up on all your favorite snacks.

If you're looking for somewhere to grab a quality sub, the deli selection is great with freshly sliced meats and produce.

Throwing a party or hosting a tailgate? Publix has you covered. With customizable cakes and a large selection of desserts, you can find the food to feed the party based on the occasion.

The workers are not only helpful but friendly. They hire workers who are willing to help customers to find the products they're looking for. It's been said that Publix workers are the grocery store equivalent of Chick-Fil-A workers.

For students, it's a great place to look for a job with flexible hours and great management.

Publix is open everyday from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. and with online shopping options, it makes this the ideal place for students to shop.



KAYLA JEFFERS

Best Clothing Store

BAREFOOT CAMPUS OUTFITTER

 Monday–Saturday: 9 a.m.–8 p.m.
Sunday: Noon–4 p.m.

 0.7 miles from the Horseshoe, 6-minute drive, 12-minute walk

Faith Worrell

If you're looking for Carolina gear for a Saturday football game, sorority event or to show your alumni pride — Barefoot is the place to go.

Located under 650 Lincoln apartments and across from Greek Village, Barefoot provides a fun selection of Gamecock shirts, sweatshirts, caps, jewelry and so much more! All the items in Barefoot are unique and stylish, catered to college students but there's something for everyone. If you're looking to personalize an ordi-

nary South Carolina T-shirt, Barefoot will cut the shirt in store into a crop top or cute designs for a little extra personality depending on whatever you'd prefer. They also have garnet and black accessories in a wide variety of styles to be worn with any outfit.

Barefoot provides high-quality clothing from cropped shirts to wear in the heat of Williams-Brice gamedays to sweatshirts for walking to class in the midst of winter — all within walking distance from campus.



KAYLA JEFFERS



Campus Recreation

University of South Carolina



📍 Strom Thurmond Wellness & Fitness Center
Solomon Blatt Physical Education Center

☎ P: 803-576-9375
F: 803-777-5261

🌐 sc.edu/campusrec

📘 University of South Carolina
Campus Recreation

🐦 UofSC_CampusRec

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Best Bookstore & Best Place to Get Gamecock Gear

UOFSC BOOKSTORE



Monday-Thursday: 7:45 a.m.-7 p.m.
Friday: 7:45 a.m.-6 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday: Noon-5 p.m.



Located on the first floor of the Russell House at 1400 Greene St



Joshua Matthews

When it comes to South Carolina gear, there isn't a more convenient place to look than the university's bookstore right on campus. Nestled among the UofSC Mom plaquettes, souvenir water bottles and Gamecock stickers, one will find all-things-Gamecock-merchandise including Champion sweatshirts, polo shirts, Under Armor apparel, and other officially licensed gear unique and exclusive to the bookstore.

Among the merchandise, the bookstore sells snacks, school supplies, magazines and generic medicines all for reasonable prices. There is also a full service Starbucks at the front, making it a perfect stop for a pick-me-up on the way to class.

Of course, the other aspect of the bookstore is the actual books themselves. The university's system is set to link to a student's Self-Service account and provide a list of required textbooks for the upcoming semester based off of their registered classes. Both purchasing and renting options are available and picked up through the bookstore. If you chose to rent textbooks, a return date with instructions is given, making the process smooth for students scrambling to get prepared for the upcoming semester.

The bookstore also accepts Carolina Cash, therefore making it even more convenient for students to shop. The bookstore's system is easy to use, reliable and an accessible resource to students on campus.



Faith Worrell

When it comes to South Carolina gear, there isn't a more convenient place on campus to look than the university's bookstore. Nestled among the UofSC Mom plaquettes, souvenir water bottles and Gamecock stickers, one will find all-things-Gamecock-merchandise including Champion sweatshirts, polo shirts, Under Armor apparel, and other officially licensed gear. Not only is what you're buying officially licensed, it's clothes and hats unique and exclusive to the bookstore. A convenient shopping benefit to the bookstore is that they accept Carolina Cash, therefore making it easier to shop for yourself or that special someone.

Among the merchandise, the bookstore sells snacks, school supplies,

magazines and generic medicines all for reasonable prices. Another benefit of shopping at the bookstore is the full-service Starbucks located in the front of the store. It's location and options make for a perfect stop on the way to class when Russell House is busy.

Of course, the other aspect of the bookstore is the actual books themselves. The university's system is set to link to your account and provide a list of required textbooks for the upcoming semester. They offer both used and new copies of textbooks along with purchasing and renting options. When you order your textbooks through the bookstore, they're ready in the store in about a week and can be picked up in an easy to carry box at any time. If you chose to rent textbooks, they give you a return date with instructions making the process easy and convenient. The

bookstore's system is easy to use, reliable and an accessible resource to students on campus.



KAYLA JEFFERS



SERVICES

Best Off-Campus Living

HUB AT COLUMBIA



KATE GHARIB

Gracie Bryant

Located right on Main Street in downtown Columbia, the Hub student apartments will, as the name suggests, become “the hub” for you and all your friends.

Room layouts for the Hub vary depending on what residents are looking for. Whether you want to live alone in a one-bedroom, one-bath apartment, or live with four of your closest friends in a five-bedroom, the Hub has you covered. Residents also have the opportunity to select between a spa or deluxe room, each coming with special perks like walk-in closets and upgraded showers.

When signing a lease, the prices may vary depending on fluctuating rates or deals, but 2020 rates are currently

listed on The Hub’s website, and leases are open.

Residents are offered a multitude of amenities that make it stand out among other off-campus apartments. For academic pursuits, there are study rooms on each floor, an “executive business center” complete with Macs, PCs and printers and conference rooms throughout the building. On the relaxation front, The Hub gives residents access to a sauna and steam room, salt-water jacuzzi, tanning beds and video games, allowing residents to create whatever their version of the perfect oasis may be.

The Hub is one of the few housing complexes to offer not only a pool, but also an infinity pool – one where

the water goes right to and overflows the edge – that sits on the rooftop of its downtown highrise and features a 22-foot LED jumbotron at one end. This outdoor area makes for the perfect place to hang out with friends and watch Gamecock away games while floating in the pool to avoid the Columbia heat.

With extensive luxury amenities and a coveted location in the heart of Columbia, the Hub has plenty to offer USC students looking for the best off-campus living options.

Best Tattoo/Piercing Shop

IMMACULATE BODY PIERCING

 Monday: 2 p.m.–8 p.m.
Tuesday–Saturday: Noon–8 p.m.

 1.2 miles from the Horseshoe, 7-minute drive, 14-minute walk

Kate Gharib

Whether you want a single piercing or three, Immaculate Body Piercing continues to impress their guests with excellent customer service and commitment to safety. The shop, located across the street from Pita Pit in Five Points, is typically crowded with daily walk-ins. However, you can beat the lines by visiting their website to schedule an appointment prior to coming in to the shop. Adults, young children (ages 8-12), older children (ages 13-15) and minors

(16-17) are all welcomed in for piercings.

The professional and experienced staff members work hard in order to ensure outstanding customer service in a safe and friendly environment. As a first time customer, staff members will recommend taking a tour of the piercing shop first and allow you to get to know your piercer so you feel comfortable. Additionally, free consultations and piercing assessments are offered to all customers. The staff is well trained with advanced knowledge

on piercing, which enhances customers to feel comfortable throughout their overall experience.

The jewelry sold at the shop is top quality. For sensitive ears, nickel-free options are offered for each piercing. Gemstone jewelry are all crafted in labs and not put together with any type of adhesives or glues. You will be offered a lifetime guarantee on all purchased jewelry as well. In addition, if you can’t find a jewel that strikes your attention, you can customize a gemstone to your personal liking and

a staff member will help you make it your own.

Immaculate Body Piercing continues to impress Carolina with its exceptional customer services since the day it has opened!



FAITH WORRELL

Best Auto Repair

FIRESTONE

Complete Auto Repair

Gracie Bryant

Whether you're a student preparing for a long drive home or a Columbia resident just trying to make it through a daily commute, Firestone Complete Auto Care on Gervais Street is there for all of your vehicle maintenance needs.

If you're like me and never quite know what exactly is wrong with your car, the experienced technicians are there to walk through it with you and get to the root of the issue. The company has been around for over 90 years, building a reputation across the country for trustworthy service and willingness to help.

The tire services are particularly highly regarded in Google reviews, but Firestone has a lot more to offer. From diagnosing the cause of mysterious blinking dashboard lights to needed realignments and general tuneups, the technicians are experienced and professional, and they look for the best possible fix, at the most affordable price, for each customer's specific needs. Need to drop off your car to be worked on while you head to class? The Gervais street location, one of many in the Columbia area, is within walking distance to campus — only a few blocks down from the USC School of Law. Which means, students, you can tell your parents to stop panicking about checking your tire tread or

changing your oil; you (and your friends at Firestone on Gervais) have it under control.



CAIT PATEL

| | | |
|---|----------------|---------------|
| 🕒 | Monday–Friday: | 7 a.m.–6 p.m. |
| | Saturday: | 7 a.m.–6 p.m. |
| | Sunday: | 8 a.m.–5 p.m. |

📍 0.7 miles from the Horseshoe, 4-minute drive, 13-minute walk

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Best Hair Salon

PAUL MITCHELL

The School Columbia

🕒 Monday, Friday, Saturday: 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Tuesday–Thursday: 9 a.m.–10 p.m.

📍 1.0 miles from the Horseshoe, 6-minute drive, 19-minute walk

💰 Google Money Rating



FAITH WORRELL

Faith Worrell

Paul Mitchell the School's Hair Salon is a perfect option for students looking to cut their hair without cutting into their wallets. Their hours vary during the week because of classes, but to make any appointment at Paul Mitchell, one can call (803)-772-2232.

Located at 700 Gervais St., Paul Mitchell is a two-year beauty school for students training to work in cosmetology. That means that the person cutting your hair, painting your nails, or waxing your eyebrows is essentially a student. Don't let that

scare you from taking advantage of, for example, their \$6 haircuts on Wednesdays or \$8 manicures. Anyone giving haircuts has been through intensive weeks of in-class training on top of extensive hands-on practice so there is a guarantee that the person giving you your cut, style, or color knows what they're doing. In addition to haircuts, Paul Mitchell offers skin, waxing and nail services.

What makes it so ideal for students is that they do all of their services at affordable prices. Their haircuts average \$6-15 dollars, and their color

appointments start at \$35. All of their waxing services and makeup appointments range between \$5-10 and their manicures and pedicures are \$8-18. The atmosphere in the salon is clean and professional and the services follow that same standard.

No matter what students are going to Paul Mitchell the School for, hair, nails, or waxing, they can rest assured that they'll have a pleasant experience for an affordable price.

Best Nail/Waxing Salon

GERVAIS NAILS & SPA

🕒 Monday–Friday: 10 a.m.–8 p.m. Saturday: 9 a.m.–7 p.m. Sunday: Noon–6 p.m.

📍 1.2 miles from the Horseshoe, 7 minute drive, 16-minute walk



ETHAN LAM

Gracie Bryant

Gervais Nails and Spa located in the Vista is perfect for students looking to relax after a long week of classes or exams or, really, any customers who want to be pampered in a clean, welcoming environment.

When customers arrive, they are offered a beverage and greeted with a smile from a receptionist that can answer any questions they may have. In order to ensure every customer receives exactly what they want, the technicians offer a large selection of colors, brands and techniques.

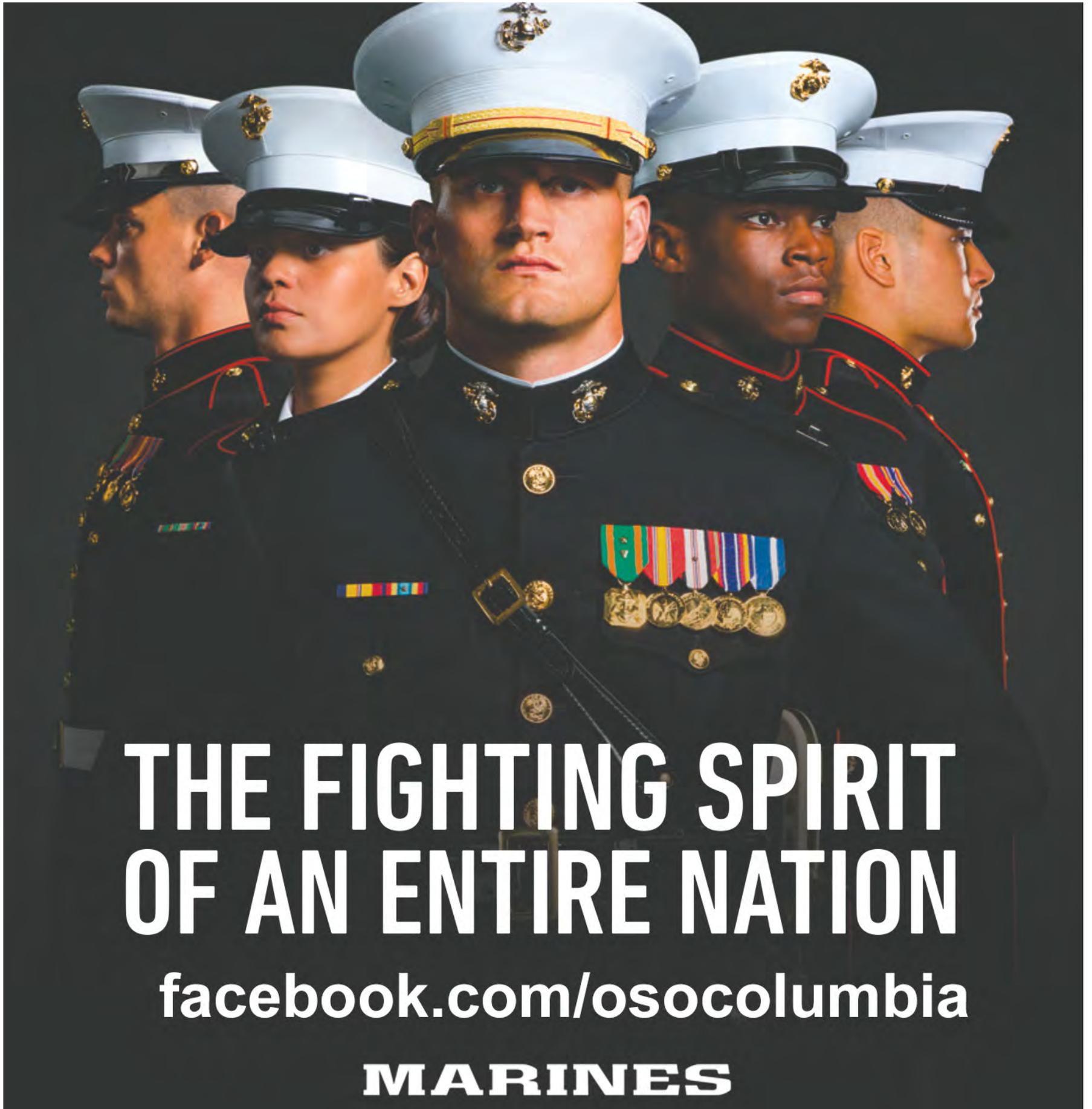
Some of the nail services offered include dip powder, acrylics and gel polish which start as low as \$40 and are done by professional and experienced technicians. If you've had an especially stressful week, treat yourself to the deluxe spa pedicure, complete with a sea salt scrub, hot stone massage and more pampering to be sure you look and feel able to conquer the next week.

If you're not looking for a manicure or pedicure, the spa offers other services to cater to your needs as well. Some of their additional services include eyebrow waxing, bikini waxing and

eyelash extensions.

For cash-strapped college students, Gervais Nails and Spa offers student discounts with a valid ID. These discounts include a \$25 "quick pedicure" and both a pedicure and gel polish manicure for only \$55.

Appointments can be made by calling ahead, but walk-ins are welcome if you have an unexpected desire to relax and feel pampered.



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