

The Insider: Students' startup to harness the social energy of food

March 04, 2016 9:00 AM Samah Ahmed
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Tulane students Eric March, left, and Lucca Alessandrini are co-founders of an upcoming startup called Loc.le. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Two Tulane University students won \$500 in the FailUp to Startup Pitch Competition hosted by two Tulane student organizations, [FailUp](#) and Startup Tulane, last Thursday. Sophomore Lucca Alessandrini and junior Eric March are co-founders of an upcoming startup called [Loc.le](#), which is an idea that aims to harness the social energy of food.

Loc.le focuses on the relationship between restaurants and their customers. Its mission is twofold: The platform plans to provide local restaurants with customized consumer feedback through the use of customer loyalty programs, and to give consumers a place to share their food experiences with others.

“One of the most social things in life is food,” says Alessandrini, a double major in marketing and Italian. “Loc.le promotes the organic discovery of new foods.”

According to Loc.le’s online page, “Loc.le shows consumers new restaurants in their area and offers them a promotion in exchange for a small feedback survey after the meal.”

While the concept is simple, March emphasizes that reliable consumer feedback is crucial to New Orleans restaurants, as the majority of them are locally owned.

“We want to be able to find a way for them [local restaurants] to get the same insights and the same kind of loyalty from customers as big [restaurant] chains,” says March, a management and legal studies major.

March and Alessandrini are currently detailing the logistics of their idea and seeking an interested software developer to create the application.

“This is a great place to be for a startup,” says Alessandrini. “Tulane is small enough to be able to connect with almost a whole network, while at the same time big enough to have enough people to support this.”

Samah Ahmed is a sophomore majoring in public health and political science at Tulane University.

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Lucca Alessandrini, sophomore