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Fearless Friday: Aidan Caravana

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Fearless Friday: Aidan Caravana

Abstract

Fearlessly creating a welcoming environment for students to learn more about **Buddhism, spirituality, and meditation while also raising awareness for international social justice issues** about which he's passionate, Aidan Caravana '14 helps students learn more about themselves and more about the world.

Aidan studied abroad last year in Nepal and while he was there, he was exposed to the political, cultural, and societal issues surrounding **Tibet's relationship with China and Nepal**. "I started getting involved with groups on campus like Amnesty International after I came back from Nepal because it was a really eye-opening experience for me. When I was there, I met a person who had been in a Chinese prison for years, and hearing stories like that inspired me to learn more and get involved." [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Surge, Surge Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, Center for Public Service, religion, spirituality, Buddhism

Disciplines

Civic and Community Engagement | History of Religions of Eastern Origins | Religion

Comments

Surge is a student blog at [Gettysburg College](#) where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at surgegettysburg.wordpress.com Through stories and reflection, these blog entries relate personal experiences to larger issues of equity, demonstrating that -isms are structural problems, not actions defined by individual prejudice. We intend to popularize justice, helping each other to recognize our biases and unlearn the untruths.

SURGE

[VERB] : to move suddenly or powerfully forward or upward

FEARLESS FRIDAY: AIDAN CARAVANA

April 4, 2014

Fearlessly creating a welcoming environment for students to learn more about **Buddhism, spirituality, and meditation while also raising awareness for international social justice issues** about which he's passionate, Aidan Caravana '14 helps students learn more about themselves and more about the world.

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Since coming back from abroad, Aidan has given a talk on campus speaking about the issues Tibet faces, and has gotten more involved in **Sangha, the Buddhist meditation club on campus**. Now serving as the club's president, Aidan helps students learn more about how Buddhism and meditation exercises. "I'd been interested in Buddhism for a while, but I really started wanting to learn more after coming back from Nepal. **At Sangha we talk a lot about how to find happiness in everyday life through meditation**. We have a speaker come named John who leads us through the exercises and we have different discussions about things related to Buddhism and spirituality."



This semester, Sangha organized an event to have a speaker named Bante come talk to the campus community and the event was incredibly well-attended and successful. “It’s great that so many people came out to see what it was all about,” says Aidan. “So often you’ll hear people saying these crazy things about meditation or even Buddhism specifically. They usually say something about weird energy radiating off of you or something. People get a bit carried away with the idea of the energy and everything. The basic principle is just that, if you’re happy, that will rub off on the people around you. People have a lot of misconceptions.”

In addition to being the president of Sangha, Aidan is also involved in the college’s Amnesty International club, ALLies, and the Peace and Justice House. While participating in these groups, Aidan has not only focused his efforts on raising awareness about Tibet, he has also worked with the Amnesty International club to focus on specific issues like Russia’s treatment of the LGBTQ community during the Olympics.

Aidan’s abroad experience inspired him to become more involved with groups on campus related to issues of social justice, spirituality, and expression. “I find myself to be a pretty spiritual person in general,” says Aidan, “and since being abroad, I think about these issues and concepts in my daily life and try to do what I can to raise awareness and find ways to help out.” Doubtlessly an involved leader on campus, **Aidan’s experience shows the importance of not just finding out more about yourself, but also the importance of learning about how you fit into the greater context of the world.**

<http://surgegettysburg.wordpress.com/2014/04/04/fearless-friday-aidan-caravana/>