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## Fealess Friday: Kelsey Chapman

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# Fealess Friday: Kelsey Chapman

## **Abstract**

Kelsey Chapman '15 fearlessly advocates for human rights, peace, and justice, focusing on the Middle East. An economics major and Middle East and Islamic Studies (MEIS) minor, Kelsey is the house leader for the MEIS House, an Arabic PLA, and the founder of Gettysburg's chapter of J Street U. [*excerpt*]

## **Keywords**

Surge, Surge Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, Center for Public Service, Middle East and Islamic Studies (MEIS), MEIS House, J Street U, Hillel House, human rights, peace, social justice, foreign policy, Arabic, Economics

## **Disciplines**

Communication | Economics | Education | European Languages and Societies | Islamic Studies | Jewish Studies | Near and Middle Eastern Studies | Other Languages, Societies, and Cultures | Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration | Religion

## **Comments**

Surge is a student blog at [Gettysburg College](https://cupola.gettysburg.edu) where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at [surgegettysburg.wordpress.com](https://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: KELSEY CHAPMAN

April 24, 2015



Kelsey Chapman '15 fearlessly advocates for human rights, peace, and justice, focusing on the Middle East. An economics major and Middle East and Islamic Studies (MEIS) minor, Kelsey is the house leader for the MEIS House, an Arabic PLA, and the founder of Gettysburg's chapter of J Street U.

Kelsey studied abroad in Israel because she wanted to see the occupation and to learn more about the Jewish perspective of the conflict. Returning from abroad, Kelsey stated it was difficult to be back in the

United States, not able to do anything about the Gaza War. To funnel her frustration into something more productive, Kelsey decided to bring J Street U to Gettysburg, an organization she learned about from her roommate abroad. J Street U is the student branch of J Street, an advocacy organization that support Israelis and Palestinians and is pro-peace, democracy, justice, and human rights.

Kelsey states you do not have to be pro-Israel or Pro-Palestinian to want change and J Street U is an organization that cares about people on both sides. Gettysburg has a chapter that is connected to many other chapters and is part of a large organization and national movement. Last fall, J Street U at Gettysburg held a discussion event about the Israel-Gaza Conflict and had a film screening of "The Gate Keepers."

This semester, Kelsey organized nine Gettysburg students to go to the national conference in Washington D.C. There were over 1,100 students present and over 3,000 people total at the conference. Kelsey expressed that it was amazing to see Israelis and Palestinians together on the stage and uplifting that there were so many people in the room caring about the future and the movement.

Having the MEIS House and Hillel House together, Kelsey has helped bring the house together and bring dialogue on the issue to campus. Graduating in a few weeks, Kelsey urges others to get involved with J Street U, even those who do not know anything about the conflict, but are interested in human rights,

social justice, or foreign policy more broadly. For her future, Kelsey is planning on going to the Middle East and learning more Arabic to increase her language skills. In the long run, she'd love to incorporate her Economics major and possibly work on development in the Middle East.