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Fearless Friday: Laurel Downie

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Fearless Friday: Laurel Downie

Abstract

In this week's edition of Fearless Friday, SURGE is honoring Laurel Downie for all the work she does in our community, especially towards organizing "Take Back the Night" for Sexual Assault Awareness Week.
[*excerpt*]

Keywords

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Disciplines

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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: LAUREL DOWNIE

April 14, 2017



In this week's edition of Fearless Friday, SURGE is honoring Laurel Downie for all the work she does in our community, especially towards organizing "Take Back the Night" for Sexual Assault Awareness Week.

Laurel is a current junior here at Gettysburg College from Troy, New York. She is a WGS and Political science double major. Some of the organizations she's involved in on campus include the Women's Center where she worked as a Program Coordinator. She also works in admissions as a tour guide. Additionally she is a member of the women's rugby team.

She has a lot of motivations that make her who she is. Starting with her motivations in life, she likes presenting herself as a role model for people around her. She likes to think that she's easily approachable and can be a mentor to numerous types of people and can lend a hand to anyone who needs help. She is also passionate about activism as a self-described "protest junkie" and believed that protests have the capacity to create change as well as challenge people to step out of their comfort zones. She particularly enjoys going to protests with women of all colors. Women representation is essential. She is also passionate about women's studies as a WGS

major and went to an all girls high school and was shocked to know that so many of the girls did not consider themselves feminists even though that was in part the reason why they had an all girls school. She enjoys studying modern feminism and trends about women naming themselves as feminists. Women's issues have always been at the forefront of her studies both in the classroom and outside of it.

She feels lucky to have been able to organize Take Back the Night, and believes that sexual violence is an issue not only relevant to our campus here at Gettysburg, but towards all college campuses. It is upsetting to know that there is still so much violence throughout college communities despite a number of programs and seminars that bring light to these issues. For Take Back the Night one of her goals was to get different people involved and was happy to say both SASA members and fraternity brothers were present to read testimonies. She says, "It was an honor to be able to organize the event on behalf of the women's center and to show the organization "Survivors" that what they do in the community is so important and how we strive to replicate their work on our campus." She hopes this event will continue to grow and improve every year.

As a WGS major it is not a surprise that Laurel's future plans involve women's issues. She enjoys involving herself in non-profit work, but hopes to become more involved in lobbying for policy and inducing governmental change. She also highlights that, "When you're involved as an activist, it's so easy to give everything you have to everyone else, but it is super important to balance out one's interests and to take care of oneself if you want to be involved in activism in the long run. Be realistic about the tasks that you can take on!"

Thank you Laurel for all the work you've done for the campus community!