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Fearless Friday: Melanie Pangol

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Fearless Friday: Melanie Pangol

Abstract

Today, we celebrate the work of Melanie Pangol '21. Originally from Ecuador, Melanie was raised in Philly, and has been living in New York in the last few years. On campus, Melanie is part of the Brown Nipple Collective, works for the Center for Career Engagement, and acts as program coordinator for the Painted Turtle Farm through the Center for Public Service among many other activities. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Brown Nipple Collective, Dia de los Muertos, Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, Latin American Student Association, Latino, Painted Turtle Farm

Disciplines

Civic and Community Engagement

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: MELANIE PANGOL

November 2, 2018

Today, we celebrate the work of Melanie Pangol '21. Originally from Ecuador, Melanie was raised in Philly, and has been living in New York in the last few years. On campus, Melanie is part of the Brown Nipple Collective, works for the Center for Career Engagement, and acts as program coordinator for the Painted Turtle Farm through the Center for Public Service among many other activities.

When Melanie first arrived on campus, she lost a sense of community and wanted to leave, but didn't have that luxury. To cope, she worked to develop connections with the greater Latino community by becoming involved with the Painted Turtle Farm, a campus-community hub for food justice. As she met families from Adams County she became more grounded. She explains, "the farm was a completely different environment from everyday college life, with people who understood where I was coming from."

Aiming to better connect the Latino communities on and off campus, Melanie organized a Dia de los Muertos event where over 75 individuals – local families, students and faculty – came together as one community to share food and personal stories. Although members of the Latino community have many different backgrounds and identities, Melanie explains that "the connection between us comes from being the minority in Adams County." Many students "get so stuck in the Gettysburg bubble, they don't even realize there are local Latino families." Therefore, creating a space where everyone could come together is powerful. People can hear each other's voices and can grow from that learning.

Melanie hopes this sparks the energy needed to continue to bridge the distance between college and campus communities while working together on issues facing Latinos and other minorities. She also hopes it makes students feel that when they engage outside of their comfort zone, support and learning can increase.

Before she graduates, Melanie hopes to see more support for students. "Students of color are each unique, and we have extremely different experiences, but we are joined by the fact that being here is hard for us." She hopes to continue to help create systems that encourage students as they negotiate their intersecting identities. She cites supporting queer students of color or DACA students as examples.

After college, Melanie is unsure exactly what her future will look like. For her, a diploma does not guarantee that DACA will remain an option. “Without paper work, I can’t practice what I learn, so I can’t plan my future. I don’t know what’s going to happen tomorrow. In the real world, nothing is guaranteed.”

However, Melanie is motivated to continue to connect people and ideas, strengthening bonds to ensure that each person is able to reach their dreams.



Thank you for all your incredible work on our campus, Melanie, we wish you the best!