

Sharon Joy Kwinjo



Today's portrait is of Sharon Joy Kwinjo, a senior from Zimbabwe in Pauli Murray College.

"I was born and raised in Harare, Zimbabwe and my first trip to Yale in August 2016 was my first time ever travelling internationally alone, and it was my first time leaving Southern Africa, but I wasn't scared at all. I was excited and I was very grateful. I hadn't looked up much about Yale (honestly, the YouTube video "That's Why I Chose Yale" is why I chose Yale). I took a blind leap but I trusted the people (e.g. Ozan & Ann from OISS) who had their arms reaching out to catch me.

One of the most unexpected things I had to confront when I got to Yale was my name (!!!), simply figuring out whether I was going to be known as Sharon or as Joy. I had always used Sharon at school and Joy at home, but all of sudden the two had become one! Yale was both school and home. The end result was not clean - I ultimately decided that I had no preference and so some of my Yale friends call me Sharon, some Joy, some Sharon Joy, and some SJ.

I've spent a lot of the last four years singing with @livingwaterat Yale. This community has been my biggest blessing at Yale, a family that combined two of my great loves, God and music (if you hadn't guessed, I'm singing in this picture). I have made friendships far stronger than I could have ever thought possible and been more vulnerable than I imagined I could be through this community that has encouraged me when I was down and rebuked me (in love) when I was dumb.

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Outside of Living Water, I've been a part of the African Students Association, the Federalist Party at Yale and a Pauli Murray College FroCo (and others). Approaching some of these organisations, especially the Yale political Union, from the lens of an international student has at times been challenging but it has also forced me to grow. I'm always down to discuss the good and the bad parts of my experience and of Yale in general (so let me know if you want to). Yale has been a wonderfully painful and joyous journey and I wouldn't trade any part of it (even horrible sophomore year)."

Congratulations Sharon Joy on your upcoming graduation! #humansofoiss @surbhib42

https://www.instagram.com/p/B_xSF-ZJc5p/ [1]

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