

News

Spectrum Presents Pride Week

Rachel Pratt, editorial editor

Meredith Spectrum hosted its first ever Pride Week, a week-long series of events celebrating the diversity of the student body. To Pride Week co-chair Rachel Powell, the flag display meant so much. She said, "It's the first time in Meredith's history that those flags have been on campus, and for the first time, Meredith is making it known that everyone is welcome."

Unlike last year's Ally Week, which celebrated the supporters, or "al-lies," of the LGBTQ community, Pride Week this year served a different purpose. "We want everyone to understand that

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"We want everyone to understand that this is a safe place."

this is a safe place," said Pride Week co-chair Kristen Rivera.

Pride Week was inspired by Duke University's long-held tradition. Some events, like Gender Bender day, were adapted just for Meredith.

Most unique to Meredith was a spoken word performance titled "Coming Out," an event where seven stories of men and women revealing their sexuality were recited to an audience in Kresge Auditorium. Some of the stories were told by the author's friends, others by the authors themselves, and one story was recited anonymously.

Last Friday night at Meredith and a Movie, Spectrum's "It Gets Better" video was released. Although still unfinished, the video features encouragement and support from students and faculty about the shared experience of coming out to fellow Meredith students.

Spectrum is hoping to have the video shown at Freshman Orientation next year.



via Kristen Rivera

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Terrorists Attack Kenya Mall

Mollie Schrull, staff writer

On Sept. 21, 2013, disaster struck a Nairobi mall in Kenya when members of Al-Shabaab, a Somalia-based terror group, held hostages at Westgate Shopping Mall for four days, killing and injuring many of their captives. Al-Shabaab is a group that wishes to create a purely Islamist state in Somalia and will go to extremes, such as this Nairobi mall attack, to shut down any threats of western influence to an Islamist state. According to CNN reporters David McKenzie and Antonia Mortensen, the group launched the attack at Westgate Shopping Mall in protest of Kenya's military involvement in fighting Al-Shabaab in Somalia in 2011. McKenzie and Mortensen report that military doctors found victims with severed hands and cut off noses. As of Saturday, Sept. 29, the official death count was 67 civilians, militants, and police. Many others were injured, and there are also victims who are still unaccounted for.

Zainabu Otieno, a sophomore accounting and economics major at Meredith College, worked in a candy store at Westgate Shopping mall during the summer of 2012. Zainabu shared some of her thoughts about the tragedy in her home country. She received a call from her sister early in the morning of Sept. 21, informing her of the attack at her former workplace. At the time, only three people were believed to have been killed; however, Zainabu would later learn that there were many more confirmed casualties. She says that the safety of some of her coworkers is still unclear because there have been no confirmation about their whereabouts; however, she was relieved to hear from a friend she worked with who stayed home the day of the siege because she was sick. Zainabu described that some hostages were released because they recited the Muslim prayer or had Muslim names. She relayed that her name is a Muslim name though she is actually a Christian; she said that it seems unfair to her because other innocent Christians were killed for not having Muslim names.

According to Zainabu, the government of Kenya should not interfere with the fighting in Somalia. She stated, "The Kenyan government should have let the people of Somalia fight it out." Zainabu used the United States Civil War as an example of how the north and south were left to fight over their conflicts, and it made our country stronger. She doesn't feel that it is right for innocent Kenyan people to die because of the government's decision to intervene in Somalia's problems. Zainabu said that she has felt guilt over being safely overseas while her family is at home amidst threats of more attacks from Al-Shabaab. She said that it is hard to focus on school in America while she is worrying about the safety of her family at home.