

Engagement goals at syracuse university

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One of my plans at Syracuse is to make use of the university's international links to complete part of my degree in the Middle East. Women in the Middle East are often downtrodden and abused: just two examples are that honor killing and arranged marriages remain prevalent. I find such events personally abhorrent and want to do everything I can to change the situation for women in the Middle East, but feel like I would like to learn more about the countries and cultures involved. I hope to give my goals some personal context: the fact that 52% of students at the American University of Cairo are women is exciting, as I would be able to talk to Egyptian women first-hand to learn about their experiences. One can always learn more about one's own background, and I think returning to the Middle East as a Syracuse student would add an invaluable perspective to my post-graduation plans.

In the US and other parts of the Western world, I have often found the prevalent image of Middle Eastern women a troubling and inaccurate one: women in traditional Middle Eastern clothing are viewed with suspicion, to the point that in France the burqa has been banned. Instead of a liberating act, this just adds to the amount of oppression that Middle Eastern women typically have to face. As an international affairs student, I will participate in local events and engage with fellow students and professors to alter how people view Middle Eastern women – as one of the biggest cities in the US, Syracuse is a wonderful city from which to make an impact. I would also like to complete an internship at Capitol Hill to witness the inner workings of government and to gain a better idea of how I can ensure freedom for women in the Middle East. It concerns me gravely that so many countries, like Syria and Pakistan, claim to be proponents of human rights, but do not

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enforce those rights for their female citizens. It is very important for people like me to be the ones who lead revolutionary changes in Middle Eastern womanhood, and studying at Syracuse will help me into a position where I can do exactly that.