



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

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For Immediate Release

Press Release/Announcement

**Kelsie Joseph of IGDS Ignite! is the recipient of the
2022 Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS)
Undergraduate Social Action Award**



The Institute for Gender and Development Studies is pleased to announce Kelsie Joseph of IGDS Ignite!, as the [recipient of the 2022 Sociologists for Women in Society \(SWS\) Undergraduate Social Action Award Winner](#). The Undergraduate Social Action Award is given annually to

recognize students making a substantial contribution to improving the lives of women in society through activism. The SWS will honour her at their Virtual Awards Ceremony on February 7, 2022, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm EST.

Kelsie is an undergraduate student, currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science Degree in Sociology, with minors in Gender and Development Studies and Criminology. She is the co-founder of Cat Calls of UWI, a social media project of the IGDS Ignite! highlighting street harassment and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) through chalking, consciousness-raising, and outreach. She is also a member of Chalkback, a global network of organisations and groups challenging street harassment. She defines herself as a feminist activist committed to creating a gender just world.

The IGDS Ignite, is a student-led, undergraduate feminist activist group of the IGDS, The University of the West Indies. Their work focuses on education, outreach and advocacy for gender and rights based issues. It is a mentorship programme, designed to train another generation of students in Caribbean social justice advocacy and organising. Students are supported by the staff, graduate students and partners to develop their knowledge and skills to bridge academia and activism. Over the years, students have engaged in organizing marches and fora, creating on line campaigns, conducting student surveys, initiating popular activities in public spaces in relation to issues of gender and sexual violence, securing representation of gendered perspectives on student governance committees, and much more.

According to Kelsie, “This award is not mine but a win for the entire IGDS family!!! Congratulations to all the lecturers, mentors, and Igniters!!! Also, everyone who supported the Cat Calls project by volunteering and sharing their stories!! I feel grateful for all the mentorship, guidance, and support always! I am eternally grateful and feel privileged to experience this.

I started UWI wanting to pursue law and never imagined I would become a feminist activist. The Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) has provided me with a safe space and community of folks that have transformed me in ways words can't describe. Also, connecting me with a community of feminist activists from Chalkback.”

Kelsie plans on initiating an IGDS Ignite project which will seek to draw on the activities undertaken, and the lessons learned by these young students, and to use these as the basis for a peer-led pedagogical, online approach to Caribbean feminist activism.

The IGDS wishes to extend hearty congratulations to Kelsie for this award. It is a testament to the potential and positive impact of student activism at the UWI and Trinidad and Tobago.

See the SWS announcement [HERE](#)

<https://socwomen.org/congratulations-to-the-2022-sws-undergraduate-social-action-award-winner-kelsie-joseph/>

For more information about IGDS Ignite! and Cat Calls of UWI, visit <https://sta.uwi.edu/igds/ignite> @igdsignite and @catcallsowuwi on Instagram and Twitter.