

Chalk Message Project

For about ten years, starting in 2005-06, one day a year Drewids found "You are Loved" notes-- such as "You are loved," "You are beautiful" and "Be yourself"-- chalked on the sidewalks. The "Chalk Project" was started by Jen Dugan, '08 in her junior year. According to Wikipedia,

Dugan began writing sporadic messages in sidewalk chalk one night while coping with a series of traumatic events. The messages read, "You are loved," "You are wonderful," and "You are beautiful." These generic messages were dedicated to people she knew. "You are loved" was written for a friend of hers who died shortly before. "You are wonderful" was written for people feeling lonely or depressed. The person who "You are beautiful" was written for is never mentioned by name. She is described as someone who was very kind to Dugan who she wanted to express gratitude to.

A member of the Drew University Alliance, the LGBTQ group that Dugan headed at the time, convinced her to make the messages into an LGBTQ-focused project. From that moment on, the project became an LGBTQ empowerment initiative. In addition to reminding people that they are appreciated, the project raises awareness about staggering suicide statistics among LGBTQ youth. LGBTQ youth are cited as being between four to nine times more likely to attempt suicide than heterosexual youth."

As an alumni, Dugan spread the project to campuses nationwide.



References:

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