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Six walk to help Darfur

Students trying to raise awareness about genocide speak at GW

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Six students have been walking across the country since June to raise awareness about genocide and stopped at GW Sunday to hold a forum.

The group, part of Journey for Humanity, marched from Los Angeles to the District to draw particular attention to the crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan.

"Walking is symbolic of genocide," said one of the marchers, Edward S. Majian. "We are walking in an attempt

to be in solidarity with those people."

Journey for Humanity is an organization whose goals are "to keep the memory of the victims of crimes against humanity alive," according to its Web site.

Marching since June 27, the group finally walked into Washington on Nov. 1. Throughout their journey the marchers made various stops and showed presentations about genocide.

The forum, hosted by the GW Armenian Student Network, STAND, Progressive Student Union, Hillel and the Georgetown Armenian Student Association, included guests from the Holocaust Museum, American Islamic Congress, Citizens for Global Solutions and the Save Darfur Coalition.

About 40 people attended the event, which was held in the Continental Ballroom at the Marvin Center, including students from Georgetown and American University. Attendees had the opportunity to look at a line of posters explaining genocide and describing genocides of the past.

"The photos are really gruesome and kind of disturbing," said Georgetown University freshman Allison Fritz.

Lisa Rogoff from the Committee on Conscience, a part of the Holocaust Memorial Museum explained why the Holocaust Museum works with modern cases of genocide, such as Darfur.

"There's a space between

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what can happen and what will happen (and) we hope to come between that space" Rogoff said. People keep saying 'never again, never again' and then it happens again. We need to say 'not this time.'"

Fulbright Scholar Jana Horr of the American Islamic Congress reminded the audience that "silence is a sign of acceptance," and encour-

aged audience members not to stand back.

"I as a person, as a human being I can do something," Horr said.

Julia Fitzpatrick of Citizens for Global Solutions commented on how any conflict, especially genocide, affects everyone, not just those who are directly involved.

"It is important to always talk about the importance of global interdependence," Fitzpatrick said.

Martha Heinemann-Bixby of the Save Darfur Coalition

spoke on issues of political will and what people can do to help raise awareness.

"The best way to honor the memories of past victims is to prevent future crimes," Heinemann-Bixby said.

The marchers showed a short video montage of their journey and then spoke of their experience. Rather than focus on the trivial events of what happened along the way, the group made general comments about the atrocities of genocide.

"Our approach is inclu-

sive; we focus on the holistic nature of genocide," said Majian. "We attempt to teach genocide in continuity, not just as separate instance. It's not just their people who were victims, it's a world wide problem"

Megan Melloy, a freshman member of the GW Troubadors, felt honored to be a part of the event.

"I think it really raises awareness for something that affects the whole world," Melloy said. "I'm really glad to be singing here." ■