Lauren Harper is the 2017 graduating senior recipient of the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award. Affectionately known as ‘Harper’, she will be graduating in May with a B.S. in Civil Engineering (Structural). The Sullivan Award seeks to perpetuate the excellence of character and humanitarian service of Algernon Sydney Sullivan by recognizing and honoring such qualities in others.

Harper is a person of impeccable character known for her humor, compassion, generosity, willingness to listen to others, and joyful spirit who has demonstrated an eagerness to engage her faith intellectually and practically while at Duke. She is an advocate for those who are often forgotten and is quick to look at campus, city, and world events through an ethical lens that is informed by her sense of spirituality. Her experiences have led her to an understanding of “working with” and “being with” marginalized communities in a way that is empowering.

Nominated for her outstanding leadership and advocacy work with Presbyterian Campus Ministries, PathWays, Ubuntu, and Duke Voices for Interfaith Action (VIA), Harper is passionate about exploring issues of difference and finding points of convergence across various religions. She is committed to bringing students together in shared fellowship and common action. Through her efforts, she has led these groups in local service and engagement opportunities.

All of Harper’s outreach stems from a desire to contribute. She does so in the most selfless manner by embodying the ethics of servant leadership. She will continue to embody selflessness, leadership and generosity of service well after graduating from Duke. Harper will be serving as an AmeriCorps member with Habitat for Humanity of Durham for a year. In this capacity she will be merging her passion for community engagement together with her education as a civil engineer.

Harper is both an excellent reflection of the best of what the Sullivan Award embodies as well as a great reflection of what Duke students have to offer society.