

Outside of the

Comfort Zone

How School
Captain
Jordan
Murrell Pushes
Herself and
Others to
Explore the
Unknown

By Heather Hudson



Jordan Murrell wants her fellow students to get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

As the 2019–20 School Captain, she hopes to inspire others to try new things and open the door for frank discussions. “I want our school to be a place where people come to get out of their comfort zones and try things that they didn’t think they could do. I hope students will push themselves this year and grow as students and people.”

Murrell also wants to encourage an open dialogue on topics that can be difficult to talk about.

“Diversity is something that should be acknowledged every day, all year-round. Being able to share our different experiences, listen to new points of view and recognize any issues, even if it’s uncomfortable, are the first steps to growth. I want every student to feel seen and heard.”

If these seem like lofty goals for a School Captain, you clearly haven’t met Murrell. The determined Grade 12 student has been barrelling her way through Havergal since Grade 1. In the Junior School, she eagerly participated on the Volleyball, Soccer, Track & Field, and Cross Country teams. When she moved to the Upper School, she joined clubs such as knitting, rock climbing and DECA, of which she became a passionate member. Last year, Murrell was co-head of HCTV, a biweekly student-inspired YouTube show of goings-on at Havergal.

“I’ve always loved being around people and having the opportunity to connect and have fun with others. It’s what draws me to clubs. I’m also very competitive, so sports are a great outlet and a good way to make friends,” she says.

Murrell credits an intrinsic motivation, the example of her family and the ambitious school culture for her drive to pursue challenging goals. “My parents have always shown me that, to get where you want to be, you need to work hard. And at Havergal, the Upper School is not an environment where you can be lacklustre. We’re encouraged to grow and be the best we can be.”

In Grade 9, she and three friends founded She Clothing Co., a non-profit organization that sells sweatshirts, hats and socks with positive feminist messages. “It’s been a fun way and accessible way for us to show that feminism is about equality.”

All proceeds support organizations that empower women and girls. When they were in Grade 11, the She Clothing Co. founders won Startup Canada’s Young Entrepreneur of the Year award. She says the experience has been pivotal in showing her that amazing things can happen when you try new things and work hard.

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Next year, Murrell plans to study economics or statistics at university, though her ultimate plan is to be a corporate lawyer, a goal she’s had since she was very young. “I like to argue, negotiate and find agreements between two parties.”

She says she’s been thinking about running for School Captain since Grade 7, when her older sister first pointed out the impact student leaders can make as the voice of their peers. More than that, Murrell wanted to be a role model for all students. “It’s difficult not seeing people who look like you running for positions like this. I wanted other people who are part of the black community to have more representation. Not just for me, but also for other girls like me.”

Despite a hectic schedule—she has three agendas to help juggle everything—Murrell is intent on facilitating a school environment where people feel welcome, are encouraged to try new things and have the confidence to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns. As School Captain, she considers herself a member of a school-wide team and plans to encourage and lead students of all ages.

Her message for her fellow students is twofold: “Don’t limit yourself. You never know where something will take you. And you need to work for what you want. Don’t tell yourself that you’re not good at something—if you apply yourself, you can achieve anything.”

And when all else fails, get uncomfortable. 🍀