

Girl from Mt. Sinabung to Study for Free at UGM

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Be patient in every situation determines how an event is resolved. Laura Elva Apriyana Br Singarimbun, alumnus of high school SMA Negeri 1 Kabanjahe, in Karo regency, North Sumatera did just that. Two big volcanic eruptions of Mt. Sinabung in 2010 and 2013 only strengthened her stance to remain patient.

Her home in Kutambaru village in Karo is only 4 km away from the top of Mt. Sinabung.

"During the eruption in 2010, I was still a junior high student. It was midnight and we all had to flee. I had a long school holiday afterwards, we evacuated to some other place because of the disaster," said Laura.

The second eruption in 2013 saw Laura Elva already at high school. She no longer had to evacuate as she already stayed in a boarding house. Her home is too far to reach daily being 60 km in distance. Her parents sent her to a boarding house instead.

Laura said her parents no longer had earnings. The paddyfield had all gone, damaged by the pyroclastic ash. Her family had to stay even longer at the refugee camp. Laura said all these events made her stronger. She did not lose the spirit to study even harder and get good grades. She was also active in Student Intracurricular Organisation that brought her more friends. Her school report

is always good from average of B and B+ at tenth and eleventh grades to A- in twelfth grade.

"I like Maths and Biology. My English is not very bad, too, and now I'm thankful that I've been accepted at Agrobusiness program, Faculty of Agriculture UGM," she said, smiling.

Laura is an active and talented girl. She likes singing, reading, and watching movies. She had even won speech competitions and first winner of vocal group competitions in Karo regency.

As the eldest of three, Laura wants to be a good example for her sisters, Titania and Ebi, as well as a child that gives pride to her parents.

Junaidi Singarimbun, her father, expressed his excitement and pride for her daughter to be able to study at UGM for free under the Bidik Misi scholarship. Her achievement is a consolation to all the bad events they experienced so far.

"I just hope Laura will be able to adapt quickly to her new surroundings, learn and study well. I only pray that she will be a child useful for family, society and the nation," said Junaidi Singarimbun.

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