

SLAVERY NO MORE 2012 GLOBAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE
August 10-11 ~ LOS ANGELES, CA

Robert Kirschner Introduction - Skirball Cultural Center

Jocelyn White: A little over a year ago I had the privilege of meeting our next guest. He so graciously answered an email from me. I actually didn't think I was going to hear a response because I was sending out hundreds of emails to organizations wanting to see what they can do to put human trafficking on the forefront of their work. He actually responded to my email within a day and invited me to come and sit with him. There I shared my heart about human trafficking, and I was so pleased to hear that he, a parent of teenage daughters, was already engaged in the issue.

He was already looking at putting an exhibit which I think already most of you have actually seen that was hosted for many months at the Skirball called *Women Hold Up Half the Sky* which talks about the abuse women and girls go through all over the world. I was so touched by his desire to give them a voice and the desire to do it well, his desire to educate the general public and to use his leadership and his influence in a way that brought rescue and restoration and a voice to the voiceless, so I am so privileged to introduce the Museum Director Dr. Robert Kirschner.

Robert Kirschner: Thank you and it's my privilege and pleasure to welcome each of you to the Skirball Cultural Center. Often when we host events here we like to have some representative of our staff say hello. It's a big part of our mission to extend a welcome to the entire community. In this case, it's a particular honor for us to have you here. The word welcome, joyously as we extend it to you, it hardly compares in eloquence or sheer inspiration to the welcome that I was just reading in this brochure of this stupendous achievement, this conference that has brought so many of you together.

I think that I'm going to keep this on file as a truly eloquent and meaningful statement of not only what only all of you are assembled here to combat but indeed what the Skirball Cultural Center also hopes to accomplish in its own modest way. When we organized the exhibition that Jocelyn was kind enough to mention, *Women Hold Up Half the Sky...* Did any of you have a chance to visit that? Many of you did, wonderful. We work directly with the authors of the book. Nick Kirstof and Sheryl Wudunn who perhaps you know happen to be husband and wife and through them found that there is a vast community of people like you who are committed to changing these realities for imperiled women and girls throughout the world and are actually embarked upon that task.

The idea that here in southern California that these two remarkable people Peter and Jocelyn White have been able to convene so many of you, and to try and harness all of that goodwill and commitment, is very inspirational to us. We couldn't be prouder to be hosting this event.

I've often thought of the effort that this exhibition represented as being first of all the work of activists like you, but I learned and I'm sure that you would agree that the real leadership

SLAVERY NO MORE 2012 GLOBAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE **August 10-11 ~ LOS ANGELES, CA**

comes from the women and girls themselves, those who are coping with these terrible burdens who are finding the strength, courage to overcome and to set an example that we couldn't help but wish to follow. I'm greatly honored now to introduce an example of such a person, a particular individual who has overcome and is an inspiration to all of us, a survivor of domestic minor sex trafficking D'Lita Miller.

A Survivor's Story D'Lita Miller

D'Lita Miller: Thank you all for being here. I may be a little short winded. I'm here straight from the hospital, but I'm here okay. My story starts 23 years ago when I had my first kid at 15. My mom was a drug addict, and my dad was nowhere in my life. I found myself pregnant at 15 and no help. I was raised on the streets of Compton, and I used to be a member of a gang. I remember one of my homeboys telling me once, "You don't have any milk or Pampers for your baby. I know how you can get money. You're running around here with all of these men having sex for free. You might as well get paid for it." Well I believed that lie, and between the years of 1989 and I'll say 2002, I sold myself for sex, for money, for shelter, Pampers, you name it I did it. Strip clubs, even encouraged other women to do what I was doing.

About 2002 I'll say, I had a wakeup call. I can't do this anymore. Between 1989 and 1997, I had five children. My oldest son is 23 and my youngest is 15. I realized I can't live like this no more. I have two girls, and I have to be an example for them although they were never exposed to my lifestyle but still. So I decided to change. I gave my life to God. I became an evangelist. I checked in the local community college. I would like to become an attorney. Due to certain circumstances in my life I've had to drop out of school several times.

To fast forward a little bit, about a year ago one of my daughters whose now 17 was brought home by the LAPD, and they told me my daughter had been prostituting. I haven't kept my past life from my children, because I felt maybe if I let them know what I've gone through and encourage them to be better, they wouldn't walk in my footsteps. I remember when the LAPD officer brought my daughter home, and we talked. I told her I said, "Babe we talked about this. You're beautiful, you're intelligent. I talked to her for hours. A week later, she ran on me again. I looked all over, searched all over, couldn't find her, called law enforcement, couldn't really get any help. I have a lot more respect for law enforcement now, because at that time when your child is missing and you know she's with a pimp all type of thoughts run through your head. Is she being raped? Is she being beaten?

I was really angry, and I'm thinking if you got something. I'm going to do something myself, because I need my baby home. I prayed, and I prayed. And I prayed. Sometime inside of me said, you go ahead and take care of your business, and your daughter will be home by this afternoon. I'm thinking are you serious? Well sure enough I got a phone call from LAPD, and I went and picked my daughter up. That was just the beginning of that journey.

As a result of that I was contacted by Long Beach detectives a short time after, telling me that they wanted to come and interview my daughter. We didn't realize what we were

SLAVERY NO MORE 2012 GLOBAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE
August 10-11 ~ LOS ANGELES, CA

getting ourselves into at that time. They interviewed her, and they told me that they may come. She may have to testify. We may receive a subpoena. Well we did, and sure enough the pimp was convicted of 65 years. In the midst of that, my children and I had to relocate.

My boss now Kim Biddle from Saving Innocence called me. We went to preliminary hearing, and this 21 year old man posted a million dollar bail. When we got to court, we thought this individual was incarcerated. When I got to the court, the social worker came to me, and she said, "He's out." I'm like, "What do you mean he's out." He posted a million dollars bail. Now where did a 21 year old get a million dollars bail to post?

He was there, and it was very frightening for my daughter. We're talking about gang members. Being a gang member myself, and seeing what they are capable of, you really can't say, I don't think they're going to come. You don't know what they're going to do. As law enforcement, I felt that my life and safety is in your hands, because I can't do anything. I have to depend on you.

My children and I fled in our home, and we lived in motels for about four or five months. In January, we found a home, and we relocated out of Los Angeles County. Since that time, I have been advocating, working with Saving Innocence. I now work with the *Mary Magdalene Project* doing trainings. I go out on the tracks, and I minister to young girls. I am holding parent trainings, and I am trying to develop a parent support group as well as a survivor's support group. I find that there aren't a lot of them, especially parent support.

I also have found that a lot of these girls that have been arrested, parents haven't made missing persons reports. The detectives can vouch that I'm texting their phone and I'm calling. My daughter is missing. She's even ran out on me again within the last 90 days. I was terrified, and it was devastating. I believe that that's why I'm so emotional today, because I thought and I believed that she had learned. She's home. She's in school. She's doing the best she can, but she's still traumatized. Our family's still getting back together, but I stand here today to tell you that I am devoted to advocating. I devoted to doing whatever that I can, and I thank you guys. If you're here, evidentially you have some kind of devotion or some type of heart as well.

I thank you for allowing me to share my message, and I can leave anything with you today. I would like to leave this. I realize that when people see the girls on the tracks, they don't see someone's daughter. They don't see someone's mother. They don't see someone's sister. They see a whole, tramp. I went to a meeting at I believe it was West Angeles Church, and when I got there, there were signs up and down the rails that says, "No more whores." Well if us survivors, or women that are trying to get out of the life can't come to the church or can't come to law enforcement...Not to say that law enforcement had it there.

Imagine if I had brought maybe a young lady with me that was in the life and said come to this church and come to this meeting, and when she got there, she saw those signs. That did something to me, because I realized that I wasn't a whore. I was naive. I was desperate, and I just didn't know what to do. I was very young. Now it doesn't matter. It got hard. There

SLAVERY NO MORE 2012 GLOBAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE
August 10-11 ~ LOS ANGELES, CA

were days when we were homeless that I didn't know what where we wanted to live. Those thoughts always come by. You know if you call this person you could at least get a motel for tonight, and I would tell myself nope I'm out, and I'm done, because I have to be an example for young ladies and women all over the world.

I thank you so much for hearing my story today. God bless you.

SLAVERY

NO

MORE