

END THE **SILENCE** OF  
**SEX TRAFFICKING**



2019 Jackson County Sex Trafficking Awareness Conference

## **Jackson County Sex Trafficking Awareness Conference Speaker Bios**

### **REBECCA BENDER: CEO & Founder, Rebecca Bender Initiative, Survivor Leader**

Rebecca Bender is the founder and CEO of the Rebecca Bender Initiative (RBI).

She is an award-winning, nationally recognized expert on human trafficking. After escaping nearly six years of modern day slavery, she wrote her first book, Roadmap to Redemption, followed by her recent curriculum Elevate. RBI's advanced trainings have equipped FBI, Homeland Security, and former President Jimmy Carter, local law enforcement, medical professionals, service providers, and faith communities across America. Rebecca serves as an advisor to both the Oregon DOJ Human Trafficking Council and the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services. She is also the recipient of the Female Overcomer Award, Unlikely

Hero Award, Hero to our Generation Award and multiple FBI and Congressional recognitions. She lives in the Pacific Northwest with her husband and their four daughters, and is currently finishing her masters. She is a sought after speaker and consultant and has been featured on the Today Show, NBC Deadline Crimes, Forbes, Huffington Post, and Sports Illustrated. [www.rebeccabender.org](http://www.rebeccabender.org)

### **STAYSHA HACKMANN: Survivor Leader, and Coordinator of the Jackson County Sex Trafficking Task Force (JCSTTF)**

Staysha is a local survivor of sex and labor trafficking. Staysha was first trafficked at 19 years old and trafficked for seven years. Staysha experienced multiple attempts at recovery before permanently exiting that life and becoming a full-time advocate and survivor leader in the fight against sex trafficking.

Staysha was born and raised in Medford Oregon and has a heart for her community. Staysha has done public speaking for educational and awareness events, and she assisted in creating material for training officials and first responders through the Blue Campaign for Homeland Security. Staysha was established as the coordinator for the Jackson County Sex Trafficking Task Force when the VOCA grant was awarded to Community Works in November of 2018.

### **MIKE GALLAGHER: Portland Police Bureau, Sex Trafficking Unit**

Mike has over 25 years with the Portland Police Bureau. He has been awarded the Mark Zylawy Distinguished Service Medal for his work developing a team of officers, victim advocates, and prosecutors to combat prostitution and sex trafficking. Mike has helped hundreds of women find treatment and counseling to change their lives. Mike will be talking about good advocacy from a community collaboration perspective and the importance of victim support plans - how good supports can help victims become survivors become leaders. He will also discuss the barriers to participating in the criminal justice process which victims face and how a comprehensive support plan breaks down those barriers for victims to having a meaningful role in the criminal justice process. And he will talk about completing a needs assessment, creating short term and long term comprehensive support plans with every discipline at the table, and lead a needs assessment/support plan activity.

## **LIZ ALSTON – DHS CSEC Coordinator for Child Welfare**

Elizabeth Alston has been active within the anti-sex trafficking movement for the past 8 years in various capacities including building awareness, providing direct intervention services to victims of trafficking, and maintaining and introducing new systems for the State of Oregon Department of Human Services on this matter. Currently, Ms. Alston serves as the CSEC Coordinator for the DHS Child Welfare, implementing required and ongoing training, providing technical support on cases, analyzing policies and procedures related to trafficking, and ensuring that Oregon is in full compliance with federal legislation. Alston served as a subject matter expert on prevention education for youth at Warner Pacific University, and worked with those helping to reform state policy to protect victims affected by sex trafficking. Ms. Alston has become a national speaker, trainer, and change agent on sex trafficking, and works with a wide group of stakeholders in addressing this issue. Alston also serves on the statewide Trafficking Intervention task force for the Department of Justice.

## **ERIN KEVIN: Victim Specialist for the Portland Division FBI**

Erin Kevin is a Victim Specialist for the Portland Division of the FBI covering the Bend and Pendleton resident agencies. Erin has fourteen years of experience in victim assistance. Prior to the FBI, she served as a Victim Advocate and Volunteer Coordinator with the Lane County District Attorney's Office in Eugene, Oregon and as an advocate with a non-profit domestic violence assistance agency. Erin was one of the original members of the Lane County Human Trafficking Task Force and the Central Oregon CSEC Response Team.

Erin is a past member of the FBI's Victim Specialist Working Group and the FBI's Victim Services Personnel Wellness and Resilience Work Group. She is a member of the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force, serving on the Criminal Justice Subcommittee. Erin is also a Leadership Bend Alumni (Class of 2017).

Erin is passionate about serving the public and walking alongside victims of crime in their journey to hope and healing. She has a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Women's Studies from Winona State University. Although originally from Wisconsin, Erin has been an Oregonian for fourteen years and is in love with the Oregon outdoors.

## **AMANDA SWANSON: DOJ Trafficking Intervention Coordinator**

Amanda Swanson, Trafficking Intervention Coordinator with the Oregon Department of Justice, shares with us her nine years of experience working with and for victims of human trafficking. She currently chairs the Attorney General's Trafficking Intervention Advisory Committee, working with stakeholders around Oregon on addressing the state's response. We spoke with her to learn more about her work and the changing demographic of trafficking victims in Oregon.

## **ARIANA RIDGLEY: Portland Police Officer**

Ariana Ridgely has been a police officer with the Portland Police Bureau for 10 years. From the last four years, she had been assigned to the Bureau's Sex Trafficking Unit (STU). STU works prostitution related crimes, as well as felony trafficking cases. Officer Ridgley also trains law enforcement, advocacy groups, DHS, District Attorneys, Hotel staff and community groups throughout Oregon.



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