**UNITED IN ADVOCACY: Season One**

**Danielle Turner and Caroline Ryan**

**EPISODE ONE: Windie’s Fight to End Sex Trafficking**

Danielle: Hello, and welcome to the United in Advocacy podcast. I’m Danielle Turner.

Caroline: And I’m Caroline Ryan. Each week on United in Advocacy, we share a new story

of human trafficking and domestic violence crimes. Then, we share resources, organizations and hotline numbers to improve awareness of the prevalence of these issues as well as advocate for those who may be experiencing them.

Danielle: This is not just another true crime podcast; we do more than just share grisly

stories—we share possible solutions. Our hope is that we can change the world if listeners like you will take action when it is safe to do so. Our podcast exists to encourage you to help yourself and others from experiencing these all too prevalent crimes.

Caroline: Last year, over 23,000 survivors of human trafficking were identified,

and it’s estimated that about 10 million people a year experience domestic violence or intimate partner violence. These issues are all too common and increasing, especially with the lockdowns in place due to the coronavirus! So listen to the stories. You might hear something familiar to something you’ve experienced or that you’ve seen in a friend. If so, check out the resources—which will also be up on our website, unitedinadvocacy.com—to see how you can get the help you need, or help someone else.

Danielle: This episode, we’ll be discussing the story of Windie Jo Lazenko. Before we

continue, I would like to address that this story may be triggering for some viewers as it contains information on sexual violence. Viewer discretion is advised.I got the information about Windie’s story from her website, windiejo.com, and a *Time* magazine article by Aryn Baker on Windie Jo.

Windie Jo Lazenko at the age of thirteen ran away from her abusive home in California. When Windie was trying to find a temporary home, she met a couple through a local motorcycle gang where they gave her shelter and food in exchange for her doing simple chores around the house. The love and care gave Windie a sense of belonging and family felt that she had a family. As time went by, the chores Windie was asked to do became sexually oriented. Once the couple recognized that Windie felt trapped, they forced her to dance at a local strip club when she turned sixteen. The words “Property of[couple’s name]” were branded onto Windie’s body, which is common among women and children who are forced into sex trafficking. As a branded underage girl, customers nor the staff noticed or seemed to care about a sixteen-year-old working in a strip club. At this time, Windie was further forced to drop out of high school and the couple began selling Lazenko to their friends and other members of the motorcycle gang.

Since Windie felt that she finally had a family who loved her, she tolerated the exploitation of her body stating “I saw them as the people who had saved me, when they were actually the people who were victimizing me the worst.” In 1999, the gang demanded that Windie, now thirty years old, needed to recruit other girls into the circle of sex trafficking. Lazenko refused to let what happened to her happen to anyone else so she ran away from the gang. When finally free, she pieced together her experiences and came to the realization to terms on the fact that the couple used her for sex and in 2007, decided to change her life by working with organizations against sex trafficking.

Once Windie’s life stabilized, she started her own nonprofit, 4her, a one-woman organization where Windie traveled to different cities around North Dakota giving training on how to spot sex trafficking behaviors/victims to hotel concierge, motel receptionists, gas station employees, and bartenders/baristas. When Windie started working with police officers, she picked up on negative and insensitive behavior that police officers showed towards survivors of sex trafficking; asking how many men they have slept with or why they never ran away from their abusers. From this, she developed training procedures and offered her time to local police departments to educate those on working with survivors of sex trafficking. As time passed by, the internet and social media platforms became more popular for young adults, teenagers, and younger. Sex trafficking and sexploitation were starting from commenting on girls’ photos, which Windie referred to as Internet Romeos. These Internet Romeos would build trust with girls online for months until the girls felt they were in love. These men would then beg for the girl to move to a new town with him and start a new life. An elaborate plan would be made to break the victim where this traumatic event would make her feel like she has nowhere else to go. This is when the so-called Internet Romeo would turn into the woman’s pimp and force her into sex slavery. Windie’s nonprofit noticed all of these behaviors becoming more prevalent so she then tailored her organization to educate the internet on what virtual sexploitation looks like.

Lazenko’s story changed the message around advocacy for sex-trafficked survivors around the nation and has provided education on what sex trafficking can look like over social media. Without her activism, resources for sex trafficking crimes would be outdated.

Caroline: Let’s talk about some ways to help people experiencing human trafficking. New

technology has improved the resources that are available that not only help

survivors of sex trafficking, but also help those who are currently being sex trafficked around the nation.

Thorn, a nonprofit started by Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore, developed software that helps identify victims of child sex trafficking that were sold online. The software created a database of child abuse images with leading internet companies like Facebook, Google, and Twitter, which helped identify more than 30,000 survivors, and at least 10,000 of those identified were children. Thorn’s software development is provided for free to law enforcement across the nation. The nonprofit also provides new data yearly on surveys/research they have sponsored. In 2017, Thorn set out to update and expand our understanding of sextortion, expanding participation to include 13-25 year olds, 2,097 responded. Their website, thorn.org, has many infographics that provide up-to-date information, like the survey I just mentioned, on current ways people are sex trafficking others, on ways to report trafficking activity, and outlets for those who have survived. Furthermore, Ashton Kutcher uses his celebrity platform to give speeches to Congress members in order to further advocate for the mission of Thorn. Visit their website to find local resources or make a donation.

Next, a way for you, the audience, to make a difference for current survivors of

sex trafficking is through an app called *TraffickCam*, created by researchers at

Temple University and George Washington University. By downloading the app,

or using their website, traffickcam.com, the user uploads photos of hotel/motel/hostel buildings, along with the location, room numbers, and the building’s name. Law enforcement can then run the image and compare it to images that sex traffickers post of victims who they are trying to exploit. The user can upload up to four photos; TraffickCam recommends two pictures of the entire room from different locations, one picture of the bed from the foot of the bed, and one picture of the bathroom from the doorway. So, the next time you visit a hotel or motel, take a few pictures before you unpack. Be sure to look at policy use on the app as it could include legal issues with hotels and image uses. Please use it with discretion.

We would like to end his episode with direct resources that anyone can use if they have any information on sex trafficking or for those who are or know anyone who is being sex trafficked. For the United States, please call 911 if anyone is in immediate danger. The National Human Trafficking Hotline is 1-(888)-373-7888 or you can text 233733, just please note message and data rates may apply. Report missing children or child pornography to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) at 1-800-THE-LOST (843-5678).

Danielle: Thank you for listening. We’ll be back next week!

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**EPISODE TWO: Angela Gabriel Overcomes Domestic Violence**

Caroline: Welcome back to United in Advocacy. I’m Caroline Ryan.

Danielle: And I’m Danielle Turner. Each week, we tell a story of someone who experienced

human trafficking or domestic violence. Then, we’ll share resources on how to prevent these issues from occurring and help current survivors.

Caroline: We should warn you that these stories can be triggering, as they mention violent

crimes and abuse. Our story today includes domestic abuse and gun violence, so please listen only if you’re comfortable doing so.

Danielle: We share these stories because we want to educate our audience of these issues

that are so prevalent in our society as well as provide a platform of advocacy to those who are survivors of these crimes. So often, human trafficking and domestic abuse are happening all around us, and we’re not aware of the signs. So listen, and then take a look at the resources we provide! This is more than just a true crime podcast for your entertainment; you might learn something that could save your life or another’s.

Caroline: This episode, we’ll be sharing the story of Angela Gabriel. I got information

about Angela’s story from Amnesty International, two articles from theadvocate.com—one by Grace Toohey and the other by Joe Gyan Jr.—and two stories from local Louisiana news stations. You can find those on WBRZ by Natalia Verdina and on WAFB by Graham Ulkins. Alright, let’s dive into it.

In 2017, Angela Gabriel was a 42-year-old mother of four and a real estate agent. She had also been dating 46-year-old Carl Thompson, the father of her two youngest children, for six years. Angela had started to notice a change in Carl’s behavior after his mother passed away in 2015. He started buying several guns and was often combative and verbally abusive. One day in November of that year, Angela and Carl had an argument that got so escalated that she asked Carl to leave, but when she opened the door for him, he grabbed her, threw her on the ground and began to choke her until Angela was able to call for her oldest son.

Angela and Carl ended their relationship at first but began to work things out over the next two years. What Angela didn’t know, however, is that choking a partner is a key indicator that an abuser will attempt to kill their partner. Then, on February 22, 2017, the two had another argument. When Angela was taking a bath, Carl came in and shot her nine times in the chest with a .40 caliber pistol. He said to her, “Look what you made me do, Angie. You made me shoot you.”

But, in a miracle, Angela *survived* nine gunshot wounds; one just millimeters away from her heart. Two of the bullets still remain in her torso. Angela spent three weeks in the hospital and is now paralyzed from the chest down, with only the use of her left arm. Her boyfriend called 911 after he shot Angela and was arrested at the scene. In December 2018, Carl was sentenced to 45 years in prison for attempted second-degree murder. At the trial, he insisted “I’m not abusive. I’m not a domestic abuser,” but said that he “snapped” that day.

In reality, this shooting was a common instance of domestic abuse—especially in Louisiana, which has “the second-highest rate of female victims murdered by men in single victim-offender incidents, according to a 2016 report from the Violence Policy Center.” In fact, in the three months prior to Angela’s shooting, three Louisiana women had died from domestic violence shootings.

As for Angela, she does not take her survival story lightly and has used it to propel a new purpose in life. She began public speaking about domestic violence, gun violence, and mental health, and has partnered with groups such as Amnesty International. In October 2018, Angela spoke on a panel hosted by 100 Black Women of Baton Rouge to speak about her experience during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. And, in 2019, she started working with IRIS Domestic Violence Center, an East Baton Rouge organization offering free and confidential services to survivors.

Angela says she has “no hate in her heart” for Carl Thompson because surviving the shooting brought her closer to her faith and showed her she needed to help others. She has made it her new life’s work to help women see the signs of domestic violence and get help so that stories like hers won’t exist anymore.

Danielle: After hearing Angela’s story, let’s talk about some resources that survivors of

domestic violence or their allies can use. These resources are particularly critical right now since we’re living through the coronavirus outbreak.

Caroline: That’s so true. Right now, since we’re all quarantined, it’s infinitely harder to deal

with domestic violence. For one, people may be trapped in an abusive home environment with slim options on how to remove themselves. But also, it’s so much harder to check in on our coworkers and friends and have real conversations with them when they’re away from their partners and feel safe to disclose things.

Danielle: Right! So, we’re going to go over some resources to help with that. Most of these

organizations are now taking special efforts to confront the difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic.

First up, we have Futures Without Violence; they’re a non-profit organization that does a ton of work on a number of issues, including human trafficking and domestic abuse. In response to the pandemic, Futures Without Violence released a document about ways to help adults and children experiencing violence at home. It lists eight different ways that we can work together to help those while we have to be distanced for health.

For example, they suggest finding ways to interrupt or intervene in different dangerous situations. For instance, you can use different safe words to text or say in a phone call to a friend—one might mean “call me to provide an interruption,” or one might mean “alert the police.” Also, since sometimes abuse takes the form of restriction, check in with friends and family to see if they need any basic necessities. You can offer to drop off groceries or cleaning supplies. They also suggest calling national resources to find local organizations that can provide more help. You can call The National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or go to thehotline.org.

Speaking of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, you can go to their website, thehotline.org, to learn about making a safety plan. Safety plans are especially complicated right now, when travel ability is limited and everyone is trying to be socially distanced. However, the NDVH suggests “consider[ing] alternatives such as staying with family or friends, staying in motels, or sleeping in your vehicle.”

Lastly, the Aspire News app can be a really helpful resource for those living in an abusive home environment. It’s free to download on Apple and Android phones. Aspire News appears to be a normal news app, and it really does include news story summaries. But, hidden in its “Help” section, you can secretly send a message, record a voice memo, or call one of the emergency contacts that you set up in the app. There’s also an escape button that makes the app quickly go back to the news screen. If you’re in immediate danger, you should call 911. However, this app can be a great, discreet way for someone experiencing domestic violence to get help without their partner knowing, especially if their partner goes through their phone often.

Caroline: Thank you for listening, and please check out our website, unitedinadvocacy.com

for these resources and more.

Danielle: And remember, if you’re in immediate danger, always call 911 (if you’re in the

U.S.). Otherwise, the National Domestic Violence Hotline is also 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).

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**Part II: Justifications for Our Advocacy Technique**

**Overall Structure of the Podcast, Heath & Heath:**

The structure of our podcast was created with the Heath brothers’ Made to Stick concepts

in mind. Our two-part organization applies the components of SUCCESs to make our message

clear to listeners. First, the story-resources format is both simple and concrete. Every week,

readers expect to hear a true-crime story related to human trafficking or domestic violence, and

then receive resources about those crimes. This is simple because we boil it down to one story

and only a handful of resources each week—we do not try to overwhelm the listener. It is also

concrete because the stories, though upsetting, create an image in the listeners’ minds of what

these crimes look like. Hopefully, these images stick with the listener so that they can recognize

commonalities in their lives or the lives of others.

The stories we share also apply the Heaths’ emotions and stories concepts; our episodes

are story-oriented with emotional tales of women undergoing traumatic hardships and

overcoming them. We incorporate the unexpected in these stories. For instance, in Angela

Gabriel’s story, she’s at first spoken about in past tense. Then, when the listener hears she was

shot nine times in the torso, they assume she died—until we tell them that she miraculously

Survived.

Lastly, we incorporate credibility into our podcast structure. Before sharing each story,

we verbally cite where we found the information so that listeners can fact check us. Also, the

resources we provide are nationally-recognized organizations doing anti-human trafficking and

anti-domestic violence work or phone applications that have been widely reviewed. We do not

give our own advice or purport to be experts on these issues; rather, we refer listeners to true

stories and resources that our research supports to be reputable.

**Podcast Mission, Goodnight:**

In his article, Goodnight argues that power imbalances exist within provider-client relationships and to change these imbalances, “movements arise that support new communication rules, duties, and training” (Goodnight, 2009, p. 13). Additionally, he states “too much authority lodged with expertise risks a public that may become angry, confused, and unable to respond appropriately to recommendations” (p. 14). This podcast aims to dismantle the power imbalances by creating a nonauthoritative advocacy platform that educates the public on issues with human trafficking and domestic violence while empowering the public to make change on their own through resources provided. By sharing stories of others and providing the sources in which these stories came from, the public can educate themselves further, validate the information given in the podcast, and may come to their own conclusions on how to help further. The podcast does not place blame on authorities or victims in the story, but merely provides information given to avoid feelings of anger or confusion of police involvement. Moreover, by providing multiple direct resources/organizations/hotline numbers at the end of the podcast, it gives the audience appropriate recommendations, which allows them to further investigate the sources as they please.

**Episode One, Rowland:**

We used sources from Windie’s website as well as the Time magazine article in piecing

together the story that Windie has shared with the public about her life. We decided to focus the

first episode on a story about a woman who is not only a survivor of sex trafficking but who also

became one of the biggest advocates in the United States for other survivors. We applied

Rowland’s narrative perspective of providing our audience with a story to keep their attention

and persuade them to keep an eye out for signs of sex trafficking and act when they see them.

Through identification, her story is compelling due to Windie only being a child when a couple who seemed to only want to help Windie changed the course of her life forever. Society sees children as innocent humans who need to turn to adults for guidance in order to navigate and understand life. Once the couple showed Windie what a family ought to be, they manipulated her understanding of what that exactly was. Windie describes that sex traffickers first build trust before they create a traumatic situation for victims, so they feel that they cannot leave and must continue to follow the traffickers. Part of Windie’s story also takes place in a strip club, where she is underage for an adult and working in the sex industry. The club workers ignored how Winide was branded by the couple and continued to ignore her age as long as she made money. Her age creates further identification with the audience because most teenagers’ first jobs are retail or food service and can feel empathy for Windie since her first experiences were forced sex work.

As described in the episode, Windie’s non-profit focused on education for law

enforcement and other personnel who may come in contact with those who are being sex trafficked. Witnessing police officers ask survivors how many men they have slept with showed

Windie that problems also reside with those who are supposed to help victims of crimes. Furthermore, this portion of her story keeps the audience’s attention by giving the audience knowledge on what sex trafficking looks like, what not to say to survivors, and a nonprofit that is

run by someone who is a survivor. The audience may start using these tips when they leave the

house to get coffee or go to the grocery store. Lastly, Windie’s quick details about the characters

involved, the plot, setting, and message on educating oneself on sex trafficking continues to keep

the audience engaged. We end this episode of the podcast by providing other resources and tips

that the audience can use to continue advocating, listening, and educating themselves to further

improve the lives of survivors.

**Episode Two, Daly:**

According to Daly’s article, the kairos for a podcast like this is perfect because there is

both a strong opportunity for it in the podcast genre and we can use the features of threats to

justify our choice. By offering resources, we also use some of the ways Daly describes to make

solutions feasible.

First, there is a strong opportunity in podcasts for a show like ours because the true crime

genre is booming, but all of the shows mainly focus on murder, not domestic violence

specifically, and they do not offer resources for how to solve that problem. Ours not only fits into

that niche, but it does so at a time when domestic abuse is a serious, timely problem—when it is

more difficult than ever for victims to escape abusive relationships or homes because of the

pandemic we are living through. “Kairos” means the right or opportune time; in no point in the

the past century has been a critical moment such as the one we are currently experiencing. The

coronavirus pandemic has critically changed the landscape of protecting people from domestic

violence and human trafficking. With stay-at-home orders and social distancing, people like

Angela is all the more at risk and needs to hear resources that apply to their current situation. In

a crisis such as this, domestic violence will only increase—job losses strain families and may

aggravate perpetrators even more; social distancing makes escaping an abusive home or

providing safe houses (which usually have multiple families in them at once) more difficult;

abusers may limit access to food and cleaning supplies. There has never been better kairos for a

podcast sharing domestic violence and human trafficking resources.

Our show also fits well with the problem features that Daly identifies. For example,

domestic violence is a very high-magnitude problem. We tell a story in which a woman nearly

dies, and we mention that many in her situation (domestic violence and gun violence) usually do.

Through the story, we demonstrate that domestic violence is a matter of life and death, and

therefore of a high magnitude and worth being solved. We also show that domestic violence is

not as predictable as it seems; most women, like Angela, are not familiar with the warning signs.

Angela had known her partner for 20 years, dated him for six, and had even raised children with

him. Violence was not something she expected until she started seeing changes in his behavior.

Additionally, a pandemic is not an expected factor. So, that makes domestic violence all the

more unpredictable, which Daly says gets the most attention. Lastly, the feature of affected

parties are important to this story as well. Angela was a mother of four young children, someone

that audience members will sympathize, if not identify, with.

Finally, by providing resources for those facing domestic violence in this time, we use

some of the ways Daly suggests to make solutions feasible. Most notably, we “make the proposal

seem eminently doable” by providing resources that listeners can immediately access or donate

to. We also graft our new idea to other initiatives in a few ways. For example, a listener just

looking for another true crime podcast may come across ours and realize they see some of the

signs of abuse in their relationship or a friend’s. Then, they may access or share the resources we

provide. We also graft our podcast idea to the organizations truly taking direct action against

domestic violence. We show that these organizations are already succeeding in helping survivors

of domestic violence, so they could help the listener too.

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