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**OVC**  
**Webinar Transcript**

**Labor Trafficking Case Study: Domestic Servitude**

**August 21, 2014**





## Labor Trafficking Case Study: Domestic Servitude

August 21, 2014  
3:15 – 4:15 PM EST

**Presenters:**

Kathleen Morris, WARN Program Manager, International Rescue Committee – Seattle  
Megan Bruneau, Human Trafficking – VICE/High Risk Victims Unit, Seattle Police Department  
Ashley Garrett, Human Trafficking Team Lead, OVC TTAC

The material presented during today's webinar session will be available on the Human Trafficking Learning Community.

The session will be recorded and will begin shortly.

As with all technology, we may experience a momentary lapse in the Webinar session. In the event of a problem, please be patient and remain on the line. If the problem persists, please contact [HumanTrafficking@ovc.ttc.org](mailto:HumanTrafficking@ovc.ttc.org) for technical assistance. The Webinar session will resume shortly.

### Welcome

Alejandra Acevedo: Hi, everybody. This is Alejandra Acevedo from OVC TTAC.

Ashley Garrett: This is Ashley Garrett, Human Trafficking Team Lead.

Jason Adams: This is Jason from OVC TTAC.

Alejandra Acevedo: I wanted to go ahead and give a special welcome to our BJA (Bureau of Justice Assistance) grantees and to thank all of you for joining us today for our Monthly TA Webinar. This month's Webinar is a *Labor Trafficking Case Study*. Before we get started, as a reminder, today's call is being recorded. And with all technology, we may experience a momentary lapse in the Webinar session. In the event of a problem, please be patient and remain on the line. We also encourage you to keep a copy of the PowerPoint accessible during the presentation in case of any technical difficulties.

Alejandra Acevedo: At this time we are going to go ahead and mute all the lines. If you have any questions, please feel free to use the Chat box to ask them. At the end of the Webinar, I will have compiled all the questions and we can go ahead and direct those to our speakers today.

Alejandra Acevedo: Our presenters for today are: Kathleen Morris, Program Manager at International Rescue Committee in Seattle, and Detective Megan Bruneau with the Seattle Police Department. Again, thank you all again for attending, and now I am going to pass it over to Ashley Garrett who will present the Tip of the Month before we get started on the main presentation.



**OVCTTAC**



## Tip of the Month:

### Customized Training and Technical Assistance OVC TTAC

[www.ovcttac.gov](http://www.ovcttac.gov)

#### **Tip of the Month: Customized Training and Technical Assistance, OVC TTAC**

Ashley Garrett: Hey, everybody. I hope you all are doing well and enjoying a hopefully not too hot August. I wanted to talk to you a little bit about some of the customized training and technical assistance resources that are available to you, both as individual service providers, as law enforcement, and certainly through your task forces themselves that you are working for. So, I wanted to highlight a few different ways that we can help, and one of the things that is most important to know about these resources is they are absolutely free. You just have to reach out to us and we will talk through a little bit of how you can apply for some support.

## Customized training and technical assistance

- In-person trainings, workshops and
- Peer to peer mentoring
- Strategic planning facilitation
- TA in needs assessments, program design and development, evaluation
- Webinars and conference calls
- Phone/email consultation
- Information and referral

### **Customized Training and Technical Assistance (CTTA)**

Ashley Garrett: You will look at that screen and it will give you a couple of different examples of some of the different ways that we can send you experts to help you in strategizing your different types of skills that you need to enhance. We just recently helped a task force that was interested in learning more about victim interviewing strategies. We have arranged and sent folks who were setting up a new case management program to shadow other case managers in a different state. There is a lot of really phenomenal ways that we can support you, and so we just wanted to let you know that that is a resource that is out there for you.



## OVC TTAC Task Force Capacity Framework



### **OVC TTAC Task Force Capacity Framework**

Ashley Garrett: The way that would, from a human trafficking task force perspective, what we are going to be looking at when you call us for help to strategize what we could do is we are going to talking to you in a couple of different ways. So looking at how is it working in terms of building your human trafficking task force from a multidisciplinary collaboration perspective. What are the kinds of knowledge that you need in order to combat human trafficking? So maybe your task force that got started or you have been working and you are largely working with foreign national cases, and you are now starting to expand into looking at U.S. citizens, and you need some additional knowledge around working with those different populations. Or you need to adapt some of the skills that you have. So, again, maybe you have had some experience interviewing child victims of trafficking, but you are not necessarily used to working with interpreters or interviewing adult male victims of trafficking, and need some specialized training about how to do that effectively. So in all of those instances, we are here to help. And the way that you get access to us is through our website, which we will send out to you all after this call.



## CTTA Eligibility Criteria

- TTA will help build capacity and response to crime victims
- Victim service providers, criminal justice professionals, and allied professions that serve victims of crime
- Requesting organization contributes resources or funds to the delivery of requested assistance

### **CTTA Eligibility Criteria**

Ashley Garrett: It is really the focus of the application that you send to us is – the priority is that we are helping you build your capacity and response to crime victims, which all of you are doing so you automatically apply to that criteria. Anyone that is a victim service provider, criminal justice professionals, and allied professionals who are serving crime victims are eligible. So, again, that would be you all. And you are asked to provide some support, in-kind typically, to be able to complement the sources – the resources that we are able to send to you. Most typically if we are sending someone out to conduct strategic planning or a training, it is that you are providing the facility and getting people in the room. Those are some of the different kinds of examples.



## CTTA Application Process

- Collaborate with respective OVC or BJA grant monitor on request
- Call OVC TTAC prior to application to discuss needs
- Complete on line application – [www.ovcttac.gov](http://www.ovcttac.gov)
- **MUST** submit 90 days in advance of request

### **CTTA Application Process**

Ashley Garrett: In order to access this, you just – you want to reach out to your OVC or BJA grant monitor to let them know the issue that you are having, and check in with them. And then call OVC TTAC. You will talk to someone like Alejandra and she will talk you through a quick needs assessment to help strategize what it is that you are looking for support for. And then there is an online application that you fill out and you submit. If you are looking for something that happened with a specific [unclear] in mind, keep in mind that we need to receive that application 90 days in advance of the time that you need support. So, again, it is a really great resource, it is available for all of you. We are encouraging you to use this resource, and it is free.

Ashley Garrett: So, on that note, I am going to turn it over to Detective Megan Bruneau and Kathleen Morris for the rest of the training.

**Victim-Centered & Multi-Disciplinary  
Response to Human Trafficking  
Case Study: Domestic Servitude**



**Detective Megan Bruneau**  
Human Trafficking Vice/High Risk Victims Unit  
Seattle Police Department

**Kathleen Morris**  
Program Manager  
Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network  
International Rescue Committee in Seattle

**Victim-Centered and Multi-Disciplinary Response to Human Trafficking: Case Study: Domestic Servitude**

Kathleen Morris: Thanks, Ashley.

Ashley Garrett: Thank you.

Kathleen Morris: Hi, everybody. You guys hear my voice a lot on these calls, on the OVC TTAC monthly calls. So you all, for the most part at least, know my voice. I am the Program Manager for the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network, and I work at the International Rescue Committee in Seattle. I have been doing this work for about 6 ½ years, and we will talk more about what we do and how we do it as we proceed.

Detective Megan Bruneau: And my name is Detective Megan Bruneau. I am the human trafficking detective with the Seattle Police Department's Vice/High Risk Victims Unit, and I am also a task force officer with the Seattle Office for Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

## Presentation Overview

### I. Introductions

- WashACT Collaboration

### II. Case Study: United States v. Almeda

- Initial identification
- Stabilizing survivor
- Victim-centered interviews
- Investigation
- Prosecution
- Ongoing Support
- Outcomes

### **Presentation Overview**

Kathleen Morris: So we are going to introduce ourselves and our task force, and then we are going to go into a case study for a case that we think was a really successful case. OVC TTAC asked us to talk about challenges, and we are going to talk about challenges as we go. But I think the funny thing about this case study is that our challenges with this case study were not necessarily with each other, because we already had worked through so many challenges with each other. But we will talk about some of those and how we have overcome them as we go.

Detective Megan Bruneau: And it is also going to illustrate the importance of patience, not only for the investigators and case managers, but also the patience that we are asking of the survivor.

## Introductions

**Seattle Police Department** (BJA grantee) takes a victim-centered approach to investigating human trafficking cases through a dedicated human trafficking detective and its Vice High Risk Victims Unit

**Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network (WARN)**, a coalition of non-governmental service providers led by the International Rescue Committee in Seattle (OVC grantee), provides comprehensive services to victims and survivors of human trafficking in WA and educates communities to allow better access to services for victims of human trafficking

### Introductions

Detective Megan Bruneau: So the important thing to know here is that my office and also [unclear], we take a very victim-centered approach. And we will discuss what that looks like when we are talking about the case itself. But I – my position is dedicated specifically to working with foreign nationals that are forced into any type of labor, and I do that with an agent with Homeland Security Investigations.

Kathleen Morris: And WARN, the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network, is a coalition of non-governmental service providers led – that is not spelled right – by the IRC (International Rescue Committee) in Seattle. So we – IRC is the OVC grantee and then we sub-grant to an organization called API Chaya and an organization called Youth Care to provide case management and services. And we really work together as really a comprehensive team, even though a lot of people look at sub-grants as something that – where you make referrals out and they sort of report back, we actually really work together on the day-to-day work of case management.

## Poll Question: Introductions

- What best describes your professional role in anti-trafficking work?
  - Non-governmental victim service provider
  - Law enforcement
  - Law enforcement or system-based victim specialist
  - Federal prosecutor
  - State/local prosecutor
  - Federal government staff (non-law enforcement)
  - State/local government staff (non-law enforcement)

### **Poll Question: Introductions**

Kathleen Morris: So now you know who we are. We want to know who you are. So the first poll we have, you will have about 10 or 15 seconds to answer the question. What best describes your professional role in the anti-trafficking work? And, hopefully, you can see the options.

[silence]

Kathleen Morris: Okay, so everybody has had a chance to enter a selection. Looks like we are about 75 percent OVC or service providers, but we do have a lot of law enforcement and prosecutors on the call as well, which is great. Thank you so much for participating.

## Mission Statement

The Committee's mission is to ensure that victims of trafficking receive all resources available to them; and that human traffickers are identified, investigated and prosecuted to the utmost extent of the law.

### **Washington Advisory Committee on Trafficking (WashACT) – DOJ-sponsored "Task Force"**

Kathleen Morris: So a little bit about our DOJ (Department of Justice) sponsored task force.

Detective Megan Bruneau: Basically, you see the mission statement there, but at its core, WashACT is a group that is focused on responding to human trafficking at the ground level, and it is involved directly to case-related work. WashACT is not an activist group, a lobbying group, a policy-advocacy group, or a community awareness group. But we can and should inform groups about any of these activities as it is made up with the direct case experience. Basically, it is a bunch of people getting together and talking about the kinds of cases we are seeing, who we are working with, and continually talking about how we can collaborate, with the exception, of course, of survivors.



**Co-chairs:**

Seattle Police Department (BJA grantee)  
WARN (IRC Seattle) (OVC grantee)  
U.S. Attorney's Office

**Member organizations:**

- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): WARN Partners and other Service Providers; Community Activism Groups
- Federal Law Enforcement: HSI, FBI, IRS-CID, DOL, State Dept.
- Local Law Enforcement Agencies: Seattle PD, King County Sherriff, State Patrol, Tacoma PD; Lakewood PD, etc.
- State & Federal Governmental Agencies: Department of Labor/Wage and Hour; Washington State Attorney General's Office, Health and Human Services/ACF
- County Prosecuting Attorney's Offices & Other County Agencies
- And more...

## **WashACT**

Kathleen Morris: So this is the basic structure of our task force. We actually have three co-chairs: Seattle Police Department, WARN, and the U.S. Attorney's Office. And the three of us provide leadership and coordination of the overall group. Like we said, we have this core team that is WashACT that really does the immediate case work and response, and then we have a lot of other people that come and participate in our quarterly meetings who we try to inform through our experience.

Kathleen Morris: The WashACT was initiated when Seattle PD received BJA funding. [beep] Sorry, something weird just happened. Okay, I will keep going. And it was part of the funding to work with the U.S. Attorney's Office and the OVC grantee, which was IRC at the time, and this was 10 years ago. In the beginning, law enforcement service providers from WARN and the U.S. Attorney's Office would all get together regularly and actually role play and discuss what each of us would do and what we would commit to do if a case – once a case, a trafficking case, was discovered. This went on for a few months before there were full-fledged cases, and it really helped build trust. And over the years, this foundation has withstood staff changes and turnover and expansion of WashACT participant organizations. The same core team still exists and still is intact and continues to work together on cases. We have had individuals who have changed and sometimes that meant certain agencies were not as involved. But now pretty much the same agencies are involved with new individuals making a commitment to the work and the mission of WashACT.

Kathleen Morris: It really is this foundation of trust that has led to productive collaboration for us. And I always give the example of when I started in this work 6 ½ years ago, my boss brought in our partners from the U.S. Attorney's Office and Seattle Police Department for part of my interview process. And what that told me was that we are going to work with these people, we have a commitment to collaborating in this work. And so that is what we have tried to establish and to move forward with.

Kathleen Morris: We all understand that this work takes a lot of patience, and we all really actually are in it for the long haul. We want to do things effectively as opposed to quickly, and that is something that we talk about a lot with the larger group in the outside like community activist groups and groups like that. It has taken us nearly 10 years to be where we are now, and the case we are going to review for you is a really good example of how we work together. Some cases are way harder than this case with more conflict and more challenges, and some cases are easier, and we never know what we are going to get, so we just really try hard to learn from our mistakes and to establish trust with each other. Again, this long-time built foundation of trust has really allowed us to work through disagreements and challenges that come up in each case.

Detective Megan Bruneau: And Kathleen and I have worked together now for almost 4 years, and although my chain of command has changed over time, like we both recognize that we could not do the work without one another and our collaboration, and have definitely done a lot of feedback and debriefing, not just between the two of us, but with other law enforcement and service providers which has been essential.

The slide features a title 'WashACT Collaboration at Work' at the top. Below the title is a list of services and outcomes, each preceded by a small circle icon. The list is organized into several sections: Client Identification & Referral, WARN Response, Law Enforcement Response, Investigation & Prosecution, and Survivor Outcomes. The Survivor Outcomes section is further divided into two columns of items.

**WashACT Collaboration at Work**

- Client Identification & Referral
- WARN Response
- Law Enforcement Response
- Investigation & Prosecution
- Survivor Outcomes
  - Conviction of Traffickers?
  - Restitution?
  - Safety
  - Short-term benefits
  - Long-term housing
  - Immigration Relief
  - Family reunification
  - Job Training & Job Search Assistance
  - Education
  - Self-sufficiency?

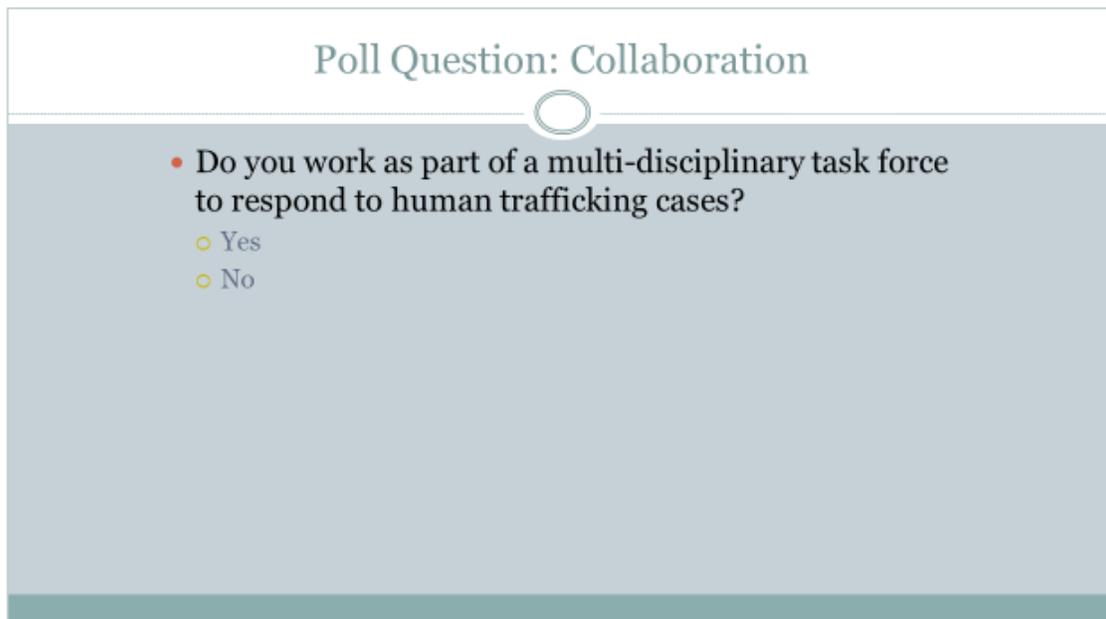
### **WashACT Collaboration at Work**

Kathleen Morris: So this slide is something that kind of identifies, you know, how does our collaboration work, and this – on an ongoing basis, we discuss these aspects of human trafficking cases. We discuss our professional obligations, the capacity and limitations we each have, and we go over and over and over again to ensure that we understand each other. And, honestly, as new people come in, we really do have to go over our professional capacity, our professional ethical obligations, and the limitations we have so that we are really understanding why we do the things we do when we work together.

Kathleen Morris: Ultimately, as I have said already, we have worked to build trust, we have delivered on the promises we have made, we have shown each other that we have integrity, and that has allowed us to work together and trust each other. And this is kind of a weird thing to say,

but one of the best things I can hear from law enforcement is – is that they – because of the nature of their work and the actual goals that they have within their work, they cannot truly be victim-centered. Their focus of their work has to be on investigation and prosecution. And when somebody tells me that, it shows me that they are being truthful. Like I understand that that is the focus of their job. They want the victim to be all right and, ultimately, they want that person to be recovered and to live a life that is free from exploitation. But their job is to find cases and prosecute traffickers. You know, when somebody says to me, “Oh, all we care about is the victim being okay,” I kind of do not trust it. So I would rather have really truthful conversations about what being victim-centered means within the scope of the actual work that we are doing.

Kathleen Morris: So we have had, you know, I have had – just recently we had a core team retreat and one of the agents said, like, “You guys get to truly be victim-centered,” and he was right. We – our focus and our work as the service providers is on helping – helping the victims and the survivors. And so it is great to really recognize our roles and really recognize the outcomes we are looking for. The best possible scenario is when we are truly honest with each other and work to achieve each other’s ultimate outcomes. And all of that being said, you know, the agencies we work with really do their best to be victim-centered when pursuing the goal of prosecution, and we appreciate that. And we, in serving survivors, we try to work in a way that supports those goals to the extent that we can.

A presentation slide titled "Poll Question: Collaboration". The title is centered at the top in a teal font. Below the title is a decorative horizontal line with a circle in the center. The main content of the slide is a list of poll questions and options, presented in a dark teal font. The question is "Do you work as part of a multi-disciplinary task force to respond to human trafficking cases?". There are two options: "Yes" and "No", each preceded by a small teal circle.

**Poll Question: Collaboration**

- Do you work as part of a multi-disciplinary task force to respond to human trafficking cases?
  - Yes
  - No

**Poll Question: Collaboration**

Kathleen Morris: Our next poll question. Do you work as part of a multi-disciplinary task force to respond to human trafficking? Okay, so we have like half of the people respond – on the call responding. It was like over 90 percent of the people on the call do work as part of a multi-disciplinary task force. And I guess I would say if you do not, try to reach out to the people in your area that are doing this work already, because it really will improve your ability to do your job.

# United States v Almeda

## A CASE STUDY OF FORCED LABOR

### United States v. Almeda

Kathleen Morris: So we are going to start with a case study, and you are going to hear me talking for a while, and then you are going to hear Megan talking for a while, just because of the nature of the chronological order in which things happen with this case.

## Initial Contact

- Referral from Seattle PD
- WARN reached out to survivor to assess needs
  - Immediate needs
- WARN worked to explain rights and options
- Survivor was extremely fearful and traumatized
- Safety concerns
- Connected survivor with pro bono immigration attorney to discuss options
- Survivor decision to report to law enforcement

### Initial Contact

Kathleen Morris: So this case first came to us because Megan, who was a lieutenant at the time, had mentioned that a City of Seattle employee had reached out to him about a potential trafficking victim that he had come into contact with, the employee. And so he told us that and then he followed up with an e-mail. And I am going to read you what he wrote in the e-mail

because I think it is a really good example of being victim-centered and trusting all of us to do our jobs.

Kathleen Morris: His e-mail said, “Here is the write-up provided by the complainant on the case I briefed you on earlier. My additions are on the second page.” And then he writes, directed at – to Megan, the detective, “Megan, for now this is an FYI. We will see where this goes after Kathleen’s people talk to the victim.” And I think that that really shows that they trusted us to go in, talk to the person, and make sure that that person was okay, and that that person understood the option to report, and was going to be able to do so in a way that was less – less traumatic.

Kathleen Morris: So we, WARN has case managers from different cultural backgrounds, and, luckily, we had one at the time who had the same background as the survivor. This went a really long way to ease the survivor’s concerns around coming forward around even working with us.

Kathleen Morris: The survivor was extremely fearful of being contacted or found by the trafficker. She had actually left the situation quite a while before we came into contact with her, but she was staying with someone who was somewhat distantly connected to the traffickers, and we offered to move her into different housing but she did not want to move at that point, but she was still very fearful. She was also extremely afraid for her family – family safety back in the home country. We safety-planned extensively with her around her own safety, but also helped her make plans so that her family could keep themselves safe, should anything happen.

Kathleen Morris: The survivor was both really anxious to meet with law enforcement and also really afraid to do so, because she thought it would put her family in more danger. We met with her several times and made sure she spoke with an immigration attorney in order to make the decision to report. And I feel she might have felt like some pressure to report because the case came to use through law enforcement, and she was super concerned that – that if she reported it, the traffickers would find out and hurt her family, as I said.

Kathleen Morris: So she also was really concerned with her own immigration status, and that kind of put, I think, put pressure on – made her feel pressured to report. Once it was explained to her that there was a form of release that we [unclear] report, she became more anxious to do so.

Kathleen Morris: We kind of had to put the brakes on because of her level of fear around reporting and the fear that she felt about her family’s safety, because we wanted her to really understand all of her options before making the decision to report, and to make sure she understood what reporting would mean and what could happen as a result. This was not in order to scare her, obviously, but to really prepare her for what this process looks like. We actually worked with her for about a month before she gave us the definitive go-ahead to contact law enforcement on her behalf. During that time we also arranged for medical services, for food assistance, and other immediate needs for her. For this client meeting, as I said, meeting with an immigration attorney was an extreme priority, and WARN worked really hard to make sure she truly understood everything that was happening and would happen as a result of reporting to law enforcement.

Kathleen Morris: We have had this sort of urgency on a few occasions where clients believe reporting will instantly result in immigration status or alleviating their fears or protecting themselves or their families. And we work to set really realistic expectations around those things. This can be really challenging to navigate and we have actually had clients sort of go around us

and call law enforcement on their own, which is funny because we really want to make sure they are working with the people that we work with and that we know and trust.

Kathleen Morris: One of the things that we work to do is to build confidence around reporting, but not make it sound like it is a super easy thing to do. So we just try to be clear about expectations, the benefits of reporting, and then address any fears or anxiety around it.

Kathleen Morris: So because we have a great working relationship with Seattle PD and the U.S. Attorney's Office and Homeland Security Investigations, we were able to tell the survivor that we trusted the people who would be interviewing her and that we knew they would not do anything to harm her. We also had to explain that they may not have the ability to keep her family safe, but that we would ask them about that and that they would do their best. This is a really hard expectation to discuss. So many of our clients are so afraid of what is going to happen to their [audio drops out]. In this case, the survivor said to us many times the trafficker had – that the trafficker had a lot of power and status in her home country.

[background conversations]

Kathleen Morris: Hello? [inaudible] talking. Is there any way to mute the phones?

Kathleen Morris: So, she literally said to us, “You know, they could just kill my children in a minute and no one would even notice, and no one would even investigate it.” And so this was really impactful, and so it was important that we showed her that we understood her fears... Uh-oh. What happened?

Detective Megan Bruneau: I do not know.

Kathleen Morris: Okay, I am going to keep talking. Megan is doing something with the PowerPoint.

Kathleen Morris: It was really important that we understood her fears. We never tried to tell her that her concerns were unrealistic. We talked to her to create safety plans for each of her family members that she could talk to them about over the phone.

Kathleen Morris: Okay, can maybe one of you guys – oh, okay, it is getting fixed. So I am going to move on and you guys will see the slide when it is fixed.

Kathleen Morris: At any rate, so we safety-planned and safety-planned and safety-planned so much. So I just wanted, you know, to re – I cannot reiterate that enough. What is that?

Detective Megan Bruneau: [inaudible]

Kathleen Morris: Yes, so I know you guys are not seeing it but we are going to keep talking just in the interest of time.

Kathleen Morris: Once the survivor did decide to report to law enforcement, we contacted the U.S. Attorney's Office to make the referral. We requested that the agents assigned be Megan and another – an agent from HSI named Jennifer Williams. And we developed this protocol so that we would not end up working with untrained agents who have never worked with victims and are – and just do not have that kind of experience. We are really lucky to have an Assistant U.S.

Attorney (AUSA) who will advocate for those kinds of things, and now we really work solely with agents who are trusted and vetted and trained.

Kathleen Morris: We have had some really challenging cases where agents come into the process and they are not sympathetic to survivors. They may be unprofessional towards advocates. They basically just do not care about human trafficking cases or working with victims. But we really worked hard to work around – Oh, we are having technical issues.

## Advocacy with Law Enforcement Process

- Interpreter
- Advocacy and support around victim interview with law enforcement
- Explanation of rights and options
- WARN responded to law enforcement requests for victim cooperation with investigation and supported victim through process
- WARN's support allowed victim to provide key evidence to support investigation and prosecution

### **Advocacy with Law Enforcement Process**

Kathleen Morris: Okay, so Megan and I have had some really – I guess moving on to talking about interpreters and how we set up this interview. We have had some really challenging situations that we – not to use this term lightly – but are still sort of traumatized by.

Detective Megan Bruneau: Very.

Kathleen Morris: And we have had interpreters tell survivors they are lying. We have had interpreters that clearly do not understand the survivor and basically paraphrase long, complicated information in a way that does not serve the purpose of evidence collection. We have even had a client tell us she knew the interpreter was not understanding her or interpreting correctly. When we stopped the interview, the interpreter stood up and left in tears. It was a really wild situation and none of us have really ever gotten over it.

Kathleen Morris: When we made this referral, the AUSA actually asked our Filipino advocate, who is a veteran in this work in this area, if she had specific interpreters she would recommend. And we were able to state preferences and also name a few who we did not want to work with specifically from the list that was provided.

Kathleen Morris: We have seen some really good practices with interpreters, including this one interpreter we used for this case. She interprets simultaneously. She will not even clarify anything without stating that she is doing so. She will actually say out loud, “May the interpreter clarify the statement?” She is very professional, and it goes a long way to establish trust in that interview.

Kathleen Morris: Some of the other best practices we have seen, we had an interpreter explain to a survivor that all the information goes into his head in one language and comes out of his mouth in another, and that nothing stays in his head and the he will not remember anything after he leaves the meeting. This really put our – one of our clients at ease. Another interpreter, when he makes notes on a piece of paper, he gives that piece of paper to the survivor at the end of the meeting so she knows he is not taking any information about her away from the meeting.

Kathleen Morris: Another one is we had an interpreter who was from the same community as the survivor, and the interpreter said, “If I ever see you outside of this room, I am going to pretend that I do not know you so that no one in our community will know that we have ever met before, and they will not ever ask me to, you know, tell them about you.” And that goes a long way to calm fears around community rumors and reputational harm.

Kathleen Morris: We continued to explain things to the survivor, answer her questions, and calm her fears. So many times we have had clients tell us that they did not sleep the night before an interview, and we definitely saw that, you know, symptoms of severe anxiety when we all met to – to have this interview go forward.

Kathleen Morris: We all agreed that we would have the interview at the IRC offices, which is just a more comfortable environment than a law office or a U.S. Attorney’s Office or the – a law enforcement office. We always make sure there are tissues, water, and food available for the survivor during interviews. We also tell the survivor that she is in charge of the room and the interview, and we do this in front of our law enforcement partners so everyone knows that this is what is being said. We say you can take a break whenever you want, you can answer the questions you want to answer, you choose where to sit, you choose where everyone else sits, you tell us when you are uncomfortable. And everyone – and we say, “Everyone here agrees that you are in control of this meeting.”

Kathleen Morris: But when we first started doing this, we got some really strange looks from law enforcement partners. But they came to understand that we do this in order to try to give the survivor some feeling of power in a room where she usually would not feel that she has any. Honestly, our clients do not always – very rarely do they actually take control of the situation. But we – we at least try to give them as much power as we can.

Kathleen Morris: As I mentioned, some of the challenges we have faced with these types of interviews are lack of training, lack of training around interviewing victims, not having trauma-informed training. And we have overcome a lot of those by having agencies and individuals within those agencies that are really dedicated to this work. I actually now have supervisors and special agents in charge come to me and say, “We want to work with you. We want to partner with you. We want to make sure we are training our agents in a way that makes that possible.” And I am able to be really honest and say like, “These are the people we currently trust when we – when we are referring a case, and right now, until we have met and vetted and worked with other people, we are not really going to trust anyone outside of that.” And so it is great that we can have this open dialogue around that, and that really I think also opens the door for them to come back to us when they have a – a question or a concern around the work that we are doing.

Kathleen Morris: We always advocate for continued presence for our immigrant clients, and we have definitely had a lot of disagreements around whether somebody is a survivor of trafficking, whether they should be continued presence. And we, because we have had this sort of foundation of trust, we are able to get pretty heated in those discussions and those debates, and still maintain a relationship, a working relationship. At the end of the day, you know, this is a professional relationship and it is not personal. And so we really remind each other of that when things get heated or we do not – or we do not agree with the way that things are being handled.

Kathleen Morris: As service providers, we have actually gone around and against a law enforcement determination on cases and have successfully gotten T visas or other good outcomes for clients, and vice versa. We have had law enforcement and prosecutors go against the things that we want to have happen and then, at the end of the day, we all try to make it work best for the survivor. So that is kind of a little bit about the initial referral and the challenges we work through in referring clients and working with law enforcement on these interviews.

### Poll Question



- What are the main reasons for using trusted, vetted, court-certified interpreters in law enforcement interviews? (Check all that apply)
  - Quality evidence collection
  - Victim-centered approach
  - Allow victim to fully express themselves
  - Your NGO partners want you to ...

### **Poll Question**

Kathleen Morris: So this is our next poll question. What are the main reasons for using trusted, vetted, court-certified interpreters in law enforcement interviews? And you can check all that apply.

[silence]

Kathleen Morris: [laughter] We like the D answer. No, just kidding. Wow, you guys are awesome. Yes, that is exactly right. It is really all of – all of them. Maybe not D, I mean...

Detective Megan Bruneau: But that is [inaudible] too.

Kathleen Morris: Yes, we will take it. But, yes, I mean really it is for all of these reasons. Our AUSA, in working with new agents, has really, really been great about advocating for using the right interpreters and... [audio drops out]... And, at the end of the day, while we are advocating for it as service providers, we – they – I feel like there has to be more than that reason. And so, you know, one of the things Megan and the U.S. Attorney's Office talk about is that we cannot collect effective evidence and quality evidence if we do not have good interpreters as part of the interview.

Detective Megan Bruneau: And that being said, just last – like 2 weeks ago, I had a really righteous case. I have been working with a new victim and found out that the interpreter was advising her to go to her church because she had issues with her own church in the past, and was flipping her notes and asking her if she is really happy in her marriage. So I only found that out through the case manager on this other investigation, so that – I only mention that because I will check in with the survivor/victim to find out if they are comfortable with the gender of the interpreter, I will find out if it is colloquially appropriate, if they are able to understand, and even in all doing that, you still have to vet even further to ensure that there is professionalism not only when you are interviewing, but on the breaks and before and after the interview as well, because we just learned that. So that is definitely something that I am continually learning new things to consider when picking them out.

**Victim-Centered Interviews**

- **Interpreter**
  - **Interview conducted at IRC's (NGO) office**
    - WARN advocate present
    - AUSA, HSI agent, and SPD detective
  - **Topics discussed**
    - Role of prosecutor
    - Explanation of investigation
    - Charging decisions
    - Victim rights
    - Safety
    - Immigration relief
    - Continued Presence

### **Victim-centered Interviews**

Detective Megan Bruneau: So, on to the victim-centered interview. We are going to kind of go through how we approach all of our interviews, but I am going to use this as kind of specific to the case that we are doing with the U.S. v Almeda. Not only, as Kathleen mentioned, was this interpreter incredibly professional, but it worked out that the – the particular colloquial accent or terminology in the dialogue that our survivor spoke, our interpreter was able to understand clearly and that made much progress for our interview.

Detective Megan Bruneau: So, like Kathleen mentioned, we were in a much more soft location. It was at her office, and we had the WARN advocate present, the U.S. Attorney at the time, Ye-Ting Woo, was with us, Jennifer Williams of HSI, who is now my partner, and myself. Ye-Ting Woo, while there, introduced herself and explained her role, and it kind of – we explained that we understood that it felt like there were a lot of people in the room, but that way our survivor did not need to retell her story over and over. Because, as you know with these, it takes an incredibly long time not only to build rapport with a fearful victim, but also for someone that you are trying to build rapport through an interpreter, and that can be really challenging.

Detective Megan Bruneau: To kind of bring it to this particular survivor, to give you an understanding, she is just maybe 5 feet, probably 115 pounds, very frail in physical appearance, but also when she walked in the room, was incredibly timid, borderline shaking, and was half smiling out of nice, like niceties, but was obviously very worrisome and like thankful that we were there, but was obviously very physically afraid.

Detective Megan Bruneau: Like Kathleen mentioned, we can say to someone over and over, “If you need to go to the restroom, let us know. If you are thirsty, let us know.” But I am well aware that when someone is in an environment and they are being interviewed by me as a detective, they do not feel like they own the room, so I will continue to ask if they need water or if they want a break, because building that trust, as you all know, takes time.

Detective Megan Bruneau: I explained my role right away, and Jennifer, the agent from HSI, explained her role. In the City of Seattle, we are a sovereign city. I am not allowed to ask any immigration-related questions unless somebody is in custody. So she is the one that would ask anything immigration-related. But also we explain that – because in this particular instance our survivor had, as I will get into, a visa in order to enter the U.S. but had been on overstay and she was also very fearful about any kind of prosecution related to her or deportation regarding her immigration status. And we explained right away that that was something that she did not need to be concerned of.

Detective Megan Bruneau: We spend a lot of time talking about concerns, both safety here in the City of Seattle and Washington State, but also the safety of her family. She has children and extended family members overseas, and we talked about what we could or could not provide via Homeland Security in order to safety plan around that, both the WARN advocate and as law enforcement, how we could do some safety planning.

Detective Megan Bruneau: We also explained our roles about how, if we wanted to get a hold of her again or if she wanted to get a hold of us, that she would go through her case manager. It was not like a, just kind of like what we would be doing, but also we provided literal boundaries so she felt really safe that she would be contacted by her case manager and not through us directly.

Detective Megan Bruneau: After we interviewed her and learned of her righteous case, we discussed continued presence and about immigration relief. We, like I mentioned, the rapport building is really essential in this, not just because I want to get information or glean it for a case, but because – I mean I literally wanted her to feel at ease. She was obviously very afraid and did not – was unaware of her rights here in the United States and how I would be able to advocate for her from a law enforcement perspective.

Detective Megan Bruneau: One thing that we have noticed in these investigations is they can – often a victim will do a very stream of consciousness, kind of go off kilter and not really stick

with what I need to obtain probable cause. But as we all know, there is not like a how to call 9-1-1 or how to provide information to law enforcement. So that is my role as well, to try and really keep somebody on track. We have learned over time that it can be helpful if the case manager knows a bit of the story beforehand, to kind of know where like the kind of the heart of the story is so I can get to that, so we do not really go off too much. Because these interviews are 3, 4, 5 hours in length at times.

Detective Megan Bruneau: Because, like I mentioned, they do not know what information I need, so part of the process is for me to explain that and make it very clear not to make any promises that I cannot deliver. I am upfront about what I will attempt to do, but what I cannot do, and really explain, “Hey, if you have a question about anything health-related, that is for your case manager. If you have a question about how I am conducting my investigation, ask me,” and so we really make that clear.

## Victim-Centered Interviews

- Explain role of interpreter as neutral person
  - Safety issues related to interpreter
- Allow victim to tell story in her own voice
- May need to conduct multiple interviews to develop rapport, comfort, safety, and understanding of factual evidence
- Victim may not tell story in narrative or linear fashion
- Allow victim to take breaks during interview, to be comforted, and to be silent
- Do not make promises, other than desire to thoroughly investigate and prosecute
- Offer referrals to immigration relief and civil legal services

Detective Megan Bruneau: Continuing on. I talk to the interpreter myself about the importance of them being neutral, even if they let me know that they are court-certified, I still talk to them about how important it is that they not influx any of their personal opinion, either to me or back to the person that I am interviewing. But I also explain that to the person I am interviewing as well. That way we allow, as we put here, for the person to speak in their own voice.

Detective Megan Bruneau: These can take a really long time. In this particular instance, the abuse and the – it occurred over a 5 year period of time. There is – our survivor was farmed out to, at a minimum, six different homes, and we had at least eight defendants, arguably could have had up to 10. Given that, there is so much information about states, locations, what occurred, who was responsible for what. So, as you can imagine, this was not delivered in a complete linear way. As we started to conduct our investigation, we had additional questions. We are going to have to go back to the victim. We are going to need to clarify, and so we were asking for a lot of patience from them. And it is hard for them – for the individual to talk about. With a survivor, as you can imagine, even though we told her upfront, “Hey, we are here for you, we do not judge,” being

able to actually feel that I am not judging, being able to feel that I truly am there to assist, you know, that as you can all imagine takes time.



### **Mambukal Barangay – Murcia, Philippines**

Detective Megan Bruneau: So, here we are. I just wanted to show kind of briefly, the arrow is kind of in the rough barangay where our survivor is from. That is basically like a village or district. Cities and municipalities are composed of a lot of barangays, kind of are also known as like a barrio, basically. So that is where our survivor was from.

## Initial Interview

- Life in the Philippines
- Job offer and immigration paperwork
- Arrival and control
- Work requirements and conditions
- Restrictions and barriers to escape
- Eventual escape

### Initial Interview

Detective Megan Bruneau: She, at the time this started, now about 8 years ago, 8 or 9 years ago, she was living in the Philippines, has three children. One of her sons was going to nursing school and she had been working in a nail salon since 1977. She was hardworking, had a family. She was offered a job in the United States to care for an elder adult, to make a lot more money, and for – to then be able to care for her son’s nursing school, and to be able to provide more money for her family. So that interested her because she cared very much for her children and wanted to help out.

Detective Megan Bruneau: While in the Philippines, all of the paperwork was completed for her because she was not, at the time did not speak, read, or write any English. So she did not really know what the paperwork was. She was just asked to sign it. The family members of Almeda, who was our lead suspect, had the paperwork filled out. They were denied an initial application. They put – did not make any changes, applied again, and then were granted her to be able to come here on a visa. There were some concerns of an inappropriate member working over in the embassy, that perhaps there was a – something shifty, basically, going on. But upon her arrival in the U.S., she arrived in Sea-Tac in Seattle, and immediately when she was picked up by Mr. Almeda and his wife, she – her passport was immediately taken from her and she was told that she was going to be working in a different home.

Detective Megan Bruneau: So, if you can imagine, she has never been in the United States, she does not read English, she does not know where she is, she had not met Mr. Almeda or his wife before. They immediately take her passport and they took her to their home where they said that she would be working there and that she would be working in some other homes.

Detective Megan Bruneau: Mr. Almeda has five children, one resides in California and the other four live in Washington State. They wanted our survivor to work in all of their children’s homes and take care of cleaning, landscaping, and childcare. She was completely dependent on the family. She did not know where to go. She was unaware of her rights here in the U.S., and while

here, her visa expired and that was used as a tool of coercion by the family. But she eventually had an opportunity to escape, which I will get into.

### Forced Labor – Domestic Work

- Working conditions
- All cooking, cleaning, landscaping and childcare
- Physical and emotional toll
- No independence and no freedom of movement
- Kept hidden from outsiders
- Sleeping arrangements

#### **Forced Labor – Domestic Work**

Detective Megan Bruneau: So, over the course of 5 years, Mr. Almeda would drive our survivor to the different homes. I will have a picture of them in a moment, but these are very – in a very affluent community, all of the Almedas, very good money. She had incredibly physically demanding work, to the point that she would have to massage her body every night. She did not have any independence and no freedom of movement. She was unable to attend church, which was very important to her. She was unable to make friends or shop for any kind of items if she needed any toiletries. She was repeatedly told on a daily basis, sometimes more than once, not to answer the door or phone, to close the blinds, take the garbage out at night.

Detective Megan Bruneau: She had to do landscaping in the dark. As I mentioned, she was very physically frail and she would have to do backbreaking labor with very large trees and bushes, and really high window cleaning.

Detective Megan Bruneau: Her sleeping arrangements were, in one home, was a basement bathroom with a little cot. She was in a really hot laundry room where the only solace she had was a very small radio where she could listen to music for a little bit. At one place, she said it was the nice one because she actually had like an actual bed to sleep on. She said that she would lay at night and try to massage her body because she was in so much pain, she was begging her body to be able to work the next day. So if that gives you any kind of idea. She was only paid about one to occasionally three hundred dollars per month.

## *United States v. Almeda* Initiation of Investigation

- Survivor's fear of retaliation and family's safety.
- Victim-centered investigation
- Treated as a missing person case
- Contacting Almeda family members
- Locating witnesses
- Interviewing "rescuers"

### **United States v. Almeda: Initial Investigation**

Detective Megan Bruneau: She was incredibly fearful of being retaliated against. This is a great example of – she did not have any – she was not physically abused. It was an incredible case of constant emotional and verbal abuse, and really banking on the fear of her children's safety. She was well aware that the Almeda family had real deep connections, both in the northwest of Washington and California, and also in the Philippines. She was so, so afraid for her children's safety. She talked of how, in her home country, she really believe that – and had seen it apparently in her history – that one could pay somebody \$5 to \$10 to kill someone in the Philippines. So she said, "Look, I do not think you understand, like they really could kill my son or my daughter," and so we talked a lot about this.

Detective Megan Bruneau: This is a great example of, what do we really mean by victim-centered? She did not want the Almeda family to know that she had spoken to us, so Jennifer, the agent, and I, we approached this as a missing person's case. We started contacting all of the Almeda family members. We had a photograph of her and treated it as though we had received information from an attaché in the Philippines, and the family was looking for her because she was missing. We went around and every single Almeda family in the Seattle area said that they had never seen her before and did not know who she was.

Detective Megan Bruneau: It is noteworthy that they had allowed her to have a cell phone later on when she was staying with them, which eventually led to her being able to leave the home. She was talking to her family, after several years, she said, "You know, I have to admit, it is really bad here." They contacted some people in Nevada who happened to know someone in Seattle who coincidentally resided four houses to the north of Mr. Almeda. At the time, our survivor was not ready to leave. She was incredibly fearful. It took several months. But then when she was in so much physical pain from the labor in a home down in Steilacoom, which is south of Seattle, she contacted the woman and said, "I am ready," and the woman and a pastor drove down and said, "Grab your things, we are driving there, run out the door and we will pick you up." And that is exactly what happened.

Detective Megan Bruneau: So we had denial from all Almeda family members we contacted. We spoke with the woman who – and the pastor who picked her up and learned of her appearance and emotional and physical state when they picked her up, and we were doing – canvassing the neighborhoods of the Almeda neighbors to try and see if anyone could have placed her in any of the homes. With all of our canvassing, we were only able to locate two neighbors that ever saw her because she was always told to stay in the house, but we did find two people.



### **Locations Where Forced Labor Occurred**

Detective Megan Bruneau: Here are four of the homes that she had to work in. There were three others that she had to do temporary work. But these are examples of – you can kind of get an idea of how large the homes are and how many bedrooms. There are a lot of bedrooms in each house, and a lot of landscaping required.

## Law Enforcement Response

- **Partnership and collaboration**
  - SPD, HSI, USAO, WARN
  - HSI in the Philippines utilized
  - Department of Labor
- **Victim-Centered Approach throughout**
- **Evidence gathered**
  - Money transfers to Survivor's family by Almeda's wife
  - VISA paperwork (both submissions) filled out for Survivor
  - House montage
  - Phone records of Survivor's texts to the Nurse
- **Some Almeda family members re-interviewed**
- **Grand Jury utilized**

### Law Enforcement Response

Detective Megan Bruneau: So a big challenge that we had here was just – we were having a really hard time corroborating what the victim had told us. We had – we did not have a lot to go on so we did a montage of the – of houses so she could point out what houses she had been in. Because we were trying to do anything we could. This was really like her word against the Almedas, and they were denying ever meeting her. So we went back to her. We had already established through her case manager with us that we were having some attachés in the Philippines, they met with her family, she was starting to feel more comfortable. We had met with her several times, continued presence was going through, so we met with her and we were very honest, like, “Hey, if you just want to be stabilized and this is the extent of where we are at, I do not have enough for this investigation, but if you want them to – if you want vindication, I need you to be able to come forward.” And she thought about it and she was willing, so we, you know, did not want to retraumatize her, but did not want to have to keep calling her, but we really wanted to do our job.

Detective Megan Bruneau: And so we met with her and really let our survivor make the choice. So she made the choice, and we went back to the Almedas and said that we had proof that she had resided, and it was amazing. You know, we would say, “So you said you did not know this person, da-da-da,” and one of the women said, “Oh, Auntie? Gosh, I – when you showed me that photo, if you had just told me it was Auntie, I would have totally remembered. We loved her. She would just lay on the couch and watch television and relax. And our family just loves her. Auntie!” But she left the part out where she was working 16 hours a day in that woman's home and cooking and caring for all of her children.

Detective Megan Bruneau: I think it is noteworthy to – I know I am trying to speed it up here because we do not have a lot of time – but each family that she worked in, they had children. And our survivor really loved the children and made it really challenging for her. That was part of the process of trying to decide to come forward because they were kind of one of the only things that brought solace to her experience as well. They had nothing to do with it, it was their parents.

Detective Megan Bruneau: We had to explain each step, and, let us see, that is pretty much. We really just wanted to ensure that we were approaching this investigation where she knew that she was in control throughout, and we really explained like what we had and what we needed from her. So that is kind of that.

### Stabilizing Survivor



- Emotional support
- Explanation of rights and options
- Housing, food, medical care, counseling, ESL, connection with community, and other needs
- Intensive case management
- Immigration legal advocacy
- Safety Planning! Safety Planning! Safety Planning!
- Survivor was highly traumatized and afraid. WARN made sure process was explained thoroughly and repeatedly so that victim could make informed decisions

### **Stabilizing Survivor**

Kathleen Morris: Yes, and I will, you know, we continued to stabilize the survivor, to help explain this process to her. She was – she met with her advocate a lot on a regular basis just for, you know, emotional and moral support. She also met with her immigration attorney a lot to just explain the process and work towards immigration relief. We always were safety planning. She called us regularly to say, “I talked to my children and there is a strange car on the street,” like there were lots of fears around what would happen to the children once the family knew she had come forward. So we just continued to work through that with her. She was connected with a community group that she felt safe and comfortable with, and that was really great for her. And she also reconnected with her faith community which had been really important and she was deprived of during her ordeal.

## Supporting Survivor

- Day to day case management
- Continued emotional support and explanations
- Immigration status and rights explanation
- Meetings with attorneys, DOL
- Negotiating restitution
- Support and advocacy at all law enforcement meetings
- WARN's support allowed victim to feel safe and work to recover, make decisions and envision a better life

### Supporting Survivor

Kathleen Morris: Oh, that seems like a double, but I think we have covered it.

## Prosecution

- Meeting to discuss prosecution
  - AUSA
  - Investigators: SPD & H.S.I.
  - WARN advocates
- Considerations
  - How strong is the case?
  - What does the survivor want?

### Prosecution

Kathleen Morris: So we do want to talk about working with the prosecutor on this case and sort of a big meeting that was a turning point for us. We went in to talk to the Assistant U.S. Attorney and she said really very seriously to us, it was Megan and Jennifer and myself and the advocate, and she said, "You know, I really want to tell you guys that I do not think we have what we need to prosecute this case." And I was like, "Well, you know, we have gotten – we are working

towards immigration relief, the client got continued presence, she is doing really well, all these things are happening. You know, if that is the way it goes, that is the way it goes.”

Detective Megan Bruneau: And I was like, “No, this is a super righteous case.”

Kathleen Morris: And, yes, that was the moment when Megan and Jennifer started fighting for this case and saying, like, “When she told us about having to massage her body, when she – the things that she told us, that needs to be pursued and justice needs to be served.” And I just kind of sat back and let them fight that battle, and it was kind of an amazing, very victim-centered thing.

Detective Megan Bruneau: Yes and, you know, the AUSA definitely wanted to – we appreciated that she was listening to us and I think she wanted to go forward as well. But there was some concern by her chain of command in order whether or not to go forward because it was a single-victim case, it does not have the like chutzpah of other like multiple victim ones. But this was, to me, exactly why we needed to go forward, and we really appreciated that she let us listen because, to me, what our survivor went through over a 5-year period of time – I mean if anyone is sleeping in like a sweaty floor of a laundry room after working a 16-hour day, and all you have to look forward to is 20 minutes of a radio and then get up and do the exact same thing. So this was something that we really fought for, but Ye-Ting also talked to us about looking into restitution as a possibility.

Kathleen Morris: So, yes, I forgot to talk about that. We – we supported the survivor as she – every time she met with law enforcement, but also when she – I think it was like an 8-hour meeting with Department of Labor to try to calculate the back wages that they had not paid her. And that was excruciating for everyone involved, but she showed such – by that point I think she had been given such confidence by Megan and Jennifer’s investigation and their really trying hard for her, that she was really starting to be really empowered in this process. And it really – she really changed. Not just through our advocacy and our support, but also through seeing like a system working for her, and seeing how hard people were willing to work for her. So that was really awesome and to see her starting to show strength in those meetings to say, “These are the hours I worked,” and really go through painstaking details with Department of Labor Wage and Hour while they calculated what the restitution should be.

Detective Megan Bruneau: And to quickly timeline it, April to June 2011, we interview, we are hitting it hard, we are trying to canvass, we are finding all these witnesses. Now she is willing to come forward, we are readdressing everything. Pause. Now everyone is looking at everything. The U.S. Attorney’s Office comes back with a to-do list. Now we are in summer 2012. Hit it hard. Grand Jury people. Now we are doing the best we can trying to come up with more stuff. Pause. All eight Almeda family members have their own legal representation. We are fighting to go to court. Who do we have charges on what? How far can we take this? And ultimately the decision was to have the seven family members, and just had Mr. Almeda, the lead patriarch, he would then plead guilty to a charge and there would be restitution for our survivor.

Kathleen Morris: And I would say we were really lucky. We got such a great pro bono attorney that was supposed to just do immigration, but he also ended up negotiating with all of the defendants’ attorneys on restitution based on what Department of Labor came up with, and that was amazing to have somebody who was willing to take that part on. Because, as you all probably know, taking on a T visa case is a lot different than taking on negotiating restitution for back wages for somebody. Okay. Oh, we have a couple more.

Detective Megan Bruneau: Oh, yes.

Kathleen Morris: We are not done yet. So these are – this is some more of the outcomes.

### Criminal Judgments



- Romulo Almeda Sr pled guilty to knowingly hiring an alien for employment and did so with knowledge that she was not authorized for any employment in the US. All in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324a(a)(1)(A)
- All 7 other Almeda family members considered “payors” with Almeda Sr to Survivor (payee) for restitution of over \$90,000 (owed wages).

#### **Criminal Judgments**

Detective Megan Bruneau: So, Mr. Almeda pled guilty for knowingly hiring a, basically, an illegal alien and knowing that they were not able to be employed. And then they did a lump sum payment to our survivor of over \$90,000. This was all set finally in January of this year, so the lump sum was paid a few months prior to that.

## Supporting Survivor Long-term

- Continuing case management
- Continued emotional support and explanations
- Building community
- Immigration status and rights explanation
- Education, life skills, alternative housing, victim advocacy, supporting choices
- WARN's support allowed victim to feel safe, pursue safe employment, and plan for future
- Advocacy and support throughout prosecution and beyond

### Supporting Survivor Long-term

Kathleen Morris: Oh, we can skip that. We already went over that stuff. She is doing great. And, but then, again, at the beginning we talked about what are important outcomes to our collaboration. And these are some of the things that come up. And, you know, this survivor got a huge sum for restitution, and that was life changing for her. Not – the majority of our clients do not see that kind of restitution payment.

## Outcomes

- Conviction
- Sentence
- Survivor Restitution (!)
- Safety
- Self-sufficiency
- Long-term immigration status
- Community awareness
- Excellent case study ;-)

### Outcomes

Kathleen Morris: But there was a conviction. The survivor is doing amazingly well. She was able to find work. She is able to be independent. She pretty quickly, after we initiated this, she decided

to move out and live independently, and we helped her do that, so she did not stay with the people she had been staying with.

Kathleen Morris: She even got a job that she really liked, and when she was ready to leave that job, she referred it to one of our other clients who she had bonded with through our support group. So she really became – she actually took on some caretaking roles, which were very natural to her just with our other client. So we really saw her go from incredibly weak and frail, and so, so, so scared, to really strong and independent and happy. I will never forget, the first time I had seen in her a while and I walk in and I did not recognize her. She had a smile on her face. She was not shy. She was not shaking. We just really got to see her change through this process.

Detective Megan Bruneau: And also, during the sentencing, what was great is Mr. Almeda’s entire family was in there and they were all looking at us, at Jennifer and I, and [unclear] as though we had done something horrible to their family. But what I thought was wonderful is the judge actually said, “Hey, I think it is great you are all here to support Mr. Almeda, but you are all responsible for this as well, and I hope you take this to note.” I am giving the brief summary of it. Basically he said, “You are all...He took the fall on the sword for this one.” So I personally enjoyed that myself. But yes, so that is...

Kathleen Morris: And, again, even that judge, it goes back to individuals involved in this case that really cared about it and wanted it to have good outcomes for the survivor, and the for the community to know, like, this is not okay to do to somebody.

The graphic is a rectangular box with a light blue background and a white header. The header contains the word "Contact" in a dark blue font, centered above a small white circle. Below the circle, the text is centered and lists contact information for two individuals. The first individual is Detective Megan Bruneau, with her title, unit, department, email address, and phone number. The second individual is Kathleen Morris, with her title, program name, location, email address, and phone number.

Contact

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## Contact

Kathleen Morris: So we are going to hang on. I know we are 1 minute over our time.

Detective Megan Bruneau: Sorry about that.

Kathleen Morris: But we are happy to take questions, and if people want to stay on and ask questions, we are happy. I see that there is one from Ashley. I will let Alejandra tell us what to do now.

Alejandra Acevedo: Thank you so much, Kathleen and Megan. We really do appreciate it. We did have one question come in, and if you could take the time to address it. You guys mentioned in the presentation the city employee who helped report the case. We were curious. What kind of work does this city employee do so much that he came into contact with her, and how did he know and learn about you guys?

Kathleen Morris: So he actually did not come into contact with her because of his job. It was through a community relationship. So he knew the people that she was staying with, and they had, I do not know, somehow brought up her situation. And he somehow knew that Lieutenant Eric Sano was working on human trafficking stuff and got in touch with Eric, the lieutenant, who then referred the case to us.

Detective Megan Bruneau: And he works in a part of the City of Seattle that is like the Human Services Department, so they are locked into understanding a lot of our non-governmental organizations in the area, but also the importance of reporting to law enforcement. So they work closely with our department in a different capacity. And so, yes, he had – that particular city member did not – came into it after she had been staying at someone's home, after she left, after she fled the Alameda home. I do not know if that answers or not for [unclear].

Alejandra Acevedo: No, that was great. Thank you once again for all of you joining us today and attending. Again, thank you, Kathleen and Megan, for your time presenting. For our grantees, when you end today's session you will see a pop-up box to an evaluation form. Please go ahead and take the time to fill out the evaluation so we can learn and improve our monthly TA Webinar series. The next conference call is scheduled for Thursday, September 18, and we will send you all an update. Again, thanks so much and have a great end of the...

[End.]