

WFWP USA: HerStory Awardees shared about their journey through trauma

Yoshi Mori
April 19, 2022



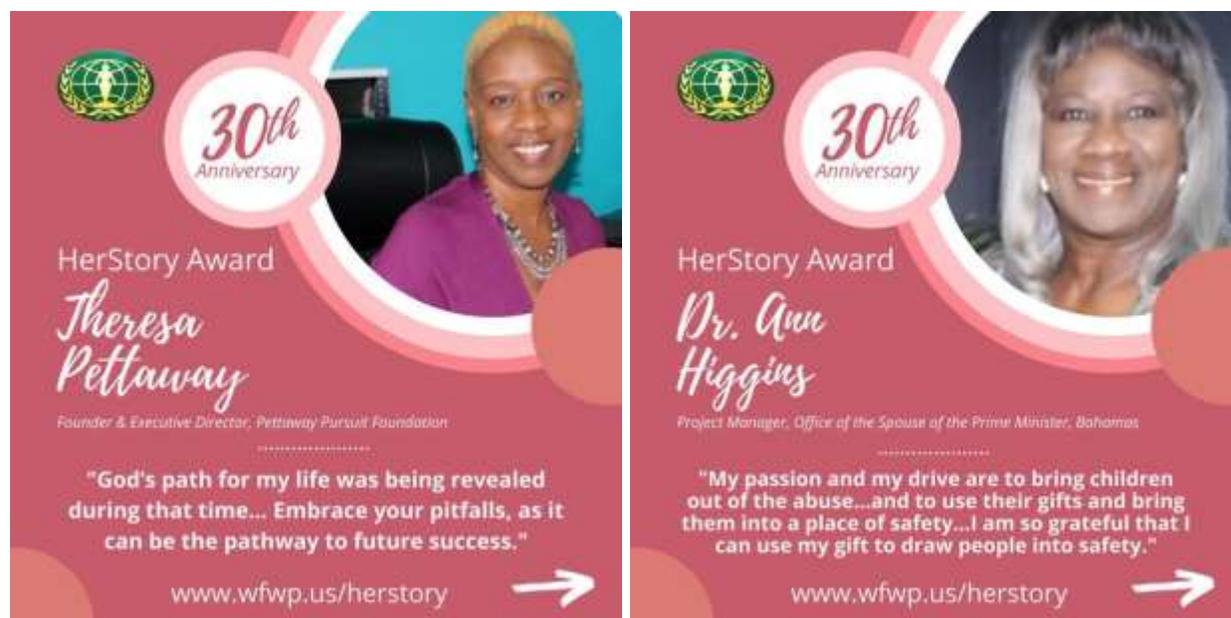
WFWP is on a mission to uplift women and inspire women to let their divine light shine forth. Therefore, on March 26, 2022 the HerStory Awardees share about their traumatic experiences and how, through their inner belief in God and their divine strength, they could overcome and grow through their pain to become a beacon of hope to others in their community.

This was the [2nd virtual national HerStory award session](#). The 50 participants and five awardees were welcomed by WFWP Vice President, Katarina Connery, the emcee for the event via the Zoom platform. Katarina welcomed WFWP President Angelika Selle.

Angelika first congratulated all on Women's History Month as the women presenting are representing all women. She went on to explain that the HerStory award started with the Inauguration of the [Global Women's Peace Network](#) (GWPN) ten years ago. HerStory awards not only honor the awardee's many accomplishments but also highlights the story behind the story. "It is this substance of these stories that will bring about peace," Angelika stated.

Next each awardee was introduced and had about ten minutes to talk about their trails and successes.

Please enjoy some excerpts of each of these women's stories below. Each of their full story can be viewed at www.wfwp.us/herstory



Theresa Pettaway is the Founder and Executive Director of Pettaway Pursuit Foundation.

Every pitfall and every hard circumstance that you conquer in your life is a piece of the puzzle towards the path of your success. It is what you learn and how you choose to see it that will help you along the way.

At the age of 15, I gave birth to a micro preemie at 1 pound 9 oz. She was in the NICU for four months. After she came home I had to care for myself while also having to revive my baby. The stress of being a new mother and having my daughter's life at risk was too much for me that I attempted suicide.

Years later, I had two more high risk pregnancies, and the stress from these experiences have a life-long effect.

Having faith in God and support is key during these sensitive periods. This support, I never received. These dramatic experiences demonstrate a clear lack of support for women, especially women of color, during their pregnancy and throughout their maternal health experience. The system in the U.S. fails us at times. God's path for my life was being revealed at that time. Through those experiences in the pitfall, I was able to birth [Pettaway Pursuit Foundation](#). Where we promote community awareness, education, information to for families with high risk pregnancies, and proper care for premature infants. We serve the community with food insecurities. We do all kinds of things to make sure the families thrive in our communities.

Again, I want to emphasize "embrace your pitfalls, as it can be the pathway to future success."

To learn more and to donate to help mothers to be in need of support visit:
pettawaypursuitfoundation.org/donate

Dr. Ann Higgins is a [Co- Pastor of Creative Christian Arts Ministries International](#), and President of the World Dance Council UNESCO-Nassau Bahamas Section. She is a dancer, choreographer, author and producer. She has been working in the area of the performing arts for over 50 years.

Thirty six years ago I began using my gifts for the Lord. Before the day I gave my life to Christ I was a topless dancer at the Casino. I drank, did drugs: that was part of my life, part of my past. At 13 my parents separated. My father was abusive. At 16, I began dating older men longing for the daddy that was never there.

The day I received the Lord into my heart, my eyes were opened and I could not go back to the life I had lived. I began to use music and dance to worship God.

I wanted to teach children to worship the Lord. My passion and my drive is to bring children out of abuse and drugs. I can now use my gifts to draw people to safety.



Jennifer Gammons-Mujica is a natural born teacher, certified Agriscaping Educator helping homeowners plant elegant and edible landscapes, and Founder of [Living Well Organic](#).

Six months into my first year of college I became majorly depressed. I realized that health is on many levels. Spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional. I began to learn about self-love and self-worth. Sometimes we see success as having a lucrative career. Although money is important it should not be the basis of self-worth. I define success as a wonderful evening with my family or cooking an enjoyable meal.

At the age of 40, I suddenly began to have bizarre health challenges. I got lost at the grocery store and felt very tired. It began to affect my family and career. After a year I was diagnosed with a large brain aneurysm that luckily was not ruptured.

After the successful brain surgery, the doctor said, God must have kept me alive for a reason. I became passionate about health and eliminated most chemicals from my food and self-care routine. I also ate fresh food from my garden and I felt the improvements in my health. I wanted to share natural living and home grown food with my community. I taught my neighbors and before I knew it I was doing classes for my community and at local schools.

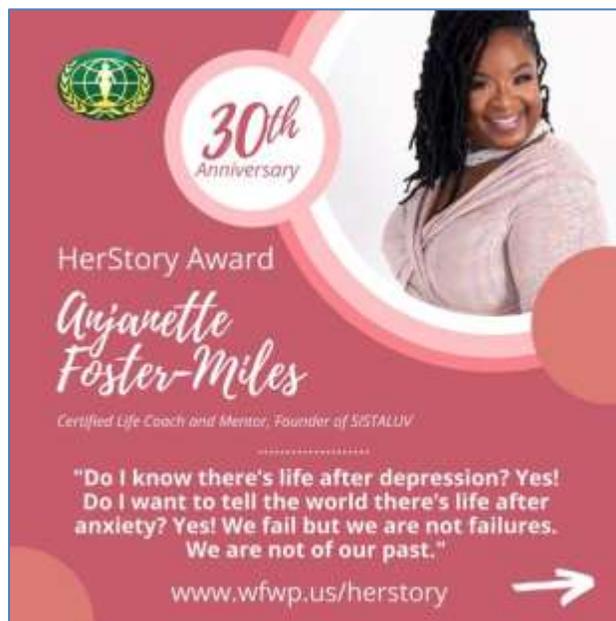
Gardening is a stewardship of the Earth. We can reverse the harm done to our environment through regenerative farming.

Resilience is finding the strength within to stay focused on positive outcomes when life can so easily spiral into negativity. I have found that resilience. I continuously stay focused on the life I want to lead.

Julia Mueller is a 20-year Clinical Hypnotherapist, Master Trainer of Hypnotherapy and owner of [A Mind and Body Connection](#) since 2003.

I was a general manager of a five star resort. I lived the life of a successful business woman until a traumatic event in 1989. I was beaten, by someone I thought I trusted, within an inch of my life. It took months to physically recover. The emotional toll took much longer. "I learned that trauma can affect you on so many deep levels - in everything that you do, in the way you behave, and the way you think. It's imperative that we learn we need that healing and search for it."

Hypnotherapy helped me. The more I healed the stronger I became and I had a strong desire to help others in the way I was helped. Helping people fed my soul. The subconscious mind can be your greatest ally or your greatest foe.



Anjanette Foster-Miles is a certified Life Coach and Mentor, and Founder of SITALUV. She launched a movement called "SITALUV" in 2013 which focuses on breaking the stigma to Mental Health, designed to be a help to the disadvantaged.

This mask I wear represents trauma, depression, suicide, anxieties, trials and tribulations, rejections, and just low self esteem. I myself wore this mask. Depression took over my life for 20 years. I was unhappy and bitter on the inside. I became confused to my own person.

After having children I wanted to change generational cycles of poverty and depression. I believed God told me I am perfectly and wonderfully made. It wasn't easy coming out of my depression. I now have a voice and can be a beacon of hope. We fail but we are not failures.



I started loving me, I learned life skills, I learned I do not have to answer to negativity. I want to let you know this is not easy. It is easy to go into darkness but it is hard coming out. I have no more doubt. There is no more fear. We are not what we went through. We are powerful, we are courageous, Through me others can heal. I am Sitaluv.

Women go through many hardships in life. These stories are examples of finding courage and hope in the un navigated terrain of personal trauma and becoming stronger through the pitfalls. Learning that trauma affects us on many levels and that we need to search for healing. That a hard path can be an opportunity to give to others the help we wish we had. That inner strength and self-love are the beginning, and that we can define what success

looks like for us. We all have gifts to use to help others. These lessons can apply to all women. Thank you to the women who shared HerStory and for being a beacon of hope for us all.