

MAY 2022

HerStory

"A person's love for God must show itself in the love for people."

VANESSA DOWDY

Executive Officer & Co-founder, It's a Girls' Thang

www.wfwp.us/herstory



[Vanessa Dowdy](#): Chief Executive Officer, Amour Finer Touch; Executive Officer and Co-founder, It's a Girls' Thang

Today I chose Luke 10:27, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" A person's love for God must show itself in the love for people. I consider myself a servant of God and I love people.

In 2000, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I remember thinking, "God, I have done what you asked me to do. I feel like I lived the life You wanted me to live." I asked, "Why me?" But God told me, "Why not you? I've chosen you as this vessel to go through this experience so that you can help others who have come behind you." I have been able to encourage other women who have

contracted breast cancer, even my younger sister. God has allowed me to encourage, push, and prod all girls and women I come in contact with to seek to be better individuals.

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HerStory

"I personally have always believed that when women collaborate and work together, magic happens."

CATHLEEN TRIGG-JONES

CEO & Founder, iWoman TV

www.wfwp.us/herstory



[Cathleen Trigg-Jones](#): CEO and Founder, Trigg Global Media; CEO and Founder, iWoman TV

I personally have always believed that when women collaborate and work together, magic happens. It's my life's work to be a storyteller as a journalist and a producer.

Life wasn't always easy for me. I didn't always have the confidence that you see standing before you today. In my early years, I started out in foster care, I was left at an orphanage. And then after high school, I decided that I wanted to go to college. I attended Delaware State University, a historically Black university; that opened my eyes to the possibilities and made me believe that I could do anything.

However, it wasn't until I got out of college and I realized I really wanted to tell the news. I wanted to tell people stories. I walked up to a television station and I offered to take the trash out... That turned into my very first television job. Shortly after that, I was tapped by our President of the United States. At the time he was the US Senator from Delaware and he asked me to come on board as his Assistant Press Secretary... I can't say enough about the courage, determination, and the confidence that I gained.

[Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke](#): U.S. Representative for New York's Ninth District

MAY 2022

HerStory

"Women are being called to heal and lead the world to a peaceful existence and it is time for us to be heard."

REP. YVETTE D. CLARKE

U.S. Congresswoman for New York's 9th District

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Women are saving the world. Make no mistake, it is because we play such a pivotal role in God's providence... Women are steadily building new blueprints to carry us into a bright future, not only as wives, mothers, aunts, and sisters - which is fine because we multitask and we are many things to many people - but as leaders in all fields of human endeavor.

I was blessed to be born into a family determined and committed to changing, impacting, and uplifting the most vulnerable in the world around us. My trailblazing mother, Dr. Una Clarke, was the first foreign-born woman to be elected to New York City's legislature, known as the New York City Council. I have been blessed to have my life

shaped by her teaching and guidance. So, my upbringing has always been a steady diet of civic engagement, public service, and community building. Women are being called to heal and lead the world to a peaceful existence and it is time for us to be heard.



Sharon Lund

May 24, 2022 · Katarina Connery



[Watch Full HerStory Program from May 21, 2022](#)

Sharon Lund was awarded the HerStory Award at the National HerStory Award Ceremony of the Global Women's Peace Network on May 21, 2022, for her exemplary work to dispel the stigmas surrounding challenges of HIV/AIDS, and support, heal, and uplift others, based on her journey of overcoming unimaginable challenges. We applaud her service to women, children, families, and the community filled with love and compassion.

Sharon Lund has danced with life and death throughout her life. She is a fearless pioneer, worldwide educator and advocate, a spiritual counselor, and a Metaphysical minister. She has worked and volunteered for decades around HIV/AIDS and end-of-life issues. She is an author and loving and devoted single mother. She is a woman of faith who lives her life with passion and purpose.

Sharon has been faced with challenges throughout her life. However, she has embraced them and found the blessing in each one which has empowered her.

From the age of three to twelve, Sharon was sexually abused by her grandfather. He told her, "If you tell anyone, I'll kill your Mommy."

As she was being sexually abused her spirit lifted out of her body, and an spirit guide/angel took her to special places – the park, her playroom to play with her dolls, to swing high on the swing set and look up to the heavens. From this experience, Sharon found the blessing of a deep spiritual connection to God/Infinite Spirit and her

spirit guide/angel.

In 1984, Sharon was diagnosed with anorexia and severe depression. She attempted suicide, caused from unexpressed emotions, mental and physical abuse from a previous boyfriend, her second husband, and her grandfather's sexual abuse. She had low self-esteem and believed the only way to end her suffering was to kill herself. As she placed a razor on her wrist Sharon said her final prayer. "God, please forgive me for what I'm about to do. If there's anything I need to know before I kill myself, let me know now."

The Light of God surrounded her, and she felt an immense love and peace. She heard, *"My Child, it's not your time to die. Get yourself into the hospital, and when you get out, you'll become a healer, teach around the world and write books."*

This was Sharon's first near-death experience.

Sharon was hospitalized for anorexia and depression for three months. The blessing of this experience is she learned to love herself, her inner child, gained self-esteem and learned to forgive the unforgivable, through techniques to heal her body-mind-spirit. What she learned allowed her to assist other people worldwide in their healing process.

Sharon's life is about service. In early 1986, she began volunteering in the Los Angeles AIDS community, teaching mind-body-spirit modalities. In 1986, her life changed forever when she saw her ex-husband, Bill, on a Dan Rather's AIDS Special titled *AIDS Hit Home*. He announced to the world that he was infected with AIDS and had led a secret-bisexual lifestyle. He also infected his previous wife.

Sharon tested for HIV, and it came back positive. Bill admitted right before he died that he was infected when he married her in 1983. The blessing was, instead of becoming a victim, Sharon allowed the virus to empower her and lead her on a journey to teach worldwide and volunteer in numerous AIDS communities.

Sharon was the first heterosexual woman in Southern California to go public with being HIV positive. She started the first women's HIV/AIDS support group, and also helped to create, interview staff members, and set up the first women and children's HIV/AIDS clinic in Los Angeles. She became an advocate for women and children who were infected, as she was on the Board of Directors for various organizations, and community programs. She helped break the stigma around HIV/AIDS globally. People, especially the media, wanted to treat her differently because of how she became infected. However, Sharon's motto is, "It doesn't matter how any man, woman, or a child becomes infected; we all deserve the same compassion, love, and understanding. Equality for all."

In 1992 Sharon was one of four women to testify at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) AIDS Surveillance Hearing Conference to expand the definition of HIV/AIDS to include women's symptoms. Also in 1992, she was one of fifty-three women infected throughout the world to start a women's organization, (ICW) International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS. Today ICW members live in one-hundred-twenty countries on five continents. In 1995, she accepted an invitation from President Bill Clinton to speak at the White House.

As an author, keynote speaker, and workshop leader, Sharon has presented

throughout the United States and internationally in Canada, Russia, Great Britain, Europe, and Japan. She was instrumental in promoting global changes for women and children living with HIV/AIDS. She has been interviewed on such shows as Eye on America, CNN, 48 Hours, and The Oprah Winfrey Show. She has been featured in countless magazines, including The Oprah "O" Magazine, Shape, and Women's Own.

In 1996 Sharon was hospitalized for nearly two years, due to AIDS complications. She was down to eighty-six pounds and dying. This is where Sharon experienced her second near-death experience. Her spirit lifted out of her body, she immediately felt healed and at peace. Two Spirit Guides show her a review of her life, and in each scene, she heard, *"Look at the difference you made in their life."* Then she went through the Tunnel of Light. The Light of God telepathically spoke to her. She heard, *"My Child, unlike the time before this time you can stay, or you can return. Before you make your decision, I want to show you one more thing."*

Immediately Sharon relived being pregnant with her daughter. Feeling her first kick, giving birth to her daughter, Jeaneen, and hearing her coos. She then relived various things they did together including educating women and children about AIDS.

Then a spark of Light hit Sharon, and she found herself back in the presence of the love and Light of God. She heard, "My Child, what is your decision?"

Even though Sharon was one with absolute peace, love, joy, and serenity, with God, she said, "I need to return to my daughter."

Instantly she was back in the hospital bed. For the next hour to hour and half Sharon could see every cell in her body vibrating with light. She knew her life was being healed and restored, cell by cell.

Sharon heard her life purpose would expand to write books, and to start a book publishing company, Sacred Life Publishers. She was also to bring back the sacredness of life and death and was guided to start a non-profit organization, Sacred Living Sacred Dying, Inc.

Sharon is the author of *Sacred Living Sacred Dying: A Guide to Embracing Life and Death*; *The Integrated Being: Techniques to Heal Your Mind-Body-Spirit*; and *There Is More: 18 Near-Death Experiences*. She has been Divinely Guided to publish nearly fifty books by other authors. She is the co-producer of the Award-Winning Documentary *Dying to LIVE: NDE*.

Sharon knows within her heart and mind that her life has been Divinely Guided throughout all of her endeavors. She finds support and strength through Infinite Spirit/God, being out in nature, volunteering, being of service, and through her beautiful, loving daughter Jeaneen, who she has a deep connection with.

Sharon Lund lives in Hawaii, on the Island of Maui. She truly is living her life with purpose and passion.

Website: SacredLife.com – Sacred Life Publishers

Website: SacredLivingSacredDying.org – Non-Profit Organization





PREVIOUS

Vanessa Dowdy

NEXT

Jennifer Gammons-Mujica



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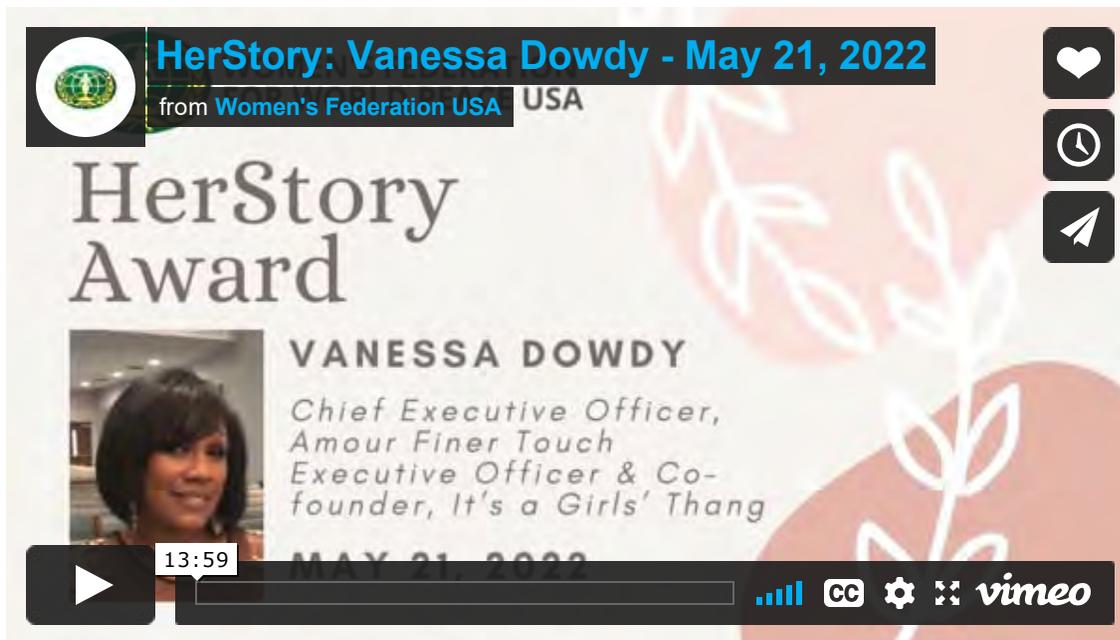
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Vanessa Dowdy

May 24, 2022 · Katarina Connery



[Watch Full HerStory Program from May 21, 2022](#)

Vanessa Dowdy was awarded the HerStory Award at the National HerStory Award Ceremony of the Global Women's Peace Network on May 21, 2022, for her exemplary work of serving and uplifting others, including young girls, mothers and daughters, those facing the emotional and physical toll of cancer, and many others, based on her journey of overcoming unimaginable challenges. We applaud her service to the community filled with love and compassion.

Mrs. Vanessa R. Dowdy is the Chief Executive Officer of *Amour Finer Touch*, where she plans and creates conferences, seminars, weddings and other events. She is also the Executive Officer and co-founder of *It's A Girls' Thang* (an entity of Greater Hope Baptist Church), where she has organized and hosted events for women and girls for over two decades. In April of 2017, she launched PEARLS which is a program designed to empower girls aged 3-18 while teaching them basic life skills.

Before starting her own business, Vanessa worked nearly twenty-four years for the Tennessee Board of Regents as an administrator. She served as the Director of Admissions and Recruitment in the Division of Enrollment Services at Southwest Tennessee Community College. She collaborated with all entities of the college in developing the Strategic Plan for Enrollment, and under her leadership the college experienced a 16% growth in new enrollees. She served as the Principal Designated School Official for International Students. In this position she advised, orientated and issued the necessary documents to admit students traveling from abroad. Vanessa also

served as the grant coordinator for the National GEAR-Up (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) Program where she created initiatives to help failing high school students realize college as an option.

During her tenure she served as President and Vice-President of the Tennessee Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, Director of Testing and Chair of the Process Activated Training Systems (PATs) Initiative. She received the *Jim Willis Spirit Award* for enthusiasm, dedication and meritorious service to the college from the President. Vanessa has been a long time leader setting standards for high quality education and has encouraged both young and seasoned individuals to develop a plan for life and make it happen. Her favorite saying is to BE GREAT!

Believing strongly in the family unit, education, human potential, transforming lives and creating new visions for others is what drives Vanessa. She believes we should live for the sake of others and not concentrate on self wants and needs. She has served as Youth Director, Sunday School Teacher, Choir Director, Director of Family Life and the Leader of Women's Fellowship in her church. She has co-sponsored a mother and daughter retreat for the past twenty years and loves the opportunity to introduce a better way of life to those who need direction.

Vanessa feels that God has given her another opportunity to help those who struggle with life, in that he cured her of breast cancer over twenty years ago. She is always willing to assist those who are traveling the same road she has traveled. She shares her experience, scriptures and prayers with those going through chemo therapy and radiation. She reassures them that they were chosen by God for this particular battle, because he made them and knew they could help the next vessel who would face the war between life and death. Vanessa will tell every believer as well as non-believer that God is good, and all the time he is good. God wants us to obey his greatest commandment and that is to love ye one another.





PREVIOUS

Cathleen Trigg-Jones

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Sharon Lund



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Cathleen Trigg-Jones

May 24, 2022 · Katarina Connery



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Cathleen Trigg-Jones was awarded the HerStory Award at the National HerStory Award Ceremony of the Global Women's Peace Network on May 21, 2022, for her commitment to uplifting and motivating thousands of women and bringing a heart of compassion into the media. We applaud her service to provide care and support for girls in the foster care system and young women in disadvantaged situations, based on her journey of overcoming unimaginable challenges.

Cathleen Trigg-Jones is a social entrepreneur and executive with a background in journalism, media production, public relations and marketing. She has created and leads three independent media companies: [iWomanTV](#), the first mass-market over-the-top streaming news and entertainment network created by women and about women; [Catscape Productions](#), an award-winning multimedia production company; and Trigg Global Media, a strategic marketing, crisis communications, and business consulting practice for global CEOs and Fortune 500 companies.

Cathleen began her career working as a news reporter for WBOC-TV before being tapped by then United States Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr. to be the Press Assistant in his Delaware Senate Office. After returning to television, she worked her way up through the ranks of several news markets, eventually landing her dream job in New York City where she was quickly recognized for her quality journalism, winning an Emmy Award while reporting and anchoring the WWOR and WNYW news broadcasts. Since that time, Cathleen has produced hundreds of projects and co-starred in more

than two dozen TV shows and films, including Power, Madam Secretary, House of Cards, Homeland, and the Tupac Shakur biopic, All Eyes On Me. She is the Executive Producer and Host of the iWoman Report on iWoman TV, and the talk show Chic Chat on iOne Digital. She is also the creator and co-star of the hit docu-series We Are The Joneses, which aired on Discovery Life and BET Centric.

From the start, Cathleen has been grounded by her core values of integrity, clarity, compassion, and drive. In addition to her Emmy Award, she has been honored with the Black Women In Media Award, A Child's Hero Award by CASA of Essex, NJ, and the BMW Women of Excellence Award and has been nominated for the Women's Image Network Award.

In 2006, Cathleen created [Trigg House](#), a nonprofit, direct-service organization to offer foster children who are about to become emancipated from the state foster care system the resources needed to help them make a smooth transition into the real world and independent living. Trigg-Jones experienced the foster care system as a child and saw a deep and growing need for energetic, nonprofit work in this area that provides sensible solutions. She is a NY State Court Appointed Special Advocate for Foster Children and serves on the Boards of Operation Keloid, the Columbia University Double Discovery Center, and the Black Entrepreneur Initiative.

Cathleen is a dynamic executive with demonstrated success building and leading complex projects and organizations. Her businesses are certified by the NY/NJ Minority Supplier Development Council and operate as Minority Women Business Enterprises. She received her BA in Journalism from Delaware State University.



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Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke

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Vanessa Dowdy



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Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke was awarded the HerStory Award at the National HerStory Award Ceremony of the Global Women's Peace Network on May 21, 2022, for her exemplary work to represent the men and women of New York's 9th District and your commitment to being a role model to young woman and girls who aspire to greatness. We applaud her and her work filled with compassion, service, and dedication.

Hailing from central Brooklyn, Congresswoman Yvette Diane Clarke feels honored to represent the community that raised her. She is the proud daughter of Jamaican immigrants and takes her passion for her Caribbean heritage to Congress, where she co-chairs the Congressional Caribbean Caucus and works to foster relationships between the United States and the Caribbean Community. Clarke is a Senior Member of both the House Energy and Commerce Committee and House Committee on Homeland Security, where she serves as Chair of the Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Innovation Subcommittee. Clarke has been a member of the Congressional Black Caucus since coming to Congress in 2007 and today chairs its Immigration Task Force.

As the Representative of the Ninth Congressional District of New York, Congresswoman Clarke has dedicated herself to continuing the legacy of excellence established by the late Honorable Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman and Caribbean American elected to Congress. In the 117th Congress, Congresswoman

Clarke introduced landmark legislation, which passed in the House, the Dream and Promise Act (H.R. 6). This legislation would give 2.5 million DREAMers, temporary protected status, and deferred enforcement departure recipients a clear citizenship pathway.

Clarke is a leader in the tech and media policy space as co-chair of the Smart Cities Caucus and co-chair of the Multicultural Media Caucus. Congresswoman Clarke believes smart technology will make communities more sustainable, resilient, and livable and works hard to ensure communities of color are not left behind while these technological advancements are made. Clarke formed the Multicultural Media Caucus to address diversity and inclusion issues in the media, telecom, and tech industries. Clarke is one of the Co-Chairs of the Congressional Caucus on Black Women and Girls, which develops programs to support the aspirations of Black women of all ages. Congresswoman Clarke is also the co-chair of the Medicare for All Caucus, where she is fighting for the right to universal health care.

Prior to being elected to the United States House of Representatives, Congresswoman Clarke served on New York's City Council, representing the 40th District. She succeeded her pioneering mother, former City Council Member Dr. Una S. T. Clarke, making them the first mother-daughter succession in the City Council's history. She cosponsored City Council resolutions that opposed the war in Iraq, criticized the federal USA PATRIOT Act, and called for a national moratorium on the death penalty.

Congresswoman Clarke is a graduate of Oberlin College and was a recipient of the prestigious APPAM/Sloan Fellowship in Public Policy and Policy Analysis. She received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws Honoris Causa from the University of Technology, Jamaica, and the Honorary Doctorate of Public Policy from the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean. Congresswoman Clarke currently resides in the Flatbush neighborhood of Brooklyn, where she grew up.





NEXT

Cathleen Trigg-Jones



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