

WFWP USA HerStory Award: Inspiring Messages from Women Peace Leaders

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In the radiant glow of December 2, 2023, WFWP USA drew the virtual curtains for a grand finale - the culminating spectacle of the National HerStory Award. Ms. Grace Kisile, WFWP Global Women's Peace Network (GWPN) National Coordinator, stood at the helm as the master of ceremonies, welcoming a diverse array of attendees to a celebration of extraordinary women. The stage was set, not for mere accolades, but for an exploration of the profound stories etched into the lives of three remarkable awardees.

WFWP USA President, Mrs. Kaeleigh Moffitt, stated, "Celebrating these women is an important part of our mission as WFWP." She shared a quote from Mother Moon's memoir:

"Women have the magical power to create harmony and to soften hearts; the world of the future can be a world of reconciliation and peace but only if it is based on the maternal love and affection of women. This is the true power of womanhood. The time has come for the power of true womanhood to save the world."

Each of the awardees were introduced with her bio as well as a personal sharing from the WFWP member who recommended her. President Moffitt virtually presented the award and each awardee was able to

share her story with the participants.

The first awardee, Jacque Zoccoli, Global Strategist and Coach, Network Builders Arizona credited her mother for encouraging her participation in various groups, fostering her social skills. The pivotal moment occurred in college through her sorority, where she met her husband. Later, she joined the Peace Corps in Liberia, West Africa. The branches of her life extended into intentional business coaching, guiding others to align with partners through LinkedIn. A significant encounter with a woman who foresaw her potential to change the world became another influential aspect of her journey. She shared her mantra, "My age justifies my wisdom, my developed clarity teaches the excitement of awareness, and ignites the spark of action and change." She wrapped up her remarks by imparting three valuable lessons. Firstly, she advised tackling problems by swiftly moving towards solutions. Secondly, when faced with a challenge, she encouraged asking whether it can be changed and if one is responsible for the change. If not, she suggested considering what God can do with the situation. Lastly, she emphasized engaging in conversations with empathy, free from judgment, staying curious, open-minded, and actively listening. Concluding with a quote from Gerry Spence, "Be open to wonder rather than being closed by belief."

The second awardee, Rohida Khan, Victim Assistance Specialist, Department of Homeland Security, explained about a pivotal event in her early career, where she was trying to help a young woman who was then killed by her cousins in an "honor killing" in the countryside of Pakistan. This event inspired her to embark on her path as a Victim Assistance specialist. Reflecting on her professional career, she highlighted both highs and lows, expressing fondness for her experiences by working with victims and sending the perpetrators to jail. Addressing challenges, she articulated, "Is this a 9-5 job? No, it's 24/7, 365 because traffickers don't adhere to a schedule. For me, it's a passion. Is it exhausting? Yes. Do you experience burnout? Yes...not once have I thought of doing anything else. If given another life, I'd still be on the same path. She concluded by sharing, "When it's a calling from the heart, you can achieve wonders. Remember, 'Impossible' says 'I'm Possible.'"

The third awardee, Dr. Veronica Ufoegbune, Adjunct professor Chabot College, early learning and care advocate, San Francisco Area, shared that her motivation comes from a place of joy. "I love people, and I believe that everyone deserves peace in their life, no matter what peace means to that person." She credits her parents - her mother, a midwife, and her father, a physical therapist in orthopedics - for instilling a sense of generosity. Despite not seeming well-off compared to others in their professions, their home was always open to people. Her mother consistently shared what they had with visitors. This upbringing forms the foundation for her view that there is no clear line between her personal life and giving back to the community. She recounted her experiences of collaborating with widows and women in dire situations in Nigeria to find meaningful employment. She also worked with local authorities and the national government in Nigeria to develop a law that addressed adultery cases fairly. She expressed her aspirations, stating, "What I want is emancipation, freedom, equality, equity, education for all young men and women, and youth."

We extend heartfelt congratulations to all the HerStory Awardees this year and invite our readers to nominate a Woman Peace Leader in their communities who is living by the logic of love. Happy Holidays!