

**Panel #3: Gangs and Sex Trafficking in
Urban and Rural Indian Communities – 04/16/14**

Joanne Shenandoah: So Panel #3 will provide an overview of travel gang issues in urban and rural communities; provide a description of sex trafficking and gangs in rural tribal community and the impact on tribal youth; discuss sex trafficking in urban communities and the impact on travel youth and provide recommendations on what can be done to improve the present situation. Each panelist will provide a 10 minute presentation, a total of 30 minutes, followed by 30 minutes of questioning by the advisory committee. The panelists consist of Chris Cuestas, Consultant, the National Violence Prevention Resource Center. Then we have Sadie Young Bird (*Arikara and Hidatsa*), Director of Forth Berthold Coalition Against Violence, and then thirdly we have Jeri Williams (*Klamath*), Diversity and Civil Leadership Program Coordinator, Office of Neighborhood Involvement from Portland, Oregon. So Mr. Cuestas, kindly proceed with your testimony.

Chris Cuestas: Good afternoon everyone, my name is Christopher Cuestas, I'm from Tucson, Arizona. The only difference between Florida and Arizona is we have mountains. This is my 34th year of working gang activity across the country, I'm retired from Tucson Police Department, where I was the lead detective for the criminal street gang unit. My main responsibility at the time was criminal syndicates, conspiracies and gang murder investigations. I started off as a young unknown office that was just interested in working with young people and some people would call it fate, other people would call it the Creator's plan, but I volunteered for a call at the University of Arizona, after one of our basketball games, and was run over by a drunk driver. As a result of that accident, I was admitted to University Medical Center with a very set of significant injuries, my head went through the windshield, and I was pronounced dead three times, and subsequently had some brain injury and was able to rehabilitate and make it all the way back to be a full-time and active member of our police department, and that was my indoctrination into the Tucson Police Department's gang unit, in 1979.

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Because of my recovery and my rehabilitation, there was no place to put me, so I was assigned to the gang unit as intelligence officer. I learned and cut my teeth from the very beginning, learning how we identify gang activity, how we work with it and what was happening to our community and what we were up against with the influx of California-based gang members that were coming into southern Arizona.

I subsequently, during my recovery, was able to travel across the country on my department's dime, and learn about the gang problem throughout the United States. I went through various different academies, I was able to work with almost every metropolitan department's gang unit because in our agency, the problem was in its infancy and we were trying to come up with alternatives as to how we could deal with this issue.

My first introduction into tribal community was I was assigned a double murder case and the shooters were from the *Tohono O'odham Nation* and we went to that jurisdiction and tried to affect the arrest for the shooters of that particular murder case and found out that our credentials didn't matter in that community, we were asked to leave. Subsequently I learned that what had happened in our community was we had put the suppression pressure on our community's gang problem and it resurfaced in a tribal region. It was the same replication of our gang problem, but was now surfacing in tribal communities. Our missteps and the things that we did wrong and right were the reasons that the surrounding tribal communities were having the problem birthed in their community.

It was at that time that I began to realize, as a young investigator, that we really weren't making a difference by building prisons and that all we were doing was we were creating a revolving door. So I focused my energy and my education and my background and tried to come and develop alternatives to deal with developing gang problem, not only in our community, but throughout the region, and subsequently came up with—out of my own pocket, of

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course—came up with some programs and strategies that would make a difference. I was one of the original authors of the GREAT Program, some of you may have heard of it, it's Gang Resistance Through Education, Awareness and Training. We put that together with some Phoenix PD investigators and subsequently that was made available to the Department of Justice and is now being taught in the majority of the schools in our country.

I also had the opportunity to learn about gang crime and violent crime through...crime prevention through environmental design and looked to see why our risk factors were prevalent in our community, what we could and couldn't do to make a difference.

Subsequently, I put together a national strategy called GRIPS and GRIPS is Gang Reduction Through Intervention, Prevention and Suppression and to date GRIPS is the only identified best practice for gang reduction in tribal lands. We were given a best practice award in 2010 and have subsequently been able to implement that strategy in 17 tribes across the country. What we're looking to do and what we do is we basically develop a multifaceted collaborative to address the risk factors that are prevalent within the community, to address those issues and deal with the problems at their infancy, to ensure that it does not become an issue within the community as the young people mature and the problem is more in their face and available to them.

There's no question that one of the sleeping giants that exist currently in the United States in tribal communities is that gang problem. Our gang problem in our country is no longer a group of thugs that are just taking over and controlling street corners, I look at our gang problem in our country as domestic terrorism. We have cells of individuals that are very criminally knowledgeable, that have developed diverse criminal enterprises and those enterprises are able and have influence throughout the United States. They make their agreements and their bonds within the correctional settings

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in our country and subsequently that problem is leapfrogged into tribal communities.

I've seen every opportunity in different type and style of gangs in tribal communities that I've worked with. These gangs have the influence and are looking to mentor tribal individuals that are interested in that criminal flexibility and diversity, and one of the prevalent opportunities for them to make the financial inroad into that community is human trafficking and sex trafficking. I had some personal experience in the Dakotas with a young lady that was sold by the family to a Hispanic gang and transported from that tribal community into Nuevo Laredo, Mexico and sold into a sex trafficking cartel in Mexico City.

I noticed on the handout that one of the program people that I said was anonymous is here so I want to personally thank the Casey Family Program because if it was not for the Casey Family Program that paid our dime to go into Mexico and recover that young lady, we would have never found her, or never had the opportunity to bring her back. They didn't ask any questions, they basically said whatever it takes for you to bring this young girl back to the Dakotas, do it. We were very successful, it was a jurisdictional nightmare, no one wanted to get involved, no one wanted to put their resources out and it became quite a problem in us trying to figure out how to get this young girl that was being housed in the Catholic Church in Mexico and being programmed to be a prostitute in Mexico City back to her tribal community. Subsequently we did what we had to do to get her back, I worked with some federal law enforcement officers in Mexico to get her back, and we paid what they call in Mexico the *mordida* or the bribe to purchase this girl and whisk her back to the American Embassy and back to the United States. It was a real criminal enterprise, there was no question, that was operating in this tribal community, that they were not aware of.

I'm currently under contract with the *Lac Du Flambeau* Tribal Community and within the two minutes I'm going to try to

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give you an overview. We've implemented the GRIPS strategy and we've subsequently went from six identified criminal street gangs to one because of the strategy. We've basically addressed and attacked their drug and gang problem. Currently the tribe has banished 80 identified gang members that were selling drugs in the tribal community and has subsequently rearrested less than five percent of those.

There's no question that the gang problem is rooted in delinquency, that's the stepping stone to the gang problem. If you're going to address your gang problem, you're going to have to address bullying, a comprehensive bullying program and protocol; truancy, and improve the efficiency of the juvenile justice delivery system. That's one of the greatest challenges that I found in working and contracting with tribal communities, is the efficient operation of their juvenile justice system, and how they can develop alternatives to consequences within that tribal setting and making those consequences culturally sensitive and reattach them to their community and to their family and to their tribe.

DOJ, thank you for CTAS, God bless you but it's only a drop in the bucket. We need a lot more resources and we cannot compete with metropolitan gang units for gang prevention funds like we have to as tribal communities. We have to have specific funding that's set aside for tribal communities that is for tribal gang reduction, whether it's mentoring, counseling, traditional therapy or reentry or horse therapy. We need to be able to have the flexibility to give us our own bit of the apple, to address our developing and evolving problems of gang activity in tribal lands. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Joanne Shenandoah: Thank you Mr. Cuestes, thank you for your testimony. Next, Miss Young Bird, please proceed.

Sadie Young Bird: My name is Sadie Young Bird and I'm the Executive Director of the Fort Berthold Coalition Against Violence, which is a victim service program that serves domestic violence, sexual violence, child sexual violence, human trafficking, and elder

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abuse.

When I first started on our program approximately three-and-a-half years ago, there was only myself and one other advocated. And then—as everyone knows, turnover rate is high—I was all by myself. I was completely overwhelmed and we've had to work through these pains.

Now I can proudly say I have a staff of 14 people. We recently opened our domestic violence and sexual violence shelter on our reservation. Our caseload has quadrupled within the last three years due to... I feel it's due to the Bakken oil boom, which our reservation sits on.

I'm from the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation, which is the three affiliated tribes of North Dakota. I don't know how many of you have heard about the Bakken oil boom, but our reservation is in the heart of the oil boom. And we have tens of thousands of men and very few women in inundated into our communities.

We've had the first case in North Dakota prosecuted for human trafficking. Dustin Morsette, a 22-year-old individual, was sentenced to 45 years in prison. He was charged with multiple charges ranging from sex trafficking, aggravated sexual abuse of minors, drug trafficking, using children in drug trafficking.

There was five juvenile victims, but that court case was horrific. We had over 19 juvenile victims that we had to try to get to court and back home, and make sure everybody was accounted for through the whole process. It took over a year-and-a-half before it finally went to trial.

So to keep track of all these children, it was horrible. They were already exposed to human trafficking, and they were using drugs to cope. Our reservation is in a major drug crisis. We have heroin and methamphetamine everywhere within our reservation. So you could about imagine how hard it was to keep track of these children.

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We are very thankful for all the federal support and our own tribal support. Through our collaboration, we were able to make it successful.

Within the Bakken oil formation, organized crime is something new that we've never seen before or had to deal with. We have drug cartels, human trafficking. There's murders. On our reservation we've had very few murders, and within the last two years there's been multiple murders, people going missing. None of us have ever had to deal with this.

And when you look at a training calendar of trainings all over the country, it wasn't something we were looking for; that wasn't on our radar. And so we went in there blind, and we had to figure it out for ourselves. Most of the time we'd wing it and hope we did the right thing. Our main goal was to serve our victims. Now we're looking at big city crimes in our little area—what we're not used to. So now we're looking at big city trainings to train our workers.

Now we have reports that parents are selling their children to feed their addictions. And these teenage girls, they're learning, oh, if I just have sex for money, then I can buy all these nice things. I can had iPads, I can have jewelry, I can have all the makeup I want, anything. So we have a lack of training even for our kids to teach them, to show them the right way.

Codes are pretty much nonexistent within our tribal court to combat sex trafficking. The only one that's anywhere close is the prostitution, which has nothing to do with sex trafficking, and it's from like the 1800s. That doesn't even make sense. So we're way far behind the times in that as well.

My recommendation is we need increased Fed presence within our reservation. We need ATF there. We need Border Patrol there. There are so many illegal immigrants within our reservation. We need help like that. We need offices set up

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on our reservation. And if it's happening with us, it's happening all over the country as well. I don't think that people realize what happens behind the scenes.

Our court needs additional training as well. I waited recently for a protection order to be signed, or denied even, for a month-and-a-half. It was an *ex parte* order that we put in, and it took over a month-and-a-half to get an answer for. Our children in foster care have been returned to their families where there's drugs because court orders aren't signed on time. Foster parents are not getting paid because the court orders aren't getting done. So how are they supposed to care for these children? We have many, many problems within our reservation.

My recommendation would also be to have Native-specific training on human trafficking for all the domestic violence programs and victim service programs so they know exactly how to combat and deal with the victims because you don't deal with a human trafficking victim like you deal with a normal sexual assault victim.

We also need more funding for treatment. There needs to be some type of grant—something so you could build treatment facilities, or even we could send our members off-reservation for treatment. There's no funding for treatment that I'm aware of.

Again I would just like to stress training. It is hard. It is very hard to go and just try to figure things out for yourself. We've done an okay job I feel, but it's really been different. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Joanne Shenandoah: Thank you very much for your testimony. Now, Mrs. Williams, please proceed.

Jeri Williams: My name is Jeri Williams and I am a survivor of human trafficking. I am also a survivor of domestic violence and I'm

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wondering if you all had the opportunity to read my testimony before we started. It's incredibly graphic and so I'm not going to share all of that with you because you're all going to leave if I do that and then what's going to happen?

When I've heard folks speak today and I'm glad that you had a safety person here, ever once in awhile I would get that little oh my gosh trigger when folks use the word prostitution, and let me tell you why. When folks use the word prostitution, you're generally blaming the person who has been oppressed in the first place and forced into a situation and I don't mean just forced by another human being, I mean forced by financial status, forced by all sorts of oppression so that when we use the work prostitute, it's really a dirty word and it's victim blaming, for the most part.

When you grow up as someone like I did, who, I'm from Portland, Oregon, I grew up in Salem, my grandmother saw her first white man in the early 1900's, she thought he was a ghost and they took her into the mission and they burned their tongues on radiators so they wouldn't speak their language and she was an amazing person, she was a community leader. So what I've learned through all of this is there is a lot strength. My father was the first *Klamath* tribal member to be educated beyond sixth grade, and so he went on to college where he met my mother and it was because the tribal elders knew that termination was coming, they had to send somebody to get a larger education.

In 1954, our tribe was terminated; in 1951 my parents got married and on the books there are still miscegenation laws with the state that say Natives can't marry non-Natives, so they're criminals, and I tell them all the time. They had six kids, I have two brothers and three sisters. They all do well, but I have to tell you, when the tribes were terminated and there was an expectation by a government who knew nothing about us, that we would just go assimilate with the White race. Now if you can imagine, this wouldn't fly today where you're like hey, you're no longer Native, go be White, but that's essentially what they said.

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So let's talk about how much oppression and confusion that causes. My dad worked on this issue all through the '70's in his polyester suits, back and forth to Washington DC when Nixon was in office, to work to get our tribe reinstated, which it was reinstated in 1986. Out of the over 200 tribes that were terminated, 106 of them were in the state of Oregon. And someone just asked me over there why, why was your tribe terminated? Probably because we were the second wealthiest tribe at the time in the United States, we had a ton of acreage full of forest and timber and that's why. Many people think *Klamaths*—many other tribes think *Klamaths* are sellouts because the government gave them money and took their land, but the reality was whether or not they took the money, the land was gone, the idea, the identity was gone.

So my father and my mother both worked in the school system all their life, they're 80 years old, they've been married 60 years, very smart people, and yet when someone grows up, as many people state, with violence, no matter how good or wonderful they are, if they know violence, in times of stress, violence happens, they commit violence, and that was the situation I was raised in, where we were the Brady Bunch, we all got straight A's, we were all athletes, we all did these wonderful things, and yet we didn't talk about what happened in the house. We didn't talk about the childhood sexual abuse that happened when we moved down by our extended family, we didn't talk about the abuse that happened.

More than ever, when I'm hearing folks talk about the mothers and they're so bad, the mothers are a product of what they've been exposed to. My mentor passed away last year at the National Prayer Breakfast, and he left me with something I say wherever I go, we're all ethnocentric, narrow-minded, with limited vision, which is to say, we only know what we know out of when we were raised, how we were raised, what foods we ate, what clothes we wore, what generation we lived in. I graduated in 1979, [laughs] but

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because of that, we know what we know, and if we have closed mindsets, and we call things tradition that really aren't Native tradition because we didn't create blood quantum, we didn't create roles, somebody else created those, you know.

So know that a woman who's 36 years old and may have six kids is still not making it is because in her mind she's four years old when she got molested, because that's how the mind works, if you're living somewhere that's isolated, and you're not having much growth, you're not having education.

When the *Klamath* tribe was terminated, half of the folks stayed down there and the rest of the folks moved up in the mid-Willamette Valley where there were jobs. For the folks who stayed down there, before we got reinstated, they lived in about 40 years of destitute poverty because there were no jobs down there and they went through their alcohol and drug problems and they went through their childhood sexual abuse problems and none of it was ever okay, but childhood sexual abuse and human trafficking is a shameful thing we're not supposed to talk about, right? We all know someone, or we've all head of someone who's been out there.

There's between 100,000 and 300,000 kids from America that are trafficked every year in the United States. These are not the immigrant trafficking cases, these are kids in America. In Portland, Oregon, 60 percent of the boys who are living downtown actually are there because they chose a sexual orientation that their parents didn't like, so they threw them out. If your parents throw you out because you've been over-sexualized because you've been raped because of all these different things that have happened, and they don't understand you because you won't talk about it, then you get thrown out into the wolves and within 48 hours they'll be approached by a predator.

When I got out of my cycle of violence, which was I knew violence when I was a child, I knew violence when I married

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my first husband and I knew violence when I escaped my ex-husband and got jumped into a gang by being raped by 10 guys and forced to walk on 82nd Avenue in Portland. Every night, there's no breaks, there's no national workers relation board for prostituted women, and I say prostituted women or trafficked women. So we would walk up and down the street, this very long street, and we were expected to earn \$300 before we could come home. Now back in 1989 dates were \$20, so that meant we had to have some sort of date with 15 different people each night. While I was out there, my pimp and his gang lived in my house, did all sorts of crazy stuff and I was a part of the gang but you're really not part of the gang when you're indoctrinated in that way, do you know what I mean?

We had a great video come recently, it's called *Gang Trap*, it explains it all and it's for lawyer and social worker types, so most of you will get it. So being forced into these things, I got away because I was stabbed and left for dead in southeast Portland and my children were two and one, and when the CSD worker came over to my house because of the gang violence, she just thought I was a bad mom. When she knew I was Native American, she said, "Oh, you must be an alcoholic, you need to go to treatment."

When I went to the evaluation, they said, "We don't think you're an alcoholic, we think you've been beaten your whole life." Which was true. So I went on to go to the treatment, to go to college to become an alcohol and drug counselor. I had learned how to stay clean and sober, I had not learned how to stay away from domestically violent people. I ended up getting busted because I was going to night school and doing my practicums during the day to be an alcohol and drug counselor and my boyfriend sold drugs out of the house, the house got busted, I lost my house, my kids, my car, everything.

ICWA came in, my parents watched my kids for a little while, by then they were five and six. They're elderly, they couldn't watch them for long, so they were sent to Warm Springs

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where my sister lives, she's retired this year as the principal of Warm Springs Elementary, she's been there for 30 years. Then they sent them to Portland. I did 30 days because I had that gang mentality that said I'm not going to tell because if I tell I'm going to be dead. I had an attorney who said, "You know, I don't buy that battered women thing, if it were me, I would have just taken my kids and slept in a church." Isn't that a nice lawyer statement, especially when they're your lawyer. I'm like, "Yeah, you need to be fired." He's like, "Yeah, I got a plea agreement for you so you might as well take it because that's the only thing that's going to work." Which meant that I had to plead to a felony conviction and they knew the drugs weren't mine, they knew I wasn't a part of the gang that was in my house. The two gang members that were in the house that were actually selling the drugs got less bail, they got less charges than I did. I know you're coming up with that little note.

So when I got out of that and my ICWA experience was, first one was CPS saying no, you're Native American, you must be an alcoholic. The second one was when my children were taken and they were taken to my parents and my parents are well-known in their community as great leaders, they said, "Your daughter's been selling drugs out of her house." It wasn't true. They said, "It can't be, she's going to college, she's getting 4.0's" She's like, "Yeah, she was probably lying to you." Which I wasn't.

Portland is so small, Oregon is so small we all know each other, so they're telling my parents that and then they placed my kids, when my kids got to Portland, they placed them in a home where the person who told my parents that was also the person who placed them into a home, who was his cousin, who was uncertified, who beat his wife and all of the foster kids, and he's known as a spiritual leader in our community.

Zero. Okay, let me just finish up real quick. So from there they went to another home because I had a great CPS worker at the time who took them to another home, where

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my daughter was molested, sexually molested by the foster father. When you're looking at prostituted women, what you're finding is foster care isn't even safe yet and they're not educated at all on how to work with commercially sexually exploited children.

I got out of the life, I became an activist, an organizer, environmental justice and workers rights for low income and communities of color, I've been doing that now for 20 years. I started working with the city seven years ago and I run a program for communities of color and immigrant refugee communities to engage with the city. We give them \$80K each in capacity building funds and I manage those grants and I train them in organizing and how to engage with the city. And this is what I do when I have time off. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Joanne Shenandoah:

I'd like to thank all three witnesses for their testimony and also for the work you're doing on behalf of our children. I'd now like to turn to the Advisory Committee for questions. Ron?

Ron Whitener:

I was wondering if you could be a little more specific about how you recommend that juvenile justice systems become more efficient.

Chris Cuestas:

What I'm finding and recognizing is that when we're dealing with the delivery system, it seems to have a repetition of behavior before they instill consequences, and it's not unusual to get a young person that has eight, nine, ten, twelve offenses before they're ever put in to some type of rehabilitative setting or they have a program or any type of response from the system, from the court system.

One of the things that I also believe is essential is that the tribal court system have got to have the flexibility to extend their arm into the community. A lot of these tribal communities don't have the financial flexibility to be able to have probation officers or pretrial service officers or bailiffs that are in a position that they can extend the consequence

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that is given out from the bench. And because of that—and I'm sure every tribal person here is going to tell you the same things—there's a lot of noncompliance. Even if there's an order issued, there's noncompliance because there's no way that the court can ensure compliance because they're only budgeted for so much and it's not enough for them to look at the opportunity to look into alternative dispositions.

One of the things that we're struggling with right now is we've developed a very comprehensive diversion program for first offenders and unfortunately it's a hit and miss project because we don't have the ability by tribal courts to ensure that they're adhering to the tribal orders. That's not unusual, we find that with just about every tribal program that we work with, is that noncompliance is probably their biggest struggle, is ensuring that they have the opportunity to follow up. And one of the things that we do with our gang reduction strategy is we start it in the home, the first response is to the residence, to the individual that's referred to the taskforce and we start the staffing from the individual themselves and then we build from that with the family, to come up with alternatives to find if there's any redirection or reintroduction or mentoring or attachment into some community based strategy, to ensure that we can begin to undermine the connection that they've made with their community gang problem, but it's something we had to build ourselves.

It's been said already today, I have yet to find a tribal community that has a tribal code that is not archaic, especially when it comes to gang activity. There is no comprehensive uniformity when it comes to identifying pre-gang or gang activity or what subsequently is the response from the tribe if they do find gang characteristics in the home, in the family or in the community. With that lack of uniformity, what we end up finding we have to do is we have to build the infrastructure in order to build a success model first, and that's unfortunate, and a lot of that takes time and there's young people that are already at risk, so we have to unfortunately go backwards before we can go forwards.

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Ron Whitener: Thank you. I have another question. With regard to the issues for Fort Berthold, I've seen a lot of things where North Dakota sort of talks a lot about how a lot of income is being derived for their state budgets from this. Is any of that being seen by the tribes and the reservations being impacted by this?

Sadie Young Bird: No, that's interesting you asked that. Actually they have an oil impact fund grant that was for eight counties that were eligible to apply, it didn't have a cap on it, nothing, so I decided I'm going to write this grant because we fall in six of the eight counties, so I was sure we should get some money from them. Then once I was done—I wrote the grant for about a week-and-a-half—once I was completed and submitted it, they said, "Oh we're sorry, tribes aren't eligible to apply." It's been happening time and time again, our leadership went to the state and requested funds, they don't help us. Ironically, most of the oil that's being produced is coming from our reservation and they're getting more oil tax revenue than we are.

Chris Cuestas: If I can piggyback on that real quickly, one of the other challenges that we're finding, that are consistent with this, is the trickle down from Federal Safe Schools money to tribal schools, that we're not seeing the same dollar per student that is required for the schools to implement Safe Schools programming because the schools are so small, that they don't get the same dollar amount that the state schools get.

Secondly is Homeland Security funding, we're not seeing the trickle down from Homeland Security that goes to the states and subsequently the tribes because the tribes being isolated and rural, they have the same Homeland Security challenges that many of the metropolitan communities have, but yet they're not receiving the federal dollar for that.

The last thing is the trickle down for asset forfeiture, where you do takedown and one of the tribal programs that is being successful is called NADGI – Native American Indian Drug Gang Initiative—but when they do their asset forfeiture and

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they take the funds from these drug cartels, that asset forfeiture is supposed to trickle down into the tribes and it's not.

Ron Whitener: And is that federal?

Chris Cuestas: Yes, it's being stuck at the state level, so the tribes are never getting that money back to be able to continue their drug interdiction strategies. Thank you.

Joanne Shenandoah: I have a question for Sadie. You mentioned a lot of outside influences and border patrol would be helpful, can you expound on that a little bit more because I know we're having this trouble in New York, as well. There is a big presence of border patrol, by the way, in New York and a lot of trafficking going on in respect to drugs and human beings, so if you could expound just a little bit more.

Sadie Young Bird: With even sexual abuse and human trafficking, we are seeing a lot of the Johns and the pimps are illegal immigrants. We are seeing lots of illegal immigrants within our reservation at this time and it takes a long time for a federal agent to come down and I think if there was more presence, with their vehicles driving around our reservation, I think it would combat some of it, or I'm hopeful it would combat some of the problems.

Joanne Shenandoah: And these young people that are being affected by this, are they dropping out of school, as well?

Sadie Young Bird: Yes, we've seen a major increase in dropping out of school, they're walking around with all kinds of new things to make themselves...like new clothes, nails, things like that, I guess to pick up the Johns.

Joanne Shenandoah: And I'm kind of interested, also, if maybe a little bit more about the recognition of gangs and how it becomes obvious, if you can kind of enlighten us.

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Sadie Young Bird:

I know with working with law enforcement, they've showed us different things and different signs how the cartels are in there and that's where most of the drugs are coming from, and along with the drugs come human trafficking. It's sad when you have 13 and 15 year olds addicted to methamphetamines and heroin, when I'm sure there was people there who were addicted previously, but nowhere near the rate of our addiction now.

Chris Cuestas:

A lot of gangs are using technology, they're going online and doing Facebook postings that are open advertisements. Many of the gangs in the upper Midwest have what they call 'metropolitan sponsors,' 'Latin Kings,' 'Vice Lords,' 'Gangster Disciples,' 'Bloods,' 'Crips,' they have regional contacts that are sponsors for that area or that region, and their assignment is to network with the tribal community and bring their influence into that particular tribe and find that connection or that contact and then they start the technological connection.

They also do a lot of Snapchat, where they send very small messages to individuals that are being introduced or indoctrinated into the subculture. For those of you that are not aware, it's \$2000 to download a Snapchat account from a crime lab, so many of these tribes can't afford to download the Snapchat to try to find out what the source of that influence is, so it ends up being a case that's not prosecuted. Even if that Snapchat is sexual in nature and involves a juvenile, there's very few crime labs that have the financial ability to download that data, that technology from whatever digital system that they're using to get the information or the connection to the kids. So that's one of the many challenges that we're finding from the connection between metropolitan gangs and tribal gangs.

Jeri Williams:

I wanted to add on just a little bit more on—can I get that microphone?

Chris Cuestas:

Oh sorry, I thought you wanted my water.

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Jeri Williams:

No, I don't want your water, thank you, though. Some good news is that when I started speaking about this—I've spoken about human trafficking as a survivor probably about 400 times in four years, at churches, colleges, etcetera—every single time I've spoke somebody's come up to me and said thank you for sharing that because that happened to me. When I worked with immigrant refugee communities, thank you for sharing that because it happened to me. We formed a group called Survivor to Survivor, we're not a non-profit, all we are is a sisterhood, and our sisterhood has grown from Portland, Oregon to all across the country. We're currently working with stellar groups in New York who do the GEMS Program, which is a very affective program, nobody else in the United States has the money to be doing the program that they're doing currently. We've matched up with the Crittenton Foundation, we've passed seven different laws with survivors advising the legislators on what we needed to see and of course one of the first things we needed to see is that you need to be doing more time for selling drugs than selling girls—right, girls than selling drugs, because it was the opposite way. If a person is making a choice to commit a crime, they do less time currently if they were selling girls. Our girls are worth way more than that.

So changing legislatively, my big thing is—I was an organizer for 20 years and now I work for government and that sent me to therapy all by itself—is that organizing is really what's the important part. Many people may have programs and unless your people who care about those programs, not governmental people, you can't lobby for those programs as a governmental person, so there may be great programs out there that will die on the vine. I had a program in 1993 that helped me get through it, by 2000 it had imploded and was gone and by the time I spoke in 2008, the mayor came off some money and created a quarter million dollar fund to help women. I got to sit on the evaluation committee of the grants and across from me was a police officer who arrested me in 1988, so it was pretty interesting.

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There are a lot of good things out there, the biggest one, of course, is that women need to have that voice, we need to be able to have those places to talk about this issue and no longer keep it in the dark.

Female: I'd like to ask one question of Sadie, I know we're almost out of time. So quickly, if there was one thing that we could do to assist you in keeping children safe on the reservation, what would that one thing be?

Sadie Young Bird: I think it would be to provide training and technical assistance for the different entities, that's including tribal law enforcement, tribal court, victim service programs, so we're aware of the different resources that we have, federally and locally, to help our victims.

Joanne Shenandoah: Thank you very much for your answers and your heartfelt testimony.

[APPLAUSE]

[END PANEL #3]