



Charese and Charnee's Story

Over the last five years I have had the honor and pleasure of telling my story of how Wheeling Crittenton helped a young girl who felt no one loved her and felt no one would defend her blossomed into a woman... However that woman was so afraid. Afraid to love, afraid to live and afraid even as I stood there telling my story that I was not good enough.

The last five years have been a journey for me. From the time that I first addressed my audience in Washington DC at the 125th celebration, I wanted to know the answer "How do I move beyond survival; how do I live?" The truth of the matter was my family was no longer abusive they very much loved and supported me in spite of the pain that my speeches revealed. The child that I birthed at 17 years old was happy, successful and wise beyond her years. I truly was blessed, but I was stuck in a cycle of being a victim and worse a "survivor." I was sick of surviving. When survivors are rescued from islands, they don't continue in their survival mode. They enjoy all that life can give them. I wanted to live my life to the fullest like others who did not identify with a past like my own.

The more I told my story, the more it changed. At first I began revealing more of the brutal details and slowly those details began to shift to focus on what was important, and that was, and is, the end result. That end result was...the perpetrators in my life made their retribution and began to deal with the hurt and the pain they experienced as children. I began to love myself and realize that I was wonderfully and fearfully made by God. I began to realize that I was created for a purpose and it was time for me to advocate for women and children and focus on everything that turned out right as a result of the services I received from Crittenton. As a result, I began calling others to action to donate their resources. Once again, because of Crittenton, my life

was changing. I was living life, and telling my story did more than all of the years of therapy combined. I felt empowered.

My proudest moment occurred last May when my daughter graduated from high school. Earlier that year, she had the opportunity to speak at a congressional caucus to advocate for children 0-3. She met Congresswoman Rosa Delaro and was so moved, she decided she wanted to run for public office as an adult. She is now a Political Science major at Weber State University. My daughter knows her worth and has made virtuous decisions for herself. When people have the opportunity to meet her, they always comment on her sweet demeanor.

I currently work at the third best place to work on Fortune's 100 list, CompHealth, a division of CHG Healthcare, and my life keeps getting better. Not because I do not have challenges and trials, and not because I don't make mistakes. It is better because I know my worth and better because I know that no matter what comes my way, it is temporary. If I just hold on another day something will change. I am loved by God and he is the only one that truly matters with that knowledge I know I can conquer anything.