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FINAL REPORT *Archue*

THE NEXT MILLENNIUM CONFERENCE:
Ending Domestic Violence.
Closing: Maxine Waters
September 1, 1999

Approved By: *[Signature]*

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Date: 9/18/00

VOICE OF SURVIVOR: As a child I witnessed my mother being abused for 12 years. Because of the abuse, the mother I have always known is distant, depressed and clinically dependent. Growing up, no one ever discussed the abuse I witnessed and experienced, hoping that their silence would somehow make it disappear. Reading research on domestic violence has helped me to find words for what was unspoken in my family.

VOICE OF SURVIVOR: I am an African and Native American Creed lesbian woman who grew up with an alcoholic father who was verbally and physically abusive. One example of the abuse I have experienced occurred when I was 11 years old. My father came home one Saturday night after becoming intoxicated and held my mother, my brothers and myself at gun point for several hours while threatening to kill us, as well as my mother's two sisters and their husbands and children. As a teen and an adult I have become involved in relationships which were also verbally and physically abusive, and in many ways similar to the abuse which my mother had experienced. I have been blessed to have had people at different points in my life who were instrumental in my healing process, and I see the conference as an opportunity for me to continue to nurture my own growth and spirituality, as well as that of others.

UNIDENTIFIED: Those were two individuals that received scholarships to this conference. We want to thank the Violence Against Women Office for making that opportunity for survivors to be here and have their voices heard.

WILLIAM RILEY: Good morning. It's been great! It's been great! You've been warm, you've been wonderful. We've had ongoing caresses and hugs for the last three days and it was fantastic. Applaud yourself. We're running a little late so we'll get right into the program.

This morning I've got the pleasure of introducing a person I've worked with for some time. A person that has helped me along the way, and also someone who's been the butt of a few jokes. But, someone who I've grown very close to over the years, and someone who's been doing some very hard work during the last several years that I've known her. What I'd like to do is introduce you to Nita Carter. She's a project manager for the National Women of Color Network, and Nita will have some remarks and a special presentation for you. Thank you.

NITA CARTER: Well, this is going to be interesting. Thank you. Good morning. It is truly wonderful to be here this morning. I'm here today to introduce to you a very, very exciting project. It is the Women of Color Network Resource Guide. I want to talk a little bit about the Women of Color Network and why we formed in the first place, and why this guide.

One of the things I've been hearing about throughout the conference, particularly from women of color, you know we don't have an opportunity to get together, and we really need to have an opportunity to network. And there _____ kinds of things going on around and it's wonderful to see so many of those programs, and we really want to know more about them. Well, the Women of Color Network was formed just because of that. The Network was formed to support the work of Women of Color activists addressing issues of domestic violence and sexual assault. The Network promotes and supports networking and leadership development for women of color. And we seek to enhance their capacity to develop and define culturally specific approaches to address some of these issues. Today, as I mentioned earlier, we're here to unveil one of the most exciting and wonderful projects I've had the opportunity to work on in my lifetime. And it is, indeed, a special project.

The Women of Color Network Resource Guide is a compilation of women of color across the country, over 260 beautiful stories of women of color who are doing this work. And over 60 programs that are doing culturally specific work to address domestic violence with communities of color. And in addition, it is truly, truly, it has truly been an awesome and humbling experience, developing this wonderful resource. And this wonderful resource is as much a celebration of your work as it is a resource. And one of

the other special things about this Resource Guide is that it was developed completely with the talent of women of color, from it's writing to it's design to it's printing. We have a wonderful group of women of color developing this guide.

As I mentioned earlier, it's a humbling experience. My staff and I have spent years, literally, gathering information and it has been very humbling indeed. There are so many creative, committed women of color who are working to make their communities safe. And we hope that when you get your hands on this Guide that you will reach out to one another as women of color, that this Guide will inspire you to develop those culturally specific programs that you've always been dreaming about, and we hope for all of those state coalitions, those national funders, those national state and local organizations, that you will use this Guide to also reach out to women of color. Include them in the work that you are doing. This is a wonderful group that you can send grand announcements to, all kinds of ways that we can use this wonderful Guide to help us in our work. And now I'd like to take the opportunity to unveil this wonderful resource. And I'm going to ask Anita Brown, who is our program coordinator, and Alicia Dixon who is the project _____ to come and do that for us.

ANITA BROWN: Presenting the Women of Color Network Resource Guide! And in answer to how can you get your hands

on it, we're going to be sending it out to over 700 women and programs that we have on our Women of Color Network mailing list for free. State coalitions, state sexual assault and domestic violence coalitions will also get it for free. And all the other folks will have to call the National Resource Center to order their copy, and it's \$30.00. We do have order forms on the table at the side before you leave, for those of you who haven't visited our exhibition booth.

Before we honor, we have a few honorees, and we're going to do that quickly. And before we do that I do want to make a quick plug for the Women of Color Network's next exciting project. We have already begun to develop a training and technical assistance project for women of color, and through this project we will be developing training and resources here. We will also be training a group of mentors to mentor other women of color and programs who are developing culturally specific programs. So, thanks to you all we are well on our way.

NITA CARTER: And now for our honorees. When we found out we would be a part of the closing plenary and that Congresswoman Maxine Waters was going to be here, well, we thought we truly saved the best for last. We couldn't have been more excited. Congresswoman Waters epitomizes what the Women of Color Network stands for. We are here to support women of color activists in developing culturally specific

programs and developing leadership skills. And we want them to use this Resource Guide to organize their communities. Who is more of a community organizer and motivator than Congresswoman Waters? One of the greatest political women of color leaders in the century. And who has done more to inspire women of color to become leaders and supported and promoted leadership among women of color than Congresswoman Waters? Congresswoman Waters, would you come up please?

Congresswoman Waters, it is because of all of your hard work and dedication and commitment that it is our pleasure and our honor to present you with our first copy of the Women of Color Network Resource Guide.

MAXINE WATERS: Thank you, thank you very much.

NITA CARTER: You're welcome. And you know we made her an honorary Women of Color member.

Leslie Landers, would you come up? We were just awe inspired by all the support that the mayor's office lent to this conference, the reception yesterday was really special, and because of your welcoming spirit, we want to also present you with a copy.

LESLIE LANDERS: Thank you. What an honor, a personal honor. Thank you so much. I had no idea.

NITA CARTER: Vickii Coffey, I don't know why you went down there. Vickii, our conference queen mother, for your continued support of our efforts. Vickii has been a strong supporter of the Women of Color Network and inspired me in

many ways to keep going when times got rough. We just thank Vickii Coffey and we just kept going. And so because of this, because of your support and hard work and dedication, we thank you and we present you with a copy of the Women of Color Network Resource Guide.

VICKII COFFEY: Thank you.

NITA CARTER: And she's already a member of the Women of Color Network. And last, but not least, Bill Riley. He was trying. What could I say about Bill Riley that hasn't already been said? Without him we would not be standing here today. He is an avid supporter of our work, he has a strong commitment to the work, he understands the issues that women of color are faced with seeking and utilizing services. And he's a friend and all of those things, and I could go on and on but I can't. So. But, because of your commitment and dedication and your understanding of the issues, we would like to present you a copy of the Women of Color Network Resource Guide.

BILL RILEY: Thank you.

NITA CARTER: We're going to conclude by just, I'm not going to make this long, I just want to thank the whole host of those who were involved with the development of the Guide. We have Lisa Dixon here, Anita Brown, who without here we definitely would not have had this Guide. They worked day in and day out, sometimes 3 and 4:00 in the morning I was getting E-mails. And we have a steering

committee over there, they're kind of in the dark over there, but I'm just going to call their names off. Our steering committee is Alice Flint, Clema Lewis, I can't see the other person. Okay, she is over there, it looks like there is no one over there that's why I'm looking, and Sue Jackawarrier(sp.?).. And not present is Sandra Comacho who is also a part of our steering committee. I want to thank the talented staff of Laurel Consultant Group and all of the others who were involved in this project. Thank you very much.

And in conclusion, could I have the Women of Color in the audience just stand up? It's all of you, all of you beautiful, talented women stand up. All right! I want you to keep standing. I just want to say that this Resource Guide is for you. Thank you.

BILL RILEY: It's been, and I know it's been a lot of hard work over the last 18 months to 2 years. We've talked quite a bit about that.

This morning, what I failed to do but I need to make known to you that we have at the head table, you know that Leslie Landers is here and she'll be introduced shortly. Congresswoman Maxine Waters, which we're saving the introduction for her, but also please greet Eleanor Williams. Eleanor Williams is the vice-president of corporate responsibilities for Sara Lee. Our conference co-sponsor. If you'd like to, yes, please.

ELEANOR WILLIAMS: It has been a pleasure for us to support this conference. I have _____ for the three days that I have been a part of this conference. I sat with Vickii when she first started the idea and helped her with just encouragement mostly. She did all of the work with her wonderful staff and people who supported the conference. I was weepy to see so many women here and supportive men dealing with this issue in a very comprehensive way. Dealing with the ups and downs and the conflicts and sometimes the disagreements about issues, and still holding together because the issue is so important. That we have to get rid of domestic violence by the next millennium. I thank you for your hard work. I was at my office yesterday and one of my very close friends in Washington said, go. I said, I have to go, I have to go to the reception. She said, go and be with the women who are doing the real work, and the supportive men who are helping. Thank you all for your help and your support on this issue.

BILL RILEY: Thank you. We all know Leslie Landers. If you didn't know here before you got to Chicago, you know her now. Leslie was the person who had the response or growing numbers as she was trying to plan a little garden party, but Leslie has been with us on the steering committee from the inception. Leslie has been a great supporter of both the conference and the movement. Leslie is also the project officer of the mayor's office on domestic violence, and a

wonderful and most fantastic host of one of the best party's I've ever been to. Please greet Leslie Landers.

LESLIE LANDERS: Hello, everybody. Good morning. Is it still morning? That party last night. I'm going to be exceedingly brief, and I really mean it this time. I took more than my fair share last night making my remarks, but I just wanted to congratulate the organizers of this huge conference, on how wonderful it has gone and it's so wonderful to have had it happen in the Chicago land area. So, I think we should give them a round of applause. I also just hope that you've had as much fun as I did at Navy Pier last night. I had a blast. And I really always welcome opportunities like that to do the informal networking, as well as the formal networking that is associated with conferences. So many of you were so kind in approaching me afterwards and letting me know that you had a wonderful time. That meant a lot to me. It meant a lot to my staff and so I hope you had just the greatest time.

I just wanted to tell you again that Chicago is very, very committed to making our response to domestic violence one that brings all stake holders to the table. We mean it in the most sincere way. We hope, and we've learned a lot at this conference about how to continue to do our work better and in new ways; neighbor to neighbor, inch by inch, moving along, moving our movement forward. I did want to also say that it is so important to me to have been brought

up on this stage this morning. I was not expecting to receive the Network Resource Guide. It's a pleasure and I will use it very much. It was an honor to receive it this morning. Again, I promised to be brief. I hope you had a good time and continue to have a good time in Chicago, and I really want to hear Congresswoman Maxine Waters so I'll take my leave. Thanks again.

BILL RILEY: As I look at my schedule, and we are indeed coming to the end. And we were concerned several months ago of how we might come to the end of this. We sat around and we thought of all kinds of things, great fireworks display, too much smoke. Dances from around the country, no, that's in the beginning. And someone said, what we need is a person who epitomizes caring and love and concern and tenacity and strength and courage _____ Maxine Waters.

Let me read a bit about Congresswoman Maxine Waters. Congresswoman Maxine Waters is considered by many to be one of the most powerful women in politics today. She has gained a reputation as a fearless and outspoken advocate and has been a fearless and outspoken advocate for women and children, people of color and poor people. Elected in November, 1998 to her fifth term in the House of Representatives with an overwhelming 89% of the vote in the 35th District of California, Congresswoman Maxine Waters represents a large part of south central Los Angeles and the diverse cities of Gardena, Hawthorn and Englewood. In

1997-98 Representative Waters served a two year term as the chair of the 39 member Congressional Black Caucus. She formulated the comprehensive agenda for black America, an agenda for justice, equality and fairness, which outlined the Caucus' legislative and programmatic priorities. These initiatives included a commitment to drug free, safe and healthy communities, education and technological opportunities, job creation and economic development. The priorities also encompassed voting and civil rights, environmental issues, the protection of the most vulnerable Americans and the promotion of opportunities for all Americans. For the 106th Congress, Representative Waters has been appointed to the influential leadership position of Chief Deputy Whip of the Democratic Party. She continues to be a member of the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services and the ranking minority member of the Domestic and International Monetary Policies Committee. She is also on banking sub-committee on Capitol Markets Securities and government sponsored enterprises. Representative Waters also continues to serve on the Committee of the Judiciary and on sub-committees on the constitution. During the House impeachment proceedings Congresswoman Waters was an outspoken advocate for fairness. She criticized Independent Council Kenneth Star's ruthless investigation, and condemned the House Republicans unfair and partisan tactics in both Judiciary Committee and on the House floor. On a whole

range of issues, economic development and police brutality, the war on drugs, the veterans concerns, women's rights and children's well-being, Congresswoman Waters is found on the cutting edge. Following the civil unrest in Los Angeles in 1992 Congresswoman Waters faced the nation's media and the public to interpret the hopelessness and despair in cities across the country. Highlighted on ABC TV World News Tonight as a person of the week for her part in the debate on the above issues described by Peter Jennings as a woman who simply will not go unheard. It is my pleasure this morning, and indeed it would be my pleasure every morning and every day to present to you, Congresswoman Waters.

MAXINE WATERS: Thank you, Bill. Thank you. Thank you, very much, Bill, for that warm introduction. To Bill Riley, to Olivia Golden, to Vickii Coffey, to all of you who have provided leadership for organizing this most important and special conference, The Next Millennium Conference: Ending Domestic Violence. To Nita Carter who has taken on this very special responsibility of organizing the resources for women of color and providing a Resource Guide. I want to thank Nita for giving me the very first copy. I started work on this issue many, many years ago when I was a member of the California State Assembly. Never in my wildest imagination did I think that we would come to the point in time where we would have a whole Resource Guide for Women of Color. Thank you, very much. I'm very appreciative for

your work.

I am also very appreciative for Donna Shalela. You know Donna Shalela is an activist, and she's a feminist. I knew her many years before she became Secretary, when she was up at Hunter College. In the days when some of those women who were involved in the Women's Movement early on would gather, and of course, at the center of that was my friend, Bella Abdug. I miss Bella Abdug, but it is because of women like Bella and Gloria Steinham and Donna Shalela and others that we were able to identify the issues that really concern us. And to begin to talk about things that we never dreamed we would be able to talk about. So, because of Donna Shalela you have the support to do conferences like this. You know the difference really is who is at the top. With Donna Shalela at the top we can move forward on this and other important issues. Let's give her a big round of applause, even in her absence.

To all of our very special head table guests, and to the mayor, who I understand just rolled out the red carpet. I heard about the party on the Pier. We want to thank him and we want to thank him for appointing Leslie to this most important position. Not all mayors use their power to do this, but let's give Mayor Daley a big round of applause.

Now I'm really appreciative for this invitation for a lot of reasons. It causes me to focus on domestic violence, once again. I realized when I received the invitation that

I have been spending a lot of time on many important issues, giving leadership on Aids and trying to deal with providing the resources as we see this increasing risk that women are at, working on CRA and some of the issues that were just identified, Community Reinvestment Act, working on economic development, welfare reform, child care that's so very needed by women in our society. All of these issues. But, it's been a long time since I really focused on the issue of domestic violence. Yes, when I was in the California State Assembly we opened some of the first centers and provided the funding for some of the first domestic violence centers. We perfected the restraining orders. We dealt with, in those days we began to deal with the problem of stalking and some other things. But, some of us went on to think, well, now that we have legislation on the books, we have women's groups that are organized, we have centers, we know we must keep getting money and funding, but we have lots of leadership now and we can go on to some other things and not have to be so worried. But this invitation helps me to understand, of course, I was just fooling myself to think that somehow we don't have to pay very special attention to this issue of domestic violence.

I supported the Violence Against Women's Act in 1994 and, of course, the Violence Against Women's Act in 1999, which I am sure you've had a lot of conversation about. The Violence Against Women's Act of 1999 re-authorizes the

Violence Against Women's Act of 1994 programs by reorganizing programs that make a real difference in our communities, like the Stop Grants, the National Domestic Hot Line, Battered Women's Shelters, League Crisis Centers and many other programs. The 1994 successes of that Act have encouraged more women to come forward, creating new burdens on systems and services to respond to more cases of domestic violence and sexual assault. We have an obligation to meet that need by continuing, improving and expanding Violence Against Women Act programs. Violence Against Women's Act programs of 1999 looks at how domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking impacts our community. It targets violence against women in our schools and work places in partnership with educators and employers, and with professionals in fields like law and medicine.

I really didn't come here today to talk about the Act of 1994 or 1999, or to talk about the new data, or to try to talk with you about the empirical information, you already have that. I know you know all of that. But I want to talk with you about what I was forced to think about once I received the invitation.

First of all, I started to reflect on the past and what it was like. And I started to remember my days as a child growing up in St. Louis, Missouri. I was raised on a street called Montrose. Montrose was a short street, just a few blocks long, it ended at the railroad tracks. My street was

like a little Peyton Place. For the young women in the audience you don't even remember what Peyton Place was. That was a rather revealing television program about what goes on sometimes in small communities. But I remember Montrose because the families on Montrose all knew each other very well, we were in and out of each other's homes, neighbors cared for children of other families, we knew everybody's business. There were no keys to the doors, we just walked in and out of each other's homes. But Friday and Saturday nights were very interesting on Montrose Street, as I'm sure it was on many streets in America. That was when the men got paid. Most of the women weren't working in those days. I have 12 brothers and sisters, 13 of us. Everybody had big families on Montrose and in that community. Mothers were home having babies, trying to figure out how to feed those children, washing clothes, hanging curtains, scrubbing floors, and literally being abused in a lot of ways. Not all women were beaten, but most of the women on Montrose Street were sad women. They were sad, not because they told you how sad they were, they were sad because you could see it in their eyes. Based on the life style. On Friday and Saturday night we could count on Ms. Leola getting beat up, and Ms. Mary, who lived on the street. Husbands got drunk when they got their pay checks. And before they got home they had been drinking and soon after they were home you could begin to hear the cries, and

the noise, and this is the way it was looked at. Somebody would say, what's that? Who is that screaming now? And somebody would say, oh, that's Ms. Mary. You know Jack is whipping her behind. He does it every Friday night. Don't pay any attention to it, that's their business. Who is that screaming? Oh, that's Ms. Leola. Don't get in those people's business. A man's got a right to beat his wife. I can recall women who showed up on the streets the next day with blackened eyes, swollen lips and the jokes that went around. Oh boy, he really kicked her behind last night, didn't he?

Growing up in that environment I also witnessed, as a young woman in the work place, women who would come to work with blackened eyes and swollen lips. They had to come to work, they needed the money, they had no place to turn, but they literally showed up at work. And people would snicker and talk about them. And this went on for many, many years, and it still goes on in many places today. I can recall some of these women with sad eyes who would go to church every Sunday. And many of these women would go to church with blackened eyes, bruised lips and faces and they would sit on those benches and they would cry, and they would pray to their gods and they would moan and they would wail. They didn't talk about it, but the pain of their experiences were really identified in some ways on Sunday mornings, in the way that they went to church and really prayed to God to

make their lives better. When I go to church today, and I go to many churches, I never forget about a year or so ago, right here in Chicago, I was in a church and the wailing of the women was just so loud and long, and they cried and I know they were crying about a lot of things. They were crying about the children, they were crying about crack cocaine, they were crying for the grandchildren, they were crying about their own lives, they were crying about their plight. Well, I've learned, having seen this for so many years, that a lot of what they say about us is so misunderstood. I thought that women just went crazy at menopause, they just lost their minds, that's what they always said. When I was a girl coming up, what's wrong with Ms. Jones? She's crazy. Why is she crazy? Change of life, honey. That's what's going to happen to you. What I discovered is that by the time you reach menopause if you've been abused, if you've been marginalized, if you're starved for affection, if you've been discounted, yeah, by the time you reach menopause you are crazy. Has nothing to do with the physical changes, but it really does have to do with this lifestyle and what has occurred.

Well, I also heard, and I wasn't supposed to hear, women who would say, honey, he wouldn't beat me like that because if he did I'd scald his ass. Those were women who learned that they had to have some kind of defense. And then I would hear the stories that came out of the south

about women who knew their husbands were coming home to beat them, so they kept a pot of water boiling on the stove. And then I would hear the stories of how they put sugar in it to make sugar water would stick. And then I heard the stories about the lie. Women who had nowhere to turn but knew they could be killed. But the only thing they had sometimes was the threat. If you put your hands on me your mother won't know you when I finish with you. That's all they had. The threat. And some of the men bought it, some didn't.

But some of those women who were so living in fear of their lives, some of them did use that pot of water. And, as you know, increasingly as women defended themselves, they started to get arrested and really had no defense. You say self-defense and they say, oh, you don't look like you've been beaten, and besides there's no law against beating your wife. I mean, really. So, I have seen a lot and I understand why it is so important for government to give support to and to develop programs for and be involved in this issue of domestic violence.

I want to talk to you about something that you may have talked about. As you talk about how you provide services in an increasingly complicated world. I did hear something very good last night, though. There was a woman who was, I think, being beaten and she was able to get the message out on her computer. And the message went out on the internet and somebody called the police. Something happened and the

police came to the rescue. I'm glad to hear that the new technology is something that is being used and can be used, perhaps, even better to connect and to provide information and services.

I also heard something else on television. Oprah had a program on about young women and abuse of young women by young men. I heard these stories about young men who purchase cell telephones so they can keep up with their woman. What's those other things you wear on your side?

(END SIDE ONE TAPE ONE)

MAXINE WATERS: ... and young women saying they felt a responsibility to let their boyfriends know where they were every moment because they didn't want to make them angry. Many had been abused, some were verbally abused, some had been physically abused, and many had not even talked to their parents about it. It's very important that we include in whatever we're doing, a lot of attention directed at young women. A lot of attention directed at young women so they won't make the mistakes that we made. First of all, knowing who they are. Self-esteem. Knowing they're better, not as good as, but better than any boyfriend and they don't have to feel that they're incomplete without a boyfriend. That's the basis of our problem. We think we can't get along without a man. And we really have to deal with that.

We also must deal with the fact that this education must be in our families as well as our schools and our other

institutions in our society. We know all of the signs of abuses. And when we fall in love we dismiss them. Somehow we overlook the anger, somehow we overlook the insults, the verbal abuse, and we think we're going to change them. Don't ever try and raise somebody else's son. That's not your responsibility. If they shout at you when you're dating and they're trying to get you, they're going to kick your behind when they marry you, and don't think there's a disconnect. If they insult you when they're supposedly trying to impress you, if they make unreasonable demands on you, you don't want to spend a lifetime with this person. Recognize the signs early and teach young girls to recognize those signs early on. I'm very concerned about these young people in these middle class communities, these upper middle class communities, where people have a lot of money and boys have a lot of money to spend and they're buying up pagers and paying for these cell phones and taking girls to dinner and doing all of this. Sometimes there's a price to pay for that. Your daughter needs to pay for her own dinner. She does not need to have her dinner paid for by her boyfriend. If they're both young people in the same age group they both should accept their own responsibility. And if your daughter is talking to you about how good Jack is to her because he's buying her dinner, you need to sit down and talk with her. And if she's excited because he's buying her dinners that she can't afford, you need to teach her what it

means to live within your means. If you don't make gourmet money you can't have gourmet food. And if it's somebody else's gourmet food that you're relying on, you're playing a fools game. And so we really do need to have some very clear cut education and conversations.

And it's not just happening on the high end and the privileged side. I'm very concerned about what I've witnessed in the hood. I've spent a lot of time working with gang members. I've spent a lot of time working in public housing projects. I've spent a lot of time working with women on crack cocaine. Crack cocaine is the devil in disguise. It is one of the worst drugs that ever hit the streets of America. And it does things to women and families that you just could never, never think of, but it does things to young children who are the children of families that are involved in crack and drugs. Young boys, once they see their mother on crack and once they see the abuse that's meated out to them by the men who are around them, act out in some very interesting ways. I have no studies, I have no documentation for what I'm going to tell you. I simply want to share with you what I've observed. If you listen to some of the rap music, and I'm not against hip hop, but if you listen to it and you listen to some of the lyrics, and you listen to some of the descriptions of women coming out of the hip hop community, many of the artists who are now performing hip hop, many of those young

people come out of the ghettos and the barrios have seen a lot and they take on the kind of same mantle as the abusers of their mothers. They are so frustrated, often times, with the fact that they can't do anything about their mother's plight, they get very angry with their mothers but they also get very angry with the men who are abusing their mothers. And this anger turns into the kind of violence that you see when young people kill each other. I've seen young men close up, many of whom try to protect their mothers in the best way they can, but on crack cocaine on the streets where you become a strawberry, where you will do anything to try to get the original high that you got from the first time that you took crack is the most destructive and mind boggling understanding of what is going on. These young men will kill, they will kill because of what they have seen. But the most interesting thing, and this is for the psychologists and the psychiatrists, is how they, too, become the abusers and they treat women very badly. Boys in gangs treat women very badly. They beat them, they call them the worst names that they can be called, they are out to demonstrate their power over them and this is something that we've got to deal with. And this is very hard to get at, very hard. When you talk about funding programs where maybe we are now just beginning to get to some of the ways by which we can deal with this domestic violence. We don't even have enough shelters, we don't have enough money to

deal with how we should provide these services.

While I have a great appreciation for all of the shelters, let me just tell you as an African-American woman, if I had to run away, if I was beat, do you know where I would really want to go? I'd want to go to the home of a grandmother. My safety and my security has always been with older women who provide a kind of mothering. I mean it is the scent of the soup on the stove, it is the smell of the house, it's the pictures on the wall, it's the homemade things. Now I know I'm probably talking about something that can't be, except if we envision services where we engage seniors, and we talk about how we open up these opportunities. We've got to have some choices, and we've got to have a multi-faceted way of providing these services. In the olden days when a woman in my community was beaten there was no place else to go but to mama or grandma, but they only fixed you up to send you back. They would take you in, they would patch you up and they would say, now honey, it's time for you to go back to your husband. That's where you supposed to be. They didn't know any better. But that's all we had. But now, with the new information, with the empowerment of seniors who want to do things, who want to be involved, I think there are some ways that not only can they work in the shelters, but we can open up their homes with some resources so that those of us who feel that that's where we want to be, maybe we could go there. I do

believe that some of the young women that I'm talking about, who just hold on to me in these communities, crack addicted women, drug addicted women, beaten, women who's bad lives almost not worth living any more. They're starting out to begin with, poor. Many coming from dysfunctional families, not completing their education, having babies too young, no money to really take care of them, abused by welfare systems that didn't really give a darn, looking for comfort in mates who further abuse them, babies taken away from them, but women who for some reason still have enough in them to say, Ms. Waters, don't let them take my children. I can't figure out how they're going to take care of them, but they still want to take care of their children. Women who say, can you get me some help? And a society that can't put together comprehensive programs to deal with the whole person. Comprehensive services that's got child care for women that need to be in rehab.

We have a lot of work to do, but I'm preaching to the choir because that's what you do. And so what do we need? We need to do what we started out doing. Programs and services can't become something that you just know about and you do every day. You've got to be advocates. You've got to light it up. Because if you don't you're going to lose them. If they become 9 to 5 programs, well I did my part for the day, you'll lose it. You've got to keep it on the minds of legislators, who still for the most part are men,

you know. You've got to keep it on the minds of the press. Yes, there are more women in these legislative bodies and they've done a good job for the most part, but if you look at the campaigns now, nobody's asking where do you stand on domestic violence? What are you going to do about domestic violence? So, when are you going to meet the next candidate? When are women going to be at the forum? What are you going to say to George Bush? What are you going to say to Gore? What are you going to say to Bradley? What are you going to say to them about where they stand on domestic violence? They're going to talk about everything. But unless you ask them, they're not going to talk about domestic violence. They're just going to assume that you know they're good on women's issues. You know I'm good on women's issues, I'm married to Tipper. So you've got to ask them. You've got to go to your City Councils. Look at the budget. What's happening with the black grant money? How much are you getting? How much money in the local black grants is designated for domestic violence? What are your state legislators doing? What kind of laws do you need? Oh, you'll have legislators who say, oh yes, I'm for more police training. Well, we've got to keep talking about training these police but some of them we've got to get off the force. Some of the very ones that are supposed to be answering the calls beat their own wives. We've got to become advocates. And let me tell you something that is

very disturbing that my daughter told me just a few days ago. I have a grandson who is 11 years old. And as they were preparing for him to go to a dance recital they had in a program, and she was trying to find the right shirt and she was trying to tell her what kind of shirt they were supposed to have for the recital, she was looking through the T-shirts and he said, no, not that kind. I want the wife beater kind. She said what are you talking about? He said you know, the one they call the wife beater T-shirt. She said I don't know about those T-shirts. What's a wife beater T-shirt? And where did you get that from? He said, well the wife beater T-shirts are the ones with the thin straps and they fit the tank tops and whatever. She said, well where did you get that from? He said, well you know, mom, you know that program called Cops? She said yeah. He said every time they go out to get this guy who's been beating up on his wife and they bring him out in handcuffs he's got these T-shirts on with the tank tops and the little straps and the kids are calling them wife beater T-shirts. Have you heard that? The first time I've heard that. So, she had to stop him and talk to him and she said, first of all if they're taking him out in handcuffs that's what needs to happen and he needs to get some time. So let that be a lesson that you don't beat your wife, you don't beat anybody and get away with it, but you don't beat your wife or your mate and get away with it. But I don't want you to use this

description of the shirt. It's not something funny, it's not something to be joked about. And so, along with the lessons and the teaching and the education that we must do, we've got to become advocates so that this issue stays on the mind of the public. Just as I said to you when I came here today, you know I've been working on Aids and CRA and farmers and economic development and education, but I haven't done any real work recently on domestic violence. And you have re-focused me, but you must focus everybody. Call in to these talk shows. Go to the community meetings. Engage your politicians. Have some rallies. The only time we really get engaged is when there's a highlighted case. Some woman finally kills some man who was going to kill her if she didn't kill him, and now she's got to go and do some time. I understand in California we've got more women in prison for killing some man who was about to kill her, but doing time without special consideration. Well, I don't believe in violence and I'm a great advocate for trying to teach and educate, because I really do believe that we should and we can eradicate violence and domestic violence in our society. But, I want you to know and if anybody wants to quote me, and if there are newspapers here, if a man is going to kill you, shoot his ass. Don't let him kill you and don't keep having third and second thoughts about he beat you once and beat you twice and told you over and over again that he's going to kill you, and then when he comes at

you to kill you, you're still thinking he loves me, he's not going to really do it. We're going to keep working on special considerations for women who defend themselves.

Now, in case somebody wants to say Maxine Waters is just hard on men, I'm not, I'm married. I've got a good husband and he better be, because I wouldn't be with him if he wasn't. I've got a great son, and he better be because I'd disown him if he beats women. And this little grandson who talked about get him a wife beater T-shirt, we're going to get him together, too. I'm very clear, and it's taken me years, as it takes most women, I'm very clear. I love me better than I love anybody. I'm going to be good to me. I can do for others but I am going to take care of me first. I'm going to love me and I'm going to look out for me. And you know what? In my old age I don't suffer much of anything even from my husband. If he makes too many demands, hey, cook it yourself. What's the matter? Nothing's the matter, I just don't feel like it. I just don't feel like it. You say you really want something else to eat? Go get it. And bring me some back with you. And my husband laughed and he said, you're right. And it's all right, it's all right not to be burdened. It's all right not to be put upon. It's all right to stop suffering making somebody else happy all the time. When you love yourself you can love somebody else. But if you're always put upon, you're always burdened, you can't love somebody else because

secretly you start to hate them. They're always after you to do this, do that, don't do this, I like this, I don't like that. Well, let me tell you what I like.

Let me just close by saying, when I started to come to grips with all of this it was because I had been working in the women's movement. I served on the Board of Ms. Foundation for years. I read the proposals unsolicited that came in and I learned what women were thinking, what women were doing. And we had on that Board a wonderful woman who said her husband was forever asking for things. And when he was getting dressed he was always late and in a hurry. He would say, where are my shoes? And finally she said one day, she looked him in the eye and she said, where are my shoes? He looked at her and he couldn't figure out what she was saying and she just stood there and looked at him and said, where are my shoes? And he said well I don't know where your shoes are. How would I know where your shoes are? She said I don't know where yours are either. Thank you very much.

BILL RILEY: Can somebody say Amen? Whew! Thank you, Congresswoman Maxine Waters. I think we have been appropriately moved and also we've gotten the message. Love yourself first. Thank you.

We're moving now towards the end of things. I hate to see you go, I know a lot of you have a long way to go. I want to thank you for coming. I've met people who have come

from Japan, Australia, Guam, SiPan, Mexico, Canada, England, from all over the world, you're absolutely beautiful. Thank you much.

There are some people that we need to thank, please, and if you just bear with me for a while and then we have a treat for you. I'd like to re-thank and ask to stand, the National Committee, the steering committee for the conference, would you please stand. If we had been smart in our planning we would have had them all up front. Sometimes we miss it. We have our senior advisors. People that have worked with us for so long in helping to pull this together. National Advisory, if there are members of the National Advisory Council, if they are indeed still able to be here, if you are here, please stand. There are some names that I'd like to also give you people who have worked very hard, very early for a long time. If you, indeed, believe as I do that the workshops and the plenary sessions were substantive and worth the time, and gave you something to sort of react to and think about and to take back, I think that there's a group of people who have worked arduously and long for this. I'd like to recognize them at this point. From the National Training Center on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Debbie Tucker and Christina Walsh. Some other folks that we really need to recognize, Eleanor Lyons, Lyons & Associates, very helpful, very helpful to us. Someone who I don't think was able to make it, but many of you know her, Redia Javar

(sp.?). Redia worked tirelessly for us. And from our favorite fund in San Francisco, Christy Wang. Is Christy still here please? There are a number of people who sat behind desks and sat behind counters and ducked behind that door out there that you didn't see, but who worked very long hours. There are guys running around with radios and things in their hands and if you saw them they were always walking fast and talking on the run, and if you'll bear with me, just let me read the names. If you think it went well, if you think the logistics fit, if you think we got things done in some effective way, these are the people that did it, believe me. From the Long Consulting Group, a great bunch of folks, I've worked with them for years, Conrad Kenley who is the CEO and takes the responsibility, but his people, Preston Bruce, III, the guy that we call number 3 cause his father is number 2. John Sanders, Dearra Hall, Bruce Hunter, Jay Hong, Harold Suggs, Len Links and Preston Bruce, Jr. Let me continue, please bear with me. Cody Bridges, you all heard her name, Theresa Burke, Emria Brisco, Tracy Bowers, Dawn Duncan, Sean Bank, Delisha Ballard, Monica Jackson, Michelle Lee, Tina Concardy, Magdelana Morales, Angela Saunders, Nathema Thompson, Alicia Dixon. Another group that also worked with us from the beginning is the Alpheia Consulting Group. Victoria Greer, Karen Tyler, Lamont Joiner, who is the CEO of that group, and Karen Moll. These people deserve a hand, they made it work.

I don't know how to say good bye, and I've also been a person, music has always been a large part of my life, I am a frustrated musician. I attempted to play a number of things. I tried to play the piano, I tried to play the guitar, I tried to play the saxophone, I even tried singing. But, this afternoon, I'd like to invite to the stage, Jacqueline Kimbrough. Jacqueline if you would come up please. She is a community outreach specialist. She is with the Chicago Abused Women Coalition. I'm going to ask Jacqueline to sing a song for us, and it's called, "We Are Called To Make Justice". Jacqueline Kimbrough.

JACQUELINE KIMBROUGH: Singing song.

NITA CARTER: I have a very important message for you. Jacqueline is a survivor. Jacqueline is a survivor. Thank you.

JACQUELINE KIMBROUGH: Thank you very much.

BILL RILEY: Thank you. The conference has ended. The work goes on. Thank you.