

Rebecca Pober Citrin's Gold Award: Against Human Trafficking

Rebecca Pober Citrin produced, directed, edited and screened a professional documentary on domestic human sex trafficking, which can be seen on the website she created: againsthumantrafficking.com.

In order to create her documentary, she made contacts, fundraised, conducted on and off-camera interviews. Afterwards, she has given and continues to give presentations to highlight this issue.

We interview all Gold Award recipients, asking them to tell us more about their personal journey, to give other girls an idea of how it feels to go through the Gold Award process.



How did you come up with your idea? I saw the issue in a newspaper and noticed how unaware of it my friends, family and community are.

Were you intimidated by the scale of the project? At some points, yes. My project grew very quickly, and it was hard to keep up with the expenses.

How did you keep up the momentum for the project? I kept in touch with all of the contacts reaching out to me. Organization was key.

Were you ever discouraged? If so, what did you do to overcome that? Yes, when I had issues with my initial editor. I kept at it and never gave up.

Can you tell us a story about some part of your project that was especially meaningful? I started crying during one of the interviews with a victim because her story was so sad. She told me that I had no right to cry because I didn't know the pain she felt. She said that I had to be strong if I wanted to fight against this issue and had to be able to show sympathy towards the victims without showing emotion. Victims already have to deal with so much and it makes them feel worse when people show emotions from their stories; non-victims have no idea what the victims went through because they didn't experience it themselves. It was a shocking experience, but it taught me a lot. I never cried again, no matter how sad the stories I heard were.

How will people benefit from this? They will be aware of human trafficking and know that it IS happening in their community and that it can happen to ANYONE. Hopefully, people will be more cautious and have their eyes open all the time for potential predators.

How did you feel after you finished? Ecstatic. I couldn't wait to get the documentary out there.

What advice would you give to other girls considering a Gold Award? DO IT. You will learn so much about yourself and make a difference in your community. It is very rewarding. START EARLY, 9th grade ideally. I was surprised by how long everything took, especially the proposal process. Gold Awards take time, but they are well worth it.

How did your Gold Project change you? I've learned more from my Gold Project than I have from any other project, program, or class. It definitely changed me. Just the issue of sex trafficking required me to grow up a lot. The adults I interviewed were victims, parents of victims, law enforcement officers, a state representative, etc. As a teenager who had never interviewed anyone before, I had to quickly learn to conduct professional interviews. I worked with adults, organized, scheduled, raised funds, was a producer, director and editor, and made presentations. I learned MANY new skills, from how to professionally edit video to becoming a better public speaker.

I'll take away more maturity, countless skills, and several life lessons from my Gold Award process.