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February 2021

Open Letter to Ophelia Followers,

Every January we hold the Ophelia Mentor Certification Conference. It is part of the national program model for Ophelia and all mentors are required to attend. This year the conference was held virtually. Superintendent of Desert Sands Unified School District, Scott Bailey, welcomed everyone and gave an encouraging update on the district's plans for moving forward.

At this year's conference, we also had an amazing keynote speaker, Dr. Veronica Slaughter. Dr. Slaughter is retired from her 35-year chiropractic practice here in Palm Desert, and now lives on the beautiful island of Maui, with her many animals. She is also a renown author. Dr. Slaughter talked about her recently published book, "Have you Seen These Children" revealing her harrowing life as a young girl. This book tells the true account of her troubled and turbulent childhood and how she survived to achieve the American Dream through her resilience, fortitude and bravery. Dr. Slaughter relates her supportive mentors to the wonderful work our Mentors are doing in Ophelia.

There are many well-known figures in the history of American Women whose quotes inspired young women to never give up. Powerful brave people who made such a difference and changed so many young lives for the better teaching young girls to be warriors - not victims. Dr. Slaughter said of these powerful women in history "my strength erupted deep within me, like a volcano. I felt like a phoenix rising from the ashes."

Ophelia Mentors give that kind of strength to Ophelia Girls. That is how Ophelia Mentors make Ophelia girls feel. Dr. Slaughter praises Ophelia Mentors for relying on their own history of survival skills and instilling the importance of strength and resilience in the girls they mentor. Veronica Slaughter is a warrior, and Mentors, you also are warriors.

"Without Fear there is no Courage. Without Weakness there is no Strength"  
Dr. Veronica Slaughter

Stay safe and healthy everyone and thank you for your commitment to Ophelia Project!

Susan Francis  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
John F. Kennedy Memorial Foundation  
Home of Ophelia Project