

school introduced her to an older man who groomed her and eventually started trafficking her. Stephanie was forced to make money and if she did not succeed she would be beaten. Sometimes the beatings would lead to hospitalizations. Her trafficker had been arrested multiple times for domestic violence, other violent crimes and she tried to escape the situation several times over the years. Despite her attempts, the trafficker was always able to find her. The last time she tried to escape the trafficker beat her so severely her teeth were knocked out, her eardrum was ruptured, and she was stabbed in the abdomen.

A partnering agency made a referral to the Northwest Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition. An assessment determined that Stephanie was in fact a human trafficking victim and had been for nearly 20 years! The Coalition along with law enforcement assisted Stephanie in escaping her situation, provided shelter, met her basic needs, and gave her intensive case management and counseling services.

Over time Stephanie began to heal from her trauma, and she is now attending University of Toledo on a scholarship given from a Human Trafficking advocate. Stephanie's story is an outstanding example of how the Coalition and collaboration with other community agencies can pull together to meet the needs of human trafficking survivors. Stephanie is a strong, empowered woman who has shown all of us what overcoming and moving forward is all about.

You can be a part of helping these victims escape their trafficking situations and start a new life. Donations are welcome in the form of gift and gas cards, personal hygiene items, therapeutic activities, other household items or monetary gifts. If you are interested in receiving Labor trafficking and or Sex trafficking training for yourself, or your business, or if you have any other questions, please contact rlaiza@crimevictimservices.org.

Inspired by Event

Thank you to all the ladies who attended our membership appreciation event at the Inspired By art gallery last month. We had a great turnout for the event. Thank you for your participation, and for all you do for our community ladies!

