

# Vednita Carter



## Professional Profile

Vednita Carter, founder and executive Director of Breaking Free, has extensive experience in developing and planning programs for women and girls who are victims of sex trafficking and exploitation. Breaking Free, founded in 1996, is an Afro-Centric non-profit agency whose mission is to educate and provide services to women and girls who have been victims of abuse and sexual exploitation and need assistance escaping violence in their lives. Breaking Free provides advocacy, direct services, housing, education, and hope to more than 500 women, girls, and their children each year.

Prior to founding Breaking Free, Ms. Carter developed and directed the Women's Services Program at WHISPER (Women Hurt in Systems of Prostitution Engaged in Revolt), a pioneering program of its time and also counseled incarcerated women at the Rivers of Life prison ministry program. Her passion has always been for the underserved and often invisible victims of oppression and injustice.

Ms. Carter has dedicated her life to helping others help themselves. She is a leading expert in the sex trafficking abolitionist movement and a sought-after speaker educating the local community, the FBI and police, members of Congress, international colleagues, the faith community, as well as many other stakeholders in the fight to end sex trafficking. She is a consultant to the United States Department of Justice and was invited to speak at the United Nations on the topic of prostitution and its impact on African American Women (June 1997). In 2010, Ms. Carter received the Norma Hotaling Award, an international honor awarded to her for developing model programming for prostituted/trafficked women and girls.

Ms. Carter's greatest asset continues to be her ability to connect with and relate to women and girls who have had their lives ripped away from them. They often feel that they are worthless and hopeless individuals. Vednita makes sure they know that that ***they are worth saving***.

- Professional Experience

### **Founder and Executive Director, Breaking Free**

*1996-current*

Founded the only Afro-centric nonprofit organization in the country to provide advocacy, services, housing, education, and legal services to sex trafficked women and girls. Developed an intensive victim-centered case management program. Established transitional and permanent supportive housing programs for victims. Successfully created the Offenders Prostitution Program, a restorative justice for men arrested for soliciting prostitution. Provided training and technical assistance to professionals around the world.

**Program Director, WHISPER** 1985-1996

**(Women Hurt in Systems of Prostitution Engaged in Revolt)**

Developed and implemented a model case management program to assist women and girls to escape systems of sex trafficking/prostitution and domestic violence. Hired, trained, supervised and evaluated case managers, interns, and volunteers.

• **Education and Qualifications**

**Institute for Executive Director Leadership** 2005-2006

University of St. Thomas *St. Paul, Minnesota*

**United States Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation** 2001

Citizen's Academy Graduate

**Women's Studies** 1986-1990

University of Minnesota *Minneapolis, Minnesota*

• **Awards**

Winona State University Certificate of Recognition 2002-2003 2003

St. Paul Council of Churches – All Faith Alliance for Crime Victims Award 2006

City of St. Paul Proclamation – Breaking Free Day 2006

Women's Press Change Makers 2007

Achieving Dreams Award, Resource, Inc. 2008

Soroptomist Woman Award 2009

Minnesota Coalition of Battered Women Appreciation 2009

Extraordinary Service Award MCBW 2009

Global Centurion Norma Hotaling Award 2010

Century College Women of Distinction Award 2012

Dedicated Service Award - Resource Recovery Center 2012

Shared Hope International Pathbreaker Award 2013

Cable News Network 2014 Hero Award 2014

• **Professional Activities**

**Board Member, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women** 2000-Current

*New York, New York*

Vice-President 2013-current.

<b>First White House Conference on Missing, Exploited, and Runaway Children</b> Washington, D.C	<i>October 2, 2002</i>
<b>AFNAP Program Trainer (A Future Not A Past)</b> <i>Denver, Colorado</i>	<i>April 21-22, 2010</i>
<b>Witness for Peace Delegation to Colombia</b> <i>Colombia, South America</i>	<i>March 2011</i>
<b>White House Advisory Committee Advisor for Human Trafficking Stakeholder Meeting</b> <i>Washington, D.C</i>	<i>December 10, 2012</i>

- **Training/Certifications**

Minnesota Department of Health Sexual and Domestic Violence: Enhancing Trauma-Informed Practice Training	<i>June 2012</i>
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- **Publications and Documentaries**

Author, "Prostitution: Where Racism and Sexism Intersect," *Michigan Journal of Gender and Law*, 1993, Volume 1: 81-89

Co-author with Evelina Giobbe, "Duet: Prostitution, Racism and Feminist Discourse", *Hastings Women's Law Journal*, 1999, Volume 10: 37-57

Contributor, *Sisterhood Is Forever: The Women's Anthology for a New Millennium*, Washington Square Press, 2003

Author, "Providing Services to African American Prostituted Women," *Journal of Trauma Practice* Volume 2.3-4: 213-222

Documentary contributor, *Rape Is*, Cambridge Documentary Films, 2003

Author, "Providing Services to African American Prostituted Women," *Journal of Trauma Practice*, 2004, Volume 2: 213-224

Contributor, *Missing, Abducted and After*, STM Learning, Inc., 2010

- **Key Conference Presentations and Speaking Engagements 2012-Present**

- October 2012 – ‘New York State's Campaign Against Sex Trafficking: What's Next?’ (Fordham University School of Law) *New York, New York*
- November 2012 – Shared Hope International Conference *Washington, D.C*
- November 2012 – NC CASA Sexual Assault Conference *Fayetteville, North Carolina*
- December 2012 – Special Guest invite at President Obama’s address on Human Trafficking *Washington, D.C*
- March 2013 – Women’s Studies Tour *Israel*
- April 2013 – Symposium on Trafficking (Smith College) *Northampton, Massachusetts*
- April 2013 – Dismantling Rape Culture Conference (University of Vermont) *Burlington, Vermont*
- April 2013 – Women’s Bar Association Conference *Washington, D.C*
- April 2013 – ‘We Were Slaves: The Jewish Community Unite Against Sex Trafficking’ *New York, New York*
- May 2013 – Virginia Commonwealth University Conference *Richmond, Virginia*
- June 2013 – Refugee Housing Conference *Tallahassee, Florida*
- September 2013 – Agape International Missions *Thailand and Cambodia*
- October 2013 – Demand Change Heartland Conference *Kansas City, Missouri*
- October 2013 – William Mitchell School of Law *St. Paul, Minnesota*
- October 2013 – Special Guest College of St. Scholastica *Duluth, Minnesota*
- November 2013 – Special Guest: University of Minnesota’s Humphrey School of Public Affairs *Minneapolis, Minnesota*
- December 2013 – Survivors Forum *Washington, D.C*
- January 2014 – United Nations Symposium *New York, New York*
- February 2014 – ‘Lessons About Issues and Solutions in Cuba from Women’s Perspectives’ *Cuba*
- March 2014 – United Nations Symposium *New York, New York*
- May 2014 – Amnesty International Symposium *New York, New York*
- June 2014 - NOW Conference ‘Faces of Feminism: Strength in Diversity’ *Albuquerque, New Mexico*
- July 2014 – Anti-Pornography Conference *Boston, Massachusetts*

**Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives**

Witness Disclosure Requirement - "Truth in Testimony"  
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

<b>1. Your Name: Vednita Carter</b>		
<b>2. Are you testifying on behalf of the Federal, or a State or local government entity?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>3. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity that is not a government entity?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4. Other than yourself, please list which entity or entities you are representing:</b>  Breaking Free, Inc. St. Paul, MN		
<b>5. Please list any Federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) that you or the entity you represent have received on or after October 1, 2011:</b>  OVW SASP-CS, OVW THP, OVW SASP-ES, HUD, OJP CCP, OJP CVS		
<b>6. If your answer to the question in item 3 in this form is "yes," please describe your position or representational capacity with the entity or entities you are representing:</b>  Executive Director/Founder of Breaking Free 501(c)(3), a non-profit agency helping women and girls escape systems of prostitution and sexual exploitation through advocacy, direct services, housing, and education located in St. Paul, MN.		
<b>7. If your answer to the question in item 3 is "yes," do any of the entities disclosed in item 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships that you are not representing in your testimony?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>8. If the answer to the question in item 3 is "yes," please list any Federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) that were received by the entities listed under the question in item 4 on or after October 1, 2011, that exceed 10 percent of the revenue of the entities in the year received, including the source and amount of each grant or contract to be listed:</b>  NA – no single federal grant received exceeds 10 percent of yearly revenue		

9. Please attach your curriculum vitae to your completed disclosure form.

Signature



Date: 9-9-14