

Biography:

Michelle Littleton

My name is Michelle Littleton, and I am a left-behind parent of three beautiful children, Ascila, Leilah, and Yousef. I was born in Dallas, Texas and raised on the east coast in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina mainly. My parents divorced when I was about nine years old, but they were quite amicable and I was able to move back and forth as I wished so I had a chance to know both of my parents. Looking back I realize what a blessing that was. I have two older sisters who also have children of their own. My entire family is struggling with the loss of my children. I try to avoid family gatherings now especially during the holidays. I gave birth to all three of my children in Orange County, California. Ascila is now 15, Leilah 13, and Yousef is 7 years old. I was mainly a stay at home mom since they were born. I took my daughters to ballet, soccer, and many other activities and we were always busy trying to enjoy life. My son was just beginning to play soccer and I was teaching him how to throw a football and swing a baseball bat when he was ripped out of my life at age 5. He still believes in Santa Claus per a conversation I had with him over a month ago. All three of my children are very artistic. Ascila played the viola in the school orchestra and they won many competitions. Leilah had a knack for art and draws animals very realistically. My daughters were in honors classes and scored 100% across the board on the California statewide testing. To tell you about me, I must tell you about them. They are my world and without them in my life it is beyond heartbreaking.

Before they were kidnapped my mom came to California to help me watch over the kids while I was at work. It wasn't long before we were selling all of my furniture and packing up for Florida. I moved to Florida to lean on my family and regroup. It was impossible to pursue my career in California real estate having to suffer through such agony every day. I cried constantly day and night. We drove across the United States from California to Florida in less than three days. My mom, dad, sister and many other relatives all live on Merritt Island. I began looking for a job immediately so that I could pay my Lebanese lawyer to begin working on my case. It didn't take me long to find a good job at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station as a contract hire for United Launch Alliance. I was hired as an administrative assistant to the Director of Launch Operations. It was amazing to actually find a job that had a greater purpose and mission. It took me less than a year to become a full-time employee and I was selected as an Ambassador for ULA. I have made many friends at work and most people have seen my story in the news and in the newspaper. Just today I had to leave a meeting crying due to a disheartening email I received regarding my case. This is my daily life now. The pain in my heart never ends. It never goes away.

My children were kidnapped to Lebanon on January 4, 2017 by their father with the help of his family members based on a lie that they were only going on vacation for ten days. I warned Orange County California Judge James Waltz for a year before this occurred that if they went to Lebanon, I would never see them again. He dismissed me and my family's desperate pleas to keep the children safe. He took away my custody so my ex could obtain passports. I had to agree to the trip to gain partial custody back.

I was working at a commercial real estate company as an administrative assistant and receptionist during the last year before they went missing. I had high hopes that I would be able to pursue a career there and use commercial real estate certifications and real estate license to support my family and have a wonderful life. But all of that came crashing down like a building being demolished.

About two weeks after my children went on this supposed vacation, the grandfather and uncle began calling me to invite me to visit Lebanon and remarry my ex-husband. Out of desperation to be with my children, I almost agreed to go. The State Department and FBI urged me not to go because they believed I would be in danger and never return to the states. The children's return flights were scheduled for January 27 but they never boarded the plane. I felt in my gut that I needed to act quickly so I contacted the FBI and reported the children missing. I have been fighting for my children ever since.

I did not understand exactly what was happening because I was in shock. I remember very vividly the phone call I received from my ex-husband's brother and father telling me that the children were not coming home and that if I called the FBI they would never allow me to see my children again. My body shook and I could barely walk out of the building I was working in.

So far the abductors have been very successful at skillfully alienating my children from me. I have not had one FaceTime with my children and contact is limited. I find it difficult to talk about my life, because it isn't much of a life at all without my children to raise. They deserve all of the freedoms and opportunities they were given as United States citizens. My mission in life to bring home my children and help fight for all abducted children and left behind parents. I have to make use of the pain I am suffering by fighting IPCA so it isn't wasted on suffering alone.

I have been preparing my new home on Merritt Island in Florida for my children when they come home. Their rooms are all furnished and decorated and I am just waiting for them anxiously. I was hoping to go Christmas tree shopping with them and pretend that Santa was coming for my son. Unless our government intervenes and Lebanon cooperates, having them home by Christmas is not part of my reality.