



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Georgia Cares and Junior League of Atlanta Release “Stripped Down, Set Free” To Raise Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking**

ATLANTA, GA (May 15, 2015) – Georgia Cares, in partnership with the Junior League of Atlanta, announces the release of “Stripped Down, Set Free,” a video aimed to bring attention and raise awareness to Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. In this video, National Trafficking Advocate & Survivor Keisha Head courageously recounts her story of childhood abuse, homelessness, teenage pregnancy, and system involvements that increased her vulnerability to being approached, groomed, and ultimately sexually exploited over the course of several years. Ms. Head’s account of her experience is an eye-opening and raw depiction of what victims of exploitation undergo, including physical, mental, and sexual abuse, threats of harm against victims and their families, untreated medical and mental health needs, substance abuse dependency, and fear. However, this story of resiliency and strength is one that will inspire all to become the voice for the voiceless, and an advocate for the advancement and support of all survivors.

Georgia Cares and The Junior League of Atlanta have worked together over the past years to tackle the issue of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. Jen Bennecke, President of The Junior League of Atlanta, Inc. (JLA), said “The Junior League of Atlanta has been working hard for years to end trafficking and exploitation in our community by raising public awareness and training community members on this important issue. The JLA partnered with Georgia Cares to put a face on the statistics in ‘Stripped Down, Set Free.’ Children who have been subjected to commercial sexual exploitation have a big story, but may have a small voice. In many cases, their exploiter has stripped them of their voice, completely. ‘Stripped Down, Set Free’ helps us give each child back her voice.”

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) defines Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) as “The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act where the person is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident under the age of 18 years.” Since 2009, the state of Georgia has received over 1,250 referrals for DMST victims, both male and female youth, coming from over 80 counties across Georgia, (Georgia Cares, 2015). Victims of DMST range in age, gender, race and socioeconomic status, demonstrating that youth of all backgrounds are susceptible to the dangers of trafficking.

“Stripped Down, Set Free” is available to view by clicking [here](#); the video can be viewed as a trailer, regular cut, and extended cut on the Georgia Cares website <http://www.gacares.org/resources.html>. Viewers are encouraged to share this video with others to aid in efforts to bring attention to Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in Georgia. Georgia Cares and the Junior League of Atlanta thank Ms. Keisha Head for sharing her story and bringing a voice to this issue.

#### **About Georgia Cares**

Georgia Cares is the single, statewide coordinating agency to connect services and treatment care for victims of child sex trafficking. Through research informed practices and evidence based assessments, the organization coordinates services to meet all needs and dimensions of a child’s wellbeing. Staff follow a victim throughout their process of treatment and recovery to lead healthy, successful lives as productive members of society. Visit [www.gacares.org](http://www.gacares.org) to learn more about Georgia Cares.

#### **About the Junior League of Atlanta**

The Junior League of Atlanta, Inc., (JLA) is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. For more information, please visit [www.jlatlanta.org](http://www.jlatlanta.org).