

Sylvia Ui'lani Matayoshi



Sylvia is recognized as an international expert on Human Trafficking. Her career began as a member of the Honolulu Police Department Domestic Abuse Response Team. She currently manages the day to day operations of the W.E.A.V.E. Special Victims Unit of the Nisqually Police Department, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice and is a Senior Advisor to the Tronie Foundation. She was a member of the Washington State Governor's Anti-Trafficking Taskforce and the Washington Anti-Trafficking Resource Network. She was a lead staff member of the Trafficking Response Team, a collaborative project with the Asian Pacific Islander Safety Center, Refugee Women's Alliance, Seattle Police Department Vice Unit and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

From 2000 to 2010 Sylvia served as a Violence Against Women and Human Rights Specialist on Trafficking at the United Nations. She was appointed and an official delegate to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women as a Senior Advisor and Negotiator representing Pacific Island Countries and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. During her service on the UN CSW, Sylvia co-sponsored UN policy along with the United States Delegation that addressed the prosecution of individuals and groups who fuel the demand for trafficked victims. Sylvia has conducted human trafficking investigations for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In 2003, Sylvia traveled with Washington State Representative Velma Veloria and Ms. Rani Hong to Brazil, on assignment with the U.S. State Department to train law enforcement, prosecutors, law makers and advocates throughout the country and South America. Sylvia has served on the faculty for the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center's Domestic Violence Indian Country Training Program. Sylvia has participated in high level human trafficking briefings at the United States White House.

Sylvia was a Keynote Speaker on Human Trafficking at the United Nations International Women's Day Celebration, Brigham Young University, University of Hawaii- School of Law and two International Conferences on Human Trafficking in Brazil. She has provided training for visiting delegations from Croatia, Tanzania, Senegal, Russia, Japan, Korea, Iraq, Philippines and Albania.

In her spare time, Sylvia enjoys swimming, gardening, cultural activities and her most important calling in life: being Mom to nine busy kids.