



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

November 13, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

I met Kimleigh Smith in Washington, DC about 4 years ago at the FRINGE Festival, where she performed *T-O-T-A-L-L-Y*. I was so impressed by what she had to say and everything she represented that I decided right there and then that we had to bring her to Fairfax County for our Sexual Assault Awareness Month events.

A couple of years later it finally happened! We started to plan and very early on I realized that we could not make it on our own so I decided to invite other county and community agencies from our neighboring jurisdictions to partner on this important and exciting endeavor: *to raise awareness about sexual assault and violence against women and to empower community members to take the issue as their own.*

In April of 2014, we had the privilege of having *T-O-T-A-L-L-Y* performed by Ms. Smith at Northern Virginia Community College, sponsored by: The Women Center, Shelter House, Northern Virginia Community College, Arlington County Project Peace, Zonta Club of Fairfax, City of Alexandria-Sexual Assault Center and Fairfax County Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services.

Kim Smith has been by far, the best Sexual Assault Awareness speakers this area has had!

Sexual assault is a challenging topic in so many ways. It's hard to get folks to sacrifice their spare time to learn more about sexual assault on college campuses and in our community at large. It's hard for survivors to listen to someone else's story without being triggered. It's hard to make healing from trauma both entertaining *and* inspirational. Kimleigh Smith exceeded all of our expectations in light of these many challenges.

Kimleigh's story is raw and honest in a way unlike any other speaker I have seen—on this topic or any other. She speaks to her audience in such a brave fashion; it is impossible not to be moved by her story and recovery. She truly inspired so much learning and healing in just over an hour.

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My biggest regret is that we cannot bring Ms. Smith to our community every year, even though we wish we could! It would be fantastic to be able to present her performance in a different area of our jurisdiction every year. Due to Kimleigh's performance and how she shared her story, so many survivors in the audience were impacted and more so were able to move further in their healing process.. Also, so many friends and bystanders were able to learn how to help someone who may have experienced sexual violence, after being part of the performance.

I strongly recommend Kimleigh Smith for your next Sexual Assault Awareness and/or Take Back the Night presentation. Your students and/or community have so much to learn from her, whether they are survivors themselves, support persons, or folks who think they are not affected by sexual violence. *T-O-T-A-L-L-Y!* It should be mandatory viewing for any and every college student.

I would be thrilled to discuss Kimleigh Smith and her talents further. Please feel free to email me at debra.ranf@fairfaxcounty.gov or call me at 703.324.9496.

Sincerely,



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