

## Questions and Answers with Johnny Bueno

Why and how did you get involved in responding to and preventing gender-based violence?

I first got involved in responding to and preventing gender-based violence when, as an adult, I realized that my anguish from seeing my father abuse my family was permanent. After that realization, I sought out a place where I could be with people in the community who have had experiences like mine. I realized that I could deal with what I was holding onto in a positive manner by helping people, which in turn, helps me deal with my past.

What are some challenges and successes you've experienced in doing this type of work?

One challenge I have experienced doing this type of work is that my raw emotion still exists; it is surprising. It is hard to see women and children come to the shelter abused and scared. But, every challenge has turned into a success. Helping our community by showing those scared women and children that they have friends at La Casa de las Madres feels good. Another big challenge for me this year was speaking to a large audience to share my experiences with abuse (Link to Speech), but it was also the most rewarding moment I have had in a long time.

What do you consider the most important aspect of your work/advocacy?

The most important aspect of my advocacy is realizing that the work is never done. We need to constantly remind young women and men that domestic violence is not the answer, so that the message continues. We do not have to be like our parents, we can stop the cycle.

What would a violence-free world look like to you?

A violence-free world would be a place where children, mothers, and girlfriends feel safe, and where hate, anger, and violence are washed away. It would be a beautiful world of communication, understanding, and love.

How can others get involved in preventing gender-based violence?

People can get involved in preventing gender-based violence by working at a domestic violence shelter, volunteering, speaking out, and letting family and friends know where you stand on the topic. If people stand up for what they believe in, their lives will change.