

## Nita Belles

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Nita Belles is an author, speaker and leading national expert in the anti-human trafficking movement. Her journey as a tireless crusader against human trafficking began in 2006 when she witnessed the cruelty of this atrocity and was compelled to take action. Each year since 2010, Nita's anti-trafficking work surrounding the Super Bowl has been instrumental in holding traffickers and sex-buyers accountable, and recovering victims of human trafficking. In her years of dedication to this issue – from prevention to restoration – she has collaborated with top law enforcement, survivors, government officials, social service providers, medical professionals, and faith communities as the key to creating comprehensive, lasting change.

### **National Speaker and Trainer**

As a prominent trainer and motivational speaker, Nita engages audiences of all kinds, empowering them to use their expertise and sphere of influence to stop human trafficking. She frequently speaks to government officials, law enforcement, universities, businesses, civic organizations, medical communities, conferences and faith-based groups. Some past audiences have included National Association of Attorneys General, Oregon Youth Authority Parole and Probation, University of Oregon, Brigham Young University, Saddleback Church, Willow Creek Church, and innumerable human trafficking conferences.

### **Victims Advocate and Legislative Advisor**

She possesses a deep understanding of both labor and sex trafficking and is sought after to assist in the recovery and restoration of victims. Nita knows that to make a lasting impact in ending human trafficking, laws must be changed and she often advises legislators regarding laws to bring justice in this realm. She provides expert testimony as an advisor on HT laws and has influenced the passing of human trafficking legislation in several states. Nita was instrumental in the passing of Oregon's House Bill 3143 which requires that Freedom Stickers go out with every renewed liquor license in the state of Oregon. Freedom Stickers contain the National Human Trafficking Hotline number, offering a pathway to freedom for victims of human trafficking. They originated with In Our Backyard and were designed in collaboration with survivors.

### **Author and Spokesperson**

Expanding upon her first book written in 2011, Belles authored what has been acclaimed as the primer on human trafficking: *In Our Backyard: Human Trafficking in America and What We Can Do to Stop It* (Baker Books 2015). Nita is published in Huffington Post, Washington Post, and the Journal of Christian Nursing, among others. Often interviewed as an expert on human trafficking, her work has been featured by CNN, FOX Files, USA Today, Focus on the Family, and others.

### **Founder and Executive Director**

Nita is the Executive Director and Founder of In Our Backyard, a national nonprofit organization that links arms across America in the fight against human trafficking through awareness, action, education, legislative advising and advocacy for survivors. She is passionate and dedicated to leading the organization and has never taken a salary.

### **Career and Education**

After a career in business, Nita earned her Master's Degree in Theology with a Concentration in Women's Concerns. She served as a domestic violence chaplain and associate pastor prior to founding In Our Backyard. Nita has been happily married to her husband Dan for more than 30 years. In her spare time, Nita enjoys riding her bike and spending time with her family.