Julissa Ponce

Julissa is a speaker, advocate, and consultant for anti-trafficking work with lived experience in labor exploitation and trafficking. She has extensive knowledge in cultural humility, worker rights, migrant outreach and labor trafficking training.

Prior to joining US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, Julissa worked as a comprehensive bi-lingual survivor advocate for an Iowa-based nonprofit serving survivors of human trafficking. Julissa is also a certified sexual assault and domestic violence advocate.

"Trauma comes in many forms, whether it be childhood abuse or human trafficking. One thing I try to keep close in mind and heart is that no one experiences trauma the same way. So, when working with survivors my experience has taught me never to create a hierarchy of trauma within the survivors. I have been trained in trauma informed care, sexual assault and domestic violence response among other different modalities and have created some of my own in order to better serve my clients who range from children to adults both foreign and domestic."

Her lived experience gives her a unique insight into the intersectionality of different forms of trauma. Human trafficking lives within the grey areas of everyday life. It is her goal to teach responders and everyday lay people to be able to identify at-risk populations, the different forms of human trafficking, over-looked community resources for survivors, and most importantly to respond adequately by minimizing the harm and re-traumatization that survivors could be exposed to.