

Contact: Gloria Allred
Phone: 323-653-6530
Email: gallred@amglaw.com

Statement of Gloria Allred Regarding Michelle Miller

Today James Hooker was sentenced after he entered a plea of no contest to a misdemeanor charge of oral copulation of a minor, Penal Code 288A (B) (1).

I represent the victim in this case, Michelle Miller, who has given permission to use her name and reveal her identity to the public. Ms. Miller is now 32 year old. She was 17 years old when she met James Hooker. He was, at the time, as Business teacher at Davis High School. She was a senior at Beyer High School, but she met him because he was the adult chaperone for her and another student who had been selected to attend a Future Business Leaders of America conference in Orlando Florida.

At the time, the victim was extremely vulnerable because of challenges she was facing in her personal life. Mr. Hooker, like many sexual predators, must have sensed that vulnerability and took advantage of it.

He began a romantic relationship with Michelle even though he was still married. Mr. Hooker has recently admitted, through a stipulation in court in advance of his trial, that he did perform oral sex on my client, the victim in this case.

Prior to this criminal case, Mr. Hooker had been on the news last year because of his relationship with another high school student, Jordan Powers. Mr. Hooker, at the time of that relationship, was still married and was 41 years old. Mr. Hooker appeared to be proud of that relationship appearing on both "Good Morning America" and "Dr. Phil", where he seemed to revel in it, while the mother of Jordan Powers was visibly upset that Mr. Hooker, a married man approximately 23 years older than her daughter, was engaged in a relationship with her daughter.

Today Mr. Hooker no longer appears to be smiling with pride about his relationship with another young woman, the victim in this case. Because of her courage, Mr. Hooker was charged with felony oral copulation on a minor under the age of 18. It was only on the eve of the trial that the defendant, Mr. Hooker,

entered his plea, which is tantamount to a plea of guilty and for which he has been sentenced today.

The sentence includes a requirement that Mr. Hooker must register as a sex offender and it places restrictions on his contacts with minors under the age of 18.

The requirement that Mr. Hooker must register as a sex offender was extremely important to my client and because this was a condition of the plea, Michelle has agreed to the plea being offered in lieu of trial.

I am extremely proud of Michelle. She has demonstrated enormous courage in reporting Mr. Hooker's criminal conduct to law enforcement. She did so because she felt that it was her duty to report a crime against a minor.

She has paid a high price emotionally for performing her duty. Some people, who have no knowledge of what she has suffered because of Mr. Hooker's criminal conduct toward her, have mistakenly criticized her for coming forward. However, she understood that if she had evidence regarding this defendant she should share it with law enforcement and allow them to determine its value, or lack of it, in the criminal justice system.

Because she has done the right thing, other children will now receive a measure of protection and Mr. Hooker will be recognized for the predator he is.

Now that Mr. Hooker has been sentenced, Michelle is no longer a victim. She is now an empowered and inspirational survivor.

I am honored to have been able to support her in her journey. She has been an inspiration to me and to many others who have been the victims of sexual predatory misconduct by adults.

**Gloria Allred
Attorney at Law
Representing Michelle Miller
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