

CONTACT: GLORIA ALLRED
(323) 653-6530
Email: gallred@amglaw.com

Statement of Erika Butner

My name is Erika. I was proud to be an active duty Marine for 4 years and became a civilian as of June 2016. In August 2016, I learned that a photo of me was posted on "Marines United" Facebook page without my consent. As a result of that posting, a former Marine posted a comment asking if anyone had naked photos of me.

In January 2017, I contacted NCIS along with Google with my personal information to notify both of them about a share drive which contained indecent photos of women from all military services, organized by name, rank and even where they were stationed. Some of them were naked and information was provided on how these women could be contacted. I knew some of these women did not give their permission to post their photos and some were not aware that they were posted.

Multiple victims recently began speaking out about those unauthorized photos but they received threats and backlash in an attempt to quiet them.

We will not be silenced.

As a rape survivor, I can tell you that this exact behavior leads to the normalization of sexual harassment and even sexual violence.

Victim blaming and the excuse that some are giving that "boys will be boys" needs to stop. It is an excuse to justify the perpetrator's behavior and normalizes aggression toward women. As a Marine Corps veteran, I am disheartened and disgusted with this scandal.

I am thankful that the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Neller made a statement acknowledging the sensitive issue at hand. I know myself and many other victims would appreciate meeting with the Commandant in person to discuss how we can promote more respect for each other and to make our suggestions for change.

I encourage all victims of this incident to come forward. You are not alone.