

TSOS **THEIR STORY IS OUR STORY**
giving voice to refugees



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2018

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR : Melissa Dalton Bradford

Presented: 20.05.2019

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE



MELISSA DALTON-BRADFORD

Executive Director Melissa Dalton-Bradford is an author, public speaker, intercultural integration consultant, humanitarian, and founding member of Their Story Is Our Story.

Their Story is Our Story has experienced remarkable growth and refinement since its founding early in 2016. Over three short but intense years mirroring three distinct phases of our development, TSOS has expanded quantitatively and deepened qualitatively.

Development Phases

Our two earliest phases focused on raising awareness of the refugee crisis by sharing stories harvested primarily within Europe. Our most recent phase,

however, (2019), has moved well beyond awareness-raising. We have recrafted our mission statement to concentrate on harnessing our storytelling expertise to mobilize local populations to engage with refugees in their very midst. **In other words, we aim to bring the global crisis to its very grassroots, to everyone's doorstep. We will bring the crisis home.**

Restructuring

This year alone, we nearly tripled our

number of team members. This growth required a restructuring of everything from our board to our social media subtitle writers. We established the Community Program Development (CPD) team where our content is currently being transformed into shareable tool kits to be made available for free on our website, so educators and community leaders across the US can amplify our message and drive local action toward refugee integration. Educational hubs —primarily universities and high schools—are our main focus, because

we believe that by igniting campus movements in the rising generation TSOS and its followers will stand boldly on the forefront of historical plate tectonics, a juncture where societal shifts will either unite and salvage or divide and destroy humanity.

Millennials

Our future is in our millennials. We have recently established our first bona fide university chapter. Those 20 members are hard at work preparing to share our stories at several venues on World Refugee Day. Under the direction of our CPD, Regional Program Coordinators will direct Community Liaisons (like our university chapters) to light a fire in the grass roots that will drive citizens to connect with refugees across the nation and accompany them as they become stable, successful, strong members of our shared social webwork.

Recent Progress

Determined to speak authoritatively about the global refugee landscape, we traveled to key clusters of refugees in Europe (Greece, Italy, France, Switzerland and Germany), but also added a week-long documenting trip to Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, the largest known refugee camp on earth. The latter trip was the first we have made under our new partnering model. By working hand-in-hand with two nonprofits, Hope Foundation for Women and Children and Humani Terra, we were able to work efficiently while strengthening our reach and reputation. And in two weeks from this writing, we are sending a team to document stories coming from the US southern border. Truly, the crisis—and all its opportunities for good—are on our doorstep.

We assert that every last man woman and child can assist their sister and brother refugees to learn language, make local friends, and move toward gainful employment. These three “markers of belonging”, as we call them at TSOS, will benefit not only refugees, but the whole of society, our entire communal future.

OUR VISION

To bridge the gap
between
refugees and
established citizens,
so that there is no “them,”
just us.

OUR MISSION

We gather and share
first-hand refugee stories
to reveal the individuals
behind the “refugee” label
and cultivate meaningful
relationships with those
seeking refuge locally,
so that together we can help
build strong and inclusive
communities.

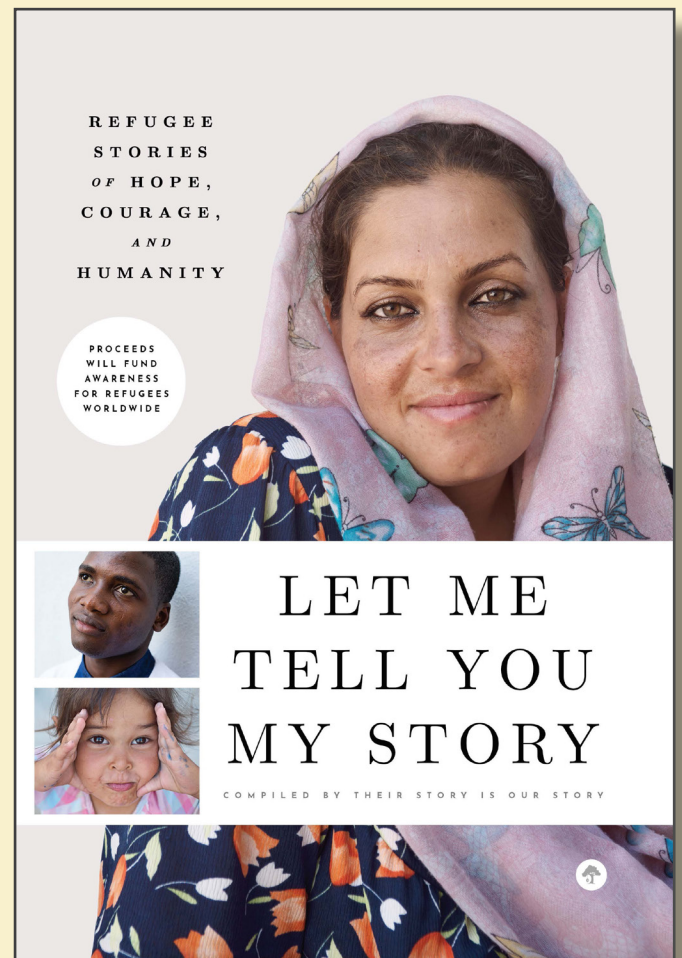
LET ME TELL YOU MY STORY

OUR CULMINATING PROJECT

TSOS partnered with Familius, a California publishing company, to publish *Let Me Tell You My Story*, a stunning and revelatory collection of dozens of photojournalistic essays spanning the over two years we have been documenting refugee stories. The book became available to the public in October 2018.

BOOK LAUNCH EVENTS, PUBLICITY

- ➔ **An Evening of Refugee Stories and Song** — Salt Lake City Public Library. TSOS volunteers sold books and t-shirts. Refugee musicians and native dancers from different parts of the world performed. TSOS Executive Director Melissa Dalton-Bradford spoke of her experiences and the mission of TSOS.
- ➔ **Apfel Fest at Frankfurt International School.** TSOS had a table with books, artwork, videos, and volunteers. Later, on November 26, TSOS held an event called “Refugees in Story and Song” at the school.
- ➔ **Deseret News** (Utah’s largest newspaper) — “Group with Utah Ties has Revolutionary Idea to Help Refugees: Listen to Them”
- ➔ **BYU Magazine** — “Refugees, Strangers No More”
90.9 FM KRCL RAdio — interview with Melissa Dalton-Bradford
- ➔ **The Women with Fire Podcast** — Interview with TSOS refugee portrait artist Elizabeth Thayer
- ➔ **Top of Mind with Julie Rose** (BYU radio program) — interview with Melissa Dalton-Bradford





Refugees in Germany



A Refugee in Greece



Fourth grade students in Paris

- ➔ **Covey Center Art Exhibit** (Provo, Utah) — with portraits by TSOS artist Elizabeth Thayer
- ➔ **Authority Magazine** — interviews Melissa Dalton-Bradford
- ➔ **Top of Mind with Julie Rose** (BYU radio program) — interview with Elizabeth Thayer
- ➔ **Fox 13 Television interview** (Salt Lake City) — Melissa Dalton-Bradford and Lindsay Silsby
- ➔ **Top of Mind with Julie Rose** (BYU radio program) — interview with Trisha Leimer

BOOK REVIEWS

CHRISTOPHER ROBBINS

founder of Familius Publishers

The most important work I've ever published.

BRANDON STANTON

founder of Humans of New York and
New York Times #1 bestselling author

With no political power, refugees are often left without a voice. Let Me Tell You My Story helps refugees reclaim some power and dignity by giving them a platform to tell their stories. It is a meaningful and important collection.

MARY COWPER

Midwest Book Review

An extraordinary collection of extraordinary lives lived out in extraordinary circumstances, "Let Me Tell You My Story" is a compelling read and one that will linger in the mind and memory long after the book itself is finished and set back upon the shelf. A unique and outstanding contribution to our contemporary national discussion over refugees and immigration, "Let Me Tell You My Story" should be a part of every community and academic library collection in the country.

STORY COLLECTION



TSOS volunteers visited five European countries on a story collection trip between November 8-26, 2018. The primary objective was to follow up with individuals whose stories had been published in the book in order to give them a copy of the book and document their continued progress. Additionally, TSOS planned to interview new refugee and volunteer contacts. Staff visited Italy, Greece, Germany, France, and Switzerland. They completed 54 total interviews during the trip, including 14 refugees who had previously shared their stories, each of whom received a copy of Let Me Tell You My Story. Fifteen interviews were completed with new refugee contacts and their stories were documented. And 25 interviews were conducted with other volunteers.

In Italy, the team revisited the Baobab tent camp near Rome's Tiburtina train station and were able to interview some new refugee contacts.

In Greece, the team spent three days at Lisa Campbell's Do Your Part Community Center, which is a few miles away from the Oinofyta Refugee camp where TSOS first interviewed refugees in July 2016. TSOS interviewed Lisa extensively and conducted brief interviews with several of the refugee employees as well as representatives from two NGOs who regularly assist Lisa in providing aid and supplies to refugees.

In Paris, TSOS Executive Director Melissa Dalton-Bradford held a lecture at the American School of Paris. Staff also met with other volunteers and refugees around the city. All of the interviews conducted in Germany were follow-ups, in order to help document peoples' progress over the past several years. A TSOS volunteer was also present at the Frankfurt International Airport as a mother who provided her story for the book was reunited with her husband and three older sons. Finally, in Switzerland staff members met with a handful of refugees who have been in close touch over the past couple of years and who are setting up life in Switzerland.



ITALY



GREECE



FRANCE



GERMANY



SWITZERLAND



UTAH

PRESENTATIONS & EVENTS

“BANDS FOR REFUGEES”



SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

On June 16, 2018 TSOS held an event called “Bands for Refugees” in Provo, Utah. Several local musicians were invited to sing and perform at an outdoor amphitheater. In between performances, people read accounts from Let Me Tell You My Story. Refugee photos were projected on a large screen behind the musicians. There were food trucks and a table with t-shirts and other donated products for sale. TSOS accepted donations at the door and raised about \$4200.



WORLD REFUGEE DAY

On World Refugee Day,

June 20, 2019, TSOS actively promoted acceptance and understanding of refugees by sponsoring booths, activities, and events — all designed to change hearts and minds and generate support in behalf of displaced people worldwide. Meet-and-greet volunteers in TSOS-branded t-shirts screened refugee videos, distributed fliers and story cards, answered questions, and recruited support for TSOS and other refugee-aid organizations. TSOS had a presence in the following cities nationwide:

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

MESA, ARIZONA

WASHINGTON D.C.

MISSOULA, MONTANA

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

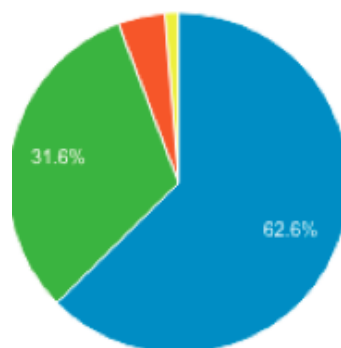
PORTLAND, OREGON



SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

MARKET SEGMENTATION

The TSOS social media team regularly posted on Facebook and Instagram a few times per week throughout the year. Posts included photos and excerpts from refugee stories, videos, and links to blog posts by team members.

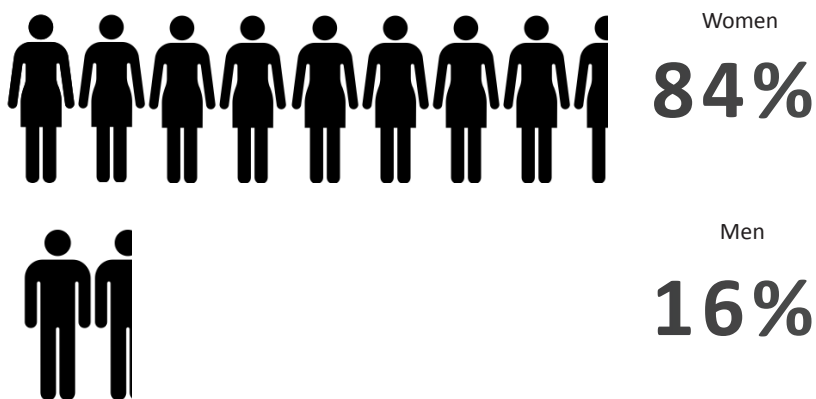


- Direct
- Social
- Organic Search
- Referral
- (Other)

The TSOS website had:

- 57,196 unique visitors for 2018
- 31% (18,302) from Social Media
- 5% (2,579) from Search Results
- 112,000 total pageviews

DEMOGRAPHICS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGERS

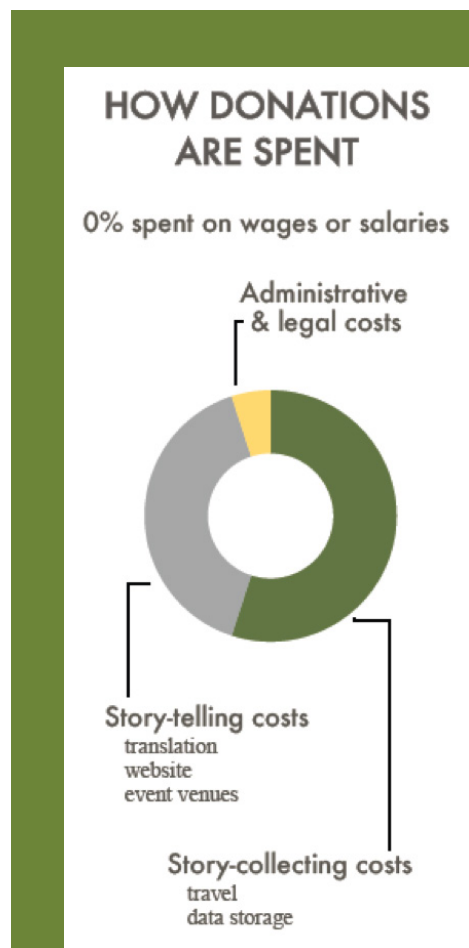


TOP COUNTRIES

1. U.S.A.
2. United Kingdom
3. Germany

TOP CITIES

1. Provo, Utah
2. Salt Lake City, Utah
3. Frankfurt, Germany



VOLUNTEER WORKFORCE



Their Story Is Our Story consists of award-winning photographers, filmmakers, painters, writers, and other skilled specialists from Europe and the United States — all volunteers who donate their time and talents to the refugee cause.

Our team has doubled in size since this photo collage was prepared a year ago for inclusion in our book, *Let Me Tell You My Story*.



UNITED STATES

Utah, California, Washington, Texas, Montana,
Virginia, New Hampshire, Arizona,



EUROPE

Germany, Italy, England, Switzerland, France,

THEIR STORY IS OUR STORY

giving **voice** to refugees

MORE INFORMATION

www.refugees.org
help@tsosrefugees.org
[instagram.com/tsosrefugees](https://www.instagram.com/tsosrefugees)
[facebook.com/tsosrefugees](https://www.facebook.com/tsosrefugees)
twitter.com/tsosrefugees
[youtube.com/tsosrefugees](https://www.youtube.com/tsosrefugees)