

# Dallas Jessup Bringing Focus to Social Unjustice

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**D**allas Jessup is your average teenager. You know, the type that gets behind a global cause by producing an acclaimed independent film and a best-selling book. And, oh, who could forget, testifying in front of the U.S. House of Representatives with an unusual solution to worldwide human trafficking crisis.

Jessup, a Vanderbilt University freshman, captured the worldwide spotlight with her film "Just Yell Fire" and NGO of the same name which focus on empowering teenage girls to fight back against predators and traffickers.

She recently sat down with Technorati to talk about her organization and provide advice to those looking to find a cause of their own.

TR: What advice would you give to young people around the country about embracing a cause?

Jessup: Be sure to pick a community organization or a cause that is not your moms or dads. Find something that you want to do and get involved in something you are passionate about. Find that social injustice that makes you angry and get involved full force. People often dip their feet in all types of philosophies, but should just focus in on one passion. It's more than just doing a bake sale. It's about getting involved.

TR: So what's next for you and your organization?

Jessup: I'm working on a new script for a new film that's geared towards college students, coaches and physical education teachers. I want to continue to train and teach girls so we can reach more young women in more places. We want young women to be more alert and in tune with this issue. We want them to

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be more aware about what they can do to prevent trafficking.

TR: What advice would you give parents raising daughters?

Jessup: It's hard to tell your kids that there are bad people out there. They will never be too young to tell them about this stuff. For example, if your kids are young, teach them to knock stuff off the store shelves if they are in a store and someone is trying to grab them. Teach them to not go willingly. It's never to young to start educating them.

TR: How important is it to have a good support base around you to start something similar to what you've done?

Jessup: Have a good support system that's made up of your friends, family and connections you can make in the business world. There are a lot of skills out there that you may not have, but other people do. Build relationships with

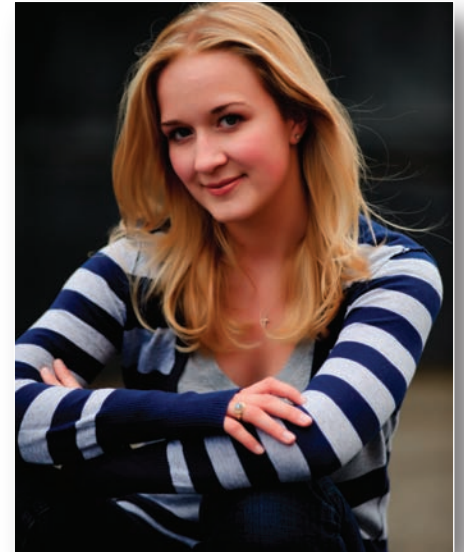


Photo Credit: DallasJessup.com

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TR: What have you learned about yourself throughout your journey?

Jessup: I've learned a lot about business at a young age — things like marketing and PR. I've learned that I might be interested in a broadcast or communications job in the future. I might even want to go to law school. Whatever it is, I want to talk about social solutions to problems.

This process has made me a stronger person. It's important to remain humble even though you want to get loud, proud and excited for what you've accomplished. This sort of work becomes who you are, what you do in life. It motivates you to continue and succeed. There's a perception of my generation being a bunch of slackers and gamers. But we're not. I'm just one example of that. ■