

1 GVP45

2 T: The audio.

3 D: Yep. Just audio. Okay, please state your name.

4 T: Tatiana Washington.

5 D: Okay, and Tatiana, how old are you?

6 T: I am eighteen years old.

7 D: Okay, and may I ask, what is your nationality?

8 T: African American, black.

9 D: Okay and are you, and your gender?

10 T: I am female.

11 D: Okay, and what neighborhood or area did this incident happen with gun violence?

12 T: The Northwest Side of Milwaukee.

13 D: Okay. And are you a native Milwaukeean?

14 T: Yes.

15 D: 'Kay. And can you please share your story and be as descriptive as possible?

16 T: Yeah, 'bout two years ago, my aunt Sharda was shot and killed by her husband and he then

17 turned the gun on himself and their two children, my little cousins were eight and twelve at the

18 time and were home when that happened.

19 D: Wow and was, what side of town was it around where the incident took place?

20 T: It was on Northwest Side, at their home.

21 D: Okay, and well, you told me that, that the neighborhood, can you be, like was it off of

22 Sherman, North Avenue, Silver Spring? We just do that for the mapping.

23 T: Oh, I can probably send it to you later, I don't know the exact—

24 D: You could just take a guess.

25 T: I don't know.

26 ?: It's a working class neighborhood off of 97th and Bradley, in that area.

27 T: That's what I thought.

28 D: Just repeat that.

29 T: 96th and Bradley.

30 D: Okay. And what would you say, what would you say as a result of this, what has happened to

31 your family?

32 T: Yeah, I think that it definitely brought my family closer. And we really had to kind of, grieve

33 together and you know, my cousins, their whole life completely changed. They lost both of their

34 parents. So, it's been hard, it's been an adjustment period, period. But, I think this definitely

35 made us all stronger. And it brought us closer together.

36 D: And you said your cousins were how old when this happened?

37 T: They were eight and twelve years old.

38 D: Were they there? Were they at the house? Were they gone?

39 T: Yeah, so it happened at home and they were home too when it happened.

40 D: Do you know if they actually saw it?

41 T: I'm not comfortable with answerin' that.

42 D: That's, that's fine. Okay, and you said that the experience brought your family closer

43 together, and just so you know, they're gonna eliminate my voice.

44 T: Okay, oh.

45 D: What would you say (pause) have the children, you said that they children experience post-

46 traumatic stress?

47 T: I think definitely just because it's such a traumatic event. That, what happened, but you know,
48 us as a family, we work through everything.

49 D: What would you say to a family who recently experienced a, a similar incident with gun
50 violence? How would you suggest they get, go through it?

51 T: I think especially what happened with my aunt, because it was domestic violence there can be
52 a lot of guilt and wondering like, "Why didn't we know anything was happening?" And kind of a
53 lot of survivor's guilt. And I think you have to take that guilt away and know that everything
54 happens for a reason, as much as that hurts to know, everything does happen for a reason. And to
55 not lost hope and to keep that hope alive as you're grieving. And it's okay to grieve, you know,
56 really go through all those steps and that process of grieving and that's, that, it's okay to do that.

57 D: Wow, you sound so wise for such a young lady. (laughter) She does! Old soul. Do you think
58 that that situation could've been avoided?

59 T: I definitely do think situations like this and other situations can be avoided. You know?
60 There's things called Extreme Risk Protection Orders, where people can get their gun, well,
61 someone that they love rather leaving their gun be harm to themselves or others can get their
62 guns temporarily taken away. So, you know and we see that in states like Colorado or other
63 states where that's been reinstated, that domestic violence homicides have gone down, suicides
64 have gone down, too. So, when you look at that, there's that, definitely avoidable. And I honestly
65 think that all gun violence is avoidable. So.

66 D: What, well, you said the perpetrator killed himself, so that's not a question. (pause) What do
67 you think we could do to eliminate or lower gun violence?

68 T: Well, we can obviously be lobbying for gun legislation like Extreme Risk Protection Orders,
69 universal background checks, but there really has to be a cultural change around violence. We, as

70 a community, need to come together and look at the root causes of violence. And once we
71 address those root causes, we can start eradicating gun violence.

72 D: Wow. And do you want me to take your photo or do you want to send me a professional
73 photo?

74 T: I can send you a headshot. Yeah.

75 D: Okay, great. And do you have anything you'd like to say to elected officials or the
76 community?

77 T: To elected officials, I would say that we need to stop polarizing this issue. This is not a
78 democrat versus republican issue, this is literally, a life or death issue. And it's frustrating when
79 you see politicians continuously take money from the NRA, who literally blocks any common-
80 sense legislation getting passed and that's frustrating. And I would say to the community, that we
81 need to vote. We have to exercise that right to vote because we have to get out those politicians
82 that don't care about our lives.

83 D: And is there anything you'd like to add?

84 T: No. (laughter)

85 D: Thank you.

86 T: You're welcome.

87 D: (pause) I felt like I rushed it for your mom.

88 T: (laughter)

89 D: But that's okay.