

Eugenie Mukeshimana

Eugenie is a survivor of the 1994 genocide against Tutsis in Rwanda. She was 8 months pregnant and living in Kigali when the genocide unleashed. After moving to the U.S. in 2001, Eugenie began to publicly share her experiences with students across the country to educate them about the dangers of hatred, inflammatory language, violence, and lack of concern for others. She uses her life story to inspire others to rise above personal setbacks and tragedies.

Topics Include

- Overcoming Adversity • Violence Prevention
- Character Education • Stress Management
- Communication Skills • Leadership Training
- Curriculum Building



Available For: Student Assemblies, Parent Workshops, Staff Development Programs

Biography

In Spring of 1994, life changed dramatically for the first time soon-to-be mother, Ms. Eugenie Mukeshimana. She had been hiding from Hutu militia for nearly a month when she suddenly went into labor and realized she was to deal with it alone. The events that followed this rainy long night redefined the concept of life as she knew it.

Eugenie's story of surviving provides a true insight into a well-organized genocide crime that only few survivors have the courage to recount. In compelling story-telling fashion, Ms. Mukeshimana recounts her life from childhood to motherhood, from captivity to liberation, from loss and despair to resiliency and hope, from near-death to life worth living, from injustice to justice for all.

In 2001, Eugenie moved to the USA to start a new life journey. She attended The College of St. Rose in Albany, New York, where she earned a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Social Work. Shocked by the lack of knowledge about the genocide among her classmates and teachers, Eugenie began to publicly speak about her experiences during the genocide. Eight years later, her story has been heard by thousands of students and community members throughout the country.

Eugenie is an experienced public speaker, frequently sought to speak about genocide crimes, gender-based violence, coping with loss and grief, post-conflict justice, forgiveness and reconciliation, fighting hatred, diversity and cross-cultural education. Her exceptional gift to connect with audiences of any age, in addition to her ability to deliver her painful story in a humble, informative and captivating manner, has won her standing ovations and accolades throughout the country.

Testimonials

"It was right after your story that I told myself I would join the STAND chapter at Ramsey. In school, we are not told of the severity of these events--they are merely said as an afterthought and never put in the forefront of our studies. But your story was enlightening (and terribly, terribly saddening). I truly wish to be involved in STAND and other efforts my school organizes to combat genocide, and I owe it all to you and your story." – Ramsey High School Student

"It is truly a transformative experience for the teachers and students who attend, and I can wholeheartedly say that it was a most worthwhile experience for our entire Farmingdale High School community." – Garner Bass, Director of Social Studies, Farmingdale Public Schools, NY

"I had the privilege to attend the 59th Annual DPI/NGO Conference, UN Headquarters, NYC last fall. One speaker that really impressed me was a 1994 Rwanda genocide survivor, Eugenie Mukeshimana. She spoke of gender-based violence against women in conflict regions and empowerment in the post-conflict period." – Virginia J. Schlicher, Australia

"You made me realize that life is what you make it, and to live my life the best way I can, Now I see I can change the way I live no matter what I have done, that my life is to be lived happily." – Marvin C. Recovering drug addict, Albany, NY