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Blog Series Details Sexual Assaults at Financial Events

The incidents shared by advisor consultant Sonya Dreizler affected 40 women, most — but not all — of whom wish to remain anonymous.

By Janet Levaux | October 18, 2019



(Photo: Shutterstock)

A woman in the investment business who was present when advisor Ken Fisher made lewd remarks (<https://www.thinkadvisor.com/2019/10/09/ken-fishers-off-color-comments-at-conference-spark-debate/>) at an industry event last week is

speaking out on what she says is the “unchecked bad behavior [that] runs rampant at many financial services conferences.”

Sonya Dreizler, head of the ESG-investing consultancy Solutions with Sonya, has started sharing “real stories of sexual harassment, assault and discrimination” in the industry in a series of blog posts (<https://www.solutionswithsonya.com/do-better-series>).

Her aim is for members of the industry “to first continue listening to women’s experiences to better understand the problem” before moving to address them.

These incidents were told to her by 40 women, most of whom wish to remain anonymous.

However, one of the women, Mary Moore of AdvicePay, has explained her story on Facebook. Her husband, Alan Moore, co-founder of XY Planning Network, also said on Twitter (https://twitter.com/R_Alان_Moore/status/1185229152472817664) that she is the woman described in the second story of Dreizler’s Friday blog post. Mary “was raped at her boss’ house” four years ago, he told ThinkAdvisor in a phone interview.

Mary Moore says she is speaking out now after “processing it” and discussing it with a therapist and others: “I’m now empowered ... to bring awareness that this [type of behavior] exists and for us all to be allies [against it]. So now when others see something [untoward], they will stand up.”

The first time Mary Moore described what happened to her to another person, “She did not believe me. And if a victim gets a negative reaction immediately then they will not share [the truth] with others. I want those who hear [about these incidents] to know how important it is to believe [the victims]. And I hope those who have had this experience know that they are not alone and that they are supported.”

Alan Moore said he and his wife both believe the media should be willing to “publish stories from anonymous sources,” since many victims are not comfortable sharing their names and their stories “then do not get told.” He and his wife want women “to be aware and empowered” by such accounts.

Dreizler says conference organizers “have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all participants.” Plus, they should have codes of conduct that attendees, sponsors, speakers and staff must agree to.

(XY Planning Network has an anti-harassment policy at its conferences, a decision Alan Moore said was prompted by his wife’s experience.)

Dreizler is asking anyone who sees “sexual harassment, assault or any other type of degrading behavior” to speak up. “A phrase that works in many situations is, ‘Hey, we don’t do that here,’ ” she added.

— *Check out Debate Rages On as Ken Fisher’s Son Defends His Lewd Remarks (<https://www.thinkadvisor.com/2019/10/18/debate-rages-on-as-ken-fishers-son-defends-his-lewd-remarks/>) on ThinkAdvisor.*

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