

Good morning and thank you Chairwoman Maloney and Members of the Committee for holding this important roundtable.

My name is Tiffani Johnston. I appreciate you all taking the time to hear about the constant workplace sexual harassment that occurred at the Washington Football Team for over 2 decades. I personally experienced it multiple times during my 8 year tenure as both a cheerleader and a Marketing Manager.

This is the first time I am telling my story publicly. I basically blocked these experiences to avoid dealing with the trauma. I am ready to talk, I am ready to tell the full story and I am beyond ready to see accountability. Dan Snyder and the WFT NEED to be held accountable and the report NEEDS to be released. I am here today to tell you about the sexual advances by Dan Snyder and the constant unprofessionalism and “boys locker room” culture that started at the top with Dan Snyder and continued down the line with all of Dan Snyder’s Senior Team.

I began working for the Washington Football Team in 2002 after a team executive approached me and presented me with an opportunity. He said he was creating a new position with the Club Level Tickets team, a Marketing and Events Coordinator, and he had me in mind from our interactions at team events while I was a cheerleader. He and I went to breakfast to discuss the opportunity and after lots of conversations with my parents (I was in my early 20’s, after all) and my boss at Booz, Allen Hamilton, I decided if there ever was a time to leave a distinguished, incredibly professional company like Booz Allen to take a job with an NFL team, now, in my early 20’s, was the time.

Boy, did I learn a lot at the Washington Football Team, under top executives and Dan Snyder. Let me share some of the “highlights” I learned during my tenure with the team.

I learned what a “pearl necklace” is while in a marketing meeting with my boss and male co-workers. And it’s not the kind you receive from your grandmother at 8th grade graduation. For those of you who don’t know, it’s an offensive sexual term.

I learned from another high-level executive that I should wear low cut blouses when making sales pitches to potential Suite Owners. Apparently, it generates faster sales.

I also learned from this same executive that the best way to avoid an uncomfortable situation in front of a potential Suite Owner is to just do what my boss asks, which on one occasion involved him tossing me in the air to do a cheerleader stunt for a client while I was wearing a skirt.

I learned on one specific occasion that when I was asked by my boss to attend a networking event (and oh, to dress “cute”), it was actually an orchestration by him and Dan Snyder to put me in a compromising, sexual situation.

I learned that placing me strategically by the owner at a work dinner after this networking event was not for me to discuss business, but to allow him to place his hand on my thigh under the table.

I learned how to discreetly remove a man’s unwanted hand from my thigh at a crowded dinner table, at a crowded restaurant to avoid a scene. I learned that job survival meant I should continue my conversation with another co-worker rather than to call out Dan Snyder right then, in the moment.

I also learned later that evening how to awkwardly laugh while Dan Snyder aggressively pushed me towards his limo with his hand on my lower back, encouraging me to ride with him to my car. I learned how to continue to say no even though a situation was getting more awkward, uncomfortable and physical.

I learned that the only reason Dan Snyder removed his hand from my back and stopped pushing me towards his limo was because his attorney intervened and said "Dan, Dan, this is a bad idea...a very bad idea Dan."

I learned that I should remove myself from Dan's grip while his attorney was distracting him.

I also learned, at that moment, during an unspoken conversation between my boss and I, that my boss was not there to look out for me, he was there to listen to any directive his boss, Dan Snyder, had given to him...at my cost.

The next day, I learned, when I told a senior co-worker about Dan Snyder's sexual advance that I "should not repeat this story to anyone outside this office door."

That was when I also learned that there was no one to go to about Dan Snyder's advance, no path to report the incident ...so I learned to move on.

As a Washington Redskins Cheerleader, I learned a lot as well.

In the last couple of years, I learned that Dan Snyder, via a Senior Vice President, demanded that my unedited, enlarged lingerie calendar photo be sent to his office. I learned that this demand was made urgently because they knew that the graphic artist was getting ready to photoshop my personal areas before the edited proof went before all the Senior VPs and Dan Snyder for approval.

There is my story. I also learned by recounting these details and telling this story, that I at some point subconsciously developed an emotional wall that I can only assume is a means to protect myself as a result of my tenure at the WFT. This has affected me more than I originally thought. This is something no woman should be subjected to in the workplace. No one should have to learn about pearl necklaces or be objectified and harassed, and certainly no one should have to fend off sexual advances from a company's owner. I sit here before you and hope that my words will leave a lasting impact, as these events have had on me, so we can work to hold all employers accountable for ensuring a safe and professional workplace. Transparency should be the standard so that accountability follows.