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“WHISTLEBLOWER”

BUS 434: Ethical Leadership

Professor Joseph Williams

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What is a Whistleblower? According to Harper and Ingulli (p. 87), “Whistleblowers are people who decide to report unethical or illegal activities, often activities under the control of their employers”.

Let us meet, this courageous and “famous” woman, Commander Kimberly Young-McLear. She is not famous in the world of entertainment or broadcasting, or a well-known athlete. Commander Kimberly Young-McLear, PhD., is famously known, within the United States Armed Forces, the Coast Guard, as a whistleblower who exposed gross and unlawful misconduct at the Coast Guard, where she is currently on active duty in her 19th year of service.

She previously served as Special Assistant to the Cabinet Secretary of Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security as an advisor on both domestic and international issues. She has advocated for increasing internal equity within the Coast Guard by opposing discriminatory prohibitions on dreadlocks and natural hairstyles for Black women on active duty and implementing protections for LGBTQ+ members of the Coast Guard.

According to the National Whistleblower Center (NWC) website, “In 2014, Commander Young-McLear became a whistleblower by reporting systemic abuses of power at the highest levels of the Coast Guard”. And the National Whistleblower Center, in conjunction with other not for profits groups, has stood alongside her and sent a letter to President Joseph Biden for him to acknowledge her heroism.

Despite her years of service to our nation and selfless advocacy against misconduct and discrimination, Commander Young-McLear has faced retaliation for her whistleblowing. Commander Young-McLear continues to suffer from egregious psychological harm.

With all the positive impact she makes, fighting for the rights of women, who like her, voluntarily took an oath to honor, defend, and serve the American people, within the Armed Forces, instead of being celebrated, she is being bamboozled by the United States Coast Guard.

Due to her courageous efforts, integrity, grit, and advocacy, in blowing the whistle, the United States Coast Guard has since designed and implemented over 30 policy improvements.

The irony behind this heroic event is horrendous. Commander Kimberly Young-McLear, PhD., has a target on her back, every day, from the very organization she vowed to defend our country. I commend her bravery for taking an ethical stand on her moral beliefs. She did it in the face of adversity, being unpopular, and afraid.