



## Local

Home Local



By NIKKI GREY news-press correspondent

November 25, 2011 5:51 AM

Others may have hurt her before, but you'd have to be out of your mind to mess with her now.

That's what Beverly Hills-based plastic surgeon Dr. Brent Moelleken said of his patient, Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department Deputy Judith Hall, who he'll be performing reconstructive surgery on this coming Monday.

Dr. Moelleken will be providing the South Coast resident surgical services for free through his nonprofit organization called About Face Foundation.

Founded by Dr. Moelleken, the foundation provides reconstructive surgery to victims of crime as well as disadvantaged children.

When Deputy Hall walked into Dr. Moelleken's Santa Barbara office about two months ago - with the intention of paying for his services and having never heard about his charity work - the doctor said he knew right away there was a story behind her broken nose.

"There was obviously this tremendous trauma associated with it, so I asked, 'What happened to you?'" he said.

"What didn't happen to you?" may have been an easier question.

Deputy Hall, now 35, spent most of her childhood in and out of foster homes. Her family troubles started when she was only a baby and her father was murdered. After that, Deputy Hall said, her young mother was very abusive to her and her five siblings.

"It was nothing new to go to school with welts and bruises on my body," Deputy Hall told the News-Press. "It was everyday life for me."



Judith Hall is seen in front of the Figueroa Annex of the Santa Barbara County Superior Courthouse.  
THOMAS KELSEY / NEWS-PRESS

everyday life for me."

She recalls begging for food from neighbors as a child because her mother often didn't feed her. She remembers a mom who wouldn't allow her daughter to be adopted by a loving foster family, but only held on to her children for a welfare check.

Deputy Hall laments that social workers and other state employees continued to send her back to her mother, only for her to be abused more and end back up in the system.

When Deputy Hall's aunt convinced her mother to allow the young girl to live in her home, Deputy Hall thought most of life's troubles were going to be behind her. At 15 years old, she wanted to try to "live a normal life." She met a boy at church and they began dating, but a few months into the relationship the boyfriend started pressuring her to have sex. One day, when the two were alone at his parents' house, things turned ugly.

After refusing to have sex with him, Deputy Hall said her boyfriend "beat the crap out of me," breaking her nose. Someone in the house overheard what was going on, and the teenager escaped the situation, but she didn't report it, she said, because she didn't think anyone would help.

"I didn't believe anybody would do anything for me because I was a part of the (foster care) system and they'd never protected me," Deputy Hall said.

She had her nose looked at by a doctor, but said her family didn't have the means to pay for reconstructive surgery. Since then, she hasn't been able to breathe normally through the right side of her nose. A few months ago, Deputy Hall decided she wanted to have reconstructive surgery, saving for months, accumulating overtime, and even working an entire month without a day off so that she could have the operation.

Once Dr. Moelleken heard her story, however, he insisted on performing the operation free of charge. He told the News-Press that Deputy Hall is the perfect candidate for his charity. She was not only a victim of abuse, but she also uses her experiences to help others. He said he hopes the surgery will help Deputy Hall "clean up some baggage from the past.

"It's almost cliché, but it is really true that people who have had a traumatic experience, they may never come to terms with it," Dr. Moelleken said. "The physical manifestation of that is often a scar, that might not even be that big, but when they get it fixed, it's this cleansing (that occurs)."

Her nose is a constant reminder of the attack, said Deputy Hall, but also a motivator to help other women suffering from similar situations.

"Every time I look at my nose, I remember this (guy)," she said. "Because of that, I want to tell young women that no one has the right to physically or mentally abuse you."

That is why she became a law enforcement professional, she said.

"I grew up wanting a female cop to give me a hug, to tell me everything is OK," she said. "I wanted to become that person that I never had."

Her experiences have helped her relate to many women she sees through her work. In the ten years she has worked in law enforcement, Deputy Hall said she's proud to say she's making a difference. She thinks if something that she has said - or just showing that she cared in some way - helps a woman or child, she will be happy.

Although she doesn't normally share her story with people she helps on the job, Deputy Hall is now eager to tell others about what happened to her nose, which she feels is symbolic of not only her traumatic childhood, but also of her determination to overcome her obstacles and succeed.

She wants others to know that they can break the cycle of abuse. She believes that all women and children are beautiful and they deserve better, she said. Although many people told Deputy Hall she would never amount to anything, she said, she has accomplished her dreams and wants others who have suffered from abuse to know that they can, too.

After experiencing a life filled with abuse, uncertainty, and feeling unloved, Deputy Hall - who is incredibly grateful for the doctor's gift - said she's ready to put her past behind her.

A friend compared Deputy Hall to a volcano recently. She said she had all this stuff bubbling under the surface, and now it's ready to come out.

"I've had a hard life, but I'm here to show people that here I am," Deputy Hall said. "I am whole and I'm going to make a difference."



## Related Stories

- [Sep 12, 2004](#)  
**ARCHIVE** Thinning the politician
- [Apr 22, 2004](#)  
**ARCHIVE** Good-bye to Gale Noon
- [Mar 16, 2006](#)  
**ARCHIVE** Opinion: Can we believe a Jackson a?
- [Oct 23, 2008](#)  
**ARCHIVE** PET GALLERY
- [Jul 4, 2007](#)  
**ARCHIVE** CARDENAS, Doloe
- [Oct 29, 2006](#)  
**ARCHIVE**