



## Truckers Against Trafficking Newsletter

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### As seen on our Facebook page

When asked why someone recommended our TAT Facebook page to others, here was the response given by some of our supporters:

"Do I support this?!?!? Let me ask you this... If your son or daughter was just taken from you, the amber alert is a week old and you are losing hope...

How would you feel that a trucker reported suspicious activity about a van that was taking your son or daughter across the border to make them a prostitute, labor in a sweat shop or make porn? Yes, I support this organization with all of my heart."

"This group is a POWERFUL, effective group, working so hard to end human trafficking! Much love and gratitude to TAT!!!"

"Truckers Against Trafficking is an awesome organization with the goals of educating truckers about the spotting and reporting of human trafficking. Check them out!"

The work TAT does is because of people like YOU! Thank you for your support.

**Hello friends and supporters,**

**As we begin the final quarter of 2013, we are thankful for a year filled with new partnerships, new opportunities to provide training and education for more people about human trafficking and the work the trucking industry is doing to stop the spread and growth of this massive crime. This last quarter, we gave out our first Harriet Tubman award to a woman who, like Tubman, was willing to keep her eyes open to those who needed help, asked the right questions, and eventually made the call that prevented a trafficking situation from occurring right before her eyes.**

**Every call makes a difference. Every driver trained on recognizing the signs of human trafficking makes a difference. Every wallet card in the hands of those of you that are the eyes and ears of our nation's highways makes a difference. Thank you for the work you do. We are privileged to be a part of it.**

**Truckers Against Trafficking**

### Truckers Against Trafficking announces first winner of the Harriet Tubman Award

Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) announces the first winner of its annual Harriet Tubman award.

The award, which carries with it a \$500 check, is named in honor of famed abolitionist Harriet Tubman, whose courageous personal actions resulted in the transportation of 300 slaves to freedom through the Underground Railroad and whose overall role in the freedom movement was instrumental in the freeing of thousands more. Born

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into slavery in 1820, Miss Tubman was the first African American woman buried with full military honors and the first to have the inaugural Liberty ship named after her - the SS Harriet Tubman - by the US Maritime Commission.

"Because of Harriet Tubman's connection to transportation through the Underground Railroad and her heroic work to free thousands of slaves, TAT believes she epitomizes the symbol of freedom a trucking anti-trafficking award represents," said Kendis Paris, TAT executive director. "TAT is dedicated to the prevention of and/or rescue from human trafficking through the intervention of members of the trucking industry. Each year, through a nomination process and the information collected by the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, we will present the Harriet Tubman award to the member of the trucking industry whose direct actions help save or improve the lives of those enslaved or prevent human trafficking from taking place.

"For 2013, we're pleased to announce that Tracy Mullins, general manager of the Petro Stopping Center® in Spokane, Washington, is our first Harriet Tubman award winner," she continued. "Her ability to implement training into appropriate actions resulted in the possible prevention of human trafficking of two minors at her station."

Mullins is a Spokane resident and a 14-year veteran of the transportation industry. She credits the TAT training required of all employees/managers of TravelCenters of America LLC or TA, with playing a pivotal role in her awareness of "something that could be wrong."

In relating the incident which earned her the award, Mullins recounted that she was walking into a restaurant near her travel plaza to talk to the manager. She noticed two young girls sitting with an older man. "Not that the situation was odd," she said, "but the man looked as if something could be wrong. I positioned myself close enough to the table to hear the young girls ask for a ride to Seattle. At this point, the images of all the young girls from the training video were going through my mind. I approached the table and asked the girls if everything was okay. One of the girls told me the man was her uncle. The man seemed very uncomfortable and removed himself from the situation. The young girls then asked other drivers for a ride."

Mullins realized there was a problem and notified law enforcement. The girls turned out to be runaways from a neighboring state with only \$5 between them.

Mullins stated, "This is a very special award for me,

because, as a mother, I know we helped two young girls not become a statistic that day."

"Human trafficking is a worldwide issue. We and TAT recognize that, in the United States, much of this activity relies upon the U.S. highway system for trafficking transport, and that because of our prime locations principally along the Interstate Highway System, our professional driver customers and our employees just might be in the right place at the right time to help a victim. We provide employees and drivers with information about what to look for through our company-wide training and awareness programs. We are honored by the news that Tracy received this award. We are proud of her and of the fact that she took the TAT training to heart and used it," commented Tom O'Brien, president and CEO of TA.



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## Adopt the IRS

Nope ... not the Internal Revenue Service.

Something that gives back, rather than takes ... the Internal Reporting System.

That's right. For TAT to be able to award the Harriet Tubman Award to the most deserving people each year, we need your help.

Because the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) at 1-888-3737-888 does call intake when human trafficking situations occur, TAT needs its partners to create an internal reporting system to help us uncover those everyday heroes who are making a real difference, so we can celebrate and highlight their efforts. Like the hotline, we also want to respect those who wish to remain anonymous, but we know there are folks who would like to share the positive results of their phone call. We also believe this internal reporting system will give your company a chance to recognize and honor the real Truckers Against Trafficking, as well as give the trucking industry another reason to take pride in its work. Therefore, we ask that you implement the following (or similar) steps at your company:

- Using your best communication tool, announce that your company would like anyone who has made a call to the NHTRC at 1-888-3737-888 -- and does not need to remain anonymous -- to let you know the results of the call.
- Create a reporting mechanism ... most likely just an email that would contain the following information for proper vetting to take place.
  - First and last name
  - Date, time and location of call
  - What was the situation?
  - How did the hotline and law enforcement respond?
  - What is the name of the police department that responded?
  - What happened when police came? Was anyone arrested? (pimp, john, or victim?)
  - Do you know if the victim was able to access victim services through the hotline?
- Send an email to [tat.truckers@gmail.com](mailto:tat.truckers@gmail.com) with this information or have the original come to us, along with the contact information of someone at your company with whom we could verify the information.
- TAT will vet the information, and if it is accurate and a success story comes out of it, we will notify you to honor your employee. (Consider giving a certification of recognition, or developing some other means to honor this person internally).
- Your employee will be automatically considered for the TAT Harriet Tubman Award. If your employee wins, you will be immediately notified.

We urge you to implement this program immediately, so we can begin to recognize the real Truckers Against Trafficking and celebrate their efforts both within and out of the industry.



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## Training gives general public greater understanding of trucking

Often times, members of the general public want to help TAT spread awareness of the issue of human trafficking to the trucking industry in their specific area. This could include making contact with trucking companies, trucking associations, truck stops and travel plazas, truck driving schools and trucking suppliers.

When they offer, TAT sends them to volunteer coordinator Bonnie Blank to ensure they understand TAT's message and approach as well gain a bit of insight into the trucking industry, before they receive materials.

Blank takes prospective volunteers through two training protocols with an invitation to e-mail questions and let her know when they've completed training and are ready for materials to take with them to an appointment they've made with a trucking company official or a general manager of a travel plaza. Blank also requests that they provide a report of their progress.

"So far," she said, "we've trained 37 volunteers from a variety of states. However, they haven't all become active by scheduling appointments with trucking members."

Blank began working with TAT in her present capacity in January of this year. However, she'd been excited about the work TAT was doing for two years, since she'd learned Pilot/Flying J travel plazas and the California Trucking Association had both joined TAT's efforts to fight human trafficking, in 2011 and 2012, respectively. As a member of the Justice and Peace Committee of the School Sisters of St. Francis, she and other members of the committee were already engaged in efforts to combat the crime, and were pleased to learn of the trucking industry's involvement.

"I love hearing the passion from a number of truck stop general managers," she commented. "Some have explained how important they felt this program was, because they have wives and children of their own. They want this trafficking out in the open, so we can end it. They were just as passionate as I am about it. Many use the TAT video as part of their training for their employees. It's my opinion that the best general managers are working this program at their truck stops and are destined for advancement in their careers. They are the super-stars in my book."

She continued that she loves the work she's doing with TAT and feels she's making a difference just by helping TAT keep up with the volunteers. "TAT staff are the ones working at the truck shows, updating the website, keeping us volunteers on the right track. They are wonderful and professional as well as passionate and caring people," she concluded.



Bonnie Blank

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## What is TAT?

Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) is a non-profit organization that exists to educate, equip, empower and mobilize the trucking industry to combat human trafficking as part of their regular jobs. Domestic sex trafficking occurs along our nation's highways and at its truck stops, where traffickers can sell their victims to a transient population they believe are less likely to attempt rescue. In response, TAT is asking the 3 million domestic truckers, as well as other members of the trucking industry, to become aware of this issue, and, when they suspect a human trafficking case, to call the national hotline and report it.

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