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Human Trafficking in the News

AG Paxton announces new agency human trafficking unit

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton today held a press conference to announce a new unit within the Texas Attorney General's Office dedicated to combating human trafficking. This new unit will be headed by Deputy Criminal Chief Kirsta Leebug Melton, an experienced prosecutor with an extensive background in combating human trafficking in Texas.

Shutdown of sex-trafficking websites long overdue

Survivors are those who have escaped prostitution and have had time and distance from it. They are the ones looking back at their pasts and wondering how to move forward into the future. Sex workers believe they are empowered within prostitution, as if laying on our backs is the highest level any woman could hope to achieve.

Human trafficking victim from Alaska found in Houston area

Airport officials said they were contacted by the Anchorage Police Department in reference to a human trafficking victim. Investigators said a 19-year-old woman was taken from Alaska to Houston "for the purpose of the commercial sex trade."

[Click here to read these articles on our website](#)

Elisabeth Barna joins TAT Board of Directors

"Truckers Against Trafficking is saving lives and making a big difference in communities across the United States. I joined the TAT Board of Directors to be part of the solution in solving human trafficking, said Elisabeth Barna, senior vice president of communications and public affairs/image and outreach advocacy for the

American Trucking Associations (ATA). "I have attended a number of meetings among the different modes of transportation, and TAT is definitely the model program. I am excited to work with such a special organization that is so passionate about their work."

With ATA, Barna is responsible for the organization's overall communications and public affairs strategy, including image and outreach advocacy. [Click here](#) to read more.



Elisabeth Barna

DC Department of Motor Vehicles partners with TAT

District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser has announced that as part of greater efforts within the District to combat human trafficking, the DC Department of Motor Vehicles is partnering with Truckers Against Trafficking to distribute anti-trafficking materials to residents with a commercial driving license. They will also train all Service Center staff on human trafficking awareness. The mayor's announcement came on Jan. 11 as part of National Human Trafficking Awareness Day.

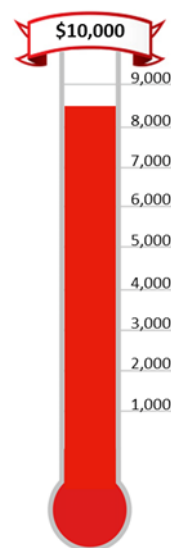


"Since 2007, there have been 486 reported cases of human trafficking in the District. This is unacceptable," said Mayor Bowser. [Click here](#) to read more.

Twin Eagle Transport develops TAT Trained certified driver program

When Twin Eagle Transport chose TAT as their community partner for the first quarter of 2016, they developed a unique plan for training their 400-plus drivers, located across the nation. For every driver who watches the TAT video and passes a test, which TAT provided, Twin Eagle will provide a certificate to the driver testifying that the driver is TAT Trained and will donate \$25 to TAT. Between the certification donations and some breakfast-by-donation events they'll be holding throughout the quarter, they plan on being a TAT Gold Level Sponsor at quarter's end.

Along the way, Twin Eagle sends out blast e-mails to its employees, informing them of the progress, both in terms of total employees trained and money raised. As of Jan. 21, Twin Eagle reports 328 employees trained and \$8,506 raised.





Twin Eagle drivers pose with their TAT temporary tattoos.



New online training for truck-stop employees and operators launches with human trafficking course

NATSO Foundation has premiered a new online educational tool for members of the truck stop and travel plaza industry. With the initial focus on how truck stops help people, the first of four e-learning modules, launched in January as part of Human

Trafficking Awareness month, is titled *The Role of Truck Stops in Combating Human Trafficking*. The second course -- *How Truck Stops Help the Homeless* -- will be available in coming weeks. Additional courses planned for the series on how truck stops help people will focus on what to do for drivers who are suffering distress and how to respond during a natural disaster.

[Click here](#) to read more about the course and where truck-stop operators can access it.

FDP travels from California to Florida in January

Following appearances in January at TAT's California coalition build and Rotary's World Peace Conference 2016 in California, the Freedom Driver's Project traveled cross country to Florida to take part at Orlando's eighth

annual Human Trafficking Awareness Day on Jan. 23 at the Walt Disney Amphitheater at Lake Eola. The drive from Dallas to Orlando was courtesy of Walmart. The invitation to the event came through the Greater Orlando Human Trafficking Task Force (GOHTT), in partnership with Florida Abolitionist, in recognition that the trucking industry is playing a critical role in the fight against human trafficking.



Helen Van Dam, FDP director, was the event's keynote speaker. Tomas Lares, president of GOHTT, said, "Truckers Against Trafficking's Freedom Driver's Project was the highlight of this year's annual Human Trafficking Awareness Day in Central Florida."

Helen Van Dam, FDP director, gave the keynote address at Orlando's event.

While a history-making East Coast storm cut down on the number of people attending this year's event, 344 people still toured the FDP.



Walmart drivers Harold Doctor (left) and Antoine Sadler (right) brought the FDP into Orlando and volunteered at the event.

New animation explains the Shipping Partners Program

Check out the latest animation on the TAT website. [This one](#) explains how shippers can play a part in fighting human trafficking and the steps to join TAT's Shipping Partners Program. This fast-paced, whiteboard animation was produced through the talent of justice-focused media consultant Alice Paul Group.

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Sex Trafficking Around the Big Game: Drivers headed into and out of California, extra vigilance needed!

While sex trafficking occurs all year long, there is a surge around the Big Game. This is due to increased demand in a concentrated area. Traffickers will be bringing their victims to the San Francisco region from all over the country, and you could be the person who makes the call that saves a life.

Be on the lookout for:

- Minors selling commercial sex
- Individuals with restricted or controlled communication— not allowed to speak for themselves
- CB chatter about “commercal company”
- You can find more red flag indicators here:
<http://www.truckersagainsttrafficking.org/get-our-materials/>

**Be the game champion and MAKE THE CALL
when you suspect sex trafficking:
1-888-3737-888**



Upcoming Events

Feb. 1-3 - Peterbilt Dealership Meeting, San Diego, CA,

Guido Hajenius, TAT representative, presenting

Feb. 5-6 - Mid-west Truck and Trailer Show, Peoria, IL, Helen Van Dam, FDP director, Michelle Bishop, TAT program coordinator, and the FDP

Feb. 9 - 18th Judicial Human Trafficking Committee, Denver, CO, Kendis Paris, TAT executive director, presenting

Feb. 14 - Central Tech Truck Driving School Open House, Drumright, OK, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, attending

Feb. 24-25 - Georgia Safety and Security Council, Atlanta, GA, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, presenting



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