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Human Trafficking in the News

Organization helps bus drivers spot human trafficking

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. - Human trafficking is not something many people want to think about. Yet it exists in everyday places like bus terminals and truck stops, in every state in America. Human trafficking is modern-day slavery. Traffickers use force, fraud or coercion to compel someone to engage in commercial sex or forced labor. Anyone who is under the age of 18 and engaging in commercial sex, regardless of the use of force, fraud or coercion, is considered a victim.

Human trafficking is an often-invisible community problem

"It happens here, and it happens in plain sight," Teresa Stafford, senior director of victim services and outreach at Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, said Thursday during the "Human Trafficking: Under the Radar in Our Community" training at Jefferson Area High School.

'It lights up the brain like crack': Why men buy sex

The man in the red shirt is angry. My question, which has triggered his anger, was about whether he and other men in a court-ordered program for sex buyers had considered whether at least some of the girls and women they purchased were victims of human trafficking. "I've never had sex with anyone who didn't want to be there," Red Shirt says, his voice rising. "They're whores. They wanted the money."

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

Give now to double your money and impact!

The best purchases you make are those that give you the results you want. Read this short account from Arian Taylor of the impact TAT's training and window stickers are making ... not just to those who are trained, but, most importantly, to the lives of those they encounter, who need their help.

On January 9, 2018, professional driver Arian Taylor pulled into a Compton, California business to make a delivery at 3:30 a.m. Shortly thereafter, he received a knock on his cab door, only to find a 19-year-old young woman standing outside his truck. As he spoke with her, he learned that her friend's older boyfriend was trying to force her into prostitution. After she had refused and argued with him, he dumped her in the parking lot and sped off. She was cold, exhausted, had no money, no identification, was carrying everything she owned in her arms and was desperate to get back home to Las Vegas. At that point, Arian told her, "I will find a way to get you home." After getting her warm and giving her water to drink, Arian looked at one of two TAT stickers prominently displayed on his windows (which the victim had been eye-level with when she knocked on his door) and called the National Human Trafficking Hotline. They worked with him to secure the woman shelter for the night, a pre-paid cab ride to get her to that shelter and a chaperoned train ride back to Las Vegas the next day, where she was reunited with a family member. Arian took care of the young woman until she was placed in the cab, and even gave her his personal cell phone number in case she needed anything else.



"Our friends at Change A Path have extended a matching grant challenge from March through May of up to \$45,000 for both new gifts and increased gifts from current donors," said Kendis Paris, TAT executive director. "We love this goal, because it will enable us to diversify our revenue streams, enhance our sustainability as an organization and expand our capacity to do the work, which will make more stories like Arian's a reality."

Give now and let your money do double duty in the fight against human trafficking!

[Donate here](#)

Busing on the Lookout and the American Bus Association announce partnership

A new partnership between Busing on the Lookout (BOTL) and the American Bus Association (ABA), the industry leader advancing North American motorcoach travel and tourism, will significantly increase the engagement of America's busing employees in the fight against human trafficking.



"Human trafficking is a disgrace on American roadways that needs to be eradicated," said ABA President and CEO Peter Pantuso. "Many of our members already participate in human trafficking awareness training for their employees. We look forward to participating in the collective effort with Busing on the Lookout. We have a very diverse industry

and ABA wants to be the key connector to the industry with this great program."

The ABA plans on assisting TAT by sharing information about BOTL with its members, facilitate introductions between BOTL staff and ABA members, open doors for BOTL presentations at ABA council meetings, participate in coalition builds and offer advice and consultation as industry experts on ways to further engage ABA members as BOTL partners.



"We are grateful to the ABA for its commitment to combatting this heinous crime," stated Annie Sovcik, BOTL director. "And we are optimistic that through this partnership, we are taking a significant step forward in creating another mobile army on our roadways that can help disrupt trafficking networks."

Have you got your TAT on?



Let people know you're proud to be a Trucker Against Trafficking (TAT). Get your TAT on! A variety of T-shirts, hats and the large 11x14 inch TAT decals are available through the [online TAT store](#). Every item is made in America and carries the TAT logo. T-shirts come in multiple sizes and three designs. Help spread awareness about your and trucking's involvement in the fight against human trafficking ... wear TAT apparel that will start a conversation

with those who need to know how they, too, can be involved.

Mid-America Trucking Show enables TAT to meet, greet and reconnect

John McKown, UPS driver and America's Road Team captain, joined TAT staffers Laura Cyrus, Helen Van Dam, Ashley Smith and Annie Sovcik to work the TAT booth at the Mid-America Trucking Show (MATS) March 22-24 in Louisville. The team connected with over 3000 show participants, engaging in conversations with drivers, fleet owners and others from the trucking industry.

"We heard from many folks who had known about TAT previously but had yet to really connect the dots and experience a sense of just how important it was for them to be on the lookout for evidence of trafficking," said Cyrus, TAT operations director. "We also spoke with a number of people who had never heard about our work, or even human trafficking. They were left stunned and yet motivated to be a part of these real and tangible efforts."



Helen Van Dam, FDP director and John McKown, UPS driver and ATA Road Team captain, educated people on human trafficking at MATS.

"What was powerful about each of the interactions we have with people at MATS, is that regardless of their prior knowledge of human trafficking, we get to take each of them on that next step deeper into their anti-trafficking journey," concluded Van Dam, FDP director.

To read an article from Wave 3 News on TAT at MATS, [click here](#).

TAT joint winner of the Michigan Trucking Association's Truck Safety Partner Award

Following a successful joint undercover operation in December by the Michigan State Police, with the help of Truckers Against Trafficking and NPO Transportation, which made commercial motor vehicles available for the operation, all three entities were honored by the Michigan Trucking Association (MTA) at their Safety Awards banquet on March 20 in Lansing.

The undercover operation resulted in several sex-offense-related arrests and the development of intelligence to be used in continuing human trafficking efforts.

Laura Cyrus, TAT operations director, accepted the Truck Safety Partner Award for Truckers Against Trafficking.



Showing off their awards, from left to right, Larry Larson, Great West Casualty Company (Great Western sponsored the award); Kathleen Eberle, president, NPO Transportation; Laura Cyrus, TAT operations director; Inspector Patrick Morris, MSP-CVED; and Ruth Johnson, Michigan Secretary of State

Talking about the award and the trucking industry's commitment to fight human trafficking, Greg Causley, Causley Trucking and president of the Michigan Trucking Association, said, "Truckers Against Trafficking continues to push the message, and continues the commitment to train law enforcement. Kathleen Eberle, president of NPO Transportation, is an excellent example of the trucking industry's dedication to this worthy cause. All NPO Transportation employees are trained to spot and report this crime along the road after Kathie was specifically moved by a TAT presentation held during an MTA conference. For their commitment to this very important cause, the Michigan Trucking Association is proud to

present the joint safety award to Laura Cyrus, representing TAT, Inspector Pat Morris, representing the Michigan State Police Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division, and Kathleen Eberle, president of NPO Transportation. Thank you for your dedication to this worthy cause and for your commitment to keeping our roads and families safe."

"It's humbling to be honored alongside those that are out doing this important work: our partners in law enforcement and members of the trucking industry that have been trained to help aid in the reporting of this crime that they are literally seeing before their eyes," commented Cyrus. "TAT has worked diligently over the years to train not only the industry but also law enforcement and state patrol on how the two can work together to close loopholes to traffickers and help see that victims are recovered. We're thankful for our partnerships with Michigan State Patrol, the Michigan Trucking Association, and companies like NPO."

Upcoming Events



April 5 - Freedom Drivers Project at AIMS Community College, Greeley, CO, Helen Van Dam, FDP director, presenting

April 8 - Commercial Vehicle Safety Administration Conference, Portland, OR, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, presenting

April 9-11 - American Moving and Storage Association Conference, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, Laura Cyrus, TAT operations director, presenting

April 10-12 - Freedom Drivers Project at UPS Freight Headquarters and Small Package Facility, Richmond, VA, Helen Van Dam, FDP director, presenting with Barbara Amaya of BASMARTGIRL

April 10 - Tennessee Highway Patrol training, Nashville, TN, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, and Tajuan McCarty, TAT field trainer, presenting

April 12 - Women in Buses Council of the American Bus Association webinar on fighting human trafficking, Annie Sovcik, BOTL director, presenting

April 17-20 - Minnesota coalition build and in-depth law enforcement training, St. Paul, MN, Esther Goetsch, coalition build specialist, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, and Beth Jacobs, TAT field trainer, presenting, with FDP there

April 24 - Ontario Transportation Expo and Trade Show, Toronto, Ontario, Annie Sovcik, BOTL director, presenting

April 28 - Freedom Drivers Project at Nevada Trucking Association's Truck Driving Championships, Las Vegas, NV, Helen Van Dam, FDP director, attending and presenting

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