Human Trafficking in the News

Iowa launches school bus driver training on human trafficking
DES MOINES, Iowa - School bus drivers in Iowa are now required to complete a training program to help protect students from human trafficking. The state Department of Education began using Busing on the Lookout on Aug. 1. The training program provides both new and current school bus drivers with the necessary skills to identify and effectively report cases of student trafficking.

Police arrest 34 men in massive Michigan prostitution sting
A massive prostitution sting in northern Michigan has led to the arrest of more than two dozen men across seven counties. Michigan State Police said 73 charges have been placed against 34 men, ranging in age from 18 to 65. Of those charges, 70 are split evenly between solicitation for prostitution and using a computer to commit a crime.

Three ways businesses can fight sex trafficking
In her 12-minute TED Talk, Nicole Clifton, vice president of global public affairs for UPS, provides corporations with compelling rationale and concrete steps to take to become engaged in fighting human trafficking, one of the nation's most egregious crimes and civil rights violations. Click here to read more.

Barry Richards of Travel Centers of America elected to TAT Board of Directors
The Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) Board of Directors has elected Barry Richards, president and COO of Travel Centers of America (TA), to join the TAT board.

"Barry has been a long-time advocate of TAT," said Kendis Paris, TAT executive director, "as he cares passionately about protecting vulnerable kids. From the beginning, he has been doing his part to help educate all TA/Petro personnel about the realities of human trafficking and the integral role they can play in combating it. We are honored to have him serve on TAT's board."

Richards joined TravelCenters of America in 2000 with more than 25 years in the food service and hospitality industries. Since that time, he has held several leadership roles at the company, including regional vice president, senior vice president of food operations and executive vice president of operations. In 2017, he assumed the role of executive vice president, commercial operations, which oversees fuel supply, fleet sales, truck service and TA's corporate construction division.

Richards stated, "Prior to my exposure to TAT, I was unaware of the horrors linked to prostitution via trafficking and slavery in the United States. Joining this board seems like an opportunity to ensure others aren't as naive about this reality as I once was."

**Lanier provides law enforcement trainings in three states**

Criss-crossing the country, catching 16 planes in an eight-day stretch, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, provided law enforcement trainings in Nashville, Tennessee, Sacramento, California and Decatur, Illinois in September, as well as spoke to trucking companies at a trucking software conference in Nashville within that same time period.

Lanier began her marathon trip in California on Sept. 5, training California Highway Patrol (CHP) officers in the Commercial Industry Education Program. She and survivor-leader Annika Huff spoke to 42 officers, whose duties include meeting with all busing and trucking companies and entities around the state. These officers will now be implementing TAT into their presentations, and in October, CHP will add a TAT message to the tops of the inspection reports given to drivers passing through the state's scale houses.

From there, Lanier flew to Nashville, where, along with survivor-leader Amanda Joy, she trained 18 people, including Tennessee Highway Patrol (THP) officers.
and officials from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). FMCSA officers were interested in getting Busing on the Lookout (BOTL) materials to the Tennessee Busing Association.

On Sept. 13, Lanier was back in Sacramento, where she briefed 125 CHP division commanders from around the state, who work in Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE), on human trafficking and TAT.

On Sept. 17-18, along with TAT Field Trainer Beth Jacobs, Lanier trained 32 Macon County Sheriff's officers and local law enforcement agencies in Decatur, Illinois. "This was the first human trafficking training brought to their area," said Lanier, "and the Howard Buffet Foundation, whose mission is to catalyze transformational change, particularly for the world's most marginalized and impoverished people, sponsored the trainings. The foundation looked around the state and beyond for someone with a solid human trafficking 101 training and chose TAT."

Sandwiched in between the law enforcement trainings was an additional trip to Nashville, where Lanier presented to trucking companies at the Omnitracs Sylectus software conference.

"Training law enforcement, who so often are the first line of defense for a trafficking victim, is critical," she said. "It is deeply rewarding to see officers engaging with the material, asking questions and reflecting on past interdiction and inspection stops and how, with this new information, they will be able to identify a victim easier and know how to speak with him/her."

**TAT presents to Oil and Gas Trafficking Advocacy Group**

In 2017, OVS Group, a software and services company working in oil and gas, formed the Oil and Gas Trafficking Advocacy Group (OGTAG) in response to the growing concern over human trafficking. On Sept. 18, Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) presented their partnership opportunities to OGTAG in Houston, Texas. Attendees represented fifteen different companies within the oil and gas sector.

Current TAT partners shared how they have utilized TAT's programs, while Ashley Smith, TAT's oil and gas program manager, provided information on the upcoming oil and gas coalition build in Pecos, Texas on Nov. 14, as well as steps companies can take to oppose this crime. By meeting’s end, Smith reported that new companies were already exploring how they can combat human trafficking within their organizations.

"TAT’s presentation at this meeting was important, because it presented tangible actions that oil and gas companies can take to become engaged in this battle," she said. "OGTAG has done an excellent job of raising awareness of this issue, and we were honored to bring our program to their members."
Alexandria Alvarez Gerbasi, chief administrative officer for OVS, said, "OGTAG was started to bring awareness about trafficking to the oil and gas industry for prevention of human trafficking in the U.S. and abroad and the role the industry can play in ending trafficking. TAT plays a vital role in bringing awareness and tools to combat trafficking. Likewise, the oil and gas industry is taking a leadership role in ending trafficking. With the natural ties between oil and gas and trucking, it makes sense to partner whenever possible. TAT's presentation was very timely and offered companies tangible actions to help end modern-day slavery."

**Networking by TAT partners opens doors, engages more people in the fight against human trafficking**

Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) is a small organization with a handful of staff, but when TAT’s partners are fully invested in the fight against human trafficking, their resources and leadership multiply TAT’s efforts, creating powerful reach and impact and advancing TAT’s mission.

Through key introductions, as well as carving out presentation time and booth space for TAT, both Ford Motor Company and Ryder used their influence to provide the opportunity for Laura Cyrus, TAT operations director, to present at the Automotive Logistics Global Conference gala event in Detroit, Michigan in September. Hosted by the Ultima Media Team, which publishes Automotive Logistics, a global magazine for the automotive industry, and held at the Detroit Opera House, the audience for the event was composed of approximately 250 supply chain and logistics professionals within the automotive industry, including manufacturers, shippers, third-party logistics companies, auto haulers and more.

"The opportunity to present at this event, and meet a great number of the people who attended, provides TAT with some significant introductions to people and companies who could get involved in the fight against human trafficking and use their influence to help effect change," said Cyrus. "I hope I was able to inspire the folks in the room to get involved and partner with us in this effort."

She continued, "Our participation in the Automotive Logistics Global event is proof that our 'TAT Champions' across the industry are so vital in advancing our mission. The way we were informed of this event and then successfully included is a testament to just how deeply our partners care about this work and then use their position, network, and influence as leaders to see..."
that others are made aware of our program and look for ways we can all work together to, ultimately, save lives. Ryder, in particular TAT board member Stephanie Wicky, went above and beyond to make sure the TAT message was amplified at the event, and their strong support of our work surely impressed upon the audience the level of importance they place on the partnership and the work we do."

**Coalition builds help close loopholes to traffickers in Arizona and Wisconsin**

Co-hosted by the Office of the Attorney General of Arizona and the Arizona Trucking Association, TAT held a coalition build in Phoenix, Arizona at Knight Transportation on Sept. 13.

"We were honored to have Cindy McCain, a very special guest, in attendance to offer inspiring welcoming remarks," said Esther Goetsch, TAT coalition build specialist. "She made sure to thank all the truckers against trafficking out there, who are on the front lines making calls and saving lives. And to illustrate that, she told a story of seeing TAT in action at a gas station a few years back. She saw two young girls and a pimp on-site. Before she could get into the store to tell the manager and call law enforcement, she heard someone behind her call out 'I've got it! I'm a Trucker Against Trafficking!'"

The call to action continued with Attorney General Brovich sharing how his office will continue to make fighting human trafficking a priority in Arizona and how it is working hard to put perpetrators behind bars.

The coalition build had around 70 participants, including representatives from the Department of Transportation, the Arizona Transit Association, the Arizona Trucking Association, 14 trucking companies, Arizona State University Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research, Arizona Department of Public Safety, Travel Centers of America, two sheriff's offices, Homeland Security Investigations, the Phoenix Police Department and the Phoenix Dream Center.

"One of the outcomes of the build is that we now are going to work extensively with the Department of Transportation Enforcement Division which has recently gotten involved in the fight against human trafficking and is now very enthusiastic about partnering with TAT and BOTL to adopt the Iowa MVE model," stated Goetsch.

On Sept. 27, TAT conducted the month's second coalition build, this one at Harley Davidson of Madison, Wisconsin, co-hosted with the Wisconsin DOJ, Wisconsin Highway
Harley Davidson of Madison, Wisconsin was the site of the Wisconsin coalition build.

More than 100 people attended the coalition build in Wisconsin.

"The coalition build was about creating partnerships to enhance our ability to identify victims and apprehend traffickers," said Wisconsin DOJ Human Trafficking Initiative Policy Advisor Julie Braun. "TAT has the expertise to facilitate meaningful collaboration between trucking and busing industry stakeholders and law enforcement. We also received practical resources to sustain and expand these partnerships moving forward."

Upcoming Events

Oct. 3 -4 - Dow Carrier Conference, Midland, MI, Laura Cyrus, TAT operations director, presenting

Oct. 4 - Trucking Industry Defense Association annual conference, Austin, TX, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, presenting

Oct. 6 - Colorado Motor Carrier Association annual convention, Beaver Creek, CO, Kendis Paris, TAT executive director, presenting

Oct. 8 - Standing Against Trafficking, Lakewood, CO, Kendis Paris, TAT executive director, presenting

Oct. 9-10 - Great Dane employee event, Elysburg and Danville, PA, FDP and Helen Van Dam, FDP director, attending

Oct. 12-13 - Frito Lay/Pepsi meeting, Ontario, CA, Kendis Paris, TAT executive director, presenting

Oct. 14-15 - Florida Public Transportation Association annual conference, Daytona Beach, FL, Annie Sovcik, BOTL program director, presenting

Oct. 15-16 - Auto Haulers Association of America Fall Expo and Industry Meeting, Amelia Island, FL, Laura Cyrus, TAT operations director, presenting
Oct. 17 - California Association of School Transportation Officials Managers' Forum, Anaheim, CA, Annie Sovcik, BOTL program director, presenting

Oct. 21-23 - California Bus Association annual meeting, Squaw Valley, CA, Annie Sovcik, BOTL program director, presenting

Oct. 22 - ConocoPhillips Supplier meeting, Houston, TX, Ashley Smith, TAT oil and gas program manager, presenting, and FDP present with Helen Van Dam, FDP director

Oct. 22-23 - Bus Association of New York annual meeting, Cooperstown, NY, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, presenting

Oct. 25 - Coalition build, Bangor, ME, Esther Goetsch, coalition build specialist, and Beth Jacobs, TAT field trainer, presenting

Oct. 26 - Oklahoma Safety Management Council meeting, Oklahoma City, OK, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, presenting

Oct. 28-30 - National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services and National Association of Pupil Transportation annual conference, Kansas City, KS, Annie Sovcik, BOTL program director, presenting

Oct. 28-30 - International Foodservice Distributors Association Distribution Solutions Conference, San Antonio, TX, Laura Cyrus, TAT operations director, presenting and exhibiting

Oct. 30-31 - New Mexico Safety Fest, Carlsbad, NM, Ashley Smith, TAT oil and gas program manager, presenting and exhibiting

Oct. 31 - Southeast Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Research Summit 2018, Tuscaloosa, AL, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, presenting

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