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## Human Trafficking in the News

### **How human traffickers are recruiting victims in a digital age**

The way most traffickers first reach their victims is not like Hollywood movies lead you to believe -- a dramatic abduction of a child walking home from school. Experts describe the way traffickers typically target kids or teens as pretty subtle. It can happen in schools, at the mall, or anywhere. However, nowadays, it most commonly begins with just one click, like, or friend request.

### **The clothes aren't what's for sale in this chilling fashion campaign**

Yesterday, five young women stood in a shop window on Toronto's busy Queen Street West, seemingly modeling fashions. Names were lettered on the glass, and at first glance, they seemed to refer to the outfits: "The Ellie," "The Amara," "The Samantha," "The Maya" and "The Michaela." As passersby approached, however, they were greeted by a sign proclaiming, "To sex traffickers, girls are just products."

### **A solution to human trafficking? Stop the men who pay for it**

The demand for commercial sex is higher on the Western Slope than anywhere else in Colorado, according to Dr. Angie Henderson. That's been the case since 2015, when Henderson's firm Avery Research and Consulting began studying the demand side of human sex trafficking.

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## **TravelCenters of America honored with TAT Champion Award**



*Barry Richards, COO and president of TravelCenters of America, received the TAT Champion Award for TA from Helen Van Dam, TAT Freedom Drivers Project director.*

Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) awarded TravelCenters of America (TA) its prestigious Champion Award in the Organization category for 2020. The award was presented Feb. 13 at TA's biannual leadership expo in Sandusky, Ohio, with more than 850 employees in attendance, including general managers from locations across the nation and members of TA's executive leadership team.

The Champion Award was created to recognize and honor the outstanding creative, innovative, generous and dedicated efforts of specific TAT partners, whose actions have significantly furthered TAT's work and mission to end human trafficking, recover more survivors and prosecute more perpetrators.

"Professional truck drivers are vitally important to helping us fulfill our work. From the beginning, TravelCenters of America knew they had the audience of people we needed to reach the most. They not only invited us in; they took our mission and ran with it. They've trained thousands of employees on what to look for at their sites and are committed to supporting our work in whatever way they can," said Kendis Paris, TAT executive director. "Without the support, commitment and actions of TA, we wouldn't be as far along as we are today in the fight against human trafficking."

Examples of TA's work with TAT includes:

- TA created and held TAT's very first product promotion and continues to sell TAT merchandise in its travel stores. In January and February of 2019, TA raised awareness and over \$110,000 for TAT's mission. TA is continuing the merchandise sales in 2020 and hopes to raise even more money.
- TA administers awareness and empowerment training to its more than 21,000 employees at over 260 locations across the nation. TAT has also had the opportunity to present to all of TA's general managers, alongside a survivor of human trafficking. Paris also presented at TA headquarters.
- TA locations across the country serve as points of display and distribution for TAT messages and materials, including more than 2,500 posters to promote TAT's Harriet Tubman award.
- TA engages leadership, leverages multiple streams of support within the company and engages external organizations to support TAT. In 2011, TA encouraged other companies to become early adopters. President and COO Barry Richards recorded a specialized message to include at the beginning of TAT's training video for all TA employees, emphasizing the organization's passion in combating this crime.

"Human trafficking is a prevalent issue and we can't just sit back when the opportunity to help combat this crime is at our fingertips," said Richards, who is also a member of TAT's Board of Directors. "With a captive audience of millions of drivers on our properties and thousands of employees across the nation, we knew we could make a difference, so we did. And we will continue to do so. I'd

like to thank Kendis and Truckers Against Trafficking for this honor and for leading the charge to transform our industry."

The TAT Champion Award was created in 2019 and honors state agencies, organizations and associations for their dedicated work combating human trafficking.

## **Visit Truckers Against Trafficking at the Mid-America Trucking Show**

Heading to the Mid-America Trucking Show (MATS) in Louisville, Kentucky this year, March 26-28? Be sure to visit the West Wing and TAT's booth, #62088. TAT staffers will be at the booth March 26, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. for the VIP time and 1-6 p.m. for all MATS attendees. On Friday, March 27, the booth will be open from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and on Saturday, March 28, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



## **Motel 6 becomes TAT's first hospitality partner**



Motel 6 is taking some aggressive steps in the fight against human trafficking. They have not only created an anti-trafficking program but have given it oversight, coordination and management by an internal task force, representing all key functions of the company, to ensure it receives the appropriate resources and attention.

As part of their program, they have committed to Platinum-level sponsorship for Truckers Against Trafficking, and, as a show of support for TAT, they are offering a 15-percent national discount to TAT-trained drivers. The code to access that discount is CPM64TAT. Additionally, Motel 6 is providing TAT with 24 vouchers for free, single-night stays to be used as social media giveaways in 2020.

"We're deeply committed to the fight against human trafficking in all forms, and we continue to expand our efforts through new initiatives and partnerships," said Rob Palleschi, CEO of G6 Hospitality. "Through vigilance, education, training of every single Motel 6 team member, and coordination with local, state and national organizations, we are focused on doing our part to battle this global problem."

# HAVE YOU MADE A CALL ON BEHALF OF A VICTIM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

*Let your company and Truckers Against Trafficking know today!*

Even though we know it's not why you made the call, you could be in the running for TAT's prestigious **Harriet Tubman Award** presented by Protective Insurance, that brings with it a prize package including tickets to the Indy500 and \$2500!



**INDY500  
TICKETS**



**\$2500  
PRIZE & AWARD  
GALA**

**Tell us your story at  
[tat.truckers@gmail.com](mailto:tat.truckers@gmail.com)**



## Upcoming Events

**March 9** - Colorado State Patrol POE Cadet Training, Golden, CO, Louie Greek, TAT training specialist, presenting

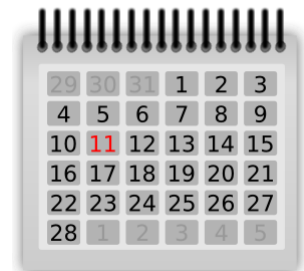
**March 10** - Michigan Trucking Association's Equipment and Maintenance Council, Dearborn, MI, FDP, Helen Van Dam, FDP director, and Molly Griffiths, Corporate Engagement manager, attending, and Laura Cyrus, Corporate Engagement director, presenting

**March 10** - Black Hawk Public Safety Meeting, Golden, CO, Annie Sovcik, BOTL director, presenting

**March 10** - Greater New Jersey Motorcoach Association Spring Meeting, Atlantic City, NJ, Lexi Higgins, BOTL program specialist, manning a booth

**March 12** - Iowa Motor Truck Association webinar, Louie Greek, TAT training specialist, presenting

**March 18-19** - Nevada Highway Patrol training, Elko and Reno, NV, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, and Annika Huff, TAT field trainer and survivor-advocate, presenting



**March 20** - Virginia Transit Association webinar, Annie Sovcik, BOTL director, presenting

**March 21** - Safety Drive for a Cure, Atlanta, GA, FDP and Susan Dold, TAT systems administrator, attending

**March 23-26** - Pennsylvania Coalition Builds in Monroeville and Lancaster and Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association Board Meeting in Harrisburg, PA, Esther Goetsch, Coalition Build director, Beth Jacobs, TAT field trainer and survivor-leader, Annie Sovcik, BOTL director, Ashley Smith, Energy Operations director, and Ruthie Stanfill, Coalition Build specialist, presenting, FDP attending

**March 24-25** - Union Station Human Trafficking Training, Washington, DC, Annie Sovcik, BOTL director, presenting

**March 25** - New York State Police training, Albany, NY, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, and Annika Huff, TAT field trainer and survivor-advocate, presenting

**March 25-28** - Mid-America Truck Show, Louisville, KY, TAT staff manning booth

**March 26-27** - UPS Harrisburg, FDP present with FDP-certified drivers hosting

**March 26-27** - Albertson's Summit, Phoenix, AZ, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, presenting

**March 30-31** - National Lease Spring Business Meeting, Naples, FL, Laura Cyrus presenting

TAT's work is made possible through the generous support of our corporate sponsors, foundation partners and individual donors. Our education, training, legislative engagement, and advocacy efforts would not exist without those who invest in the change that we work towards each day. If you are interested in learning more about how you can provide financial support, please visit our [corporate engagement webpage](#) or contact Laura Cyrus at 612-888-4828 or [lcyrus@truckersagainsttrafficking.org](mailto:lcyrus@truckersagainsttrafficking.org) to explore our giving opportunities.

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Truckers Against Trafficking  
PO Box 816 | Englewood, CO 80151  
tat.truckers@gmail.com  
www.TruckersAgainstTrafficking.org

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