



Volume 11 | Issue 12  
December 2020

## Human trafficking in the news

### **Sex trafficking survivors speak about abuse at Dodge County strip clubs**

Christopher L. Childs, 48, made a career of coercing, threatening and assaulting women, forcing them to work in strip clubs to engage in prostitution with the money going into Childs' pockets. He was sentenced to 27 years in prison for sex trafficking.

### **FBI arrests 28 in Nevada human trafficking sting**

A week-long human trafficking sting targeting sex buyers led by the FBI has resulted in 28 arrests. The Washoe County Sheriff's Office says all of the suspects went to a home in South Reno to "knowingly engage in, and pay for, sex acts with a minor."

### **Ashley Moody launches campaign enlisting truck drivers to help stop human trafficking**

"In Florida, we are fortunate to have more than 500,000 licensed commercial drivers that serve our communities every day. Not only do they keep our economy moving and haul essential goods, but they also are uniquely positioned to shine a light on traffickers that exploit our transportation system for their horrific crimes," said FLHSMV Executive Director Terry L. Rhodes. "I appreciate Attorney General Moody and our trucking industry heroes for prioritizing the fight against human trafficking in our state and on our roadways through this important initiative."

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## Michigan State Police named TAT Champion Award winner

## in State Agency category



Major Mike Krumm received the TAT Champion Award in the State Agency category on behalf of the Michigan State Police (MSP) Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division (CVED). The award was presented by TAT Deputy Director Kylla Lanier during the opening ceremonies of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance virtual fall conference.

In presenting the award, Lanier labeled the MSP CVED “a stellar example” of what it means to be a TAT Champion. “After hearing TAT’s executive director speak at the MVCI many years ago, Major Krumm set to work adopting all the elements of the

Iowa MVE Model in the state of Michigan, becoming the second state to achieve full implementation,” she related. “Major Krumm and his officers consistently visit trucking companies and other organizations/agencies with the TAT message. In 2016, they even presented to the Office of the Michigan Secretary of State, which led that office to display TAT posters, raising further awareness about human trafficking. Most recently, Officer Nathan Daughtery has taken a strong role of furthering TAT’s message to the bus industry in Michigan with our Busing on the Lookout training materials.”

MSP CVED collect data on their interdiction and inspection stops that turn into trafficking cases, and always follow up on tips from concerned citizens and truck drivers. They have been leaders on their regional initiative to combat human trafficking by helping to create, coordinate and participate in a Quad-State detail with their colleagues from Ohio State Highway Patrol, Illinois State Police and Indiana State Police. During the month of January, National Human Trafficking Awareness Month in the United States, these four state law enforcement groups work to raise awareness about human trafficking by blanketing the commercial vehicle industries in their state with TAT materials, presentations, etc.

MSP CVED has made training their officers on human trafficking a priority, and they work to encourage other state agencies throughout the United States to work with Truckers Against Trafficking, recognizing that a coordinated and unified effort provides the best chance of crippling human traffickers’ networks.

“The Michigan State Police is excited to be recognized as a TAT Champion Award winner for the year 2020! We are grateful for the partnership we have developed with TAT over the past six years, as together we fight the horrific crime of human trafficking,” Major Krumm stated.

Each year, TAT presents the TAT Champion Awards to recognize and honor the outstanding creative, innovative, generous and dedicated efforts of specific TAT organization, association and state agency partners, whose actions have significantly furthered the work of engaging more members of the industries TAT works with, as well as the efforts of more agencies and organizations within their state and the nation in the fight to end human trafficking and recover more survivors and prosecute more perpetrators.

## TAT law enforcement trainings reap results

“When Annika and I train law enforcement officers, our hope and main goal is always to equip officers to both recognize victims of sexual exploitation and

know how to engage with them in the best ways possible,” declared Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director. “We don’t always get to hear how our training plays out in the field, so hearing how Trooper Heard employed the victim-centered approach with victims after detecting that something was off and became an advocate for them -- there is really nothing better. He, and other law enforcement officers who risk their lives daily to make our nation safer, inspire us in our work; and we know victims have the chance to become survivors and overcomers because of them.”

The two incidents below involve Illinois State Police (ISP) Trooper Zachary Heard. The first one occurred this year and the second one last year:



On a routine traffic stop in Illinois, a 10-year-old boy was taken into protective custody and a middle-aged man was arrested for sexual assault. Through personal experience and training he received through the TAT law enforcement training, ISP Trooper Zach Heard was able to legally build a case for prosecution. “TAT’s law enforcement training pulls the curtain back on a reclusive black market, with insight and details that can only be provided by survivors of the industry,” he stated.

In 2019, Trooper Heard was involved in another interdiction involving trafficking where TAT training came into play. He pulled over a pickup on a traffic violation with a male driver and a female passenger. The passenger appeared trying to make herself small, as if she were distancing herself from the truck and driver. During his conversation with the driver, Trooper Heard noticed some drug paraphernalia and proceeded to search the vehicle, where he discovered a large quantity of narcotics. He called in the narcotics detectives, who took over the arrest and the search and confiscation of the vehicle.

Trooper Heard then spoke with the adult female, who had a large tattoo in Spanish covering her forearm. While Trooper Heard spoke Spanish, he discovered the victim did not. She tried to explain away the tattoo with a convoluted explanation, which led Trooper Heard to suspect human trafficking. He continued to speak with her in a very non-judgmental way, using a victim-centered approach and offering to help her and connect her with resources. While she broke down crying a couple times, she refused services.

Trooper Heard offered her a ride somewhere. She asked to go to an ATM and then to a hotel for the night before figuring out her way home. He continued to talk with her, expressing concern and offering services. They exchanged numbers, and he told her to call if she needed anything or if she wanted to testify against the driver she’d been with.

TAT Deputy Director Kylla Lanier said Trooper Heard called TAT a couple days later saying he believed the woman was very close to accepting help and “wondered if we could speak with her.” Lanier asked Trooper Heard to call this young woman back and ask her if she would be willing to have her number shared with Annika Huff, TAT training specialist and survivor-advocate. “Not only did she answer the phone when Trooper Heard called, revealing that he’d established rapport and trust,” related Lanier, “but she agreed to speak with Annika once he explained who she was. Annika and the young woman talked, and, at the conclusion of the call, she asked Annika to find out resource providers in her home state. Annika was able to do that, and they had another conversation when she passed on the service providers in that area.”

## Survivor-advocate Liz Williamson joins TAT as field trainer

Liz Williamson, a survivor of human trafficking who works as a survivor-advocate based in Northern California, is the newest



member of the TAT team. As a TAT training specialist, she will make presentations to a variety of audiences, engage with the trucking industry in Canada and handle some administrative duties.

Williamson has done direct service work with survivors at the local, regional and national level. For the past decade, she has trained and spoken nationally to audiences regarding her survival of familial trafficking to help dispel the myths surrounding this topic and to empower individuals to help make a difference. She has also trained medical professionals with Dignity Health to identify victims seeking to receive medical services, with special attention given to what the medical community missed or was unable to assist her with during her trafficking experience.

Williamson is a member of the Survivor Leadership Institute through GEMS. With a bachelor's in English Literature and a flair for all things creative, she enjoys communicating and creating. Williamson passionately believes that survivors deserve the opportunity to use their experiences to rewrite their stories and their futures.

"I'm glad to be working for TAT, because of the ability to train and educate so many. Somewhere there is a victim waiting to be seen, and those drivers will be prepared," she said.

## Say 'Goodbye' to 2020 with an act of generosity

*Editorial note from the TAT staff:* No one argues that 2020 has been a year without equal – one for the books, as they say – and not one anyone cares to repeat. But it's also been a year where people have shown remarkable heroism, unselfish commitment at personal risk to support others and the grit to endure much hardship, loss and grief, while continuing to work steadily to provide life-saving care, resources and supplies to needy, hurting people.

"Despite the hardships this year has brought, so many of our industry partners have been serving on the frontlines, while continuing to make calls on behalf of the exploited," shared Kendis Paris, TAT executive director. "To all of the truckers against trafficking out there ... thank you for what you do!"

TAT has recently received a \$100,000 matching grant gift from Berger North, and we would love your contribution toward this matching grant to close out this year with a bang and begin 2021 on a clear note of optimism. Use your donation toward this matching grant to say thank you to:

- The truckers who used their vehicles to bring personal protective gear and hand sanitizer to tens of thousands of frontline workers
- The truckers who kept grocery store shelves stocked and delivered millions of packages to people confined to their homes
- The truck stop employees who worked to keep transportation fueled and moving
- The school bus drivers who used their buses to deliver meals to kids in need from the schools they served
- This mobile army of transportation professionals who have kept their eyes and ears open for trafficking along the way

TAT's 2020 annual report, due for release in the first quarter of 2021, will not only give a detailed impact report of the year but also recognize the essential contribution of our transportation and energy partners.



Say goodbye  
to 2020  
with an *act of  
generosity.*

Double your dollar and  
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