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Human trafficking in the news

SRTC trucking students learn to watch for human trafficking

Before a commercial truck driver graduates from Southern Regional Technical College (SRTC), the student must prove that they are ready to handle the demands of driving a commercial vehicle ... One lesson, however, has little to do with operating a tractor-trailer, and everything to do with making the country safer for some of the most vulnerable people in the world. The Commercial Truck Driving program at SRTC has joined forces with Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) ...

SC asks truck drivers to help fight human trafficking

It's a simple request that could save many lives. State Attorney General Alan Wilson has teamed up with truckers around the state to help stop human trafficking.

Oklahoma City man sentenced to federal prison for child sex trafficking

An Oklahoma City man was given a lengthy prison sentence for coercing two juveniles to have sex with him and other men by threatening to evict their families. Rolando Cifuentes-Lopez, 37, was sentenced to 24 years in federal prison, according to a news release issued by U.S. Attorney Robert Troester.

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UPS leads the way as TAT's first North Star Sponsor

UPS began a partnership with TAT in 2016 and has repeatedly proven its commitment to be a leader in the transportation sector in the fight against human trafficking. UPS is TAT's first North Star sponsor with a \$250,000 donation.



"We're so grateful to UPS for all they do to fight human trafficking. They advance TAT's work and influence exponentially," declared Kendis Paris, TAT executive director. "From training their drivers, to hauling our Freedom Drivers Project to events across the nation and then manning the exhibit once it arrives, to strong anti-trafficking-in-persons policy adoption and using their influence to spread the word and bring more partners to TAT, to their incredible financial support of our mission ... let alone all of the other anti-trafficking work they do to affect systems change within the broader abolitionist movement ... they truly are a 'north star,' an incredible industry leader in this field and outstanding partners."

In addition to their work with TAT, which includes training well over 100,000 drivers in the United States and Canada and their consistent and insightful involvement on TAT's Board of Directors, UPS strives to keep employees aware of this issue in multiple ways. They've also adopted an enterprise-wide anti-trafficking-in-persons policy, which strictly prohibits the use of any UPS assets or resources for any purpose that would enable the trafficking of persons. They partner with the DHS Blue Campaign and teamed up with Wellspring, a Georgia-based survivor's advocacy program, to provide employment opportunities to survivors of human trafficking.

UPS is also leveraging the power of corporate philanthropy to invest in organizations like the United Way Worldwide's Center on Human Trafficking and Slavery and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. That partnership employs a comprehensive and ground-breaking approach which convenes community leaders – including relief and human service agencies, medical providers, local government, employers, advocates, citizens and more – around the singular issue of fighting local human trafficking, in many cases, for the first time. Through this collaboration, they're identifying needs and gaps at the community level, including housing, services, training and policy.

Additionally, UPS employees have donated more than \$5 million toward the Anti-Human Traffick Impact Fund through United Way Center on Human Trafficking & Slavery.

In many public forums and presentations, UPS leadership use the opportunities they're given to educate others on what they can do to join the fight. A TED Talk given by Nikki Clifton, UPS Social Impact and The UPS Foundation president, detailing three ways businesses can fight human trafficking and personalize their efforts through their own "special sauce," has now been seen by more than a million people.

La'Kerri Jackson, director of Social Impact and The UPS Foundation, said, "Human trafficking is a horrific crime, too often affecting youth and women. Since partnering with TAT, we've been able to implement training that has empowered more than 100,000 UPS drivers in the U.S. to save those in dangerous situations. Together, we are empowering our drivers to put the brakes on human trafficking one day at a time."



Having just received their FDP certification, UPS employees Mark Camp (left) and Vincent Wiggins (center) practice their host and communication skills by handing out TAT wallet cards and talking to other UPS employees about human trafficking as they prepare to tour the Freedom Drivers Project at the UPS SMART Hub in Atlanta.

Allied Universal partners with TAT to offer human trafficking training to security professionals

Allied Universal, one of the world's largest private security companies, has joined forces with Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) to offer TAT's online training for law enforcement to more than 300,000 security professionals in the United States and Canada. The goal of this training is to make Allied Universal's security forces more effective in recognizing and reporting human trafficking. The organization will also be offering TAT's Empower Freedom and Busing on the Lookout (BOTL) training within its vertical markets for security professionals working in the energy and transit industries.

"Our security professionals are the eyes and ears of the world, who are on the front line of service each and every day," said Brent O'Bryan, SVP of Training and Organizational Effectiveness at Allied Universal. "We are proud to align with Truckers Against Trafficking to ensure that our security professionals are expertly trained to recognize and combat human trafficking."

Annie Sovcik, BOTL director, stated, "As we seek to train all bus and transit employees in the United States and Canada, reaching security professionals is critical. Transit security officers are uniquely positioned to come into contact with human trafficking victims, as traffickers recruit victims at transit centers and use transit in the furtherance of their illicit activities. As victims may seek out transportation hubs for safety or escape, a well-trained security professional may be their ticket to freedom. We are grateful to Allied Universal for making the BOTL training available to its transit security officers and hope other private security companies will follow their lead."

"Security for the broader energy and petrochemical industry has traditionally been focused on protecting infrastructure and employees," explained Ashley Smith, TAT's director of Energy Operations. "With the introduction of the Empower Freedom training, Allied Universal security professionals can expand their protection to the communities in which they operate. Every employee

and contractor within the industry has a role to play, and we invite security professionals to be a part of the front lines of this issue."



Missouri State Highway Patrol runs two successful undercover operations



Sgt. Daniel Nash of the Missouri State Highway Patrol (MSHP) reported that during COVID, with the closure of casinos and some hotels and other hotels ramping up security and only letting in registered guests, truck stops became an even more significant funnel point for human trafficking activities.

As a result of TAT's Sedalia, Missouri Coalition Build in 2019, the MSHP and the Missouri Attorney General's Office Human Trafficking Task Force built a solid partnership with truck stops in the state, as did some of the local police departments who attended the event. Subsequently, departments like the Oak Grove Police Department began working more closely with

their local truck stops and providing extra patrol.

On one such occasion at the Petro truck stop, Oak Grove Police made contact with a female that they recognized may be a trafficking victim. The Police Department called the MSHP for assistance. While the victim didn't cooperate, officers did identify the possible trafficker. A few weeks later, after Oak Grove had a similar incident at another truck stop, they asked the MSHP and the Missouri Attorney General's Office Human Trafficking Task Force to conduct a proactive operation. Both truck stops were completely supportive and offered their assistance. Beside MSHP, this operation included: AGO, FBI, IRS, HSI, U.S. Marshal's, Johnson Co. SO, Jackson Co. SO, KCPD, St. Joseph PD, Independence PD, Oak Grove PD, MIAC, Kansas Highway Patrol, RISE Coalition and Central MO HT Coalition. Ten victims, two of which had potentially life-threatening medical conditions, were contacted, and all accepted services. Three children under five years old were taken into custody. Three arrests were made that night and one later. This created a deterrence effect as seen by online chatter.

Upon completion of the successful Oak Grove operation, St. Joseph PD contacted the MSHP and the Missouri Attorney General's Office Human Trafficking Task Force advised they were having increased issues with truck stops in their city and asked for assistance with a similar operation in St. Joseph. That operation involved the MSHP and AGO, FBI, U.S. Marshal, Johnson Co. SO, Buchanan Co. SO, KCPD, St. Joseph PD, MIAC, Probation and Parole, Department of Corrections, RISE Coalition, Relentless Pursuit and YWCA St. Joseph. Eight victims were contacted, and all accepted services. Two children under three years old were secured and provided services. Three arrests were made that night and one additional arrest is pending. This created a deterrence effect due to media coverage. The Attorney General was present and very supportive of the operations.

Sgt. Nash said, "To me, the takeaway from this is that in Missouri we are all part of a team. The truck stops, law enforcement, agencies of all sizes, TAT and the human trafficking task force. When we all work together, we can make a difference in locating and rescuing victims and identifying and arresting traffickers. TAT did and does continue to play an important role in this team, and we appreciate your work and effort to partner with us. While we all agree that

training is the foundation of all of this, we also believe you have to get out there and do the work, get the boots on the ground, get down and dirty, collect statistics, or put-up posters. So that's why we work so hard on these types of operations; because without them, law enforcement is far less effective."



The MSHP participated in the law enforcement panel at the 2019 Missouri Coalition Build. Pictured left to right are: Detective Andy Blair, Joplin Police Department; Keaton Strong, District Crisis Intervention Specialist, Ritenour School District; and Sergeant Dan Nash, Division of Drug and Crime Control, MSHP.

May 2021 Calendar of Events

June 8 – Kansas Highway Patrol training, Salina, KS, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, and Annika Huff, TAT training specialist and survivor-leader, presenting

June 9 – Montana Transit Association Spring Conference, Kalispell, MT, Annie Sovcik, BOTL director, presenting

June 9-13 – Mississippi Trucking Annual Conference, Sandestin, FL, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, presenting

June 14 – National Private Truck Council 2021 Annual Education Management Conference and Exhibition, Cincinnati, OH, Kendis Paris, TAT executive director, co-presenting with Tim Burke, CTP, director of Transportation Operations, Albertsons Companies, on Combating Human Trafficking through Your Supply Chain



June 16-18 – Private Motor Truck Council of Canada Virtual Conference, Liz Williamson, TAT training specialist and survivor-leader, manning “booth”

June 17 – St. Louis, MO Coalition Build with FDP, Esther Goetsch, Coalition Build director, Helen Hofer, FDP director, Louie Greek, TAT training specialist, and Liz Williamson, TAT training specialist and survivor-leader, presenting

June 18 – Nebraska Trucking Association Annual Conference, Grand Island, NB, Annika Huff, TAT training specialist and survivor-leader, presenting

June 22-25 – FDP at Reno Rodeo, Reno, NV, Helen Hofer, FDP director, and Susan Dold, TAT systems administrator, presenting

June 22-24 – International Virtual Summit on Counter-Sex Trafficking, Louie Greek, TAT training specialist, presenting

June 29 – [Human Trafficking Awareness Webinars](#) presented by The Criminal Justice Institute and The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences of Wilmington University, 2 pm, Kendis Paris, TAT executive director, presenting on how the truck, bus and energy industries are combating human trafficking and the essential nature of public/private partnerships to counter-trafficking initiatives

June 30 – Louisiana District Attorneys Association, Destin, FL, Louie Greek, TAT training specialist, presenting

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