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Human trafficking in the news

Smithfield man sentenced to three life sentences for human trafficking

A Smithfield man was sentenced today to three consecutive life sentences in prison for conspiracy to commit sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion and of a minor; sex trafficking by force fraud and coercion; sex trafficking of a minor; using the internet to promote a prostitution business enterprise (ITAR); and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

Training to end trafficking held in McPherson

Thursday, members of law enforcement, truckers and local industry leaders joined Truckers Against Trafficking and the Attorney General's Office for a training focused on reducing the instances of human trafficking in Kansas. The event, held in McPherson, provided ongoing collaboration among the various agencies.

Beyond the furrows: How labor trafficking affects farmworkers and what's being done locally

During the COVID-19 pandemic, essential workers helped the rest of us keep some semblance of order during the initial wave of uncertainty. And farmworkers are included in that workforce; they're how we get our food on the table. So when the pandemic hit, Andrea Rojas saw an increase in calls from agricultural workers to the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

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

UPS brings the FDP to New York and New Jersey to continue human trafficking awareness for employees

To continue bringing awareness of human trafficking to all its employees, UPS hosted the Freedom Drivers Project (FDP) on the fifth-floor rooftop of its New York City location, as well as its Secaucus, New Jersey location, in late July.

In preparation for the New York City event, UPS provided staff a webinar about TAT and the FDP

prior to the exhibit's arrival to encourage them to tour and to volunteer at the event. More than 500 drivers, mechanics, operators, dispatch, engineers, directors and managers toured the FDP over the course of two days with 30 employees volunteering at the FDP itself.



Prior to FDP tours beginning, UPS held a ceremony for more than 60 drivers and staff to discuss the UPS commitment to human trafficking training.

Prior to the tours beginning, UPS held a ceremony for more than 60 drivers and staff. Along with Helen Hofer, FDP director, UPS dignitaries at the ceremony included Brian Cannon, president of the North Atlantic District; Nikki Clifton, president of Social Impact and The UPS Foundation; Ray Barczak, president of the East Region Corporate Transport; and Kesha Sylvester, North Atlantic District Feeder director.

While speaking at the ceremony, Barczak announced that UPS will train all their feeder drivers with TAT materials before the end of October. That training began the next day at the New Jersey location.

Attendees demonstrated amazement as they toured the FDP, making comments like, "I didn't think was real" and "I didn't know half of what you had in there." Another UPS employee stated, "It was a very informative presentation ... we (feeder drivers) are out there in force and are willing to help. I have two daughters myself (13 & 15), so this hits close to home. Again, thank you to you and your team for coming out and bringing this to our attention; we will do our part to try to put an end to this horrible situation."

Hofer said, "I was reminded of the power of the exhibit when shared with the drivers who are on the front lines of recognizing and reporting trafficking. Drivers leading each other through the exhibit and emphasizing the critical role they have to play in the fight against human trafficking; managers wanting to share the FDP with other terminals in their region and taking materials to make sure everyone is equipped and empowered to recognize and report trafficking. Glad we could reach new heights in so many ways."

UPS also included TAT as an option for employees to donate to as part of their United Way Giving Campaign held in August.



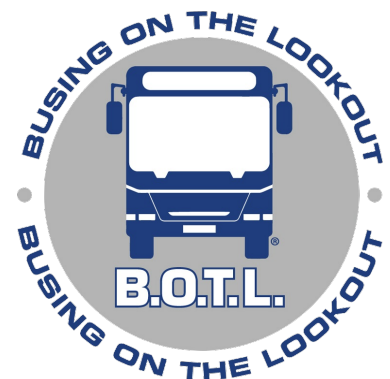
The FDP joined a fleet of UPS trucks on the rooftop in New York City.

BOTL prepares drivers for back to school; increases awareness of vulnerability factors through webinar series

Throughout the summer, Busing on the Lookout (BOTL) focused on training bus drivers to recognize human trafficking in preparation for the 2021/2022 school year and on providing awareness of the vulnerability factors which contribute to victimization by traffickers.

BOTL Program Specialist Lexi Higgins trained more than 1,800 members of the bus industry through:

- Providing the keynote address at the Florida Association for Pupil Transportation Annual Conference
- Facilitating two breakout sessions at the Texas Association for Pupil Transportation Annual Conference
- Presenting on a plenary panel with other national leaders in pupil transportation at the National School Transportation Association Annual Conference
- Providing direct training to school bus drivers in the Hillsborough County School District (seventh largest school bus fleet in the nation) in Tampa, Florida and at the Pennsylvania Bus Association's Annual Motorcoach Safety and Preparedness Workshop
- Presenting virtually at the Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation's Annual Conference and to the Pennsylvania Center for Safe Schools



Higgins also joined the Dave Nemo Show with guest, Alia Dewees, survivor-leader and director of Aftercare Development at Safe House Project, for a special Back-to-School episode. On that episode, Dewees reflected on how she continued to go to school while being trafficked and, even though she felt like the teachers and counselors at school were worried about her and wanted to help, their lack of human trafficking training was a barrier to being able to see and understand what was happening

to her.

Additionally, BOTL hosted a four-part webinar series focused on some of the vulnerability factors that traffickers may prey upon. The series, which featured guest presenters and addressed the topics of LGBTQ+ identity, homelessness, immigration and the child welfare system, was attended by BOTL partners in school transportation, transit, motorcoach, casinos and law enforcement from 36 states. A majority of webinar participants – 88.4 percent – who responded to the survey said the session they attended increased their knowledge of human trafficking.

For more on BOTL's work with school transportation, visit <https://truckersagainstrafficking.org/school-transportation/>. To learn how you can get involved – and to help make sure the school bus drivers in your community are BOTL trained – check out BOTL's School Transportation Outreach Kit with step-by-step guidance on how to introduce BOTL to your school district, available at <https://truckersagainstrafficking.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/BOTL-School-Transportation-Outreach-Kit.pdf>.



Bus drivers from the Hillsborough County School District in Tampa learned about human trafficking from Lexi Higgins, BOTL program specialist.

TAT Dealership Program welcomes GCR Tires and Service as a new partner

GCR, the commercial tire and service network owned and operated by Bridgestone Americas, Inc., has joined TDP, the [TAT Dealership Program](#), as a [Diamond-Level sponsor](#). Their fleet of more than 500 trucks all sport the TAT window decal, and their employees have been or are training with TAT materials. On Aug. 18, the GCR facility in Commerce City, Colorado



hosted the Freedom Drivers Project (FDP), so customers and employees could receive additional training through the exhibit's artifacts and displays. This is the first time the FDP has been invited to a tire dealership.

Allan Cieniuch, East Mountain regional manager for GCR Tires, commented, "Overall the event was a tremendous success. We had support from vendors, a food truck, and over 60 customers attended throughout the day. This was an eye opening and powerful event; TAT did a great job of having impactful conversations with all who attended."

"Bridgestone is proud to stand with Truckers Against Trafficking in the fight against human trafficking," added Steve Hoeft, COO of Dealer Operations and GCR Tires and Service at Bridgestone America. "As a global leader in tires and advanced mobility solutions, safety is a core value of our company. We are committed to training our employees and customers on this important issue, so that they are empowered to take action to help end human trafficking once and for all."

The [Tire Industry Association](#) also recently announced its partnership with TAT. In that announcement, TIA Board Member T. J. Trum said, "Today, I am extremely proud that our industry has unequivocally stated in one voice that it does not tolerate human trafficking in our communities." TIA's commitment will amplify the mission and voice of Truckers Against Trafficking by reaching and training more TIA members. It is very possible that someone in the TIA network could very well be the difference-maker that brings a victim of human trafficking home and an offender to justice."

As a partner, TIA will help get the word out to association members, their customers and the tire industry at large, encouraging them to get involved in the effort to stop human trafficking.

"As a resource to the trucking, bus and energy industries, TAT believes the tire industry locations are influential distribution points for the anti-human trafficking message if this movement is to continue to grow," said Kendis Paris, TAT executive director. "We are excited about our partnerships with GCR and TIA and are extremely hopeful that their efforts will result in a host of TAT Dealership Partners all across the nation."



Visitors to the FDP at the GCR event learned how pornography fuels trafficking.



GCR trucks carry the TAT window sticker.

Trafficking victims can and do come from all racial and ethnic groups. In an analysis of child trafficking cases by the Connecticut Human Anti-trafficking Response Team, 73 percent of referrals that the CT Department of Children and Families received in 2018 for high-risk or confirmed victims of human trafficking were children of color, while children of color make up less than half of the state's youth population. The more we

know about what human trafficking really looks like, the better we'll be able to recognize a victim and make the call.

Source: <https://love146.org/lets-talk-about-race-and-human-trafficking/>



September 2021 Calendar of Events

Aug. 29-Sept. 2 – Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) Annual Conference, Wilmington, DE, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, and Louie Greek, TAT training specialist, manning booth

Sept. 8 – South Dakota Trucking Association Conference, Sioux Falls, SD, Louie Greek, TAT training specialist, presenting

Sept. 9 – High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) law enforcement training, San Antonio, TX, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, and Annika Huff, TAT training specialist and survivor-advocate, presenting

Sept. 9 – New Jersey Human Trafficking Task Force, Esther Goetsch, CB director, presenting

Sept. 9 – Automotive Industry Action Group Virtual Supply Chain and International Trade Summit, Laura Cyrus, Corporate Engagement director, and Molly Griffiths, Corporate Engagement manager, exhibiting

Sept. 14 – FDP at GCR Tires and Service, Salt Lake City, UT, Susan Dold, TAT systems administrator, presenting

Sept. 16 – FDP at UPS Regional Hub, Salt Lake City, UT, Susan Dold, TAT systems administrator, presenting

Sept. 21-22 – Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association Annual Convention, Lake Geneva, WI, Ashley Smith, Energy Operations director, manning booth and presenting

Sept. 22 – Landstar BCO Days, Las Vegas, NV, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, presenting

Sept. 23 – Honda Supply Chain Virtual Symposium, Laura Cyrus, Corporate Engagement director, presenting

Sept. 25 – Zonta Annual Conference (PA and Canada) virtual presentation, Liz Williamson, TAT training specialist and survivor-advocate, presenting

Sept. 28-Oct. 1 – Western States Information Network, Sacramento, CA, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, and Annika Huff, TAT training specialist and survivor-advocate, presenting

Sept. 28 – National Transportation in Indian Country Conference (virtual), Annie Sovcik, BOTL director, presenting



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