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## Human trafficking in the news

### Michigan State Police rescue 21-year-old woman from alleged sex trafficking

A missing persons report to the Michigan State Police ended with troopers recovering a 21-year-old woman from an alleged sex trafficking ring near Detroit. The Saginaw resident told police that 33-year-old John Luke Ramirez, who she met online, forced her into sex trafficking. The woman added that Ramirez had control of her phone and would park outside rooms where she met people for "dates."

### FBI conducts a nationwide operation against sex trafficking

Human trafficking is among the most heinous crimes the FBI encounters. Unfortunately, such crimes—against both adults and children—are far more common than most people realize. Throughout the nation, the FBI worked alongside 200 state, local and federal partners to conduct 391 in Operation Cross Country. The youngest victim found was 11 years old.

### Kingston, Ontario man now facing 95 human trafficking-related charges, police seek additional victims

Since the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) announced sexual assault and human trafficking-related charges laid against a local man in July 2022, further victims have been identified and more charges have been laid. The investigation began in January 2022 when police were made aware of an individual "luring women and girls through social media platforms for the purpose of exploitation."

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

## CVSA Named 2022 TAT Champion Award Winner in the Association Category

Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) has named the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) the winner of its 2022 TAT Champion Award in the Association Category. Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director and senior director of Public Sector Engagement, presented the award at the CVSA fall conference in September.

Providing the historical context of the relationship between TAT and CVSA, Lanier explained, “We first heard about the CVSA from Director Dave Lorenzen, Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), formerly the Chief of Motor Vehicle Enforcement. He informed us that there was no better alliance to promote TAT’s work throughout all of North America than the CVSA. And while he was talking to us about CVSA, he was championing TAT to CVSA leadership, including Collin Mooney, CVSA executive director.”



*From left: Jake Elovirta, from CVSA, accepting the TAT Champion Award in the Association Category for CVSA by Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director.*

In 2018, TAT attended its first CVSA conference and presented about its work. The following year, CVSA invited TAT to present at the spring workshop, and as a direct result of that opportunity, “implementation of the Iowa MVE Model exploded,” Lanier shared. “In April 2019, 32 states had implemented the Iowa MVE model in part, and only seven states had adopted it in whole. Today, we have 49 states working with us on the model, with 38 states adopting it in full.”

CVSA has also:

- Included the TAT curriculum in CVSA’s industry presentations in both the U.S. and Canada, and allowed TAT to present its 4-hour law enforcement training at the North American Inspectors Championship (NAIC).
- Been instrumental in helping TAT launch its operations in Canada, serving on the TAT Canada Committee, providing counsel and advice, opening doors, making introductions and helping to light the path forward.
- Launched the Human Trafficking Prevention Program in the fall of 2020, which held its first tri-national Human Trafficking Awareness Initiative in January, February and March 2022, with 30 states, three Canadian provinces and multiple Mexican states participating.

“This coming year, this three-day initiative is being expanded to five days, and we hope for a full 50 states participating, more Canadian provinces joining the efforts and our Mexican partners continuing to move the TAT replication of Guardianes del Asfalto forward through their channels as well,” Lanier shared. “I can’t even begin to explain the impact of this action, as it is still happening, with wave after wave of new support, states and provinces and Mexican states joining with us on both our more established models as well as with new innovations.”

Lanier enthused, “The ideas and educational opportunities that have been generated within the program have been inspirational, and the legitimacy of our work has only been maximized and expanded through this partnership with CVSA and their championing of our message.”

She also applauded the generosity of the CVSA for always waiving TAT’s registration and exhibitor fees, enabling the organization to participate in the spring workshop and fall conferences each year.

“CVSA is grateful and honored to have received the TAT Champion Award,” said CVSA Executive Director Collin Mooney. “However, we could not have accomplished all that we have without our partnership with Truckers Against Trafficking. TAT’s support has allowed us the opportunity to educate countless commercial motor vehicle drivers, motor carriers, law enforcement officers and the general public about the crime of human trafficking. Prevention starts with awareness, and the Alliance is proud to work with TAT to do its part to put an end to human trafficking.”

“Truckers Against Trafficking was instrumental in the establishment of CVSA’s Human Trafficking Prevention Program and the launch of the Alliance’s annual Human Trafficking Awareness Initiative in Canada, Mexico and the U.S.,” said CVSA Director of Enforcement Programs and Human Trafficking Prevention Program staff liaison Jake Elovirta. “We continue to collaborate together to equip drivers, motor carriers and inspectors with the tools and resources they need to serve on the transportation-sector frontline in our effort to end human trafficking.”

TAT created its Champion Awards to recognize significant partners in both the public and private sectors, which leverage their networks to raise awareness about the crime of human trafficking,

commit to concrete actions to combat it and whose efforts have significantly advanced TAT's mission and goals. TAT recognizes and acknowledges that without the support and committed actions of these entities, its impact would be significantly curtailed, and the loopholes traffickers exploit would continue to grow.

## TAT Builds Partnerships and Expands Reach in Canada



*TAT Public Sector Engagement Specialist, Dylan Wecht, greets attendees at the Fort McMurray CB.*

Through a Coalition Build (CB) in Alberta, a Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) meeting in British Columbia and a Fleet Safety Council Event in Ontario, Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) staff engaged leaders from the energy and trucking industries and law enforcement in efforts to combat human trafficking in Canada.

On October 4, 2022, TAT hosted a CB in Fort McMurray, Alberta in partnership with ConocoPhillips Canada. The goal of the CB was to bring together representatives from the energy industry with law enforcement, government agencies and the local indigenous communities for anti-trafficking training and solutions-oriented coordination. Over 70 people were in attendance and heard presentations by anti-trafficking experts from the Alberta Crown Prosecution Services, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams, and TAT.

Attendees also heard a presentation by a Canadian survivor of human trafficking and learned about cases that national and regional law enforcement had investigated. TAT staff provided an overview of engagement opportunities and training resources, emphasizing that TAT CBs are intended to spark action and equip participants with the tools they need to spread awareness to combat human trafficking within their companies, agencies and communities. Ninety percent of survey respondents said they felt better prepared to identify human trafficking after attending the briefing with several describing the training as “powerful,” “moving” and “informative.” In follow-up conversations, participants have expressed interest in receiving TAT training resources for the energy industry and law enforcement and TAT has already begun discussions about planning additional Canadian-based CBs in the future.

At the CTA's Annual Meeting on October 5-6, 2022, in Whistler, British Columbia, TAT Field Trainer and Survivor Leader, Liz Williamson, and TAT Public Sector Engagement Specialist, Dylan Wecht presented at the CTA's Blue Ribbon Task Force Meeting. The Task Force is comprised of approximately 100 CTA Board members, including all provincial trucking associations, and Team Canada Elite members. TAT provided an overview of how the trucking industry in Canada can help combat human trafficking and recommended that the CTA implement anti-trafficking training as part of the Mandatory Entry-Level Training (MELT) class for Class 1 and Class 2 commercial drivers nationwide.

On October 14, 2022, TAT participated in the 31st annual Fleet Safety Council Conference in Brampton, Ontario where approximately 250 professionals and council members met to discuss health and safety within the Canadian transportation industry. TAT's Data Administration Specialist, Amanda Haggarty, managed the TAT booth and described, “TAT received a warm welcome, and attendees were enthusiastic about TAT's work in the industry.” In addition, TAT received a generous donation and recognition from the Fleet Safety Council.



*TAT Public Sector Engagement Specialist, Dylan Wecht, presents at the CTA's Blue Ribbon Task Force Meeting.*

TAT continues to be encouraged by the level of interest and commitment expressed by members of



## TAT in Action

**A truck driver called the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) to report seeing a potential trafficker enter a truck with a bag, while a minor and adult potential victim were in the back of the vehicle. The potential victims appeared fearful and were dressed in inappropriate clothing given the weather. The NHTH called police and followed up with a written report to its confidential law enforcement contacts.**

**Make the Call. Save Lives.**

**1-888-3737-888 (US) | 1-833-900-1010 (Canada)**

**01800-5533-000 (Mexico)**

**Text INFO or HELP to BeFree (233733)**

*\*Names, locations and other identifying information have been changed and/or omitted to preserve the confidentiality of the people we serve.*



## BOTL Distributes the Results of its 2022 School Bus Survey

In commemoration of National School Bus Safety Week, a public education program held annually during the third full week of October, TAT's Busing on the Lookout (BOTL) program began distributing the results of its [2022 School Bus Survey](#).

Recognizing that school transportation professionals (e.g., bus drivers, transportation directors, bus aides, etc.) are uniquely positioned to recognize and report human trafficking, BOTL has been partnering with school districts, school bus contractors, pupil transportation associations and state departments of education since 2017. In the summer of 2022, however, BOTL set out to not only train school transportation professionals, but to also learn from them about their experiences on the ground related to suspicions about grooming, trafficking and/or exploitation.

Survey data collected from over 400 school transportation professionals at conferences in Kansas, Virginia, Wyoming and Colorado revealed that 1 in 3 have suspected that a student was at risk of being groomed and/or abused and 1 in 4 have reported an incident of suspected child abuse, grooming or trafficking. Suspicions were reported to supervisors, counselors, transportation directors and/or the principal or administration.

This feedback reinforces the important role that school transportation professionals play in protecting the safety of school children and demonstrates that human trafficking training is vital for not only these frontline professionals, but everyone within the school ecosystem, including those in the chain of reporting.

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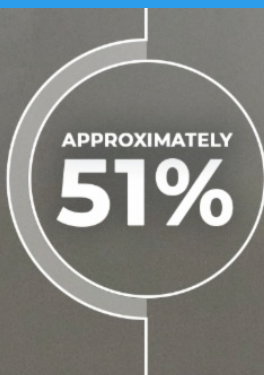


Berger North is offering  
TAT a \$250,000 matching  
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*Will YOU help us  
reach that goal?*

**Double your end-of-year  
donation by giving today!**

## Stat of the Month



**OF PROSTITUTION ARRESTS  
FOR INDIVIDUALS UNDER  
AGE 18 ARE MADE UP OF  
BLACK OR AFRICAN  
AMERICAN YOUTH.**



In 2019, Black or African American youth made up approximately 51% of prostitution arrests for individuals under age 18.

*[Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime in the United States. \(2019\). Table 43B.](#)*

## November 2022 | Calendar of Events

**Nov. 2** - Kansas Highway Patrol Law Enforcement Trainings, Salina, KS, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director and Kelley Alsobrook, TAT field trainer, presenting

**Nov. 2** - California Association for Coordinated Transportation Fall Conference, Sonoma, CA, Annie Sovcik, senior director of Programs & Strategic Initiatives and Liz Williamson, TAT training specialist, presenting

**Nov. 4** - Commercial Vehicle Training Association Bi-Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA, Chris Moreno, Industry Training Program specialist, presenting

**Nov. 8** - Human Trafficking Task Force of Southern Colorado, Colorado Springs, CO, Chris Moreno, Industry Training Program specialist, presenting

**Nov. 9** - Washington State Patrol Law Enforcement Training, Leavenworth, WA, Kylla Lanier,





TAT deputy director and Kelley Alsobrook, TAT field trainer, presenting  
**Nov. 9** - Central Valley Coalition Build, Stockton, CA, Louie Greek, Coalition Build specialist, Annie Sovcik, senior director of Programs & Strategic Initiatives, Liz Williamson, TAT field trainer and survivor-leader, presenting  
**Nov. 10** - Ascent On-Demand/General Motors Carrier Conference, Livonia, MI, Laura Cyrus, senior director of Industry Training and Outreach, presenting  
**Nov. 13-16** - Women in Transportation Accelerate Conference, Dallas, TX, Laura Cyrus, senior director of Industry Training and Outreach, presenting, and Brandy Belton, Freedom Drivers Project director, attending  
**Nov. 15** - Idaho State Police Law Enforcement Training, Boise, ID, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, Dylan Wecht, TAT Public Sector Engagement specialist and Kelley Alsobrook, TAT field trainer presenting  
**Nov. 29-30** - Western Region Commercial Vehicle Safety Summit, Denver, CO, Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director, attending and exhibiting  
**Nov. 29** - National FMCSA Conference, Baltimore, MD, Dylan Wecht, Public Sector Engagement specialist, presenting

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