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HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE NEWS

Truckers Against Trafficking wants industry to remember it's a year-long battle

While industry leaders used **National Human Trafficking Awareness Month** to remind stakeholders about the problem, Truckers Against Trafficking wants to be sure this issue receives year-round awareness. According to Esther Goetsch, executive director of nonprofit **Truckers Against Trafficking**, the industry is "in a unique position to be able to recognize and report the crime of human trafficking, knowing that it's a crime that often hides in plain sight."

Operation targeting human trafficking in Scottsdale leads to 158 arrests

PHOENIX — A recent multi-agency operation targeting human trafficking in Scottsdale led to the arrests of 158 people, authorities said. The 12-day operation, which took place from Jan. 23 to Feb. 10, aimed to apprehend people engaged in the solicitation of sex, exploitation of minors and participation in the sex trade and human trafficking, the Scottsdale Police Department said. The operations were conducted using decoys, ensuring no children were involved.

TravelCenters of America raises human trafficking awareness

TravelCenters of America (TA) and bp have announced a new initiative to raise awareness for human trafficking in Las Vegas before the Super Bowl. "Human trafficking is known to increase during major sporting events and other big gatherings due to an increased demand for illicit services," TA stated in a press release. TA and bp are collaborating with the non-profit organization In Our Backyard to distribute TA and bp-sponsored booklets with photos of missing children in the area who are at high risk for trafficking.

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TAT celebrates 15 years with a new look highlighting its growth

TAT is turning 15 years old and is sporting a new look to celebrate and underscore the occasion and the organization's development.

"Since our inception in 2009, TAT has been characterized by a commitment to scaling sustainably ... extending our boundaries, stepping up and stepping out to invite more organizations, agencies and associations to play a role in the fight against human trafficking," explained Esther Goetsch, TAT executive director.

"While trucking and truckers are — and always will be — a cornerstone of our existence," she explained, "we believe the cross-functional collaboration we're achieving with the inclusion of multiple key industry members and agencies is serving to provide a better equipped and informed defensive force of transportation professionals in this war we wage against this insidious crime."



With the breadth of TAT's growth becoming so visible, in 2023, TAT's partners at Bridgestone suggested senior leadership might want to explore whether TAT's mission and logo were accurately portraying who the organization was becoming, rather than just who TAT started out to be.

With resources and experts Bridgestone provided, including the services of advertising

legend Leo Burnett, TAT's senior leadership engaged in a series of meetings to better communicate the identity the organization -- through the support of its partners -- has achieved in the past 15 years in its efforts to transform an ever-expanding vision into reality. The brand changes resulting from those meetings included the decision to use the shortened name TAT, and to refine the logo and mission statement to be more inclusive of all the entities TAT works with today and the reality of who TAT has become.

TAT programs will be rebranded to clearly identify them as TAT programs, so Busing on the Lookout will become TAT Motorcoach, TAT School Transportation and TAT Transit; Empower Freedom will become TAT Energy; and the trucking industry will be divided into TAT Trucking, TAT Truck Stops, TAT Local Drivers and TAT Dealerships. Additionally, sector logos will identify information, training, materials, programs, etc., for other entities with which TAT works, such as TAT Law Enforcement, TAT Shipping & Logistics, TAT Government Agencies and TAT Organizations.

"We're excited about the changes we're making," commented Goetsch. "They're long overdue, will remove some of the confusion people have experienced about who we are due to the names and logos we had given a number of our programs as we've grown, and will help tell the story of the ever-multiplying industry, agency and organizational partners and champions we have the privilege to work with in this multi-faceted battle to recover victims of human trafficking and arrest the perpetrators of this crime."

Take a look at TAT's 2023 Impact Report; it's worth the read!

TAT's 2023 impact report is out and ready for your attention. This report focused on how viewing TAT's audiences in a more holistic way brought about greater innovation, as well as a deeper understanding of the people TAT serves. This broader perspective resulted in new resources and programs, a greater emphasis on vulnerable populations and a desire to empower the people TAT works with to address human trafficking at every level of work and life, to help eradicate it in the places it breeds ... thoughts, attitudes, complacency and in the shadows of our lives ... before it victimizes people.

"We hope you'll take the time to read through the report and see the impact of your support through the work we're doing," said Esther Goetsch, TAT executive director. "Awareness and engagement in the fight against human trafficking remove the cloak of invisibility traffickers use to hide their nefarious actions."



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 1 – USPS Transportation Strategy Team Lunch N Learn, virtual
March 1 – Illinois Violent Crime Advisory Commission, virtual
March 2 – UPS Rodeo, Goodyear, AZ
March 4 – Alaska Governor's Council on Human and Sex Trafficking Quarterly Task Force Meeting, virtual
March 7 – High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Domestic Highway Enforcement Conference, St. Louis, MO
March 8 – JB Hunt FDP Event, San Bernardino, CA
March 9 – UPS Rodeo, Ontario, CA
March 12 – Anti-Trafficking Alliance of Central Oregon, TAT Task Force Presentation, virtual
March 12 – Coalition Build, Green Bay, Wisconsin
March 12 – Co-Op Meeting, Wyoming DOT, Cheyenne, WY
March 13 – 2024 California Sexual Assault Investigator's Association, Pismo, CA
March 13 – Women's Network Forum, Kenworth, virtual
March 13-14 – AAMVA Workshop and Law Institute, Oklahoma City, OK
March 15 – youthSpark Drives Change, Atlanta, GA
March 16 – SmartHub UPS, Atlanta, GA

March 20 – Mid-Columbia Oregon Human Trafficking Task Force, virtual
March 20-21 – Stop Human Trafficking Conference, Pendleton, OR
March 21-23 – Mid-America Trucking Show, Louisville, KY
March 25-28 – 2024 Women-in-Law Enforcement Conference, San Marcos, TX
March 26 – Teamsters Pipeline Stewards Conference, San Antonio, TX
March 26 – Office of Administrative Law Judges Brown Bag, virtual
March 27 – ATA Movers Webinar, virtual
March 30 – Epes Driver Appreciation Event, Greensboro, NC



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