



Arizona Human  
Trafficking Council

**Arizona Human Trafficking Council  
December 8, 2021, 9:00 AM  
Virtual Meeting**

1700 West Washington Street, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

A general meeting of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council was convened on September 22, 2021 virtually, 1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

Members Present (19)	Members Absent (8)
Maria Cristina Fuentes, Chair	Brian Steele
David Curry	Jill Rable
Alix Skelpsa Ridgway (proxy for Debbie Johnson)	Jim Waring
Dominique Roe-Sepowitz	Marsha Calhoun
Doug Coleman	Nathaniel Brown
Heather Carter	Rachel Garcia (Proxy for Don Herrington)
Tony Mapp (Proxy for Heston Silbert)	Regina Cobb
Jennifer Crawford	T.J. Shope
James Gallagher	
Joseph Kelroy	
Lois Lucas	
Jeramia Ramadan (Proxy for Michael Wisehart)	
Keith Moffitt (Proxy for Mike Faust)	
Rachel Mitchell	
Angela Salomon (Proxy for Sarah Beaumont)	
Sarah Chung (formerly Sarah Kent)	
Sheila Polk	
Tim Roemer	
Zora Manjencich	
Staff and Guests Present (5)	
Kim Brooks	Garrick Taylor
Vianney Careaga	Lacey Fischer
Claire Merkel	

**Call to Order**

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Chair**, called the Arizona Human Trafficking Council meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. with 19 members and 5 staff and guests present.
- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, announced the resignation of **Mrs. Cindy McCain**, now **Ambassador McCain**, as the Co-Chair of the Council, following her confirmation as United States Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture. **Ambassador McCain** has served as Co-Chair of the Council since its

inception in 2013. During her tenure, **Ambassador McCain** played an integral role in leading efforts to combat human trafficking and increase multi-agency collaboration to prevent and respond to trafficking in our state. She has been an advocate for victims and the need to increase and improve services and support for those recovering from this heinous crime. Under her leadership, the Council has:

- o Provided training on how to identify, report and respond to victims of trafficking to more than 44,000 professionals and community members statewide, including legislators, law enforcement, medical professionals, tribal communities, school staff, faith-based organizations, and businesses;
  - o Launched a statewide human trafficking outreach and awareness campaign, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security;
  - o Hosted the annual Arizona Human Trafficking Symposium;
  - o Supported more than 30 research studies that shed light on the human trafficking landscape in Arizona and provide insight on how systems of care can better support survivors of human trafficking; and
  - o Supported the successful passage of five pieces of legislation that strengthen protections for victims and increase penalties for perpetrators.
- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, further added her gratitude, on behalf of the Council, for **Ambassador McCain's** incredible service as Co-Chair of this Council.

### Roll Call

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, conducted a roll call of the Council and took note of Councilmember proxies.

### Approval of Minutes

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, requested a review of the **October 20, 2021** meeting minutes.
  - o **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** moved to accept the **October 20, 2021** minutes.
  - o **Jennifer Crawford** seconded the motion.
  - o The motion passed with no dissenting votes at 9:08 a.m.

### Arizona Chamber of Commerce Involvement in Combatting Human Trafficking

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, introduced **Garrick Taylor** for an update on the involvement of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry in combatting human trafficking. **Mr. Taylor** began his presentation by providing background on the Arizona Chamber. One of the primary functions of the Arizona Chamber is to advocate for a competitive business environment in the state. That environment is disrupted when the state is perceived to be welcoming to criminal enterprises. This year, the Arizona Chamber has become part of United to Safeguard America from Illegal Trade (USA-IT). USA-IT is a partnership between public and private sector organizations to protect Americans' security and prosperity from black market criminals. The impetus behind this partnership was mostly in the trafficking of illegal goods and counterfeit goods, which has now become a critical issue relating to supply chain challenges that make certain goods hard to come by. This also has implications relating to the nation's security. For example with cigarettes, tobacco smuggling provides quick capital for networks to grow from one illegal activity to another including trade in arms, people, drugs, oil, antiques, and other illegal products. These criminal enterprises are very sophisticated, traffickers that establish routes for illegal goods can also use the routes for the trafficking of people. USA-IT works to educate the public on this issue. The Arizona Chamber is also very integrated in the tourism industry throughout the state and supports the SAFE Action Project. This project is aimed at training tourism industry professionals at all levels to identify, report, and prevent human trafficking. The Arizona Chamber does not want tourist destinations to be leveraged or exploited as liaison points for criminal activity and they encourage increased visibility on this topic. American Airlines, a longtime member of the Arizona Chamber, has also trained its employees to look out for the signs of human trafficking.
- **Director Fuentes** added that the Council has a task force led by **Director Debbie Johnson** that is working with the National Football League (NFL) and other partners on outreach efforts for Super Bowl LVII. The Council is grateful that the NFL and the organizers of Super Bowl LVII recognize that when it comes to mega events, not just football, it can sometimes create the opportunity for criminal enterprises to grow. To mitigate

that activity, the Council, through its task force, will be working closely with its partners to develop a framework for outreach and awareness for mega events.

- **Director Tim Roemer** lauded the efforts of the Arizona Chamber for the work they are doing to combat trafficking activity. He also thanked the Arizona Chamber for their help facilitating thriving relationships between the Arizona Department of Homeland Security, law enforcement agencies, and private sector organizations.

### **Update: Arizona's Child and Youth Sex Trafficking Report Card**

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, introduced **Rachel Mitchell** for an update on Arizona's Child and Youth Sex Trafficking report card. **Ms. Mitchell** began her presentation by explaining that, about a month ago, Shared Hope International released its Report Cards on Child & Youth Sex Trafficking on the 50 states. All states, except Florida, received overall grades of "D" and "F." Arizona received an "F" grade in all categories of the report card, but upon further examination, inconsistencies can be found in Shared Hope International's assessment of Arizona, particularly in the matters concerning criminal law in the state. When it comes to criminal law, it is important to remember that criminal law is not found in just one section of the law, but rather it is a collection of the law that includes statutes of general and specific applicability, criminal rules of procedure, rules of evidence, caselaw, and the federal and state constitutions. A good understanding of these various aspects of criminal law can provide a better picture of Arizona against Shared Hope International's assessment. One of the first claims made by Shared Hope International can be found in Policy Goal 1.2, which states that "Arizona's commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) laws do not criminalize purchasing or soliciting commercial sex with a minor." This is a false claim. When coupled with the definition of prostitution under A.R.S. § 13-3211, both subsection A and subsection B of A.R.S. § 13-3212 align with Shared Hope International's aim of enacting CSEC laws that criminalize the purchasing or soliciting commercial sex with a minor. Additionally, Arizona has also codified A.R.S. § 13-3554 to address the luring of a minor for sexual exploitation. They also recommended, based on their claim in Policy Goal 1.3, that Arizona "enact a CSEC law that addresses an array of exploitive conduct engaged in by traffickers." Shared Hope International's assessment in this regard is limited to A.R.S. § 13-3206. This ignores A.R.S. § 13-3212 and other laws that encompass an array of exploitive conduct engaged in by traffickers. Another claim that is made is in Policy Goal 1.4 is that "Arizona law does not prohibit a mistake of age defense in prosecutions where an older minor is the victim of child sex trafficking, nor does it prohibit the defense in CSEC cases." Under current state law, knowledge of age is not a defense, especially if it involves a trafficker. However, if the state cannot prove that the customer knew or should have known the age of the victim, and the victim is between the ages of 15 and 17, then the defense can be used. In the past legislative session the punishment for this offense was raised from a class 6 felony to a class 5 felony, and if the case involves a repeat offender the punishment for the offense was raised from a class 5 felony to a class 2 felony. Shared Hope International claims in Policy Goal 1.6 that "Arizona's trafficking law does not expressly allow for business entity liability." When looking at A.R.S. § 13-105 there are definitions that affect all of Arizona's criminal statutes. Here the definition of a "person" is not only defined as a human being, but is also extended to apply to a business. Therefore, businesses in Arizona can be held liable under state trafficking laws. One of the statutes that is used to go after these illegal enterprises is A.R.S. § 13-2312, which prohibits the profiting of racketeering. Both child sex trafficking and sex trafficking are covered under the definition of racketeering in A.R.S. § 13-2301.
- Another claim that was raised is in Policy Goal 2.6 that states that "Arizona law does not prohibit the criminalization of child sex trafficking victims for status offenses nor does it prohibit charging victims with misdemeanors or non-violent felonies committed as a result of their trafficking victimization." In Arizona, a general defense of duress under A.R.S. § 13-412 is available to people who are charged with crimes. The defense of duress however is not available for offenses involving homicide or serious physical injury. In Policy Goal 2.7, Shared Hope International claims that "Arizona law does not prohibit the criminalization of child sex trafficking victims for sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation offenses, including accomplice and co-conspirator liability, committed as a result of their trafficking victimization." **Ms. Mitchell** here raised a point in the wording of Policy Goal 2.7 in relation to where it states "does not prohibit the

criminalization.” The wording implies that the state should not make these offenses a crime which would disallow prosecutors from charging them in the first place. This would further take away the ability of the trier of fact, either a judge or jury, to weigh whether or not the crimes were committed as a result of being trafficked. In Arizona, duress retains that ability for the trier of fact and provides victims with an affirmative defense. Shared Hope International claims in Policy Goal 2.8 that “Arizona law does not provide child sex trafficking victims with an affirmative defense to violent felonies committed as a result of their trafficking victimization.” As previously discussed, this claim is false. Arizona allows for duress defense as well as justification for the use of deadly physical force under A.R.S. § 13-405 and the justification for the use of force in preventing crime under A.R.S. § 13-411. Providing greater immunity to victims can motivate traffickers to pressure victims to be the ones to commit more crimes. From Policy Goal 5.1, Shared Hope International recommended that Arizona “amend state law to provide a hearsay exception that applies to non-testimonial evidence in cases involving commercial sexual exploitation of children under 18 years of age.” Arizona had a statute that would allow this under A.R.S. § 13-1416, but was ruled unconstitutional. In Arizona, the legislature does not make the rules of evidence, rather that power is delegated by the state constitution to the state supreme court. This recommendation also has federal constitutional implications which could run afoul of the law, particularly with the sixth amendment. When hearsay is permissible in this manner, it would deny the accused the right to confront witnesses against them. Shared Hope International, based on Policy Goal 5.2, also recommended that Arizona “strengthen existing statutory protections to allow all commercially sexually exploited children to testify by an alternative method regardless of the child’s age and the offense charged.” Arizona already has the means to do this, but it is limited to children under the age of 15, in A.R.S. § 13-4253. **Ms. Mitchell** went on to add that Shared Hope International’s report makes no mention of the following efforts: advanced forensic interviewing training, law enforcement academy training by prosecutors, and the STRENGTH Court program. She further added that the report provides a bleak outlook on Arizona’s efforts even though this Council and its members have made significant progress over the years to support victims. To the victims that read this report, **Ms. Mitchell** wanted to ensure that they know that this Council does care, its members work tirelessly for them, and that there is hope for them. The full presentation can be accessed at <https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/htc/2021/12/08>.

- **Director Fuentes** thanked **Rachel Mitchell** for her presentation and added that national assessments or reviews of what different states do can oftentimes be skewed, unfair, or ill-informed. Nuances are important and when not taken into account, these assessments or reviews can provide an erroneous picture of the states. The work of reviewing these assessments through multiple lenses, like the lens of a prosecutor, provides the public a better understanding of Arizona’s efforts to combat human trafficking. Arizona is a national leader in preventing, intervening, and responding to human trafficking.
- **James Gallagher** added that his department has reviewed Shared Hope International’s reports as they have come out in the past and their evaluation criteria is not consistent with what is being done, the successes that are being had, and how far Arizona has come of the years. He asked whether there was any counter-documentation that can be put together to reports like these. **Director Fuentes** responded by stating that the presentation by **Rachel Mitchell** was a starting point. Additionally, the Workgroups of the Council can dive deeper into the report and paint a more accurate picture of the state’s efforts.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** noted that the Council may want to have discussions in the future about safe harbor laws and whether Arizona has the right infrastructure for those laws.
- **Rachel Mitchell** added that Shared Hope International does send out questionnaires to gather information for their report, but is concerned that the correct persons are not responding to them. She recommended that outreach be conducted to Shared Hope International in the future to ensure the questionnaires are sent to the right people. **Director Fuentes** agreed and added that the content and method of assessment should also be addressed.

### YES Study and Youth Probation Screening Tool

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, introduced **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** for a presentation on the 2021 Youth Experiences Survey (YES) results and the Juvenile Sex Trafficking Screening Tool. **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** began her presentation by providing background in the YES study. This was the eighth year in which the

YES study was conducted. The purpose of the YES study is to determine the gaps in service needs for particularly vulnerable populations and explore the prevalence sex and labor exploitation as a result of these vulnerabilities. The YES study has also been replicated in other states due to the reliability of its methodology. 89 homeless young adults participated in the Arizona study, 77.5% participated with a paper and pencil survey and 22.5% participated in the online survey. All participants received a five dollar gift card for participating in the study. The average age of the study participants was 21.2 years old, 56.2% identified as female, and 33.7% identified as male. Hispanic was the primary ethnicity of study participants at 37.1% and 49.4% of the participants identified as LGBTQIA+. The age in which participants experienced homelessness for the first time ranged from four to 23 years old with the average age being 17. 46.1% of the participants reported experiencing homelessness for the first time under the age of 18. Participants originated from around the United States, as well as from Mexico, Iraq, and Russia. Over half of the participants, 53.9%, reported being raised in Arizona. 59.6% of participants reported using drugs, with the age range in which participants used drugs for the first time being from age eight to 23, the average age being 15.4. About one in three participants reported that they vape. 14.6% of the participants identified as having an addiction to drugs. Of those that identified having an addiction to drugs, 46.2% reported experiencing addiction after becoming homeless. 12.4% of the participants identified as having an addiction to alcohol. Of those that identified having an addiction to alcohol, 63.6% reported experiencing addiction after becoming homeless. Almost half of the participants, 48.3%, reported engaging in some form of self-harming behavior with over one in every three reported to have attempted suicide. 61.8% of the participants reported having a current mental health diagnosis and 52.8% of the participants reported to have more than one mental health diagnosis. 51.7% of participants reported having a current medical issue and only 18% reported receiving treatment. The most common medical issues reported were asthma, poor vision, dental problems, and skin problems. 7.9% of the participants were pregnant at the time of taking the survey and 30.3% reported having children. The number of children they had ranged from one to two children. 71.9% of the participants were kicked out of their home, with the age range for the first time getting kicked out of their home between the ages of 13 and 23. Over one in every three participants reported being kicked out of their home before the age of 18. 32.6% of the participants witnessed domestic violence in the home. 76.4% of participants reported experiencing between zero and three adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and 52.8% reported experiencing four or more ACEs. Participants also reported positive life experiences that can serve as protective factors against homelessness or long-term negative effects of trauma. Some of the highlighted experiences were that 13.5% reported having trust/good relationship with law enforcement, 23.6% reported having steady employment, 37.1% reported that they could say no when pressured for sex, and 50.6% reported that they could say no when drugs or alcohol were offered.

- Regarding human trafficking-specific data, 40.4% of the participants or two out of every five reported experiencing one form of exploitation. 12.4% reported experiencing both sex and labor exploitation. 23.6% of the participants reported experiencing sex trafficking, with the age range in which they experienced their first sex trafficking from 12 to 21 years old. The average age being 16.9 years old. Of those that reported experiencing a sex trafficking situation, 38.1% were first sex trafficked under the age of 18. The victims were primarily female, from caucasian and Hispanic ethnicities. Additionally, 66.7% identified as LGBTQIA+. Participants reported being sex trafficked for a place to stay, money, drugs, food, protection, and clothing. 9.5% reported feeling afraid to leave the sex trafficking situation due to fear of violence or other threats of harm to self or family. This year, 33.3% of participants identified their relationship to their sex trafficker as being a friend, which was higher than the relationship of boyfriend compared to previous years' studies. Technology is often used as a tool to exploit victims of sex trafficking. 49.4% reported that technology was used to facilitate their exploitation. Participants who experienced sex trafficking were significantly more likely to report addiction to drugs, anxiety, self-harm, and having 4 or more ACEs. 23.6% of the participants also reported experiencing labor trafficking, with the age range in which they experienced their first labor exploitation experience being from 12 to 20 years old. The average age being 16 years old. Of those that reported experiencing a labor exploitation situation, 33.3% were first exploited for labor under the age of 18. The victims were primarily female from Hispanic ethnicity. Additionally, 61.7% identified as LGBTQIA+. Participants were attempting to work in exchange for money, food, a place to stay, drugs, protection, and clothing. 47.6% of the participants reported being tricked or forced into doing work they did not want to do.

The sectors of labor exploitation included domestic servitude, drug related, agriculture, child care, petty theft, restaurant, selling goods, and call center. Participants who experienced labor exploitation were significantly more likely to report attempting suicide, being kicked out for using substances, and having a current medical issue.

- Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the total number of participants remained relatively low for the 2021 data collection. However, the utilization of an online survey tool proved effective and enabled agencies to reach an additional 20 participants. The data continues to show that the homeless young adult population is overrepresented by individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+. Participants who identified as LGBTQIA+ were significantly more likely to report: engaging in self-harm, attempted suicide, mental health diagnosis, anxiety diagnosis, and harassment by peers. The findings of the 2021 YES study demonstrate the significant toll that the experience of homelessness takes on this young adult population, with addiction to substances prevalent post-homelessness and the presence of significant mental health challenges indicating that participants' ability to cope is being overwhelmed. The findings consistently demonstrate that this population is at an increased risk of sex trafficking and labor exploitation, due to the multitude of life challenges present as well as the pressing necessity for basic needs to be met, particularly money, shelter, and food. Efforts such as street outreach, mobile resource units, and drop-in centers can serve as touchpoints for prevention and intervention. The full report, its findings, and its recommendations can be accessed at <https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/htc/2021/12/08>.
- **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** then presented on the Juvenile Sex Trafficking Screening Tool. From November 2017 to August 2020, the Maricopa County Juvenile Court System screened youth using a 17-question screening tool. 12,340 unduplicated youth took the screening during this time period. 8,330 identified as male and 4,007 identified as female. 45.6% identified as White, 28.6% identified as Hispanic, 18.8% identified as African American, 2.4% identified as Native American, 2.2% identified as other/undetermined, and 1% identified as Asian/Pacific Islander. Through the screening tool, they were able to confirm 83 sex trafficking cases and matched them with STRENGTH Court data. Of those 83, three identified as LGBTQIA+, 34 were in the custody of the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS), and 49 had a history of running away. The predictive accuracy of the model with all the indicators as significant factors is 99.68%. It has been determined that the six following questions have the highest likelihood of identifying a sex trafficking victim: uses any terminology referencing sex trafficking; personal items (hotel keys, large amounts of cash or gift cards, condoms, lubricants, lingerie, etc); located with an adult that is not related to the youth or in a relationship with a much older person; clothed inappropriately; juvenile is unable to freely contact friends and family; and indications in police report that the juvenile may be trafficked. If a juvenile self-discloses or there are reports by a family member, treatment provider, school, or another juvenile that the youth is being sex trafficked, the screening tool directs the screener to make a mandatory report to DCS and law enforcement, as well as not proceed with the screening tool. The screening tool was developed by the Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research at Arizona State University (ASU-STIR). ASU-STIR is working with the Administrative Office of the Courts and juvenile probation experts around the state to integrate this screening tool. ASU-STIR is also working with DCS on how they can integrate it into their work as well. The full presentation can be accessed at <https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/htc/2021/12/08>.
- **Joseph Kelroy** expressed his thanks to **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** and to the probation staff that worked on this project. So far, 10 counties are using this tool and five are in talks to use it.
- **Sarah Chung** lauded **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** and her team for shedding light on the critical issues impacting persons that identify as LGBTQIA+.

### State vs. William McElroy

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, introduced **Lacey Fischer**, Deputy County Attorney with the Maricopa County Attorney's Office, for a presentation on State v. William James McElroy Jr. (CR2018-002562-001). **Ms. Fischer** began her presentation by providing background on the defendant, William James McElroy Jr. McElroy is a career criminal with a history of violent offenses. He came to the attention of the Phoenix Police Department when they were conducting a routine operation near 27th avenue. In this situation, Det. Christina Decoufle noted that the victim was in communication with the defendant and noted other signs

that, from her training experience, led her to believe that the victim was being trafficked. After making a few more observations and noticing that the defendant was directing the behavior of the victim, Det. Decoufle made the determination with her team to separate the defendant from the victim. They were able to successfully make contact with the victim and the victim disclosed that she was a minor and a runaway. They later learned through disclosure from the victim that the defendant lived in an apartment complex right off of 27th avenue. The victim was identified as being 16 years of age, she had run away from home, and had been on the streets for about two weeks, hopping from location to location. The victim met the defendant through another female that she met on the street. The defendant was initially pleasant to her and offered the victim a place to stay. Not too long after staying with the defendant, the defendant's actions began to change. The defendant's action included: watching the victim take showers; forcing her to have oral and penile/vaginal sex; threatened to hurt her if she didn't go out and prostitute herself; he told the victim to not to charge less than 40 dollars; he collected all the money; acted as security; and kept her property. When the defendant was interviewed, he claimed that he: was homeless; employed, which they later found out was not true; didn't know the victim at all; never had physical contact with the victim; and had no involvement in trafficking. When the Phoenix Police Department executed a search warrant on the defendant's apartment, the victim was able to identify crucial evidence that aided in the investigation. In the apartment, the police found the victim's clothes, condoms, and used condoms. The used condoms were DNA-tested and found DNA belonging to the defendant and the victim. While the Phoenix Police Department was executing the search warrant on the defendant's apartment, a second individual approached them, frantically explaining that she had also been sexually assaulted and trafficked by the defendant; and that the defendant was her uncle. The defendant's niece described a similar pattern of actions that the defendant inflicted on the victim.

- January 26, 2021 was the date that the minor victim was ultimately recovered by Phoenix Police Department. Prior to this date, the victims were contacted three other times but were not identified as trafficking victims. The defendant's niece called police on her own and reported that: on the last night she was with her uncle, she told him that she did not want to prostitute anymore, and the defendant proceeded to hold a knife to her stomach, threatening to kill her. She was so afraid that she ran through the streets, got a phone, and called 911. The patrol officers who responded to the call were new, did and did not identify her as a trafficking victim. **Ms. Fischer** contributed this to a potential lack of training for new officers. The minor victim began staying with the defendant shortly after the police had contacted the defendant's niece on January 5th. On January 11th, the female that introduced the victim to the defendant, the victim, and the defendant were all at the defendant's apartment where the defendant assaulted the female. The female and the minor victim were so scared of the defendant that they called the police. When police arrived at the scene, the defendant was holding the female and the minor victim in the apartment, threatening them not to cooperate with police. Ultimately, the female and minor victim told the police that everything was fine, the police then ended up transporting and dropping them off at another location. **Ms. Fischer** added that if those patrol officers would have had a little more training relating to the identification of trafficking victims, this could have been another opportunity in which the victims could have been recovered before the trafficking took place. On January 25th, the day prior to the recovery, a patrol officer saw the victim on the "track" wearing the same dress they found in the apartment and with the defendant. The patrol officer thought it was suspicious and called it in, but because there weren't more units in the area and because he was taken away to another location, nothing happened on that date. After the victim was recovered the next day and through research conducted on the defendant, they discovered that the defendant had a slew of victims in his past whom he had threatened or intimidated to cooperate. Part of the reason that this defendant was so nefarious is because he would actually threaten his victims all the way up and through their trail. Even from custody, the defendant was able to post pictures of the victims online and label them as snitches and criminal informants. He would also tag other gang members to alert them. When some of the defendant's prior victims would learn about these posts, the victims would get terrified and would not want to cooperate with prosecutors. Fortunately for this case, they had a detective that worked incredibly hard to follow-up on those threats and really make sure that these victims felt comfortable to testify. This case also had a successful prosecution which resulted in the defendant being sentenced to 141 years in prison. **Ms. Fischer** offered three of the following areas of improvement for consideration in future cases: training for new patrol

officers, having prosecutors seek protective orders on certain information to minimize their misuse by defendants to threaten victims (like the defendant did in this case in his social media posts), and having a singular point of contact that the victims can trust, preferably a victim advocate. The full presentation can be accessed at <https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/htc/2021/12/08>.

- **Rachel Mitchell** lauded **Lacey Fischer's** efforts to go back and educate the patrol officers to ensure they mitigate missed opportunities in the future. She further added that more prosecutors should be in the habit of doing this.

### **Southern Arizona Anti-Trafficking Unified Response Network**

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, introduced **Det. Jennifer Crawford** for an update on Southern Arizona Anti-Trafficking Unified Response Network (SAATURN). **Det. Crawford** began her update by informing the Council that SAATURN has continued to hold its Law Enforcement Subcommittee meeting on a regular basis. Turnout for these meetings is positive and there is increased interest for more organizations to join. The following are some investigative casework highlights from Tucson Police Department: in partnership with Homeland Security Investigations, they were able to recover a 14 year old runaway from Nebraska which resulted in the arrests of two traffickers; they assisted Marana Police Department in the recovery of an adult trafficking victim and also were able to arrest the perpetrator; and they assisted Oro Valley Police Department in the recovery of two missing 14 year old females and were able to make an arrest. The Mercy Care Collaborative is operational and has been going well. **Det. Crawford** has been assisting the Collaborative to get more involved in these cases by serving as a point of contact and the Collaborative has been appreciative for this help. SAATURN is also continuing its outreach and education efforts. Just last night, they partnered with the McCain Institute for International Leadership on social media training. **Det. Crawford** has also helped train lateral police officers that have transferred to Tucson Police Department. In October, in partnership with the Oro Valley Police Department, they hosted a multi-agency human trafficking awareness event at the Oro Valley Farmers Market. In preparation for 2022, SAATURN is reaching out to its partners ahead of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. On January 5, 2022, the Tucson Police Department will be participating in a human trafficking panel following the premier of the movie *Wake Up*.
- **Claire Merkel** noted that the McCain Institute will also be co-hosting the movie premier of *Wake Up* in Phoenix on January 4, 2022.

### **Workgroup Updates**

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, announced that **Sheila Polk** has submitted her resignation from the Council. **Ms. Polk** has been a member of the Council since it was first formed as a Task Force in 2013. Over the course of her involvement, the Council has made significant strides to remove barriers for victims and has contributed to the overall efforts in Arizona to combat human trafficking. On behalf of the Council, **Director Fuentes** extended her gratitude to **Ms. Polk** for her many years of service to the Council and for her leadership of the Policy Workgroup. **Ms. Polk** thanked **Director Fuentes** for her sentiments and thanked the Council for their support. She has been appreciative for the opportunity to serve on the Council and for having been able to create networks to combat human trafficking. **Ms. Polk** wished the Council continued success in the future. She further informed the Council that the Workgroup has not met recently. **Director Fuentes** added that the Workgroup was is developing training on human trafficking for state employees, in partnership with the Arizona Department of Administration and partners from the Governor's Office. More updates on this project will come next year.
- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, introduced **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** for an update from the Data and Research Workgroup. **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** informed the Council that the Workgroup has been working with the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry on a broad variety of training to help their staff better detect trafficking. They are also working on scheduling training opportunities for the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office. In January, a series of training opportunities will be launched with the City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office.
- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, introduced **Dr. Angela Salomon** for an update from the Victim Services Workgroup. **Dr. Salomon** informed the Council that the Workgroup met on November 5, 2021 where they

had a guest speaker from Chicanos Por La Causa. The Workgroup continues to incorporate diverse community representation by inviting community partners to present at their Workgroup meetings and share the work they do throughout the state. Their next meeting will be in March of 2022 where they hope to have a presentation for the Arizona Department of Child Safety to provide more details on the implementation of S.B. 1660.

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, introduced **Alix Skelpsa Ridgway** for an update from the Outreach and Awareness Workgroup. **Ms. Skelpsa Ridgway** informed the Council that the Workgroup continues to focus on education and awareness strategies for big events including Super Bowl LVII. The Workgroup will be scheduling a meeting soon.

### Upcoming Meeting

- **Director Fuentes, Chair**, reminded Councilmembers to mark their calendars for the next Council meeting on February 10, 2022.

### Adjournment

- **Director Fuentes, Co-Chair**, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
  - **Rachel Mitchell** moved to adjourn.
  - **Sarah Chung** seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed with no dissenting votes and the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Dated 8 of December 2021  
Arizona Human Trafficking Council  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Vianney M. Careaga  
GOYFF