



Arizona Human  
Trafficking Council

**Arizona Human Trafficking Council**

**September 21, 2022, 9:00 AM**

**Hybrid Meeting**

1700 West Washington Street, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

A general meeting of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council was convened on **September 21, 2022**  
1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

Members Present (16)	Members Absent (12)
Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair	David Curry
Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair	Representative Regina Cobb
Jeramia Garcia Ramadan (Proxy for Michael Wisehart)	Marsha Calhoun
Dominique Roe-Sepowitz	Nathaniel Brown
Rachel Zenuk Garcia (Proxy for Don Herrington)	Heather Carter
Senator T.J. Shope	Doug Coleman
Jennifer Crawford	Jim Gallagher
Jim Waring	Joseph Kelroy
Jill Rable	Sarah Chung
Lois Lucas	Zora Manjencich
Keith Moffitt (Proxy for Michael Faust)	Debbie Johnson
Jennifer Pinnow (Proxy for Heston Silbert)	Eric Swanson
Brian Steele	
Sara Mickflikier (Proxy for Rachel Mitchell)	
Sarah Beaumont	
Tim Roemer	
Nick Alamshaw	
<b>Staff and Guests Present (9)</b>	
Kainoa Spenser, GOYFF	Myriah Mhoon, New Life Center
Assistant Dir. Darlene Quihuis, Update on DEMA	Jessie Allen, Tucson Airport Authority
Michael Camal, DHS Blue Campaign	Amy Peep, GOYFF

**Call to Order**

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, called the Arizona Human Trafficking Council meeting to order at **9:08 a.m.** with 16 members and 6 staff and guests present. She reviewed the procedures of the Council meeting, welcomed all those joining via Zoom and thanked them for their flexibility.

### **Tucson Airport Authority and Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign**

- **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced **Jessie Allen** of Tucson Airport Authority (TAA) and **Michael Camal** of the United States (U.S.) Department of Homeland Security (DHS).
- **Jessie Allen** is the Director of Marketing, Communications, and External Relations for the TAA, certificated operator of Tucson International Airport (TUS) and Ryan Airfield (RYN). Allen has been with the TAA for 7 years and oversees all internal and external communications, marketing initiatives, and led the airport's effort to become an official partner of the DHS Blue Lightning Initiative.
- **Michael Camal** currently serves as a Senior Advisor at the U.S. DHS Blue Campaign, the Department's national public awareness campaign to combat human trafficking. In this role, he leads the Blue Lightning Initiative (BLI) to address human trafficking within the aviation industry. Michael also supports the DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking (CCHT), where he coordinates across 16 DHS Components to further support the Department's anti-trafficking mission.
- **Jessie Allen** started off the presentation by giving an overview of the airports within the TAA realm. TUS had over 2 million passengers through July, which is up 42% from 2021, with 55 daily departures, 23 nonstop destinations, and 7 airlines flying through. Also, RYN that is located 12 miles west of Tucson operates out of their area, which oversaw 104,000+ aircraft operations in 2021, has 20+ businesses, and has 300+ based aircrafts.
- In the past, TAA worked with **Detective Crawford** from the Tucson Police Department (TPD) and [Southern Arizona Anti-Trafficking Unified Response Network \(SAATURN\)](#) to install anti-human trafficking restroom mirror signage but they were continuously removed and/or stolen.
- In 2021, the decision was made to re-engage in an anti-human trafficking program as they understand that educating people on human trafficking is worth the investment. TAA chose to move forward with working on the [Department of Homeland Security's Blue Campaign](#) after researching numerous organizations and reaching out to airport colleagues for best practices. The Blue Light Initiative (BLI) is part of the Blue Campaign that focuses on aviation and made the most sense for TAA to move forward with it.
- TAA launched the BLI in January 2022, signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that allowed TAA to have the BLI materials co-branded with their logo.
- TAA purchased acrylic restroom signage that cannot be removed from the restaurants. If it is attempted to be removed, TAA Police will be notified.
  - Custodians have a checklist and every single shift checks to see if they've been removed or not. So far they have not run into issues with them being removed in full, but do notice that they're definitely being tampered with in an attempt to be torn down.
- BLI also provided lanyard cards, small cards that have indicators, phone numbers, and the top signs that individuals should look for regarding trafficking. There are 1,000+ badged employees between TUS and RYN and all have lanyard cards that have since been made a minimum requirement for all TAA employees to carry at all times.
- TAA made the Blue Campaign training video an absolute requirement for all badged employees of TUS and RYN to go along with all the security training on how and how not to enter the buildings securely. Since January 2022, TAA has more than 1,500 employees who have completed the training and that does not include the additional training that the marketing communications staff has done. The police and fire departments have specialized training in human trafficking that they conduct. The unique part of TAA is that they have their own police and fire department so it is not city-run. TAA met with Homeland Security Investigations and **Detective Crawford** with TPD to rekindle that relationship so that the anti-human trafficking efforts are a focus.
- The campaign was launched during the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show, one of the largest shows in southern Arizona that brings in a multitude of international fliers that come through the airport. Working with the Tucson Police Chief, DHS, and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) in a collaborative effort, TAA received more than \$500,000 worth of advertising around anti-human trafficking assets across southern Arizona.
- TAA has some additional Blue Campaign materials in each of the employee-only hallways and offices as well for continuing education and recognition of the signs of human trafficking. TAA employees are required

on an annual basis to conduct anti-human trafficking training. Additionally, TAA participates in quarterly and Saturday training with local law enforcement partners and nonprofits.

- **Jessie Allen**, relayed that in January 2023 and in partnership with Homeland Security Investigations and DHS, TAA is planning a full week of free in-person training for all of their airlines, tenants, concessionaires, board of directors, and anybody who is affiliated with or in the community of TUS. He stated their gratitude for **Michael Camal's** collaboration and willingness to work with TAA to get this into place. TAA wants to also bring these resources and training to RYN as general aviation is happening there all the time. Signage is going to be installed in the pilots' lounge and at every single facility that is TAA owned and has a facility within.
  - TAA will have increased signage and audio announcements during the Superbowl and Tucson Gem and Mineral Show, as the facts show how much trafficking occurs when there is a large sporting event taking place.
- **Jessie Allen** asked the council members that if their city has a wing in their general aviation airports, it is highly recommended that they ask them to consider BLI from the Blue Campaign as it's no cost at the signing of an MOU. These general aviation airports are going to have these multimillion-dollar charters carrying trafficking victims and cannot be forgotten. **Jessie Allen** and Danette Bewley, President and CEO of TAA, gave a presentation at the [Arizona Airport Association](#) alongside DHS. Since then, two airports have signed and TAA was the first in the state of Arizona.
- **Jessie Allen** handed over the presentation to **Micahel Camal**, Senior Advisor with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to further discuss the [Blue Lightning Initiative \(BLI\)](#). This Initiative is a specific partnership that DHS does with airlines, airport aviation associations, and other organizations who could potentially see the behavioral indicators of human trafficking. The main goal of the BLI is to bring awareness through a 25-minute virtual training, as well as provide partners with additional awareness materials that they can use in public spaces or hand out to employees. The BLI has had a lot of success with over 100 partners and has trained over 200,000 personnel. Targeting not just commercial aviation, but also general aviation, by establishing a partnership with the [National Air Transportation Association](#) to reach into all the private jet companies as well.
  - BLI is trying to break into everything aviation because it's not just the flight attendants and the airport staff that can see what's going on. It's the custodians and anyone who interacts with a member of the public, so they've also partnered with the associations with the universities that have aviation departments so students are exposed to human trafficking awareness.
- **Michael Camal** stated **Jessie Allen** and TUS is a great example of the airport being productive in anti-trafficking efforts. There are different levels of support that airlines and airports can provide such as public awareness, digital displays, restroom signage, and establishing partnerships. The first partnership is with non-governmental operations (NGO) and service providers. There is a way for airlines and airports to partner directly with the NGOs in the local community and provide support, whether it's through financial support, or it's fighting for survivors of human trafficking helping them get out of their situation, or returning to their families. He encourages the private sector and the aviation industry when they are going to consult with survivors to make sure that they're getting paid and then consider hiring them, because that can be a challenge for many of them.
- **Michael Camal** relayed a story of human trafficking from Super Bowl 2020 in Miami where a trafficker emotionally, psychologically, and financially coerced the victim into soliciting customers with plans of taking them to the NBA All-Star Game, New Orleans, and Las Vegas to sexually exploit them if he was not convicted.
  - Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation goes on year round but the trafficker knew that he could take advantage of these big events. **Mr. Camal** emphasized that it's not the Super Bowl itself that is bringing the human trafficking, it is the traffickers that are taking advantage of the influx of people, and it shouldn't be ignored. The state, industries, and service providers can be proactive to raise awareness during the Super Bowl and then can continue those efforts throughout the entire year.
- The Blue Campaign is the national public awareness campaign to combat human trafficking for the Department of Homeland Security. Raising awareness, not just among aviation, but also in a variety of

different sectors that include private, NGOs, and law enforcement teaching them how to use a victim-centered approach, and also working with youth, as well as adults that work with youth. By establishing partnerships with local entities, they can provide awareness resources to communities, and achieve the campaign's two main goals of prevention and protection.

- o To help further this mission, the Blue Campaign works with the [Center for Countering Human Trafficking](#), a brand new center that the department launched about a year and a half ago, and the Blue Campaign is a main actor. Their partners include Customs and Border Protection, Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Homeland Security Investigations, and Citizenship and Immigration Services, providing much-needed immigration relief. All of these efforts are co-located at one center allowing for full collaboration to take place across all areas under DHS and across departments to stop human trafficking.
- **Michael Camal** stated one of the biggest assets that the Blue Campaign can provide is public awareness materials which include posters and indicator card toolkits tailoring the resources for specific target audiences, but taking into account what may or may not resonate with one community versus another community. The campaigns make sure that the resources are in plain language and easily understood by the general public.
  - o One example of this is translating posters and materials to reflect the language and culture of the large Afghan community that has settled in the U.S. as one of the valid concerns is that they would be exploited by human traffickers. Also, making sure the posters and materials are survivor-informed and not alarmist in nature as victims of human trafficking can look like everyone.
- **Michael Camal** recommended that if council members hadn't visited the campaign's [website](#), please do as they have tailored resources for different audiences. The campaign has guides for adults that work with youth, and posters for youth. Also, the Campaign has a separate guide specifically for college students so that they can create awareness campaigns on their campus, and guides for faith-based and community organizations. There is also a video for first responders and specifically disaster response personnel because a lot of times the traffickers will take advantage of that as well. There is a guide for convenience retail employees that has a lot of videos that go along with the training. He continued by discussing that they recently launched a Campus Law Enforcement Guide and gives indicator cards to campus law enforcement. The campaign is updating its transportation guide and hospitality guide for hotels which will be posted on the website in a couple of weeks. This is all free and available to download directly from the site and a lot of it can be shipped free of charge nationwide.
- **Mr. Camal** discussed "Wear Blue Day" which takes place annually on January 11 and is the campaign's largest awareness initiative of the year and is the easiest way to participate in the campaign. All you need to do is just wear it, take a picture of yourself or your company wearing blue, and post it on social media. Some of the public awareness milestones that the campaign achieved in 2021 were 956 calls generated to the National Human Trafficking Hotline and Homeland Security Investigations tip line via digital ads, 700,000+ printed materials delivered, and 31,000+ materials downloaded in 33 available languages. **Michael Camal** stated he is already working with the Arizona Governor's Office to develop cooperative resources specifically in advance of Super Bowl 2022.
- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, said she is very grateful for the leadership of TAA taking the initiative to connect with DHS, and the deployment of this campaign across the realm of TAA. She asked what are the other two airports that have signed on to this campaign.
  - o **Jessie Allen** responded that both Yuma International and Domestic Airport have signed on to the campaign as well as Mesa Airport.
- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, stated it's absolutely necessary when flying all over the country and there's not one major airport that has not taken this on and so TAA taking that leadership role, and initiative here in Arizona is something that is highly valued. She highly encourages all airports and transportation hubs to take advantage of these tremendous partnerships. The Human Trafficking Council has taken advantage of the great work of the Blue Campaign and the US Department of Homeland Security through the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family but also the Human Trafficking Council has entered into a partnership with them as well. Also, the Department of Economic Security, Department of Child Safety, Department of Health, Tourism, and Lottery are all coming together alongside this Council to fund a

statewide media campaign with Blue Campaign materials launching in December and that will be co-branded with the council. **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, stated that one voice, one message, united that Arizona will not tolerate this crime. Arizona victim services and support for victims are really important. She thanked both of them for their hard work and passion for all that they do.

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, relayed the council is working with and is grateful to the Department of Tourism, the Tourism Association, hotels, and restaurants. Arizona has received a lot of boxes from the Department of Homeland Security full of materials.
  - Working on cobranding so council members are going to see a lot of the Human Trafficking Council and Department of Homeland Security pushing out the Blue Campaign starting December through the Super Bowl but it's not a Super Bowl-specific campaign.
- **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair**, stated that the Blue Campaign has allowed the council to build on what they were already planning on doing for the Super Bowl in Arizona. They had a week of ads, brochures, posters, shoe cards, and indicator cards which are co-branded with the council and will be distributed out. These materials were very intentionally made sure that what the council was doing was not tied to the Super Bowl specifically.
  - **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair**, thanked **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, and her partners for taking what was going to be a week-long Blue Campaign and extending it into four months of a very targeted campaign.
  - **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair** inquired about the acrylic signs that they are not as easily removable and would love to talk more about that with **Jessie Allen**.

#### A New Life Center

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced **Myriah Mhoon** and **Rubeena Malik** of the New Life Center.
- **Myriah Mhoon** is currently the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Arizona's largest domestic violence shelter, [New Life Center](#). For the past 14 years, Mhoon has dedicated her professional life to working with vulnerable populations. Mhoon had the privilege of overseeing the Arizona Governor's Commission to Prevent Violence Against Women (PVAW) and has worked with the Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (ACESDV) on statewide initiatives. During her three-year tenure in the Governor's Office, Mhoon led the domestic violence awareness campaign, Lighting Arizona Purple. In 2016, Mhoon sat on Arizona's Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit Task Force, guiding the Governor's Office with recommendations to combat the backlog of rape kits in the state. Mhoon currently is appointed to the Arizona State Board of Massage Therapy, as a matter expert in human trafficking. She also sits on the Alliance of Arizona Nonprofit Board and the Valley of the Sun Waldorf Education Association School Board.
- **Rubeena Malik** is the Human Trafficking Project Coordinator at New Life Center. After completing her bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology at Arizona State University (ASU), she started working with unaccompanied minors at Southwest Key Programs. It was during this time that she developed a passion to serve victims of human trafficking, as her work assignments increased with this specific population. She was able to increase her experience in human trafficking while working in Los Angeles with a specialized human trafficking agency, Coalition to Abolish Slavery and End Trafficking (CAST). Rubeena has over 7 years of experience working with victims of sex and labor trafficking, both domestic and foreign nationals. Since 2020, she has been working at New Life Center in capacity building, partnerships, and program implementation for the human trafficking program, while still maintaining a small caseload in efforts to continue active victim engagement.
- **Myriah Mhoon** started off the presentation by saying that New Life Center has been around since 1991. It is currently the largest domestic violence shelter in the state of Arizona and has 104 beds, one of the largest in the country. She has been there 5 years and in 2019 it became a dual service provider serving not only victims of domestic violence, but also sexual violence and human trafficking victims. They have Casitas, which can house up to 12 people on campus for the victims and their families, including pets, so they can have autonomy and space for healing. **Myriah Mhoon** stated the mission of New Life Center is helping to eliminate domestic and sexual violence through supportive services, and education expertise. The vision is



to create an Arizona where all live free from domestic and sexual violence. The values are compassion, resilience, equity, and community.

- **Myriah Mhoon** discussed the programs offered at New Life Center: Residential, Outreach, Training, Prevention, and Hope's Closet. The Residential program offers casitas to the victims and families for them to heal. The Outreach program is a champion of human trafficking response at New Life Center. The Training program has been three years in the field of training, sexual assault investigation training programs. New Life Center is AZ post accredited, and to date they have trained over 800 law enforcement throughout the state, and are willing to go anywhere and everywhere in the state to train the most rural populations and counties. New Life Center trains detectives because the impact of those direct training opportunities in those rural communities is really important for the state of Arizona. The Prevention program is run through the organization Kaity's Way, a nonprofit that ran on its own for 13 years, and was acquired by New Life Center at the beginning of 2022. Starting January 2023, Kaity's Way will be championing an evidence-based curriculum set for preteens to go out and train in schools. Hope's Closet is a thrift store that is in the West Valley. It not only serves the community but it serves all survivors free of charge during their stay with New Life Center.
- **Myriah Mhoon** relayed the success they have had over the years, stating the numbers are a little lower due to the pandemic and the barriers it created:
  - 1,062 Individuals served throughout New Life Center programming
  - 27,849 meals served to individuals in shelter
  - 9,503 hours of advocacy offered
  - 17,950 safe bed nights
- New Life Center opened the state's first rape crisis center, Sunshine Healing Services, in downtown Phoenix on Third Street and Indian School. The center includes 24/7 hotline support/response, advocacy/case management, court and medical accompaniment, group and holistic healing, trauma treatment, and more.
- **Myriah Mhoon** handed off the presentation to **Rubeena Malik** who discussed the Sunshine Healing Services, which opened in May of 2022. They are able to serve primary and secondary victims of sexual violence including sex trafficking victims. Survivors can receive services without having to report to law enforcement. All services are voluntary and are available to survivors at any point during their lifespan.
- **Rubeena Malik** gave an overview of the transitional housing program offered. It includes services for both adults and their children, up to full rental subsidy, covers all initial move-in costs, initial utility costs. The program length ranges from 6-24 months with about 3-5 clients per year. There are also case management programs that offer case plans, accompaniments, resources/referrals, lay legal/general advocacy, 24/7 Hotline: (623) 215-8072, and therapy through the partnership with [La Frontera-EMPACT](#).
- New Life Center uses a multidisciplinary, victim-centered response through collaborative partnerships with organizations across the state. **Ms. Malik** relayed examples of partners like [Starfish Place](#), [ALWAYS](#), [International Rescue Committee](#), [Mexican Consulate](#), [Chicanos Por La Causa](#), and the [Phoenix Dream Center](#)
- **Rubeena Malik** stated they are funded through the [Office of Victims of Crimes \(OVC\)](#) which in 2020, OVC grantees served 9,854 clients, 78% were adults while 22% were minors. Since 2020, New Life Center has provided direct services for 35 clients despite the pandemic and other barriers. **Ms. Malik** encourages continued support so the organization can carry on their mission.
  - **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, stated she had the pleasure to visit the rape crisis center and that it's a really beautiful space. She added that in addition to the wonderful work of the family advocacy centers she is happy to see this new type of center for victims of sex crimes to go to, and to see how they can have different types of doors entries into the care system. She continued by stating she thinks it really demonstrates how Arizona can have different types of services that all work together to meet victims where they are.
- **Pastor Brian Steele** expressed his gratitude and thanks for all the incredible services they provide for victims and survivors, and for creating an excellent reputation within the community.

#### Approval of Minutes

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, requested a review of the **June 1, 2022** meeting minutes.

- **Director Tim Roemer** moved to accept the **June 1, 2022** minutes.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** seconded the motion.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes at **10:02 a.m.**

### Update on DEMA Funds

- **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** of the Arizona Division of Emergency Management.
- **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** has 23 years of service with the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, Division of Emergency Management (DEMA). In January 2017, Darlene was promoted to the Grant Administration Assistant Director position overseeing all the financial aspects of federal and state grant programs within the Division to include: the Emergency Management Performance Grant, Public Assistance, Mitigation (HMGP, PDM, BRIC), State Homeland Security Training, National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program, Emergency Management Assistance Compact, State Search & Rescue, the Governor's Emergency Fund, and the Border Security Fund. Darlene serves as the Finance & Administration Section Chief during Emergency Operations Center activations and she continues to provide assistance and direction to state, county, local agencies and volunteer organizations to assure prompt and accurate reimbursement to communities affected by disaster.
- **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** started off her presentation by expressing the shifts that needed to happen in thinking for DEMA as they deal with floods, fires, hurricanes, and natural disasters to this new invasion at the southern border and the amount of money that comes with this. **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** is hoping that with this funding that's available for anti-human trafficking efforts that it can be put to good use, and will rely on a lot of the subject matter experts on the council to create programs that would be beneficial and sustainable for the coming years. She requested assistance as the stakeholders are building their programs as there was no outline of what the funds can be used for.
- The Governor's Office appropriated an initial \$55 million in 2021 to establish an oversight committee composed of the DEMA Director, Susan Dzbanko with the Arizona Department of Homeland Security, and Phillip Case with the Arizona Department of Public Safety. This first appropriation is geared toward the National Guard and local law enforcement agencies.
- In fiscal year 2023, DEMA appropriated an additional \$533 million with \$350 million of that geared towards the barriers along the border. It has been used for additional equipment, surveillance information, and local law enforcement support. The remainder of the monies were split into 13 different funding opportunities focused on providing additional funding for barriers, local law enforcement, and National Guard services down at the border. There was a small portion of \$10 million that went to anti-human trafficking efforts with \$2 million of that going to the Arizona Counter-Terrorism Information Center (ACTIC) for anti-human trafficking operations that comply with the requirements prescribed in section 26-106, ARS. The rest of the \$8 million will be dispersed in grant awards to city, town, and county law enforcement agencies, in an amount of not more than \$500,000 per organization, allowing funding for around 16 agencies for programs that reduce human trafficking and that comply with the requirements prescribed in section 26-106, ARS. They are able to spend the money over a 3-5 year timeline.
- House Bill 2860 established the anti-human trafficking grant funds administered through DEMA to go towards programs that reduce human trafficking by providing assistance and analytical services to law enforcement agencies, providing services to victims, and training law enforcement agencies, prosecutorial agencies, and the public on preventing and identifying human trafficking. **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** reiterated that this is out of the norm for DEMA so she is looking for help from the council to assess best appropriation of the funds to the correct vendors. She stated she would like to tailor around agencies who would like to hire human trafficking-focused law enforcement personnel and give the options of training programs for airport personnel, custodial crews, and other workers who see more than assumed.
- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, stated there is a weekly call with the group that works on the fund at large on behalf of the council. She's been invited to participate in those calls where **Darlene** already reached out for their thoughts and the expertise of the council in shaping those funds. She stated the

importance of prioritizing victim-centered approaches to best understand how to respond, react, and engage with victims not just helps the victims and survivors but also aids investigations and prosecutions.

- o The goal is to make sure that this money has the ability to have the most impact and brings the most change to really transform the way that the council can amplify and evolve how to respond to human trafficking in Arizona in a way that demonstrates results and ultimately can demonstrate a need for additional funds or additional funding towards combating this in the future. Questions have been gathered from members of the council all of which have been placed onto an FAQ that **Darlene, Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair,** and **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair,** have been working on. **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair,** stated that answers should be given back by the end of September.
- **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** stated that not all the money has to be focused on southern border issues, and can be used with statewide partners combatting human trafficking.
  - o **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair,** stated the border is a catalyst; it is one possibility, but it is not the sum total of trafficking in the state. The grant proposals that are going to be the most useful are those that are multidisciplinary, cross-sector, and increase the ability of particular cities and towns to work with community resources that exist in a more efficient and effective way.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** wants to ensure **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** has the research necessary to make this money be as beneficial as possible. She gave an example that about 22% of sex trafficked individuals in Arizona have been in special education during their lifetime, and wants to make sure that people are considering that as they apply for prevention or victim-centered approaches. It is known that certain victims are identified at the border and there are issues about foreign-born victims, but the vast majority of the victims that are served in Arizona, are Arizona residents, both children and adults.
  - o She stated that these individuals are found in places like detention group homes, schools, special education classrooms, and of course, in jails, it is recognized that victims and traffickers are using the jail and prison systems as conduits.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** asked **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** if they are always going to require it to have a social service agency or some sort of a formula for the application.
  - o **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** stated that yes, they are requiring a formal application, budget, narrative, and others. She reiterated the need of assistance from the council to go through some of the documentation in the application to make sure that it's legitimate, that what the organization is saying that they're going to accomplish is achievable, and that they are going to be using the funds for its intended purpose.
- **Jennifer Crawford** asked if smaller agencies are allowed to write proposals through umbrella organizations for the grant, and the smaller agencies use the funds themselves.
  - o **Assistant Director Darlene Quihuis** stated they can do it either way. So if each entity wants to apply on their own, then they can make that connection within their applications, or they can apply under a bigger organization as long as it is benefiting everyone within it while combating human trafficking.

#### Taskforce Update: Project ALTO

- **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair,** introduced **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** to speak on Project ALTO, and more specifically, labor trafficking. There have been only two prosecutions of labor trafficking in the state of Arizona; one in 2011 and one in 2016. There's a disconnect between the awareness of people who are experiencing labor trafficking and the knowledge of the police and prosecutors, which is actually very high of what they were tracking and have prosecuted, but somehow these two things are not leading very well. **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** states one of the most vulnerable populations for labor trafficking is foreign-born day laborers. They're hired for short-term manual labor jobs who've been in the plumbing, landscaping, and roofing yard work, and sometimes they're undocumented, have limited English, limited means, and are isolated from friends or family.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** relayed stories of people she had met when she went with the [McCain Institute](#) to meet with the Consulate of Mexico and the Consulate of Guatemala. She stated how creating a personal connection with those facing labor trafficking is very powerful for both the individual and herself.



During this time, the group spoke with many people who are in need of hygiene products and clothes while discussing the current situation they are in, and if it is a part of labor trafficking.

- It's during this time that they were able to talk to over 200 people in an outreach event asking them what their needs were while looking in places such as Home Depot or Circle K's. They handed out voter rights materials developed by the McCain Institute in both Spanish and English, and made sure each group had multiple Spanish speakers so that they were able to communicate easily in conversation and through the handouts discuss the many different methodologies and demographics studied.
- During this outreach event, they were able to gain data on people truly being impacted by labor trafficking. One in three of the people that they interacted with reported that they did work and the payment was different than what was expected and promised. Over and over they heard of burglaries and robberies of people who fit the category of day laborers, who have experienced physical and sexual assault in the workplace. She gave the recommendation of creating a card that allows for dry erase conversations to take place to create less confusion during a work agreement.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** is collaborating with many states and universities across the U.S. that are studying the same thing; creating the labor trafficking outreach in a box so they can just send it to another agency or another community and they can replicate it. She discussed that the work needs to be done in tangent with law enforcement since neither side can do it alone.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** continued her presentation by discussing the work she is doing at the Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research (STIR) at Arizona State University (ASU) with funding from the STOP grant administered through the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family (GOYFF). STIR is creating training for any type of municipality agency, as well as developing a video specifically for service providers, with a goal of training 600 people by the end of the year. They are also working with Heather Bohnet of [Arizona Victim's Compensation](#) to train 15 Compensation Boards across each of Arizona's 15 counties. So far, they have completed two trainings: Arizona Courts Conference and Yavapai County Human Trafficking Task Force. She stated that STIR is working specifically in Pima County doing training with Pima County Juvenile Court, clinical providers for high risk juveniles (private practices, general agencies, and youth-serving organizations), and homeless youth service providers.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** stated that she is working closely with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) and the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry (ADCRR) on a corrections project, one of them being the Tablet Pilot Project in Estrella Jail. Female inmates were asked around 5 questions that helped to determine if they're at risk for being trafficked or have been trafficked, which led to 26 inmates who were flagged. She discussed how STIR is now working with different agencies to ensure that through the jail system, flagged inmates are provided proper services upon release. **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** added that STIR created a corrections training brochure for adult and juvenile correction facilities that has a trafficking screening tool on it. She stated that they are working with ADCRR to develop trainings on Sex Trafficking and Trauma, and for Intelligence and Investigators, developing a training on identifying individuals who are incarcerated and that have been trafficked, the potential of being trafficked, or people who are trafficking from behind bars. The final training project is working with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and resilience helping to train the social workers who help the 100,000+ people that live in public housing to learn the signs of sex trafficking within their clients.

### Workgroup Updates

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** for an update from the Data and Research Workgroup. **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** stated they are working to help build teams for DEMA, using evidence based work to try to push forward some of the things that are known about the unique features of sex trafficking in Arizona. She stated that they are working with the City of Phoenix to train 60% city employees and just completed their financial department. She added that they are in the process of developing a potential new project with kids from detention centers going back into school settings and their traffickers playing a role in their school attendance.
- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, provided an update from the Outreach and Awareness Workgroup, sharing that they have teamed up with the NFL Super Bowl Committee and will be training all

NFL volunteers during Super Bowl 2023. She thanked all the sister state agencies that are responsible for the media campaign with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security continuing before and after the Super Bowl.

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced **Sarah Chung** to provide the report for the Victim Services Workgroup.
- **Jeramia Garcia Ramadan (Proxy for Michael Wisehart)**, stated that they received inquiries through the division's programmatic team and through the public records team regarding data that might help support efforts as they get ready for the Super Bowl and anti-human trafficking assets. She added that they need to ensure that they're doing any sort of data sharing that falls in line with federal and state laws and regulations.

#### **Upcoming Meeting**

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, reminded council members to mark their calendars for the next meeting on **October 19, 2022**, at **9 a.m.**, and on **December 8, 2022** at **8 a.m** for an extended meeting in lieu of the annual symposium. The meeting will be held in person at the Executive Tower.

#### **Adjournment**

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting.
  - The meeting adjourned at **10:53 a.m.**

Dated 26 of September 2022  
Arizona Human Trafficking Council  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Kainoa Spenser  
GOYFF