



**Arizona Human Trafficking Council  
March 1, 2023, 9:00 AM  
Hybrid Meeting**

1700 West Washington Street, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007  
A general meeting of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council was convened on **March 1, 2023**,  
notice having been duly given.

Members Present (15)	Members Absent (5)
Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair	Brian Steele
Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair	Dr. Sarah Beaumont
Barbara Marshall (Proxy for Rachel Mitchell)	Nathaniel Brown
Joseph Kelroy	Regina Cobb
Tonya Hamilton	Jim Waring
Lt. Nick Alamshaw	
Lt. Rick Leyvas	
Lois Lucas	
Sarah Chung	
Jennifer Crawford	
Doug Coleman	
Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz	
Jill Rable	
Senator T.J. Shope	
Sophia Philis-Ortiz	
<b>Staff and Guests Present (7)</b>	
Amy Peep, GOYFF	Darlene Quihuis, DEMA
Joanna Jauregui, McCain Institute	Maj. Jennifer Borquez, ACTIC
	Alec Thomson, LAVIDGE
	Maj. Jennifer Pinnow, AZ DPS
	Rachelle Lump, AZ AG

**Call to Order**

- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, called the Arizona Human Trafficking Council meeting to order at **09:08 AM** with 15 members and 7 staff and guests present. She reviewed the Council meeting procedures, welcomed all those joining via Zoom, and thanked them for their flexibility.

### Approval of Minutes

- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, requested a review of the **December 8, 2022** meeting minutes.
  - **Joseph Kelroy** moved to accept the **December 8, 2022** minutes.
  - **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** seconded the motion.
- The motion passed with no dissenting votes at **09:11 AM**.

### DEMA Anti-Trafficking Grant Fund Update

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced **Darlene Quihuis** to speak to the Council.
- **Darlene Quihuis** has spent 23 years working for the State of Arizona with the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA), Division of Emergency Management. In January 2017, she was promoted to the Grant Administration Assistant Director overseeing all the financial aspects of federal and state grant programs within the Division.
- **Darlene Quihuis** provided an overview of the grant program. Per [SB 26-106](#), the Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund was established consisting of monies appropriated by the Legislature. DEMA administers the fund and distributes monies to programs to reduce human trafficking in the state of Arizona. \$10 million were appropriated, \$8 million of which are to be distributed to city, town, and county law enforcement agencies. Each agency is limited to \$500,000, over five years (maximum).
  - To date, 13 applications have been submitted and a total of \$4.5 million have been distributed. Seven agencies are located within the Maricopa County Metropolitan Area, with the other 6 located within Mohave, Yavapai, La Paz, Pinal, and Pima County. Some law enforcement agencies have partnered with private, non-profit, or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help complete their program application.
- **Rachelle Lump** asked if the State (state agencies/entities) is intentionally excluded from applying for the grant?
  - **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, replied yes, explaining that the legislation, as it's written, specified that monies are to be distributed to city, town, and county law enforcement agencies.
- Review the DEMA Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund [program](#) for more information. The program includes a frequently asked question section.
- To view Darlene Quihuis' presentation, click [here](#).

### ACTIC Tip Line Update

- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced **Major Jennifer Borquez** to speak to the Council.
- **Major Jennifer Borquez** is the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center (ACTIC) Director at the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS).
- **Major Jennifer Borquez** explained that \$2 million of the Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund (mentioned above) were allocated to ACTIC to create the Arizona Human Trafficking Tip Line.
  - The budget included four electronic billboards strategically placed along valley highways for the month of February.
  - Partnership with Arizona State University Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research (ASU STIR) for human trafficking victim crisis assistance and support. ASU STIR created marketing assets (both English and Spanish) to promote public awareness about the tip line, including distributing these assets to native communities and agencies serving human trafficking survivors.
  - **Major Jennifer Borquez** mentioned that **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** assisted in creating a process that helped the call takers determine if a victim was calling and what resources/services they needed. For example, is it a 911 call, seeking services, or reporting a tip? If it is determined that a victim has called the tip line and they are wanting services, the call would be directed to the ASU STIR staff. Most notably, the call takers can provide on going support and resources by following up with them. The call takers will be available 24/7 for 5 years.
  - If it is a reporting party, the call would be directed to the ACTIC's P3 system, meaning the tip will be entered and then assigned to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
  - As part of the partnership, ASU STIR can hire project supervisors, case managers, and on-call staff

as needed over the next five years. DPS has also hired an Intake Research Specialist (IRS) for the next three years.

- To date, there have been 10 calls directed to ASU STIR.
- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, commented that the tip line is something that Arizona and the Human Trafficking community has wanted and needed for a very long time. It was an impressive feat to put together in such a short and efficient manner.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** mentioned that Mississippi has reached out asking to replicate the tip line. She clarified that [sextraffickinghelp.com](https://sextraffickinghelp.com) is the primary resource/service hub for all organizations to use. The tip line can also be used as a capacity building tool to identify where resources and support are needed (i.e. gap analyses within Arizona).
- To view Major Jennifer Borquez's presentation, click [here](#).

### **LAVIDGE Anti-Human Trafficking Media Campaign Update**

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced **Alec Thomson** to speak to the Council.
- **Alec Thomson** is the Multicultural and Public Service Marketing Director for LAVIDGE marketing agency, where he supports clients in developing impactful public education campaigns that drive meaningful impact across diverse communities and languages. Prior to joining LAVIDGE, Alec worked for over a decade in various public service roles.
- **Alec Thomson** noted that the Anti-Human Trafficking Media Campaign served multiple purposes. The data gathered can help inform what should be continued and expanded on, or discontinued, as well as being extremely informative for other cities if they have large events in the future.
- **Alec Thomson** explained that the campaign launched in December 2022 and will continue until the beginning of March 2023. All media was launched mid-January and the billboards will continue being displayed until March.
  - Static/digital billboards, gas station TV, gas pump toppers, mall/bar restrooms, convenience store videos, Arizona lottery screens, and radio stations are all examples of media used. The digital tactics used were geo-fencing (ads within a geographical boundary - airports), contextual (explicit content), searches (key work advertisements), and paid social media ads (focused on teens - SnapChat and TikTok specifically).
  - Static billboards were deployed for 12 weeks. The placements were focused on major transportation corridors as well as domestic/international entry points to Arizona.
  - Digital billboards were focused in the Phoenix metro area, Yuma and Mohave County. In Yuma specifically, both the human trafficking and labor trafficking awareness materials were utilized. These were also placed in major transportation corridors as well.
  - The gas station TV resulted in 1.1 million impressions. Both the TV and static images above the pump displayed awareness material.
  - 16 malls across Arizona had anti-human trafficking materials placed in their restrooms. The holiday season impacted the impressions due the mall's increase of volume at this time. It is estimated that in a given month, these malls experience 8.8 million impressions.
  - Geo-fencing was determined to be the most cost-efficient digital channel. The parameters were set around the Phoenix International Airports, select malls and shopping centers, and high activity areas.
  - There were 3.6 million impressions across social media platforms. **Alec Thomson** noted that this number might be lower than "expected" because of how quickly teens are to dismiss ads. If the campaign is extended, it would be beneficial to refine this media aspect to resonate better with teens.
- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, noted that she is grateful for all of the agencies who contributed funding to make this campaign possible.
- **Tonya Hamilton** asked how the areas were determined as being high level human trafficking?
  - **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, answered that it was determined by members of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council based on their experience and knowledge.

- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** commented that she would be willing to help with facilitating a conversation with youth. She suggested the possibility of creating a youth board within the Council.
  - **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, mentioned that if the campaign is to continue, it would be beneficial to utilize the Governor's Youth Commission (GYC) as that youth voice/input.
- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, reminded the Council of why this campaign kept with the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS)'s Blue Campaign material: keeping a consistent message throughout the country is always beneficial for recognition and comprehension, and it was the single factor that allowed the airport to agree to use the materials on their digital boards.
- To view Alec Thomson's presentation, click [here](#). To view the second part of the presentation, click [here](#).

### 2023 Super Bowl Update - Phoenix Police Department

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced **Lieutenant Rick Leyvas** to speak to the Council.
- **Lieutenant Rick Leyvas** has been a member of the Phoenix Police Department (PD) for nearly 25 years. In 2018, Rick was promoted to Lieutenant and last July, was transferred to the Drug Enforcement Bureau where he currently oversees the Human Exploitation and Trafficking Unit (HEAT) and Street Narcotics Enforcement throughout the city.
  - Most of his career has been spent in various investigative assignments with an emphasis on victim centered crimes. He has had the pleasure of working alongside service providers and victim advocates, as well as numerous community groups throughout his career.
  - He is also a recently appointed member of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council.
- **Lieutenant Rick Leyvas** explained that the Phoenix Police Department came up with a multifaceted approach in preparation for the Super Bowl. In best practice, it is more beneficial to meet suspected victims of human trafficking and provide them with resources rather than focusing on enforcement. It is a great opportunity to discuss getting out of the sex work life without ever meeting the criminal justice system. As a result, Phoenix Police Department led significant outreach and child predator operations. In the week preceding and during the Super Bowl, there were a multitude of street enforcement operations throughout the valley.
  - The outreach operations were conducted primarily on the 27th Ave. corridor. As a result of these operations, 53 women and 1 male were connected to services. **Lieutenant Rick Leyvas** mentioned that **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** worked collaboratively with these operations, having a variety of service providers present. The operation's primary objective is to pick up people who have exchanged money for sex and instead of arresting them, they are taken to the Helen Drake Center where they are introduced to resources/services. These people are not penalized for not taking/meeting with these resources/services.
  - The child predator operations were conducted the week of January 23rd - 27th. These operations targeted individuals online who were looking to engage in sexual activity with underage individuals. As a result, they were able to arrest 30 adult males for a variety of felony charges related to child sexual exploitation.
  - The street enforcement operations happened across the valley. They were conducted along the 27th Ave. corridor, in hotels, condos, and various other locations throughout. As a result of these operations, they were able to arrest 48 individuals for various felony charges (human trafficking, weapon misconduct, aggravated assault, etc.), 300 misdemeanor arrests (120 of which were sex buyers), and recover five juveniles.
- **Lieutenant Rick Leyvas** explained that the Arizona Tip Line (1-877-4AZ-TIPS) was used for victims seeking resources but also for individuals to report suspected behavior indicative of human trafficking. In the command center, tips were initially sent to an analyst, then to intelligence officers to determine where in the valley it needed to go (assigning to detectives to follow-up).
  - The command center received 39 tips, 25 of which came from the Arizona Tip Line.
- To view Lieutenant Rick Leyvas' presentation, click [here](#).

### 2023 Super Bowl Update - McCain Institute for International Leadership

- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced **Joanna Jauregui** to speak to the Council.
- **Joanna Jauregui** serves as the Arizona Combating Human Trafficking Senior Program Coordinator with the McCain Institute for International Leadership. In this role, she supports the Senior Director of Arizona Initiatives and the anti-trafficking community to increase capacity, statewide collaboration, and sustainable solutions to combat labor and sex trafficking in Arizona.
- **Joanna Jauregui** started her presentation by explaining that the McCain Institute partnered with the Super Bowl Host Committee. They were able to provide training to Super Bowl volunteers and to the community, as well as support victim service organizations that work to combat human trafficking every day of the year.
  - A 15-minute training video was developed for the Super Bowl volunteers that was required prior to signing up for a shift during the event. This training was used as a way to dispel common myths and misconceptions as well as to engage individuals beyond this volunteer opportunity. The training included some legal definitions, the dynamics of labor and sex trafficking, warning signs, and how to report (sharing the state-wide tip line) if they were to come across a suspected human trafficking situation/victim. It is estimated that 5,000 volunteers completed the training.
- **Joanna Jauregui** explained that the Host Committee completed 41 events across the state. They were able to share this training information to hotels, hospitality organizations, and community members. She also recognized the other organizations that held events during January.
  - In collaboration with the McCain Institute, **Jill Rable** and **Lieutenant Nick Alamshaw** were able to train over 100 individuals in the HonorHealth ER department.
- **Joanna Jauregui** mentioned that because of the leadership of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council, a briefing was held with Senator Kyrsten Sinema.
  - **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, explained that she and **Brian Steele** arranged a tour of the [Phoenix Dream Center](#) for the Senator. **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz**, and **Lieutenant Rick Leyvas** were all present to explain the collaborative process, specifically for anti-human trafficking efforts leading up to and during the Super Bowl.
  - **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, announced that the NFL has committed approximately \$100,000 toward anti-human trafficking efforts at every Super Bowl moving forward.
- To view Joanna Jauregui's presentation, click [here](#).

### Workgroup Updates

- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced the Data and Research Workgroup Chair, **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz**, to share any updates with the Council.
- **Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** explained that [ASU STIR](#) is a central source of research on domestic sex trafficking that informs the decisions made by those who contact victims and perpetrators of sex trafficking including law enforcement and prosecutors, educators, medical services, and social services.
  - On May 6, 2023, ASU STIR will be hosting their next outreach event at the Helen Drake Center.
  - The First Lady of Louisiana has asked for ASU STIR to come and speak about labor trafficking in particular (Project ALTO).
  - The 2022 Youth Experiences Survey (YES) is prepared and ready to present. 127 young adults (aged 18-24) completed a life history survey and explained their perspective while experiencing homelessness, as well as their experiences related to sex and labor trafficking. From this survey, it was determined that young adults need older adults in their lives willing to help them be adults (taxes, credit score). ASU STIR is now looking into establishing a new mentoring program for homeless youth.
  - Discussed the difficulties human trafficking victims experience when receiving victim's compensation fund. Proposed to the Council about creating a fund to make this easy to access for victims.
  - Held nine training sessions, created new shoe cards that include the Arizona tip line and how to connect to victim-serving agencies/organizations.

### Upcoming Meeting

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, reminded members to mark their calendars for the next meeting on **April 13, 2023**, at **09:00 AM**. The meeting will be held in person at the Executive Tower but also available in a hybrid platform for Council Members and the public to join virtually.

### Adjournment

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn.
  - **Joseph Kelroy** moved to accept the motion.
  - **Jill Rable** seconded the motion.
- The motion passed with no dissenting votes at **10:47 AM**.

Dated 2 of March 2023  
Arizona Human Trafficking Council  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Amy Peep  
GOYFF

DRAFT