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HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE NEWS

St. Charles police arrest five people in connection with human trafficking enterprise

A 29-year-old Sacramento County man was sentenced last week to 71 years to life in prison for human trafficking, the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office said. Dominick Roberson was arrested in 2022 on suspicion of pimping and pandering a woman he was dating, authorities said.

Breaking: PA state constable charged with over 700 crimes in sex trafficking investigation

Chambersburg PD announce the arrest of a 64-year-old borough man for a laundry list of sex crimes, including sex trafficking and prostitution offenses. Timothy Raye Heefner is charged with 704 offenses total.

Smith County jury sentences Dallas man to 60 years for sex trafficking

TYLER, Texas (KLTV) - A Dallas man convicted of sex trafficking women, including at least one minor, was sentenced to 60 years in prison by a Smith County jury. Korwin Jerard Jones, 34, also known as De'Vonta BMT, was accused of participating in human trafficking in April 2020 after a Texas Ranger contacted an investigator in Smith County with information about an underaged sex worker Jones was allegedly managing. He was found guilty on Friday, Sept. 1.

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Colorado State Patrol Motor Carrier Safety Section named TAT Champion in the State Agency Category



Receiving the award for the Colorado State Patrol from Lanier (second from left) are (L to R) Trooper Lew Thomas, Captain John Hahn, ITD Program Manager

The Colorado State Patrol (CSP) Motor Carrier Safety Section has received the 2023 TAT Champion Award in the State Agency Category. Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director and senior director of Public Sector Engagement, presented the award at the fall conference of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA).

Recognizing that many warriors must be engaged for the fight against human trafficking to be successful, TAT has turned to the members of the trucking, bus and energy industries, as well as to law enforcement,

From among its partners each year, TAT selects “champions” in three separate categories to recognize and honor for their creative, innovative and generous actions, which have significantly furthered TAT’s work in the fight to end this crime, recover more victims and prosecute more perpetrators.

In presenting the award, Lanier cited CSP’s firm commitment to TAT’s mission, consistent training of their own officers and “willingness to jump at any opportunity” to further their outreach to raise awareness about this crime and how industry members can be trained to make a difference.

Examples of their actions include:

- Working systematically to implement the elements of the Iowa MVE Model, and achieving full adoption very quickly.
- Sharing TAT’s school transportation training materials quickly with their Department of Education, as well as school districts around the state, encouraging them to train.
- Coordinating outreach with the oil and gas companies in the state to have them begin using TAT’s energy resources.
- Visiting casinos in the state, when they became aware of TAT’s casino resources, to put the training into the hands of management.
- Supporting legislation requiring TAT’s training video be a part of CDL curriculum in the state of Colorado.
- Co-hosting and participating in a number of TAT Coalition Builds around their state with the goal of bringing private industry members into the same room with law enforcement and other state and local agencies to network and strategize ways to close loopholes to traffickers at the local level.
- Participating both years of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance’s Human Trafficking Awareness Initiative, visiting truck stops, bus, truck and energy companies with awareness materials.
- Adding TAT messaging to their inspection reports, so that both the driver and company’s safety director learn about human trafficking.
- Sending information about TAT’s truck and bus trainings in their safety audits through their education and technical assistance to commercial vehicle companies throughout the state.

“CSP Motor Carrier Safety has asked for and received TAT’s law enforcement training more than any other state or agency in the U.S.,” Lanier related, “insisting that their troopers and officers know common indicators of human trafficking and how to respond to a potential victim. This resulted in one of CSP’s Port of Entry officers, Jeanay Angel, identifying a sexual predator at an inspection stop and then alerting authorities in Colorado and Wyoming, which led to his arrest by Wyoming Highway Patrol and extradition back to Oklahoma to stand trial. She also employed a victim-centered approach with the 19-year-old victim he was with and who he was in the process of grooming.”

Lanier also singled out LaDonna Rogers of CSP as “a major force behind CSP’s incredible anti-trafficking efforts.”

TAT Board of Directors elects new members

The TAT Board of Directors elected Debi Boffa, CEO of TravelCenters of America, and Gareth Aiken, vice president of Business Development Solutions (BDS) for FedEx Ground, as new members during its monthly meeting in September.

As the new CEO of TravelCenters of America (TA), Boffa is leading TA through its next chapter as the newest member of the bp family of brands. She’s focused on elevating the guest experience and leading the business through the changing mobility landscape. A management executive with over 25 years of experience with bp, Boffa has worked across many sectors,



Debi Boffa

including engineering, retail, sales, marketing and operations. Most recently, she served as both president of bp's Retail Operating Organization and president of Thorntons LLC. In this role, Boffa led the integration of bp's ampm business with Thorntons, while concurrently overseeing the operations of more than 1,200 convenience stores nationwide.

Prior to moving to the United States, Boffa served as both the Head of Country and managing director of bp New Zealand, where she led bp's convenience retail and downstream fuel business in New Zealand. She has an engineering degree from the University of Canterbury.

"I am honored to now be part of the Truckers Against Trafficking Board of Directors and grateful to use my voice to further the organization's important work," said Boffa. "Our TA, Petro and TA Express team members are the eyes and ears of our nation's highways, and we have an incredible opportunity to help save lives. I am committed to ensuring our teams across the country are educated and empowered to take action to raise awareness and combat this crime."

Headquartered in Moon Township, Pennsylvania, Aiken has 19 years of experience with FedEx Ground, joining the company as a Pickup and Delivery service manager in 2004, before holding managerial roles of increasing responsibility in multiple business areas. In February, he became vice president of Safety, before assuming his current role as VP of BDS in February 2023, where he oversees the teams that engage with the thousands of small businesses that provide package pickup and delivery services on behalf of FedEx Ground.

Born and raised in Glenarm, Northern Ireland, Aiken earned his bachelor's degree from Judson University in Elgin, Illinois. He is also an active member of his local church community, involved with Family Guidance, a "one2one" mentoring program providing mentoring to kids in some of the most challenging Pittsburgh neighborhoods. He is a two-time recipient of the prestigious FedEx Ground Five Star award.



Gareth Aiken

Aiken said, "I'm truly honored to be given this opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors for TAT. TAT has continued to demonstrate their effectiveness in the fight against human trafficking, and I hope to be able to add to what is already an incredibly talented and diverse Board. Having a role of influence within FedEx, I'm excited to build upon the awareness and recognition of the fight against human trafficking we already have within our own team members, along with our service provider businesses."

He continued, "There is still much work to do in this space, and I'm confident we can be a part of the solution, as we work with other organizations across both the U.S. and Canada. I believe all human beings were created with purpose, and they should be afforded the dignity, respect and love they deserve. Taking steps to eradicate this form of slavery is a big step in ensuring those things become a reality."

Freedom Drivers Project stars at three-day Nebraska community event



Among the many groups who toured the FDP in Broken Bow were city employees.

Through relationships developed over the years with Rotarians, TAT received the invitation to send the Freedom Drivers Project (FDP) to Broken Bow, Nebraska for a three-day, community-wide, human trafficking awareness event ... the first of its kind for the FDP. Rotarian Deb McClaskin spearheaded the event, which was hosted by the Rotary Club District 5630 Central and Western Nebraska.

Broken Bow Mayor Rod Sonnichsen provided opening remarks to an audience composed of people from schools from several counties, community members, Rotarians, law enforcement, service industries, a ministerial association, local government, city employees and area medical and first responders.

Over the three days, there were meetings, panel discussions and training, including a class on Internet Safety for Parents, a presentation by Sheriff Dan Osmond and a panel discussion with Nebraska State Patrol Investigative Troop D Lieutenant Tim Arnold, Nebraska State Patrol Officer and Community Advocate Officer Tim Flick, TAT Board Member Antoine Sadler and FDP Director Brandy Belton. During the event, 368 students and school staff and 262 community members toured the FDP.

"Coming to Broken Bow, Nebraska, and meeting the community and children from the schools was very important," said Belton. "The event's highlight for me was speaking to the children as they toured the trailer. They engaged with the panels on the wall, pointed out the mirror, asked questions and told me how that story related to them, since many knew about a teen in their area to whom trafficking had happened. Seeing their faces as they read the stories aloud to each other and hearing their own stories of what they knew about human trafficking, and how some have been impacted by it, is why I do what I do."



During the city-wide human trafficking awareness event, many young people of all ages toured the FDP, interacting with the displays and discussing the crime with FDP Director Brandy Belton (far right).

"Human trafficking is a difficult topic – an uncomfortable topic. To close our eyes and wish it away isn't going to work," said McClaskin. "Education is critical at this juncture. It's important to know the signs, and if you see something to say something. Thanks to TAT for bringing this education to our doorstep."

Belton and the FDP have another event in Lexington, Nebraska, with the same Rotary Club at the end of October, as well as a few similar events in 2024 in Arkansas and Ohio that will target vulnerable populations.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct. 3 - USDOT Advisory Committee on Human Trafficking meeting, virtual

Oct. 18 - Chevron North America Trucking – Natural Working Team F2F Workshop,

Oct. 4 - Colorado State Patrol law enforcement training, Golden, CO
 Oct. 4 - California Highway Patrol Commercial Vehicle Safety Summit, Los Angeles, CA
 Oct. 5 - Carrizo Springs Coalition Build, Carrizo Springs, TX
 Oct. 7 - SM Energy National Night Out, Carrizo Springs, TX (FDP)
 Oct. 10 - Glenwood Springs Coalition Build, Glenwood Springs, CO
 Oct. 10 - LiquidPower Specialty Products Inc. Quarterly Safety Meeting, virtual
 Oct. 9-11 - TRANSform Conference and Expo, Orlando, FL
 Oct. 12 - Bi-Annual Meeting of U.S. Chamber of Commerce Task Force to Eradicate Human Trafficking, Washington, D.C.
 Oct. 13 - Inland Kenworth VIP Auction, Saskatoon, SK
 Oct. 14-17 - American Trucking Associations Management Conference and Exhibition, Austin, TX
 Oct. 17 - ChampionX Integrity Week, Houston, TX
 Oct. 17 - Arkansas Attorney General Human Trafficking Summit, Little Rock, AR
 Oct. 17-18 - Virginia DMV law enforcement training, Richmond and Salem, VA

Houston, TX
 Oct. 19 - Transportation Club of Houston October Social Event, Houston, TX
 Oct. 19 - Arizona Human Trafficking Task Force, virtual
 Oct. 22-24 - Lexington Rotary Club FDP event, Lexington, NE
 Oct. 23 - ESC Region 15 Texas Transportation Directors Meeting, virtual
 Oct. 24 - Massachusetts State Police law enforcement training, Framingham, MA
 Oct. 25 - Marathon Petroleum Leadership Conference, virtual
 Oct. 27 - Ontario Student Transportation Conference, Niagara Falls, Canada
 Oct. 28 - National Association of Pupil Transportation Annual Conference and Trade Show, Columbus, OH
 Oct. 31 - UPS driver/employee event, Goodyear, AZ (FDP)



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