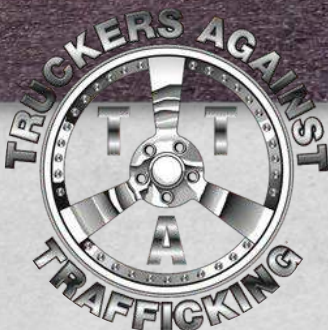


January - March 2023

VANTAGE POINT

ISSUE NO. 7



Letter from Esther

Dear TAT Friends,

With signs of Spring everywhere, I can't help but think of hope, new beginnings and blooms. However, for most of us, the topic of human trafficking evokes quite opposite emotions -- anger, disbelief and tragedy -- as we swallow the reality that even today, men, women and children are being held against their will and forced to do unimaginable things because of the sheer greed of their victimizers. So, how do we reconcile these two disparate realities that are both true? How do we find inspiration and hope, while we fight one of the greatest human rights violations of our time? As you read this report, I think you will be inspired to action, as you read about individuals who have not just done the bare minimum when recognizing the role they can play in turning the tides on the scourge of human trafficking, but have chosen to be "all in," leveraging their time, resources, influence and skills to make a difference.

After reading this report, if you find yourself wondering how you, too, can make a difference, I would urge you to look around and recognize where your influence lies. How can you bring your own unique talents and resources to bear in combating this crime? Perhaps you work for a company or state agency that can adopt training policies or protocols that focus on demand reduction, or ensure that another key market sector which potentially intersects with victims of human trafficking is now trained to recognize and report it. Perhaps you can be a connector and bring the right players to the table in order to build solid partnerships that can help facilitate a stronger, localized response. Perhaps you can volunteer with at-risk and vulnerable youth in your community, as having stable and loving relationships with adults they can trust is excellent preventive work in reducing the number of victims. Perhaps you can start with bringing your own family to the table and talking to your children about what pimps really are and open their eyes to the realities of their tactics and how to avoid predators.

Each person has a role to play in helping to end this horrific crime. This doesn't mean you have to start your own non-profit to do so ... it means blooming where you're planted ... taking a look around you and recognizing the action steps you can take right where you are. Do not discount the small steps, and do not be afraid if you are being called to make a large one ... all are necessary as we unite to fight against the ignorance and apathy pimps and traffickers count on, so that victims will no longer be hidden in plain sight.



EDUCATE | EQUIP | EMPOWER | MOBILIZE



**JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST
HUMAN TRAFFICKING TODAY!**



In the Spotlight

Asking Max Christensen how he began his career with the Iowa Department of Education results in a dirty story ... well, muddy, to be exact.

The way Christensen tells it, he was farming some rented crop fields one day, when his neighbor asked him to pull his pickup out of a mud hole using his tractor. With the good deed completed, the neighbor offered him \$20 for his time and trouble. "I told him to forget it and maybe he could do something helpful for someone one day -- a form of paying it forward," he related.

A year later, the neighbor resigned his position as

transportation director at a school and recommended Christensen to the superintendent as his replacement. "I hadn't been close to a school bus since my high school days," Christensen said, "but I decided to visit with the superintendent anyway, and before I left his office, I had a job."

That was 36 years ago. Having assumed his current position two decades ago, it was in the summer of 2018 at Iowa's annual school transportation conference when Christensen first heard a presentation about Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) and its Busing on the Lookout (BOTL) program. What he heard opened his eyes to the widespread problem of human trafficking and the fact that young school-age children could be victims. After doing some additional research, Christensen decided to bring this topic to the attention of every school bus driver in Iowa.

"A school bus driver's job is to protect the children on their bus and keep them safe. With that in mind, it just seemed logical that training all of the school bus drivers in Iowa was the direction to go," he explained. "After all, school bus drivers generally see every student on their bus at least twice a day, and they're quite astute at noticing changes in their riders. Sometimes those changes may be due to coming under the influence of human trafficking."

Christensen added BOTL training to Iowa's school bus driver annual training and their new school bus driver training (two separate classes) for the 2018-2019 school year. "Doing so enabled us to train every



**Max Christensen, Education Program
Consultant, School Transportation,
Iowa Department of
Education**

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current and new school bus driver in the state, and, since then, we've kept it in our new driver training to ensure that every school bus driver in the state has been or is being trained in this program," he said. Additionally, Christensen plans on re-running the training during their annual class every four to five years as an update and refresher for current drivers.

"Combined," he commented, "these two training tracks should keep Iowa school bus drivers on the cutting edge of being able to recognize human trafficking. With the training our drivers are now receiving, they can better recognize the signs of being trafficked, and with all these additional caring adults watching and listening, our hope is to help extinguish this terrible crime from our state. We estimate that we've trained about 12,000 school bus drivers in Iowa since the rollout of this program, and with new drivers coming on board every day, we add an additional 900 drivers to that total every year."

His actions made Iowa the first state to implement BOTL training for school transportation statewide, and, in 2022, Christensen received the Outstanding Anti-Trafficking Service Award from the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery. "While I was the one receiving the award," he explained, "this hasn't been just a one-person effort. Without the support of the community colleges in Iowa that facilitate the school bus driver training classes and the 35 school bus driver trainers delivering the classes, my efforts wouldn't have gotten off the ground. We have all worked together to make this a successful journey."

In addition to his own efforts, Christensen uses his position to motivate others to implement BOTL training through the transportation presentations he provides, both in the state and nationally. He reasons, "Just knowing I have a part in helping keep kids safe as we transport them back and forth to and from school is my motivation. Children truly are our 'most precious cargo.' Anything I can do to help keep kids safe is reward enough for me."



Sample of BOTL's school transportation materials.

“A school bus driver’s job is to protect the children on their bus and keep them safe. With that in mind, it just seemed logical that training all of the school bus drivers in Iowa was the direction to go.”

-Max Christensen

In the Spotlight

James Holzhauer, one of the mega-champions on the game show Jeopardy, was known for betting it all when he landed on the Double Jeopardy squares. Pushing both hands forward away from his body, he indicated he was “all in.”


And when it comes to fighting human trafficking, John Cummings, founder and CEO of ASAP Express & Logistics, is also “all in.”

Cummings founded ASAP, a Michigan-based 3PL organization combining the supply chain integration of warehousing operations and transportation services, some 28 years ago with the goal of offering exceptional service to customers and providing well-deserved respect to his drivers. His strong Christian faith is integrated into the company’s core values, mission and vision and provides the motivation for the way they conduct business.

Their mission statement reads: "ASAP Express & Logistics does not seek to be the biggest, but the best asset-based 3PL. ASAP is committed to delivering exceptional customer service and solutions, which enables us to serve our charitable commitments. This empowers us to honor God by impacting the lives of our employees, customers and community. We believe that God owns this business, and we are simply His stewards for a season. We believe that we are here for the purpose of impacting people for eternity."

(Continued on next page.)

John Cummings, ASAP Express & Logistics Founder/CEO



John Cummings (head bottom right) snaps a shot in a village in Nepal, while preparing to backpack through villages. These tours portrayed the dire living conditions and how easy it was for the families to feel desperate for a different way of life, even if it meant being manipulated by traffickers to take their children.

Although Cummings first learned about human trafficking in a church service in 2005, it was at a church men's retreat in 2017 where he watched videos explaining the magnitude and the violence of the crime that compelled him to get involved. That same year he watched a news story about Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT), as well as discovered a local anti-trafficking organization called HOPE Against Trafficking, which provided long-term, safe, restorative environments for adult survivors of trafficking. The following year, ASAP began supporting both TAT and HOPE.

"When I first heard about the tragedy that is human trafficking and the stories of little girls being tortured and raped, I was compelled to get involved to make a difference wherever I could," Cummings said. "Owning a transportation company, and teaming up with Truckers Against Trafficking, allowed me as the owner of a transportation company to get involved nationally. HOPE Against Trafficking allowed me to get involved locally and in a more personal way. On behalf of myself and the ASAP Team, we are and will remain committed to fighting and preventing this horrific crime wherever and however we can."

To date, ASAP has seven charity partners, five of which are anti-trafficking in mission or in at least a portion of the work.

In its support of TAT, ASAP is a Gold Level sponsor, trains all its drivers and employees with TAT materials, talks about human trafficking and TAT on its website and also holds fundraisers through the actual work it does. In 2021, the company raised \$6,379 for TAT through these fundraisers, donating a portion of customer loads during January, Human Trafficking Awareness Month, to TAT, as well as making a few other donations during the year. Last year, ASAP raised over \$16,000 for TAT.

This year, during January, ASAP fundraised \$10 per load and split that equally between TAT and HOPE, resulting in \$5,085 to TAT. They also fundraised \$5 per load for the customer with the most loads and donated that additional money from 486 loads to HOPE. For the remainder of the year, ASAP will donate \$3 per load to TAT and \$3 per load to HOPE, as well as \$3 per load (and \$5 per load in July) to a Nepalese anti-trafficking organization called Our Daughters International, which works to stop the flow of trafficking victims from Nepal to India and provide recovery care for survivors.

A cancer survivor, Cummings also sits on the Board of Directors for HOPE and has made a mission trip to Nepal to work with Our Daughters on location. He says listening to survivor testimonies and the story of their journey to wellness and being able to thrive in society keep him motivated to stay involved in the fight to end this crime.



1,543,284

individuals registered as TAT Trained



In the Spotlight

The TAT Advisory Committee (TAC) launched in 2021 to help achieve TAT's vision of affecting targeted systems change by creating the largest mobile army of transportation professionals dedicated to discovering and disrupting human trafficking networks. Comprised of thought leaders and resource activators, TAC has expanded the network and expertise of our existing leadership team, acted as a sounding board for strategic decisions, advised TAT staff in specialty areas, such as communications and marketing, resource development, diversity, equity and inclusion, program delivery and thought leadership and served in additional ways, as they are able.

This quarter, some of their recent activity includes:

- Eric Higgs, TAC chair and CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee, has scheduled the Freedom Drivers Project for June 29 in Nashville for an age-appropriate educational experience for youth in that community, ages 13-18. This project is planned in partnership with TAT and Bridgestone with a focus on how to stay safe from traffickers and other predators.
- Whilna Stewart-Franklin, Region Community Relations manager for UPS Canada, presented on human trafficking as part of a panel at the 7th Annual Truck Training Schools Association of Ontario (TTSAO) Conference on Feb. 22, Human Trafficking Awareness Day in Canada. Stewart-Franklin, along with two other members of the TAT Canada Committee – Laura Dickinson of Day & Ross and Heather Mewhinney of Kriska Holdings -- addressed how their companies have worked with TAT to combat human trafficking in a variety of ways and educated the audience on how to raise awareness and make a difference in the fight against human trafficking.

Stewart-Franklin said companies could become safe harbors for victims of trafficking. "Our vehicles are everywhere, and a person looking for help can trust one of us," she explained. "Criminals might rethink doing business in places frequented by vehicles of companies that have employees trained to fight the malaise. Any one of us can help make a difference."

(Continued on next page.)



- Kellylynn McLaughlin, professional truck driver and Women in Trucking's first Driver Ambassador, recently presented on TAT at an in-person meeting of the Women in Transportation Society (WTS), Oklahoma Chapter in Tulsa, Oklahoma. McLaughlin provided an introduction to human trafficking for the group and shared how the crime of trafficking intersects with transportation, using as an example the story of the three Oklahoma City Embark employees who helped get a victim to safety. McLaughlin detailed TAT's programming and encouraged folks in the room to consider how they could help spread the message about TAT's work.

Additionally, TAC has received three new members:

[Elisabeth Barna, EAB Strategies, LLC](#)

Barna has over 33 years of experience in the trucking industry, and, in early 2023 founded EAB Strategies, LLC, to use her years of experience to help improve the image and develop the next generation of the trucking industry. She has led the industry's image campaign by telling the overall story of the industry and its workforce and worked across communities to showcase the industry's safety record and career opportunities. She spent over 25 years at the American Trucking Associations (ATA), most recently as executive vice president of Industry Affairs and senior advisor to the president and CEO, where she was responsible for ATA's industry communications and strategy, image and outreach advocacy and oversaw all ATA events and meetings.

[Whilna Stewart-Franklin, UPS Canada](#)

Stewart-Franklin leads Community Relations for UPS Canada and as part of The UPS Foundation. She considers this her dream job, as in this role she "deliver[s] what matters" to people and communities through strategic partnerships, financial support and through the might of UPS manpower. Before assuming this role, Stewart-Franklin led an array of volunteer efforts at UPS Calgary, including spearheading the long running Pulling 4 U – YYC, a plane-pull event in partnership with the Calgary and Area United Way that brought corporate and community leaders together, raising funds for community investment. In recognition of that leadership, she was awarded a Spirits of Gold – People Power Award.

Stewart-Franklin is a committed champion of DEI, sustainability, human rights and social responsibility, focused on uplifting underserved communities, fighting human trafficking, mentoring youth and conservation. She is a skilled and passionate speaker and enjoys creating educational and engaging events for employees. A graduate of the University of Windsor, Stewart-Franklin currently lives in the Greater Toronto Area with her family. When not working, she can be found reading a book, baking treats or hosting game nights.

[Joy Friedman, The Missing Peace](#)

Over the past 22 years, Friedman has directly supported over 5,000 victims and survivors of sexual exploitation through outreach, advocacy, courtroom support and group facilitation. She has helped survivors in jails and prisons transition back into society by connecting them with needed resources and services. As a consultant, trainer and advisor, Friedman has trained and provided expert consultation to a variety of law enforcement agencies investigating sex trafficking cases, including the St. Paul Police Department's Human Trafficking Task Force and the FBI. In 2014, she completed a prestigious human trafficking program hosted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Most recently, she founded her consulting business, The Missing Peace, to empower victims of sex trafficking through multiple avenues, such as direct victim support, comprehensive enforcement training workshops and working with elected officials who can make or break the violent cycle of sexual exploitation.

Additional Highlights

Industry Training

- TAT presented to Dot Transportation distribution center managers and other leaders within Dot Foods as they were rolling out TAT training to 1875 drivers during the quarter. So far, more than 1,300 drivers have been reported as trained. TAT also engaged with employee resource and volunteerism group leaders and discussed plans for continued engagement within Dot, including the potential implementation of an anti-trafficking-in-persons (anti-TIP) policy.
- TAT presented to 160 Performance Food Group (PFG) associates from across the country in all job levels and functions. A recording of the presentation was made available to all 35,000 PFG associates. As a result of this webinar: PFG has pledged to come on as a Platinum Level sponsor and confirmed they have an anti-TIP policy in their handbook; four locations have requested additional materials; and additional connections were made.



FDP Director Brandy Belton shares information on survivor artifacts in the FDP with Alabama State Attorney General Steve Marshall during a tour at the 9th Annual Alabama Human Trafficking Summit.

Freedom Drivers Project (FDP)

In January, the FDP visited the 9th Annual Alabama Human Trafficking Summit in Montgomery:

- TAT staff presented to approximately 260 attendees, and 122 people toured the FDP.
- Alabama State Attorney General Steve Marshall attended and toured the FDP along with his staff.
- TAT distributed 13 law enforcement training DVDs, several wallet cards, window decals, brochures.



Mexico

CANAPAT, Mexico's national bus association, has distributed the awareness posters TAT helped create (see right), alongside our partners at Consejo Ciudadano, El Pozo de Vida and the SICT, to all bus terminals around the country. An increase in calls to the Mexican hotline is expected as a result of this effort.



TAT's Dylan Wecht (far right), poses with Uber's Nick Pailthorpe (far left) and Detective Marc Goudreau of the Investigative Response Team of the Edmonton Police Service (center).

Canada

- A law enforcement briefing for the Edmonton Police Department, co-led by TAT and Uber's security lead, trained 35 officers. A detective with the Edmonton Police Services commented, "This was an excellent collaboration between TAT and Uber that gave everyone in attendance a deeper understanding of the problem we currently have with human trafficking, what indicators to look for, and how organizations are teaming up in this fight. Thank you guys very much for coming; it was really an eye-opening experience."
- The number of industry-trained professionals in Canada reported as TAT Trained increased by 1,705 individuals so far this quarter, a 10% increase. The total trained in Canada is now 18,543.

Coalition Builds

TAT participated on a panel at the Attorney General Alliance Global Anti-Human Trafficking Summit where:

- The Office of the Attorney General for DC pledged to co-host a CB in 2023.
- The Illinois Office of the Attorney General expressed interest in co-hosting a CB and discussing statewide strategies.
- TAT received the Attorney General Alliance (AGA) Sword and Shield Award, recognizing our work among NGOs in the anti-trafficking movement. Sara Sefried, TAT's director of Strategic Partnerships, received the award on TAT's behalf from event co-hosts Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes and Heather Fischer, senior advisor for Human Rights Crimes at Thomson Reuters Special Services.



Sara Sefried (center), TAT's director of Strategic Partnerships, received the award from event co-hosts Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes and Heather Fischer, senior advisor for Human Rights Crimes at Thomson Reuters Special Services.

Busing on the Lookout (BOTL)

- The Florida Transit Safety Operations Network (FTSON), Center for Urban Research at the University of South Florida and Florida Department of Transportation partnered with BOTL to develop a template and a sample human trafficking reporting protocol for transit operators. The template was finalized and will be rolled out in the state of Florida during a webinar in April 2023. It will be made available for national distribution and replication by other states soon after.
- BOTL presented to approximately 50 people at the 2023 Strengthening Sovereign Responses to Sex Trafficking in Indian Country & Alaska Conference, hosted by the Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition. The presentation focused on "How the Bus, Casino and Truck Stop/Travel Plaza Industries Can Combat Sex Trafficking."



L to R: Moderator Tom Ruck, senior adviser, DHS Blue Campaign, James Lewis, Communications manager, Amtrak Police Department, Jeff Lenard, vice president of Strategic Industry Initiatives, National Association of Convenience Stores, Sovcik and Elise Malolino, Global Head of Women's Safety Policy, Uber.

U. S. Chamber of Commerce Event

Annie Sovcik, senior director of Programs and Strategic Initiatives, represented TAT at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce symposium, "Transportation Sector Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking: The Power of Public-Private Partnerships," in Washington, D.C. The symposium was co-hosted by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Sovcik presented on a panel focused on promising practices in ground transportation. The panel was moderated by Thomas Ruck, the senior advisor for the DHS Blue Campaign, and featured representatives from the National Association of Convenience Stores, Amtrak Police Department and Uber.

No buyer = no victim = no sex trafficking.

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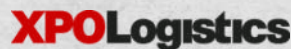
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