

February 2026: Looking ahead

VANTAGE POINT



ISSUE NO. 16

LETTER FROM ESTHER

Dear TAT friends,

This year, our vantage point centers on leadership. At TAT, we lead the way in anti-trafficking strategies, empowering our partners to confidently take meaningful action and drive progress.

When TAT began, little was known about human trafficking, and we focused our efforts on identifying truckers as a lifeline for victims of sex trafficking. Over the past 17 years, the landscape has shifted dramatically. More organizations have joined the fight; more survivors are sharing their expertise; law enforcement is better trained; traffickers' technologies have evolved ... and so has our response. Addressing labor trafficking has also become a pressing priority.

These changes drive us to continuously assess, research and deliver the most relevant resources, data and tools to empower the transportation industry to respond effectively.

This year, we're also evolving the purpose of our first Vantage Point of the year. Instead of looking back, this report now looks ahead ... offering a high-level overview of the strategies and resources we're developing to better serve you. In 2026, we'll launch a second mobile exhibit, partner with stakeholders in Mexico to expand training outreach to more trucking organizations, continue growing our work in Canada, and introduce new training videos for over-the-road drivers and truck stop personnel.



...offering a high-level overview of the strategies and resources we're developing to better serve you.

TAT will continue to lead as we work together to expose the horrors of exploitation, create pathways to freedom for victims and inspire the industry to take meaningful steps toward being part of the solution.

Handwritten signature of Esther.

TAT reveals winners of the 2026 TAT Champion Awards



TAT has selected the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), Coach USA/Coach Canada and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) as the winners of its 2026 TAT Champion Awards in the government agency, organization and association categories, respectively. Presentation of the awards will take place at individual events later in the year.

TAT annually recognizes and honors the outstanding creative, innovative, generous and dedicated efforts of specific partners, whose actions have significantly furthered its work in engaging more members of the sectors TAT works with to help bring an end to human trafficking.

“When TAT leadership come together armed with our nominees for each category, and we begin the discussion, it’s an inspiring conversation, because all of us have these different perspectives and intersections with the TAT partners we are discussing,” explained TAT Deputy Director and Senior Director of External Affairs Kylla Lanier. “It can be quite a challenge to narrow it down to our top three in any given year, based on the varied and long-term ways these entities have come alongside TAT to tackle human trafficking within their spheres of influence.”

“We are honored and humbled to have the important work our members do recognized by TAT, our longtime partner and friend in the fight against human trafficking,” enthused Ian Grossman, AAMVA president and CEO. “From DMV frontline employees and law enforcement members actively recognizing, reporting, and investigating trafficking, to assisting survivors as they rebuild their lives, AAMVA members have done amazing work to address these complex

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TAT reveals winners of the 2026 TAT Champion Awards (continued)

TAT annually recognizes and honors the outstanding partners whose actions are significantly helping to end human trafficking.

crimes. We are grateful for our partnership with TAT that helps strengthen these efforts and thank TAT for this recognition.”

Colonel Gary L. Howze II of the FHP said, “The Florida Highway Patrol is proud to partner with Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) through FHP’s Office of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement to make meaningful impacts to end this terrible victimization of others. This type of effort can only be accomplished through collaborative partnerships with genuinely motivated organizations and individuals that empower. The great work of TAT across America is appreciated by Troopers Against Trafficking here in the Sunshine State.”



AAMVA holds Peer-to-Peer discussions at its conferences.

“We are honored to be recognized as a TAT Champion for our dedicated efforts in training and combating human and sex trafficking, stated Derrick Waters, CEO of Coach USA/Coach Canada. “At Coach USA and Coach Canada, we are deeply committed to equipping all our team members with the knowledge and skills necessary to identify and address these critical issues. This award is a testament to the unwavering dedication of all our team members in the ongoing fight against human and sex trafficking.”



Florida Highway Patrol officers were attentive during TAT training.



Lexi Higgins (center), TAT director of Industry Engagement (transit, motorcoach and school transportation), and Sgt. Charles DePrima (far right) with CoachUSA staff at a Port Authority Bus Terminal workshop.

WEX Inc. announces Harriet Tubman Award sponsorship as part of its TAT partnership



TAT Senior Director of industry Training and Outreach Laura Cyrus brought the closing keynote address. Photo credit: McLendon Photography

WEX®, a global leader in intelligent payment and workflow solutions across mobility, benefits, corporate payments and travel segments is TAT’s newest Harriet Tubman Award (HTA) sponsor in a three-year partnership at the TAT Diamond sponsorship level.

TAT’s Harriet Tubman Award honors members of the industries TAT works with whose direct actions impact those victimized by human trafficking. The award is named in honor of Harriet Tubman, the famed abolitionist credited with using the Underground Railroad to transport people to freedom. She was never caught and never lost a passenger.

“At WEX, one of our core values is ‘Be a Positive Force,’ and it is an honor to represent that value by sponsoring this award,” said Matt Crumpton, vice president, OTR National Accounts Sales for WEX. “We want to ensure the people doing this hard, often invisible, work are seen, respected and supported. Supporting the Harriet Tubman Award reflects our commitment to amplify courage, protect dignity and reinforce that human safety matters wherever commerce and mobility exist.”



At WEX, one of our core values is ‘Be a Positive Force,’ and it is an honor to represent that value ...

*- Matt Crumpton,
vice president, OTR
National Accounts Sales
for WEX*



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WEX Inc. announces Harriet Tubman Award sponsorship as part of its TAT partnership (continued)

Prior to launching this sponsorship, WEX invited TAT to participate in the 2025 WEX OTR Summit alongside leaders from across the trucking industry and donated a portion of the event's registration fees to TAT, totaling \$2,700. At the end of January, WEX hosted TAT's Freedom Drivers Project exhibit at its annual sales kickoff event, where Laura Cyrus, TAT's senior director of Industry Training and Outreach, trained more than 700 employees on human trafficking awareness.



WEX Vice President of OTR National Accounts Sales Matt Crumpton (left) and Cyrus engaged during a panel discussion at the conference. Photo credit: McLendon Photography

The January event also included TAT as part of the WEX Giving Wall, which provided every attendee the opportunity to choose one of three options (Ronald McDonald House, TAT or an internal WEX employee support program) to “vote” for as a donation designee. As a result, TAT received an additional donation.

Through their HTA commitment, WEX will fund the award for both the HTA winner and their company, host a dedicated HTA ceremony at the 2026 WEX OTR Summit, and cover travel costs to the event for the winner and a guest, as well as a TAT staff member.

“We’re excited to welcome WEX as our next Harriet Tubman Award sponsor,” shared TAT Executive Director Esther Goetsch. “Even in the short time we’ve worked together, WEX has shown a real commitment to making a positive difference on fighting human trafficking. We look forward to seeing how their platform and industry presence will help expand this important work. When organizations like WEX use their influence and connections for the greater good, they show what TAT’s network leadership is all about. We truly value this partnership and look forward to the impact we can make together.”



Exactly 100 people toured TAT's Freedom Drivers Project during the conference. Photo credit: McLendon Photography

TAT refreshes trucking training with new, condensed options for TAT-trained drivers



In response to partner requests for condensed training options once they've trained employees with TAT's longer videos, such as the OTR training, TAT has developed two new training options -- an eight-minute and a four-minute version -- planned for launch later in this first quarter of the year.

After conducting interviews with existing partners in 2025 to gather needs and ideas, TAT's new training options for TAT-trained drivers:

- Keep the issue of human trafficking top of mind through case study animations in microlearning sessions that visually depict what the drivers saw.
- Reinforce the message of using the TAT app to make reports and remind drivers to share their story if they think they've ever made a call that helped a victim.
- Include human trafficking red flag training content in addition to the case studies.
- Include screenshots or stills of the animations, for visual interest.

These training options will be available later in Q1 via the TAT portal, with interactive quiz questions and direct deployment for trucking companies using their own systems, such as straight video for companies that have in-person safety meetings, and via SCORM packages for those that can load content directly into their internally managed systems. This refresh training will not be made available on external industry LMS platforms (like Infnit-i, Tenstreet, CarriersEdge, etc.) at this time.

For more information, contact info@tatnonprofit.org.



Human Trafficking 201 training ready for law enforcement

To meet the growing need for deeper, skills-based learning among law enforcement professionals, TAT recently developed an advanced Human Trafficking (HT) 201 training which builds on its foundational four-hour course.

“While our introductory training provides essential knowledge on laws, trends, the victim-centered approach and

identification of potential victims, the HT 201 course is designed to take participants further through scenario-based learning, nuanced interview techniques, niche trafficking topics and prosecution-focused content,” explained Dylan Wecht, TAT director of Public Sector Engagement.

TAT created the course in response to feedback from agencies seeking more knowledge and training, as well as specialized insight into trafficking cases. The HT 201 course, which is two hours in length and can be delivered virtually or in-person, is available by request for commercial vehicle enforcement and law enforcement agencies and can be scheduled by emailing dwecht@tatnonprofit.org.



Planning underway for a series of Canadian events



(L to R) – At the CB on PEI, TAT's Senior Director Annie Sovcik had time to talk with event co-hosts Honourable Jenn Redmond, PEI Minister of Workforce Advanced Learning and Population; Honourable Ernie Hudson, PEI Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure; and Chris McKee, Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association.

Meetings with Canadian partners and planning for a number of 2026 TAT events in Canada are underway. These include:

- A recently completed Coalition Build in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island (PEI) on Feb. 11, co-hosted by the PEI DOT and the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association. The 43 audience members included representatives from trucking, truck stop, bus, transit, energy, law enforcement and government agencies.
- A proposed July tour in British Columbia for TAT's newest mobile exhibit, the Driving Change Project, and an energy Coalition Build
- A TAT booth, sponsored by Bridgestone Canada, at the 2026 Truck World event in Mississauga, Ontario, April 16-18
- A presentation and exhibition booth at the Ontario Transportation Expo in Toronto April 13-15

TAT Motorcoach Affiliate Program provides steps to increase the human trafficking fighting power of the industry



To enable motorcoach partners to extend their reach beyond training their employees in the fight against human trafficking, TAT is announcing its Motorcoach Affiliate Program. The program, comprised of five components with a menu of action options, allows companies to build their individualized path to achieve TAT affiliate status.

Based on TAT’s successful Iowa MVE program for law enforcement and trucking, motorcoach companies achieving this affiliate status set the gold standard for how the industry responds to and combats human trafficking. TAT will provide technical assistance, guidance and consultation to companies in the implementation of the model, as well as track metrics to evaluate the success of the affiliate program and celebrate those completing all model components for this achievement. In addition, TAT will offer opportunities for affiliates to collaborate with each other virtually and at industry events, whenever possible.

For more information on the TAT Motorcoach Affiliate Program, please email info@tatnonprofit.org to get started on your company’s affiliate journey!

SAMPLE ASSETS FOR AFFILIATES

Sticker

Website Badge

Social Media Graphic

CMV Summit panels highlight public-private partnerships

Working with the Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Summit, TAT is organizing a series of panels to highlight public-private partnerships at the regional CMV Safety Summits. The first of these took place at the regional Midwest Commercial Vehicle Safety Summit in Kansas City, Missouri in December, with the panel including two representatives from law enforcement and one each from a trucking company and a state trucking association.

In March, the Eastern Regional CMV Safety Summit scheduled for Northampton, Massachusetts will feature a panel including representatives from law enforcement, a bus company, a state trucking association and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA).

“Our hope is to eventually provide public-private partnership sessions at all regional summits,” commented TAT Senior Director of Programs and Strategic Initiatives Annie Sovcik.



At the Midwest Commercial Vehicle Safety Summit in Kansas City, Missouri in December, the panel consisted of (L to R) Kylla Lanier, TAT deputy director and senior director of External Affairs; Sgt Zach Heard, Illinois State Police; Sgt Ben Pomajzi, Nebraska State Patrol; Blake Grolmus, senior vice president of Government Relations, Iowa Motor Truck Association; Tom Crawford, president, Missouri Trucking Association; and Annie Sovcik, TAT senior director of Programs and Strategic Initiatives.

NEW TAT NUMBERS

2,521,094

**professionals
trained.**

Youth on Transportation plans second annual safety month for May

Planning is underway for Youth on Transportation’s (YOT) second annual safety month this May. The campaign is dedicated to educating youth and parents about human trafficking and equipping them with tools to protect themselves and their peers from exploitation. It is a core component of TAT’s [Youth on Transportation Initiative](#).

Last May marked the inaugural YOT Safety Month, during which 22 partners participated, including 11 transit agencies, six task forces, three state trucking associations, one NGO and one government agency. These partners united to educate youth and parents directly about human trafficking in age-appropriate ways, including by displaying YOT posters, distributing YOT postcards and stickers, and posting YOT information in their social media and other public communications.

Since last year’s campaign, TAT has continued to expand and deepen the YOT Initiative, including a specific focus on reaching Native and Indigenous populations with these materials for 2026. In preparation for this, in late 2025, TAT embarked on a series of partner consultations to gather insight about how to adapt YOT materials to ensure they’re relevant for and resonant to Native/Indigenous audiences. These adapted materials will be ready for deployment during this May’s YOT Safety Month, particularly in partnership with Tribal transit and truck stops, as well as in areas where energy operations are on or near Tribal lands.

Lexi Higgins, director of Industry Engagement for transit, motorcoach and school transportation, as well as YOT, said, “We invite all our partners to join this year’s Youth on Transportation Safety Month, May 1–31! No matter how your work intersects with TAT’s mission, there are ways to get involved, including contacting TAT to coordinate displaying our youth-focused poster designs in public places where youth and parents will see them, such as on buses, at bus stops/stations, in cabs/limos, at truck stops/rest areas, lobbies; ordering TAT stickers and postcards to distribute to youth and parents; and posting on social media throughout the month.”

Additionally, TAT has [resources for youth](#) and [resources for parents](#), which are always accessible to everyone.



Last Fall, Lexi Higgins, TAT director of Industry Engagement (transit, motorcoach and school transportation), partnered with the Port Authority Police Department Youth Services Unit (YSU) in New York City to provide two human trafficking training sessions for Port Authority employees, as well as employees of carriers that operate in and out of Port Authority. Attendees learned how trafficking can intersect with public transportation and how they can help protect youth who are passengers.

TAT Energy Training Proposal Deck highlights information company leadership needs to know about human trafficking and the energy industry



It's possible that leadership at some energy companies know little to nothing about the intersections between their industry and human trafficking, and employees longing to help activate their organization into the role of changemaker in the fight against this crime need some help.

With input from the Oklahoma Energy Workgroup, a group of 10 energy leaders, plus TAT staff, which organized last fall to amplify TAT's voice in Oklahoma, TAT has developed a customizable slide deck to guide the conversation between the employee and leadership and gain the necessary approval for company-wide implementation. This deck highlights the intersections between energy and human trafficking, the ease of implementing TAT's free training and how partnering with TAT will elevate the company's commitment to social responsibility. Key elements identified to include were: no cost; easy to implement and low resources needed to maintain; and community impact with social responsibility visibility and ESG reporting.

The deck has been intentionally created with a generic look and limited TAT branding, while still using the TAT colors. It is customizable, with the opportunity to add a company logo and branded photos, as well as specific industry photos, providing a sense of ownership for the employee as well as senior leadership and, hopefully, encouraging the decision to implement this initiative into their current safety program. To request a slide deck, please contact lmattson@tatnonprofit.org.



TAT SPONSORS

While TAT is extremely thankful to all of our supporters, we want to give special recognition to our Driving Force, North Star, Freedom Driver, Diamond+, Diamond, Platinum, Gold+, Gold and Silver+ sponsors.

Driving Force



North Star

Freedom Driver



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Diamond



INLAND
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Rental | Leasing | Logistics



Platinum



Gold+

RIHM / FAMILY COMPANIES

Gold



Silver+



STAY CONNECTED WITH TAT



At the Tucking/Truck Stop Coalition Build in Phoenix, Arizona in January, (L to R) Heather Fry, TAT director of Industry Training; Louie Greek, TAT training specialist; Sara Sefried, TAT director of Strategic Partnerships; and Kelley Marshall, TAT training specialist/survivor leader, posed with the Knight mascot.



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