

Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona

Annual Report



2023



Governor's Office
of Youth, Faith
and Family



Governor's Council
to Combat Human
Trafficking in Arizona

EndTrafficking.AZ.gov



KATIE HOBBS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

TONYA HAMILTON
CABINET EXECUTIVE OFFICER

December 31, 2023

Governor Katie Hobbs
1700 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Governor,

It is our distinct honor to serve as co-chairs of the Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona. We are proud of the many accomplishments of this dedicated group in the fight against human trafficking in the state of Arizona. The expertise, talent, and passion of the professionals on this Council continue to expand and improve our ability to prevent and respond to this crime throughout Arizona. The following report includes an overview of goals, activities, outcomes, and future work carried out by the members of the Council, its workgroups, and our state task forces from this past year.

During the last ten years, the Council has worked tirelessly to develop and deploy training for professionals; develop recommendations that work to expand trauma-informed, victim-centered services; and foster greater collaboration among law enforcement agencies, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and other entities to ensure a statewide multi-disciplinary approach in this arena.

We want to express gratitude for your commitment to this work and your leadership in the fight to end human trafficking in Arizona. We hope that our continued efforts and collaborative partnerships increase prevention, improve the way we serve victims, increase successful prosecutions of traffickers, and better support all of those who are affected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Claire Sechler Merkel".

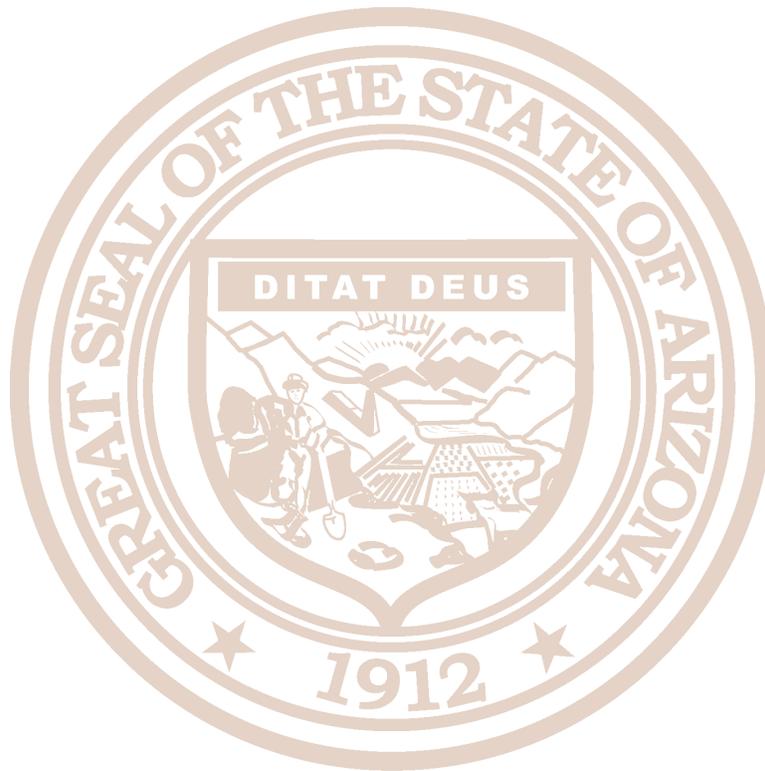
Claire Sechler Merkel
Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Fuentes".

Maria Cristina Fuentes
Co-Chair

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COUNCIL PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE	1
COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP	2
SUMMARY OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS	3
Arizona Human Trafficking Prevention Month	
Quarterly Regional Human Trafficking Task Force Meetings	
State Agency Updates	
COUNCIL MEETINGS	4
COUNCIL WORKGROUP REPORTS	12





Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona

COUNCIL PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

The [Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona](#) works to address human trafficking through strategic and targeted prevention and awareness efforts. The Council is authorized under [Executive Order 2023-26](#) to develop a comprehensive and coordinated victims' service plan; evaluate and report on statewide human trafficking data; promote greater collaboration with law enforcement, state agencies, and the community at large; and raise public awareness about victims' services, restitution, and prevention.

In addition to six meetings in the calendar year, the Council further develops its work through its two active workgroups:

Data and Research

The Data and Research Workgroup develops and facilitates training on the identification of and response to trafficking victims across the state. Training sessions are informed by research collected and analyzed by academic partners from Arizona State University that promote multidisciplinary collaboration, including education on the human trafficking warning signs, state and local response resources, current trends in demand and addressing sex trafficking buyers, school-based prevention education, and a study of Arizona-specific trafficking cases. Additional research has included exploring human trafficking among homeless youth, LGBTQIA+, juveniles on probation, as well as sex and labor trafficking cases specific to Arizona.

Victim Services

Through collaborative data collection and network mapping, the Victim Services Workgroup works to enhance Arizona services for human trafficking victims. The Workgroup identifies gaps in care, engages new community partners, and ensures that services are survivor and trauma-informed, victim-centered, and strength-based.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Under Executive Order 2023-26, the Council comprises individuals appointed by the Governor who serve at her pleasure, without compensation. The following members served during on the Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona throughout this past year:

Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair

Arizona State University

Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair

MCF Strategies, LLC

Lt. Nicholas Alamshaw

Scottsdale Police Department

David Lujan

Arizona Department of Child Safety

Dr. Sarah Beaumont

Phoenix Children's Hospital

Rachelle Lumpp

Arizona Attorney General's Office

Nathaniel Brown

Navajo Nation Council

Rachel Mitchell

Maricopa County Attorney's Office

Sarah Chung

Safal Partners

Capt. Andrew Orozco

Arizona Department of Transportation

Doug Coleman

Apache Junction Justice Court

Sophia Philis-Ortiz

American Airlines

Col. Jeffrey Glover

Arizona Department of Public Safety

Jill Rable

HonorHealth

Tonya Hamilton

Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family

Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz

Arizona State University

Joseph Kelroy

Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts

Senator T.J. Shope

Arizona State Senate

Lt. Rick Leyvas

Phoenix Police Department

Brian Steele

Phoenix Dream Center

Lois Lucas

Catholic Charities

Councilman Jim Waring

Phoenix City Council

SUMMARY OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Arizona Human Trafficking Prevention Month

Governor Katie Hobbs proclaimed January 2023 as [Human Trafficking Prevention Month](#) to recognize Arizona's commitment to combating human trafficking, protecting victims' rights, and restoring their freedom and dignity.

Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign

The Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona was the coordinating body for the statewide anti-human trafficking campaign. The Council partnered with the United States Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) to align materials and messaging with the nationally recognized [Blue Campaign](#). The campaign ran from December 2022 through March 2023, and assets included the new statewide hotline for suspected incidents of trafficking with placement dependent on the needs of communities, focusing on messaging around labor and sex trafficking in the areas most likely to occur.

The campaign utilized evidence-based and survivor-informed approaches that were integral in preparing for the upcoming major-scale events across the Phoenix metropolitan area, such as the Waste Management Phoenix Open, the Barrett Jackson Car Show, and most notably, Super Bowl LVII. Assets utilized multifaceted distribution strategies such as static and digital billboards, geo-fencing, bathrooms of highly transient locations (airports, malls, restaurants, bars), and targeted social media platforms. Through efforts from Council members and partner agencies, over 10,000 sex and labor trafficking posters are hanging across Arizona.

The Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona Members met with airport staff to further their internal messaging, provide additional resources, and support their efforts to spread the anti-trafficking message.

With help from the [Phoenix City Council Human Trafficking Task Force](#), static posters, digital billboards, and audio messaging were distributed throughout the [Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport](#) during the campaign. Messaging will continue to circulate on a regular cadence year-round.

Additionally, the Sky Harbor Airport trained all 800+ employees using the Department of Homeland Security's Blue Lightning materials and anti-trafficking awareness training designed for the transportation sector. Efforts translate into an additional 800 community members knowing and understanding what to do if they suspect trafficking. Maricopa Counties' regional airports, including Mesa, Glendale, and Scottsdale, included anti-trafficking materials in their facilities, reaching private and charter airports.

With support from the regional [Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\)](#), the [Tucson International Airport \(TUS\)](#) began partnering with DHS in 2021 to launch the Blue Lightning Initiative in January 2022, coinciding with the annual Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. Messaging was not event-specific and aimed to raise public awareness about human trafficking, leveraging existing collateral messaging developed through the DHS Blue Campaign, ensuring consistent anti-human trafficking messaging across the US. In addition to awareness materials

in airport restrooms, the TUS provided awareness cards for badged employees, worked with airport security to provide virtual training to staff, and re-engaged with the [Southern Arizona Anti-Trafficking Unified Response Network \(SAATURN\)](#) to attend an upcoming quarterly meeting with Southern Arizona's multidisciplinary stakeholders.

Quarterly Regional Human Trafficking Task Force Meetings

Beginning in 2020, the co-chairs began hosting Quarterly Regional Human Trafficking Task Force Meetings designed to share information and best practices, discuss needs, and update the Council on activities. Representatives of the following regional task forces have participated in these meetings throughout the years: Arizona Coalition of Victim Services (ACVS), CARE 7, Central Arizona United to Stop Exploitation Taskforce (CAUSE), Coalition Against Human Trafficking in Northern Arizona, Flagstaff Initiative Against Trafficking (FIAT), Mohave County Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence Coalition, Phoenix Human Trafficking Taskforce, Pinal Alliance Against Trafficking Coalition, San Luis Police Department, Southern Arizona Anti-Trafficking Unified Response Network (SAATURN), Yavapai County Trafficking Taskforce, Yuma Community Taskforce, and the McCain Institute for International Leadership.

State Agency Updates

The [Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family \(GOYFF\)](#) invests approximately \$3 million annually into Arizona programs through the [STOP \(Services • Training • Officers • Prosecutors\) Violence Against Women Grant](#). Authorized through the [Violence Against Women Act \(VAWA\)](#) and administered on the federal level by the [Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women](#), the STOP Violence Against Women Grant provides funding to support strategies that combat violent crimes against women by aiding in the development or strengthening of victim services and fostering partnerships with law enforcement, prosecutors, victim-serving organizations, tribal communities, as well as state, county, and local governments.

In 2020, the GOYFF awarded four programs to combat sex trafficking within the context of its intersection with domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and/or stalking. The three-year grant cycle concluded in December 2023 with Arizona awardees meeting the needs of survivors through multi-disciplinary, collaborative, victim-centered, and trauma-informed approaches.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

In 2023, the Council continued its work to educate the public about human trafficking, support victim services programs, and bring key stakeholders together to improve Arizona's response to trafficking in all its forms.

DEMA Anti-Trafficking Grant Fund Update

Darlene Quihuis

March 1st, 2023

Per [SB 26-106](#), the [Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund](#) comprised \$10 million appropriated by the Legislature in the fiscal year 2023. The [Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs \(DEMA\)](#) administers and distributes \$8 million (\$500,000 maximum per agency) throughout Arizona to programs that reduce human trafficking with allocation to the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center (ACTIC) of the remaining \$2 million.

Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center Hotline Update

Major Jennifer Borquez

March 1st, 2023

As a part of the Anti-Trafficking Grant Fund, the \$2 million allocation allowed the ACTIC to partner with the [Arizona State University Office of Sex Trafficking and Intervention Research \(ASU STIR\)](#) to provide a comprehensive and coordinated response to support human trafficking victims after reporting potential cases. While not a replacement for emergency services, the ACTIC Hotline (**1-877-4AZ-TIPS**) established the new Arizona-specific Human Trafficking Hotline that is an available 24/7 victim service, with English and Spanish-speaking operators who triage calls and provide warm hand-offs to services, including advocacy, case management, housing, emergency shelter, legal aid, medical care, and mental health.

Anti-Human Trafficking Media Campaign Update

Alec Thomson

March 1st, 2023

The Anti-Human Trafficking Media Campaign served as a catalyst ahead of the large-scale events coming to Arizona in early 2023, designed to increase education about trafficking while bringing awareness to the new statewide hotline (**1-877-4AZ-TIPS**). The assets launched in mid-January, with the billboards displayed throughout March.

The campaign used the following methods to distribute assets:

- *Static and Digital Billboards*
- *Gas Station TV and Gas Pump Toppers*
- *Mall and Bar Restrooms*
- *Convenience Store Videos*
- *Arizona Lottery Screens*
- *Radio Stations*
- *Digital tactics:*
 - *Geo-fencing*
 - *Contextual (explicit content)*
 - *Keyword Search Advertisements*
 - *Paid Social Media Advertisements*



Super Bowl LVII Update - Phoenix Police Department

Lt. Rick Leyvas

March 1st, 2023

The week preceding Super Bowl LVII, the [Phoenix Police Department](#) led multiple cross-sector, multifaceted street outreach events and child predator operations. The street outreach events took place primarily along the 27th Avenue corridor, with the primary objective being to meet people who have exchanged money for sex and connect them with services instead of arresting them. Child predator operations targeted individuals online who were looking to engage in sexual activity with underage individuals. As a result of these efforts, law enforcement assisted in connecting 53 women and one male to services and arrested 30 adult males for various felony charges related to child sexual exploitation.

During the week of the Super Bowl, the Phoenix Police Department conducted valley-wide street outreach operations in hotels, condos, and other locations. These resulted in the arrest of 48 individuals for different felony charges (human trafficking, weapon misconduct, aggravated assault), 300 misdemeanor arrests (120 of which were sex buyers), and five juveniles were able to be recovered.

Super Bowl LVII Update - McCain Institute for International Leadership

Joanna Jauregui

March 1st, 2023

In partnership with the [Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee](#), the [McCain Institute for International Leadership](#) developed a 15-minute virtual human trafficking awareness training for Super Bowl LVII Volunteers. Individuals could only sign up for a shift after completing the training that dispelled common trafficking misconceptions, learning how to recognize the signs/red flags for identifying trafficking victims, and how/who to report scenario-specific suspicions. Approximately 5,000 individuals completed the training.

Training also took place with hotels, hospitality organizations, and community members across 41 different arenas and over 100 individuals in the HonorHealth ER department.

Anti-Human Trafficking Media Campaign Final Report

Betsy Griffin Jones, Stephen Heitz, and Antonio Casian

April 13th, 2023

The Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign's successes included:

- Digital assets were seen approximately 300 million times, leading to more than 80,000 landing page visits with 57 clicks seeking additional resources.
- To target younger audiences, the campaign utilized the social media platforms Snapchat, TikTok, and Instagram, with TikTok leading landing page visits.
- Women, ages 25-34, were the most significant age demographic searching for information regarding human trafficking; the second largest was women, ages 45-54.

ALWAYS

Valentina Restrepo Montoya

April 13th, 2023

The [Arizona Legal Women and Youth Services \(ALWAYS\)](#) provide no-cost legal services for individuals under 25 who have experienced crime, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care system, and human trafficking survivors of all ages. The ALWAYS has found many trafficking survivors have come into contact with the criminal justice system during their exploitation and believes these charges and convictions should not hold survivors back from housing, employment, and educational opportunities. They assist with family law issues, immigration applications, and criminal history repair.

2022 YES Study

Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz

April 13th, 2023

The Youth Experiences Survey (YES) studies the life experiences of Arizona's homeless young adults (ages 18-25). The findings provide insight into the challenges and needs of Arizona's homeless young adults to target needed services, as well as increase knowledge of the scope of the sex and labor exploitation of this population in Arizona.

The 2022 YES Study reported the following related to human trafficking (labor and sex) and child sexual exploitation:

- Less than half (40.2%) reported experiencing at least one form of exploitation, with 17.8% reported experiencing both sex and labor trafficking.
- Experiencing sex trafficking was reported by 36.4% of respondents. The age of first experience was 16.9, ranging from 3 to 25. Of those who experienced a sex trafficking situation, 23.1% were under 18 at their first experience.
- Reported rates of trafficking were 61.5% for females and 25.6% for males.
- The reported rate of trafficking for individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+ is 43.6%.
- Participants reported needing a place to stay, money, food, drugs, clothing, and protection as reasons for their sex trafficking experiences.
- Respondents reported their friend as their sex trafficker at 30.8%, with 25.6% reporting their boyfriend.
- Utilization of technology to facilitate the exploitation of 46.2% of respondents.
- Sex trafficked youth are seen to be more likely to engage in drug use, less likely to eat, more likely to report one mental health diagnosis, dental problems, vision problems, etc. They were also significantly more likely to report all Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).
- Experiencing labor trafficking was reported by 29% of respondents.
- Of those who experienced a labor trafficking situation, 41% were under the age of 18 when they were first labor trafficked.
- The reasons reported as to why they were labor trafficked: money, place to stay, food, drugs, protection, clothing, forced to shoplift, forced to take care of children that were not theirs, stealing from grocery stores (forced criminality), etc.
- Respondents reported their friend as their labor exploiter at 79%.
- Respondents reported at least one form of human exploitation at 40%.

Special Education Project

Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz

April 13th, 2023

Through the GOYFF, the STOP Violence Against Women Grant funded the Special Education Project, a program developed by ASU STIR to target educators, giving them knowledge and warning signs of trafficking among special education students. Creating the [Sex Trafficking & Special Education](#) website and [brochure](#) has aided in the awareness to facilitate more participants.

Prosecuting Traffickers for Maricopa County

Sara Micflikier

June 15th, 2023

The [Maricopa County Attorney's Office \(MCAO\)](#) prosecutes human trafficking cases for the County, continually cooperating with law enforcement partners during the investigation to reduce demands, therefore decreasing the reason for trafficking victims. The caseload at any given time, specifically relating to trafficking cases, is approximately 20-30 cases and can last anywhere from a few months to a few years.

Legislative changes to the [A.R.S. § 13-705](#) and [A.R.S § 13-3212](#) added language around life sentences for repeat offenders convicted of child sex trafficking, Dangerous Crimes Against Children (DCAC), and a prior conviction for any DCAC in the first degree.

Prosecuting Traffickers for the State of Arizona

Tarah White

June 15th, 2023

Although the [Arizona Attorney General's Office \(AGO\)](#) receives cases from Arizona's 15 counties, it has limited jurisdiction over what cases it can prosecute as outlined in [A.R.S. § 21-422](#). As a result, the AGO oversees conspiracy, illegal control of an enterprise, money laundering, maintaining a prostitution enterprise, and receiving the earnings of a prostitute utilizing surveillance, bank records, and undercover operations to dismantle the network and ensure that the defendant cannot direct, oversee, manage, or hold a business license or have any interest in any massage-related business.

Human Trafficking Prosecution Training

Elizabeth Burton Ortiz

June 15th, 2023

The [Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council \(APAAC\)](#) comprises 26 members who strive to build criminal justice bridges with the greater community by empowering prosecutors to serve as Ministers of Justice through in-person and virtual training and advocacy.

The [APAAC Across Arizona Podcast](#) discusses criminal justice-related topics impacting Arizonans. Although useful to prosecutors, the primary audience is the general public. As sex and labor trafficking can be additional crimes of the holocaust, the APPAC also facilitates the [What You Do Matters: Lessons From the Holocaust](#) training developed by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The curriculum utilizes history to facilitate discussions regarding community roles, acknowledging that a person is responsible for the choice to act or not to act.

Arizona Labor Trafficking Laws

Noelle Jensen

September 20th, 2023

According to the [U.S. Code 22 U.S.C. § 7102\(9\)](#), labor trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion subject to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. An estimated 27.6 million people globally were victims of forced labor in 2021. Of those, 17.3 million are affected in the private sector through domestic work, manufacturing, construction, agriculture, etc. Of that, 6.3 million are victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

According to the [A.R.S. § 13-1308](#), labor trafficking is unlawful for a person to either: 1) Knowingly traffic another person with the intent to or knowledge that the other person will be subject to forced labor or services or knowingly benefit financially; or 2) By receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture that has engaged in an act that violates other ARS codes.

The AGO state prosecutors experience challenges, particularly with large-scale operations, such as securing witnesses, because these cases often cross State or international borders. When prosecuting cases, the AGO focuses on the financial aspects versus witness testimony and continuously trains community members.

Project ALTO

Ezequiel Dominguez

September 20th, 2023

The Arizona Labor Trafficking Outreach (Project ALTO) emerged due to the current landscape of labor trafficking in the State with the mission to support Arizona day laborers by providing education on labor rights and increasing community resource awareness. Project ALTO focuses on day laborers due to the numerous hardships this population faces and is at an increased risk for street-level/workplace victimization. Approximately 200 day laborers have received education and resources on their workers' rights through five events.

Labor Trafficking Program | International Rescue Committee

Alicia Winchel

September 20th, 2023

The Arizona League to End Regional Trafficking (ALERT) of the [International Rescue Committee \(IRC\)](#) assists foreign national human trafficking victims by providing comprehensive case management (social, legal, psychological/psychiatric, health/medical). In the state fiscal year 2022, ALERT served 70 foreign victims of trafficking, and since 2003, has served 345 clients; of those, 148 were labor trafficking victims, 40 were sex trafficking victims, and 27 were both sex and labor trafficking victims.

Labor Trafficking Program | Chicanos Por La Causa

Betty Caratachea and Mario Ramirez

September 20th, 2023

[Chicanos Por La Causa \(CPLC\)](#)'s [Building Bridges to Hope: Anti-Trafficking Initiative](#) provides comprehensive case management, community education/training, and outreach services to adult survivors of trafficking in Maricopa County and parts of Pinal County. Since the inception of

services in October 2020, CPLC has identified 494 victims of labor trafficking through outreach and referral. Although all victims did not enroll in services, CPLC provided education about labor rights through an information pamphlet that included CPLC's services and general resources.

Task Force on Missing and Murder Indigenous People

Valaura Imus-Nahsonhoya

October 18th, 2023

Governor Hobbs created the [Task Force on Missing and Murdered Indigenous People \(MMIP\)](#) in March 2023 with the objectives of collecting data, reviewing policies, and making recommendations to address the problem of MMIP through a culturally sensitive and trauma-informed process. To date, 80 missing persons have been identified.

Due to the intersection of sex and labor trafficking in the recruitment process and in maintaining control over victims, the Task Force on MMIP additionally assisted with the statewide sober living crisis by partnering with [2-1-1 Arizona](#) to provide transportation, shelter, assistance seeking appropriate services, and making referrals to law enforcement for victims/survivors and their families (if desired). The 2-1-1 line has received over 16,000 calls, with most seeking housing assistance.

Private Rehabilitation and Sober Living Homes

Mary Descheeny-Reyna

October 18th, 2023

[Operation Rainbow Bridge](#) was established in response to Arizona's sober living crisis, specifically focusing on the approximately 5,000 to 7,000 tribal members, including the over 900 Navajo Nation relatives affected. Collaborating with fellow native communities and tribal serving organizations, including [Native American Connections](#), [Native Health](#), [Phoenix Indian Center](#), and [Phoenix Indian Medical Center](#), Operation Rainbow Bridge's advocacy efforts include but are not limited to providing safe, fair, and adequate treatment for native relatives; encouraging successful completion of the rehab services the individual initially sought or assisting in returning individuals to their tribal land; an established support line (1-855-HELP-ORB) for victims/survivors and their families to connect to tribal service providers; and housing support.

Arizona Department of Public Safety and Arizona Tribes

Captain Diana Mondragon and Captain Paul Etnire

October 18th, 2023

The [Arizona Department of Public Safety \(DPS\)](#) experiences jurisdictional challenges when human trafficking and Arizona Tribe are concerned as three different sovereignties are interested: the tribes, the federal government/law enforcement, and the state. The state must enforce the law on non-indigenous peoples on tribal land; however, state agencies (non-tribal/non-federal) do not have jurisdiction over indigenous individuals on tribal land.

As a result of the DPS becoming aware of the sober living crisis, the ACTIC requested information from entities that interacted with sober living facilities to develop a database of 500 suspected facilities, with approximately 100 cases tied to the facilities.

The Trafficked Youth Collaborative

Sarah Way

November 29th, 2023

[Mercy Care](#)'s Trafficked Youth Collaborative, or the Collaborative, process identifies confirmed or suspected victims of human trafficking that informs treatment through a comprehensive understanding of the youth's experience; supports these individuals through a multidisciplinary response that allows all involved stakeholders to assist in the investigation; and provides immediate treatment and ongoing therapeutic interventions.

The Collaborative has made efforts to expand statewide, including establishing the Southern Arizona Collaborative in 2021 and the Eastern Arizona Human Trafficking Coalition in 2023. Still, it continues to experience challenges in rural communities that create barriers to a victim's healing journey, such as obtaining specialized treatment services, as victims need more travel time between service providers, and a general stigma surrounding reporting.

Evaluation of the Collaborative

Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz

November 29th, 2023

From 2021 to 2023, Mercy Care's Trafficked Youth Collaborative saw 309 children, with most referrals from the [Arizona Department of Child Safety \(DCS\)](#). Additionally, primary results include a high number of youth reporting fentanyl use and at least one present child sex trafficking case in 11 different Arizona counties. Mercy Care's Trafficked Youth Collaborative Evaluation will be released in 2024.

Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund Update

Darlene Quihuis

November 29th, 2023

DEMA awarded approximately \$7.5 million to 20 programs in eight Arizona Counties: La Paz, Gila, Maricopa, Mohave, Pima, Pinal, Yavapai, and Yuma. Most commonly, programs requested funding for personnel (i.e., dedicated human trafficking detectives), professional development (conferences and training), and supplies. If programs request technology (i.e., license plate readers), the information collected is shared with other counties to ensure continuous collaboration.

Maricopa County Tablets

Chief Deputy Russ Skinner

November 29th, 2023

The [Maricopa County Sheriff's Office \(MCSO\)](#) collaborated with the ASU STIR to secure monies from the DEMA Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund to establish a Human Exploitation and Trafficking (HEAT) Investigator who will work on trafficking cases developed within the jail system and community cases where MCSO has primary jurisdiction.

Additionally, and in partnership with ASU STIR, MCSO, sex trafficking survivors, and community partners, the development of a 12-question screening tool for [Estrella Jail](#) is delivered via tablets to identify inmates who have experienced sex trafficking and provide them an opportunity to request services either while in custody or once released.

Since July 1, 2023:

- One hundred twenty-six inmates who completed the screening were identified as being sex trafficking victims.
- Ninety-nine inmates were interviewed by one of the six Detention Human Trafficking liaisons and were connected to community service providers.
- Four inmates have been placed into housing for trafficking survivors and provided other services once released.

Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

Commander Tom Boelts

November 29th, 2023

Through the DEMA Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund, the [Yavapai County Sheriff's Office \(YCSO\)](#) received \$500,000 to hire two full-time human trafficking detectives, the first and only ones in the County. Additionally, YCSO used funds to purchase vehicles, equipment, professional development, and three years of partial funding for the Arizona Human Trafficking Summit.

The YCSO's program objectives include:

1. Develop and implement an intake screening process to identify an inmate's risk for human trafficking victimization and training for Detention Officers to help recognize and act on any attempts to victimize inmates.
2. Quality training and membership expansion for the Yavapai County Multidisciplinary Team.
3. Overtime to YCSO and law enforcement partners for buyer stings.

Arizona Human Trafficking Hotline Update

Major Jennifer Borquez

November 29th, 2023

As of November 2023, the DPS and the ACTIC spent approximately \$1.5 million of their \$2 million budget allocated from the Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund. Since the February 2023 launch, the hotline has received 71 calls from Yavapai, Maricopa, Pinal, and Pima Counties, with an increasing number each quarter.

To find a complete summary of Council meetings and presentations, [click here](#).

COUNCIL WORKGROUP REPORTS

Data and Research Workgroup

Chaired by Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz, the ASU STIR Director, the Data and Research Workgroup hosted 44 training opportunities, reaching 1,834 individuals to audiences including but not limited to victim advocates, medical residents, domestic violence shelter staff, clinical social workers/counselors, behavioral health staff, special education teachers, city employees, transportation specialists, foster parents, homeless youth service providers, outreach workers, juvenile court staff and judges, juvenile probation officers, adult corrections staff, adult probation

officers, college students, and community members-at-large. Additionally, the Workgroup had presented on sex trafficking in Arizona at the U.S. Attorney's Native American Listening Session in November.

The Workgroup collaboratively published the following studies and training sessions through the ASU STIR:

- The 2022 Youth Experiences Survey (YES).
- Familial Trafficking Training Presentation.
- An evaluation of the Collaborative in partnership with Mercy Care, which included data on Arizona child sex trafficking victims.

The Workgroup co-hosted the following professional development opportunities:

- Arizona Human Trafficking Summit in partnership with the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office with 300 attendees.
- Pima County Sex Trafficking Summit in Tucson with 141 attendees.
- Coconino County Sex Trafficking Summit in Flagstaff (December 2023).

Ongoing Workgroup projects include the following:

- Revising the DCS staff training on sex trafficking;
- Collecting information and data from the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office on inmates who self-identify as being sex trafficked and referring them for services;
- Collecting data from the Arizona Human Trafficking Hotline in partnership with the DPS and the ASU STIR;
- Coordinating training with Maricopa County Adult Probation;
- Ongoing partnerships with the City of Tucson's Ward 6;
- Working with Mercy Care to evaluate the child sex trafficking collaborative activities from 2021 to 2023;
- Training and providing support to the Arizona Juvenile Probation Sex Trafficking Experts from each county; and
- Coordinating training sessions and support to the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation, and Reentry staff.

Victim Services Workgroup

Co-chaired by Dr. Angela Salomon, [StreetLight USA](#) Director of Programs, and Dr. Sarah Beaumont, [Phoenix Children's Hospital \(PCH\)](#) Medical Director of the Homeless Youth Outreach Program, the Victim Services Workgroup's ongoing goals include:

- Expand the Workgroup's membership to include a more diverse representation;
- Utilize the 2023 YES study data to increase support to victims service's outreach activities;
- Create a central location for federal and state grant opportunities supporting human trafficking victim service providers;
- Complete a gap analysis of funding opportunities specific to special populations such as tribal, rural, age restrictions, and gender;
- Identify service gaps for labor trafficking victims; and

- Gather information regarding financial barriers to behavioral and mental health services.

