

FLETC's Role with The Blue Campaign: DHS' Unified Effort to Combat Human Trafficking

Note: This article appeared in the November 2013 Issue of IACP's *Police Chief Magazine*.

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked in countries around the world, including the United States. It is estimated that human trafficking is almost a \$32 billion per year industry, second only to drug trafficking as the most profitable form of transnational crime. [1]

Trafficking victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality, including U.S. citizens. They may or may not have legal immigration status. Victims are found in both legitimate and illegitimate labor sectors; some are lured with false promises of well-paying jobs or even love. Often, they are forced or coerced into domestic servitude, farm or factory labor, other types of forced labor, or commercial sex (prostitution). Under U.S. federal law, any minor induced to engage in commercial sex is a victim of human trafficking.

Traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to lure their victims and then force them into labor or commercial sexual exploitation. Human trafficking is not the same as smuggling. "Trafficking" is exploitation based and does not require movement across borders. "Smuggling" is movement based and involves moving a person across a country's border, with that person's consent, in violation of immigration laws.

Traffickers prey on people with little or no social safety net. They look for people who are vulnerable for a variety of reasons, including economic hardship, violence in the home, natural disasters, or political instability. Traffickers use a variety of strategies to trap victims, including violence or threats of violence, as well as psychological coercion. The trauma can be so great that many may not identify themselves as victims or ask for help, even in highly public settings.

What Is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery involving the illegal trade of human beings for the purpose of exploitation or commercial gain. It is an inhumane act that robs a person of his or her freedom, and it is a crime. Human trafficking is detrimental to the economy, the safety and health of all nations, and the very dignity of human society.

Human trafficking exists throughout the United States—in cities, suburbs, and rural towns—and in communities. Although human trafficking is widespread, many victims go unnoticed. Victims rarely come forward to seek help out of fear of their traffickers, language barriers, and/or fear of law enforcement. For this reason, human trafficking has largely remained a hidden crime until now.

The Blue Campaign is the unified voice for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) efforts to combat human trafficking. Working in collaboration with law enforcement, government, and non-governmental and private organizations; the Blue Campaign strives to protect the basic right of freedom and to bring those who exploit others to justice. Increased awareness and training will lead to more tips to law enforcement, which results in more victims being identified.

The Blue Campaign Steering Committee formed in 2010, and it is chaired by Judge Alice Hill, senior counselor to the secretary of Homeland Security. The Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) has been a member of this committee since 2010 and provides input and policy guidance to all matters related to training. The Blue Campaign is product driven, and FLETC has provided many training products as part of program.

FLETC's Leadership Role within the Blue Campaign.

FLETC has been a leader in creating training products to support the Blue Campaign. In 2010, FLETC launched a web-based training course for state and local law enforcement officers to help them identify victims of human trafficking by teaching them about the signs and indicators that these officers might encounter during their routine calls for service. This course is available by going to www.fletc.gov.

Two years later, with funding support from DHS' Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman (CISOMB), FLETC created a second web-based course. This second course was developed for DHS employees and focused on the department's seven operational components and how those employees might encounter victims of human trafficking and how to appropriately respond. FLETC mandated all of its 1,811 law enforcement staff take this training with more than 600 completing this course.

Additionally, FLETC has included a workshop on human trafficking at nearly every State and Local Law Enforcement Training Symposium since 2010. Instructors have included subject matter experts from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations (ICE HSI) teaching at the ICE Academy and from ICE headquarters in Washington, D.C.

FLETC Launches a Multi-discipline, Advanced Human Trafficking Training Course

In July 2011, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis, and U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano announced the final selection of anti-trafficking coordination teams (ACTeams) in six districts around the United States, following a competitive, nationwide interagency selection process. These specialized teams of representatives from DHS, U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) receive support from technical experts on trafficking-in-persons (TIP) investigations, prosecutions, and victim assistance. ACTeams bring together federal agents and investigators from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), ICE HSI, and DOL's Wage and Hour Division and Office of the Inspector General, along with federal prosecutors from U.S. attorney's offices, to implement a coordinated plan to develop significant U.S. federal human trafficking investigations and prosecutions. ACTeams work closely with state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement in their efforts to counter human trafficking.

In 2012, with funding support from ICE-HSI, FLETC held a curriculum development conference to create an advanced human trafficking training course for these ACTeams. The first training course was held September 10-14, 2012, at FLETC in Glynco, Georgia. It included expert instructors from DHS, DOJ, FBI, ICE HSI, and DOL. The week-long course focused on complex issues of human trafficking, including discovery issues, immigration relief, witness testimony strategies, search warrant information, interviewing cooperative and uncooperative witnesses, and evidence gathering.

In partnership with the ICE Academy, FLETC has now delivered two pilots of this course. Each course brings together two ACTeams (12 members each) consisting of agents, prosecutors, and victim assistance specialists. This four-and-one-half-day course includes interactive lecture, laboratories, and a final assignment where the teams share how they will begin a proactive investigation upon their return utilizing skills taught in the course.

This course is co-owned by FLETC and ICE and marks the first time FLETC has created a mixed, center-advanced course. Cooperation between FLETC's Behavioral Science Division, role players, and the ICE Academy make this course a success.

The course is highly interactive and utilizes adult learning methodologies such as small group assignments, interviewing role players portraying both cooperative and uncooperative trafficking victims, and ultimately creating an end product: a strategic plan to take back with the teams to strategically improve the way the team investigates human trafficking. The training also includes a case study, interviewing labs with professional role players, and computer lab modules.

FLETC, with funding support from CRCL, created two new roll call videos ("Victim Support Video for Law Enforcement Parts 1 and 2") available for viewing at www.dhs.gov/bluecampaign. These videos explain what types of immigration relief are available to victims of human trafficking and other crimes, and how knowing that information benefits law enforcement in their jobs. Subject matter experts from local law enforcement, ICE, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services provide information about human trafficking and immigration relief. Each video is approximately nine minutes in length.

What Can Law Enforcement Officers, First Responders, and Others Do to Combat Human Trafficking?

Realize that victims are in plain sight. Law enforcement may encounter a potential victim of human trafficking during the course of one's duties. Victims of human trafficking are in our communities. Law enforcement may come across victims during domestic disturbance calls; when responding to incidents at massage parlors, bars, and strip clubs; or even during routine traffic stops. First responders and healthcare professionals may notice signs while responding to emergencies or treating patients at hospitals or doctors' offices. Health and safety inspectors may find victims working in restaurants, in factories, on construction sites, or on farms.

- Get to know the task force operating in the community. Human Trafficking Task Forces comprise federal, state, local, county, and tribal law enforcement and prosecutors, as well as non-governmental organizations providing victim services. Find out whether or not there is a Human Trafficking Task Force in the area by visiting www.bja.gov. If one exists, establish a relationship and join their efforts.

- Self-educate and educate others. Law enforcement officers may utilize FLETC's free computer-based, interactive training, which explores different interviewing and investigative strategies that can enhance effectiveness. Go to: www.fletc.gov/training/programs/human-trafficking-training-program.
- For first responders or health care professionals, take the general online, interactive training and watch the first responder video. Go to: www.dhs.gov/Bluecampaign.
- Visit the Blue Campaign website, which has downloadable posters, trainings, outreach materials, victim assistance materials, and information on how to join the fight to end human trafficking, go to: www.dhs.gov/Bluecampaign. "Like" www.facebook.com/bluecampaign. Or, e-mail BlueCampaign@hq.dhs.gov.

Note:

1 Jeremy Haken, *Transnational Crime in The Developing World* (Washington, D.C.: Global Financial Integrity, February 2011), http://www.gfintegrity.org/storage/gfip/documents/reports/transcrime/gfi_transnational_crime_web.pdf (accessed September 26, 2013).

Scott Santoro, Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC), Brunswick, Georgia

Scott Santoro is the training advisor to the senior counselor to the secretary of Homeland Security. He manages training programs for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Blue Campaign. These programs include training federal, state, and local law enforcement about human trafficking; issues surrounding unaccompanied children illegally crossing the U.S. border, and other courses related to violence against women and girls. Prior to coming to FLETC, Santoro was a prosecuting attorney for more than 15 years, working in the Seattle, Washington, area. In addition, he has more than 18 years of law enforcement training experience.

Notable projects Santoro led include: a computer-based training program for state, local, tribal, and campus officers to identify indicators of human trafficking; a second web-based course to train all DHS personnel about human trafficking; an advanced human trafficking course for federal agents and prosecutors; a training for ICE Field Office Juvenile Coordinators; and, most recently, two roll-call videos explaining immigration relief provided by DHS to foreign crime victims and how that relief benefits law enforcement when investigating those crimes.