



# UNITED AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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## 2020 STATEMENT OF IMPACT



# LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



My Dear Friend,

Decades of history can happen in a single year. 2020 is a testament to that. It is with this understanding that I share my heart with you. Nonprofit leaders throughout the nation contemplate the same dilemma: What can we give you, our dearest friends, to let you know we carry gratitude for your support in our hearts every day?

HOPE.

Hope for the future. For justice. For unity. Hope for the growing, changing movement against human trafficking. Why? Because I know you walk beside me. I know that when I reach out a hand in solidarity, you will take it and rise with me.

It is easy to lose hope during a year that presented us with so many trials: a global pandemic, confronting the unjust death of George Floyd and countless other African Americans, and the most significant election of the century. Day after day, we are barraged with events that seem designed to rob us of our hope and love for each other.

But United Against Human Trafficking (UAHT) has never given up. We never lost sight of our mission: to end human trafficking through educating the community, preventing exploitation, and empowering survivors. Our clarity of vision allowed us to pivot no matter what the world threw at us in 2020. We effectively served human trafficking survivors, engaged the community, and planned for a bright future. I am deeply thankful for all our new and established partners who stood alongside us this year.

2020 marks the 20th anniversary of The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA). This federal statute sparked the anti-trafficking movement — a movement that has involved governments, communities, corporations, nonprofits, individuals, and so many more. Throughout the years, UAHT has emerged as a leader. We are at the forefront of change and progress, moving the fight ever forward in the spirit of unity and collaboration. What will the next 20 years hold for the anti-trafficking movement?

UAHT will continue growing and continue unifying our partners against injustice. But this progress will not mean forgetting the past. 2020 was full of trauma from which we continue to recover. I know many of us have experienced significant losses. Let's choose to live our best lives, celebrate each other fiercely, and relentlessly strive to make the world a better place for everybody in it.

My heart is full of love and gratitude for the tireless support of UAHT staff, board members, volunteers, partners, and donors like you. Let's continue to stand united against injustice. Let's continue to cherish one another in 2021 and beyond.

With unwavering love,



Timeka Walker  
Executive Director



## MISSION

Our mission is to end human trafficking through educating the community, preventing exploitation, and empowering survivors.

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## VISION

We fight so that all may live free.

# THE PAST 20 YEARS

## UAHT Highlights & Key Legislative Wins

**2000** | Federal government passes the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA), naming human trafficking and making it illegal in the U.S.

**2003** | Texas becomes the third state in the nation to pass human trafficking legislation.

**2005** | United Against Human Trafficking (UAHT) is formed as a volunteer organization under the name Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition (HRRRC).

**2007** | The Polaris Project establishes the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

Texas requires some establishments to post trafficking hotline information, imposes fees on sex-oriented businesses to support survivor programs.

UAHT/HRRRC registers as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, begins an anti-HT billboard campaign.

**2009** | The Texas Attorney General's Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force is formed.

UAHT co-authors the 911 Crime-Stoppers protocol for handling human trafficking calls, which is now used across the nation.

**2010** | UAHT/HRRRC joins the Texas Attorney General Prevention Task Force, participates in the White House and Department of Health's stakeholder meeting to advise on strengthening victim services.

**2011** | Texas removes statute of limitations on child sex trafficking, expands limitations on adult sex trafficking to 10 years, requires restitution for child trafficking survivors, and increases buyer penalties.

UAHT/HRRRC completes a field assessment on domestic minor sex trafficking in Harris and Galveston Counties and launches a youth education program—the first of its kind in Texas.

**2013** | Texas introduces a grant program to assist human trafficking survivors and creates anti-trafficking curriculum for child welfare employees, medical providers, and school administrators.

**2014** | UAHT/HRRRC receives the FBI Director's Community Leadership Award and changes its name to United Against Human Trafficking.

**2015** | Federal government expands victim services, creates a domestic trafficking victim fund, and improves interagency collaboration.

Texas creates a Child Sex Trafficking Unit, requires Texas judges to undergo anti-trafficking training, mandates reporting of human trafficking by school officials, and allows expungement for survivors convicted of prostitution.

Texas establishes January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month (HTAM).

UAHT launches its first HT 101 e-learning course.

**2016** | UAHT launches a media campaign: "Watch For Traffick" in partnership with the City of Houston, the Harris County District Attorney's Office, and the Houston Police Department.

**2017** | Federal government authorizes the Department of Justice to bring civil cases to prevent human trafficking.

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services creates mandatory screening for potential victims with a focus on runaway youths.

UAHT launches prevention, outreach, and direct services programming to fight Human Trafficking.

**2018** | Federal government passes the Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA)/Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA), begins providing grants for training local educational agencies.

**2019** | Texas state legislature recognizes HT as a public health issue, creates a Human Trafficking Prevention Coordinating Counsel to devise a 5-year plan to combat HT.

UAHT becomes part of the Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Victim Continuum of Care.

**2020** | UAHT launches its case management program for adult survivors of sex and/or labor trafficking and introduces Family Huddle, a support group for child sex trafficking victims and their families.



# Celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act

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Twenty years ago, the United States enacted the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), naming human trafficking and making it illegal in the U.S. As the anti-trafficking movement advances and as we learn more about the factors surrounding this criminal enterprise, the TVPA has been reauthorized and updated five times. During this time, over 62,500 cases were reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

There are countless lessons we've learned over the years, but none are more critical than this: we cannot end human trafficking alone. The systems that allow poverty, racism, and misogyny to flourish fuel the exploitation of human beings. To end human trafficking requires massive culture shift. It is not something that can be done by one person or by one organization.

The last 20 years of advancements were achieved through collaborative efforts from individuals to local organizations to the federal government and everything in between to end human trafficking together.

# A LOOK AT 2020

## We Continue to Fight the Good Fight

COVID-19 caused the worst-case-scenario for getting survivors the care they need. A downward economic turn and isolation are what traffickers count on to exploit. Traffickers never stopped targeting vulnerable people, desperate to pay their mortgages, and feed their families. They continued to prey on children, who pass the time at home chatting with strangers on video games and social media.

Although this is a harsh reality in our city, we never stopped fighting for the safety of our families, friends, and neighbors. We know lives depend on us.

In 2020, we took an audacious approach. We pivoted to offer virtual programming and continued in-person care while adhering to safety measures. We developed innovative ways to reach overlooked communities through social media and local food bank partnerships. And we defied all odds by initiating virtual and in-person case management services to survivors of sex and labor trafficking.

Through a pandemic, a newly ignited passion for racial justice, and a noteworthy election, we continue to fight trafficking in five ways: survivor services, youth programs, education, outreach, and the Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition. None of our programs could exist without generous donors like you. Each victory you read about here is made possible by our supportive community.



63

Survivors connected to care



55

Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition members enrolled



5,492

Youth trained to stay safe



10,724

Trained to respond to human trafficking



21,870

Overlooked persons reached

SOURCES: Statistics sourced from Busch-Armendariz et al., 2016, "Human Trafficking by the Numbers: The Initial Benchmark of Prevalence and Economic Impact for Texas," Coalition for the Homeless, 2020, "2020 Homeless Count & Survey," International Labour Organization, 2014, "Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour," and Roe-Sepowitz et al., 2013, "Invisible Offenders: A Study Estimating Online Sex Customers"

# FINANCIALS

## Your Gifts At Work

We pledge good stewardship of every donation received. We are transparent with our financial annual reports and Internal Revenue Service disclosure forms.

Your gifts fuel our mission to end human trafficking through preventing exploitation, educating the community, and empowering survivors.

When you give to UAHT our revenue goes to supporting our mission.

81% goes to programs and services  
11% goes to general operations  
8% goes to fundraising efforts



### WHERE SUPPORT COMES FROM:



55% from government  
24% from foundations  
9% from corporations  
8% from individuals  
4% from other sources

### MONTHLY DONOR PROGRAM: THE COMPASS

In 2020, we launched a giving community for monthly donors. Members of The Compass ensure that survivors have somewhere safe to sleep at night, that they can make it to life-saving support groups, and that they have a trustworthy case manager to walk with on their journey to freedom.

### VOLUNTEERS: EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY TO END TRAFFICKING

#### PROGRAMS

- All new remote-volunteering opportunities: Video & Print Translating, Closed Captioning, and UAHT Ambassador Program •
  - Community Outreach •
  - Business Outreach •
  - Office Volunteer •
- Special Event Volunteer •



## THANK YOU

Our hearts are full of thankfulness for each of you, our incredible donors.

In the face of tough times, you continue to step up for the most vulnerable in our community.

In chaos, you ensure trafficking survivors receive wraparound care management services from our team.

In uncertainty, you equip professionals and families to keep our community safe.

In adversity, you pave the way to a freer future.

For that, friends, we thank you.

## A SPECIAL THANKS TO

- The May Jeanne and Garland Slaughter Foundation
- The Houston Endowment
- Off-Shore Technology Conference
- The Houck Foundation
- Lululemon
- The George Foundation
- The Brown Foundation
- The Dominican Sisters
- The William Stamps Farish Fund
- The Hildebrand Foundation
- Chevron

# SURVIVOR SERVICES

## Empowering Survivors From Start To Recovery



### SERVICES

- Individual Case Management
- Family Huddle Support Group
- Real Talk Support Group
- Yoga Healing Program



### LILY'S STORY

Tough times forced Lily into homelessness. Within the first 48 hours of being out on the streets, a man approached her.

He offered a place to stay, a warm meal, and what Lily wanted most of all: appreciation and affection.

But his 'help' came at a price. Without any other options, Lily accepted: she would have sex with strangers to earn money for him. After two years of being trafficked, Lily fled her city and ended up in Houston: on the streets again, but far away from her trafficker.

Lily was highly vulnerable to becoming re-trafficked while homeless. Thankfully, she found a local shelter, who called us.

Our Case Manager, Erin, picked up the phone. Lily was anxious and frustrated, but Erin remained a guiding presence as she relayed her story. Lily needed to return home: not to the other city, but to her hometown. To her sister.

As she always does for so many other survivors, Erin stepped up for Lily. She arranged Lily's safe passage to her sister's house far away from Houston and – most importantly – far away from her trafficker.

People like Lily who have been abused in the past are more likely to be trafficked again. They need a strong support system – people that they can trust so that they don't fall for traffickers' tricks. There simply aren't enough qualified case managers for trafficking survivors. Without a guide, too many survivors fall through the cracks of services that are meant to help them.

That's why we launched our case management program in 2020 despite COVID-19. Our trained case manager helps trafficking survivors navigate the healing process: from finding tonight's shelter to remembering support group meetings to launching a new career path.

**“We didn’t know there were ways to cope with this until this group.”**

– George and Tina, Parents of a trafficking survivor

## Focal points of 2020



- **Second location opened**
- **Case management launched**



Family Huddle launched, serving **11 caregivers, 2 siblings, and 8 trafficking survivors**



- 17** Survivors enrolled in case management
- 279** Trafficking and trauma survivors served virtually and in person



A trafficking survivor consulted for our case management plan to ensure trauma-informed approach

# YOUTH PROGRAMS

## Teaching Our Youth How To Stay Safe



### PROGRAMS

- Love146 Child Trafficking Prevention Program
- Youth Trafficking Awareness Workshop
- Parent Workshop
- Staying Safe on Social Media Webinar
- How Human Trafficking Impacts Males Webinar



### MAX'S STORY

By the time Max turned 16-years-old, he wrestled with depression and hypersexuality. He began making pornography using his cell phone.

An older man saw Max's posts online, reached out, and befriended him. It wasn't long before this "friend" became Max's trafficker.

Max ran away with the man, but returned home as his mental health declined.

Although he lived at home again, Max wasn't safe. His trafficker was still exploiting him through a secret cell phone.

Youth like Max crave connection and belonging. With growing minds and changing bodies, self-doubt and confusion are normal feelings for kids. Many young people feel disconnected despite having loving families and caring classmates.

Traffickers know what to watch for and how to manipulate a child's disconnection, depression, and sexual curiosity.

In 2020, we launched a new program to teach teens how to stay safe on social media. When schools shifted online, youth spent even more time on social media at home. Traffickers prey on vulnerable adolescents on video games and every social media platform you can imagine. All our youth programs equip elementary, middle, and high school students with the skills they need to stay safe from traffickers.

**“I love being here. It makes me feel like I can be myself. I feel safe.”**

– Lexi, Age 17, Real Talk

## Focal points of 2020



**5,492** Youth trained to stay safe

**500** Teens reached at Security Next Gen's Hackathon Conference

**2 NEW** Training topics for youth:

- How human trafficking impacts boys
- Staying safe on social media



Four new partnerships with the Holocaust Museum, the New Orleans and Houston Branch Asylum, Breaking Bread with Women, and the Teen and Police Service Academy



Conversations with Kiddos launched to empower elementary-aged children to stay safe

# EDUCATION

## Training Community Members and Professionals



### TRAININGS

- Human Trafficking 101
- First Responder Training
- Health Professionals Training
- Law Enforcement Training
- Educator Training
- Hospitality Training
- Social Service Training
- Racial Justice & Human Trafficking
- How Human Trafficking Impacts the LGBTQ+ Community



### LAURYN'S STORY

The assistant principal and two teachers turned, their eyes met, and all three uttered the same name: Lauryn.

In early February, in an auditorium of 3,000 educators, the UAHT Education Coordinator went over the red flags of human trafficking. The assistant principal and two teachers began to slowly put the puzzle pieces together about their student.

No teenager wants their phone silenced or taken away, but Lauryn would become frantic, fearful even, when teachers asked her to put her phone on silent. She was 18 years old, a senior in high school, and was dating an older boy. The teachers recalled an incident when Lauryn was on FaceTime all day, even during class, so her boyfriend could hear what was being said around her the whole day.

Immediately after the training, the three teachers drafted an email to our education coordinator to explain their suspicions. We helped them contact the human trafficking hotline to connect the girl to the resources she needed.

The educators told us, "Before this training, we probably wouldn't have thought of human trafficking."

In Houston, human trafficking surrounds us. Communities must be ready to act and professionals equipped to respond.





**“Now I know what signs to look for in order to help assess if my patients are in trouble.”**

– Grace, Healthcare Provider Training

## Focal points of 2020



**10,724**

Trained virtually and in person to spot and respond to human trafficking

**2 NEW**

Trainings launched to address:

- The intersection of human trafficking with racial injustice
- Systemic oppression



Launched our podcast



Training webinars go international, reaching 4 countries



The City of Houston approved UAHT as a Hotel Employee Human Trafficking Training vendor



1,300 community members viewed Human Trafficking 101 training on Facebook Live

# OUTREACH

## Finding Trafficked Persons In Overlooked Communities

### FOCAL POINTS OF 2020

21,870

Overlooked persons reached  
virtually and in person

18K 

Individuals reached in Facebook  
Live partnership events with the  
Mexican Consulate



Launched three-part interactive  
workshop on preventing  
human trafficking



Six new partnerships established with the  
**Houston Food Bank, Community Health  
Network, The Harris Center, Northwest  
Assistance Ministries, St Hope Clinics,  
and Amanaanah Refugee Services**



### COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

- People vulnerable due to COVID-19
- People experiencing homelessness
- Immigrants and refugees
- People living with HIV
- Domestic violence survivors
- People with substance dependencies
- LGBTQ+ community



### SAMANTHA'S STORY

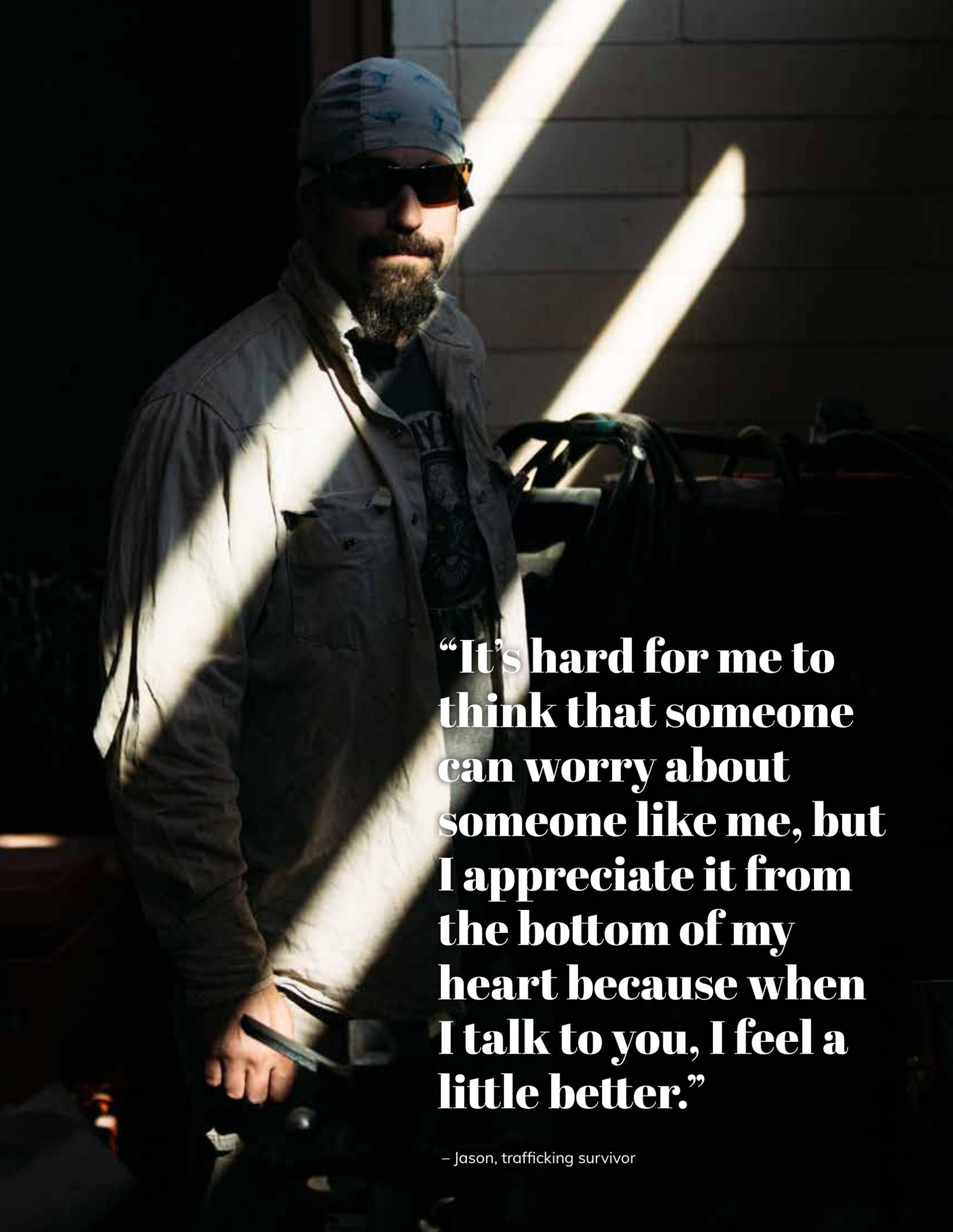
As Samantha put a brown box full of food and free community resources in the trunk, Lucia, piped up from the driver's seat,

“do you know where I can find affordable therapy for my grandkids?”

Lucia explained that her grandchildren were physically and emotionally abused by their mother due to her substance use. Although they live safely with their grandma now, Lucia knew the mistreatment would have long-lasting effects. She already witnessed the kids' trauma responses in outbursts of anger and constant restlessness. They needed a way to process their trauma before someone tries to exploit them.

People who experience abuse are more likely to be trafficked. Among homeless, immigrant and refugee, HIV+, domestic violence, substance dependent, and LGBTQ+ communities, sex and labor trafficking are prevalent. In 2020, millions of Americans lost jobs amid the pandemic, throwing them into financial instability and a risk of trafficking. Whether at work, in the nail salon, walking past a construction site, or in your own neighborhood, victims are entrapped right before our eyes. Through outreach, we not only find trafficking survivors and connect them to care, but we also work to intercept trafficking before it ever happens – like with Lucia's grandchildren.

Thankfully, these children have a loving grandmother who empowers them to break free from the cycle of abuse. We connected Lucia and her grandkids to our partners who offer free therapy to children who survived abuse. Now Lucia's grandchildren are working through their trauma and are building the skills they need to stay safe.



**“It’s hard for me to think that someone can worry about someone like me, but I appreciate it from the bottom of my heart because when I talk to you, I feel a little better.”**

– Jason, trafficking survivor

# COALITION

## Connecting The Anti- Trafficking Movement in The Greater Houston Area



“

Collaboration is vital for several reasons. It means you have a community who truly understands and supports each other's missions. It means more perspectives for well-rounded programming. Collaboration means [we can] easily identify gaps in services, areas of improvement, creation of strategic long-term plans, standardize care, and less time spent finding the right person to connect with clients.

”

- Kaylen Simpson-Porto, A 2nd Cup



### MEMBERS

- A 2nd Cup
- Alliance of Leadership and Innovation for Victims of Exploitation (ALIVE)
- Ambassadors for Christ Youth Ministries
- Arrow Child & Family Ministries
- AVDA
- Bay Area Turning Point
- BCFS + Common Thread
- Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston- Houston
- Children At Risk
- Covenant House Texas
- Creativity Shell
- Crime Stoppers of Houston
- Dominican Sisters of Houston
- Dunk Law Firm
- Elevate 61 International
- Fe y Justicia Worker Center
- Freedom Church Alliance
- Freedom Restore
- Girls Empowerment Network
- Good Hearts Youth and Family Services
- Home of Hope
- Love146
- MasterWord Services, Inc.
- Office of the Attorney General of Texas
- Optimum Nurse Aid Skills Training
- Project Protect Our Children
- Redeemed Ministries
- Refugee Services of Texas
- Rescue America
- Rescue Us, Inc.
- Rotary Club of Houston Skyline
- Shield Bearer Counseling Centers
- Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word
- St. Luke's United Methodist Church
- Tahirih Justice Center
- Texas Center for the Missing
- The Alliance
- The Landing
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Unbound Houston
- United Against Human Trafficking
- University of Houston – GCSW
- University of Houston – Clear Lake
- YMCA – South Texas Office for Refugees

**“HRRC has developed an outstanding network for agencies to come together to develop and create resources in benefit of our clients”**

– Wendy Arias, Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse

## Focal points of 2020

**55**

Members enrolled



We created a social media campaign called #TraffickingTruthStories to dispel myths with true survivor stories



We developed “Laws Against Trafficking: State of the Field 2020” to train members on 20 years of laws, leading to potential changes in 2021

### A STORY OF TRIUMPH

Once COVID-19 hit, the landscape for survivor care was dramatically depleted. On their own, agencies struggled to meet client needs, and were forced to make critical decisions affecting the livelihood of the organization and its beloved staff. Trafficking survivors suffered from isolation.

The largest gap in survivor services widened in COVID’s wake, specifically for housing. Due to local or agency regulations, many shelters closed their doors to clients outside county lines and reduced their intake capacity to comply with physical distancing requirements.

But all was not lost. The HRRC banded together to create a live document - “Human Trafficked Shelter Resource Guide.” The guide offered daily bedspace availability updates for 15 shelters and residential facilities across the Greater Houston Area. In doing so, countless survivors were connected to safe places to stay away from their abusers.

In the face of unimaginable hardship, collaboration propelled shelter solutions for trafficking survivors. Human trafficking is a global, billion-dollar industry and working alone simply isn’t an option. Together, we harness the collective desire of Houston nonprofits, businesses, law enforcement, hospitals, and more to work together to end human trafficking strategically and effectively.

# A LOOK AT 2021

## Shaping The Future With New Initiatives

Despite the challenges of 2020, we kept our focus on our mission to end human trafficking through educating the community, preventing exploitation, and empowering survivors.

As we turn the page on 2020, we are pleased to implement four unique initiatives that bolster our mission.



### INITIATIVES

1. The Pathway
2. Stopping Sexual Exploitation
3. I Dare You: A Podcast  
by United Against Human Trafficking
4. Housing Assistance For Trafficking Survivors

### THE PATHWAY: A REFERRAL NETWORK FOR TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS.



This revolutionary new online referral network allows victims of sex and/or labor trafficking to take charge of their healing journey. They can quickly access the resources they need most from local victim services agencies. Using a framework perfected by the veteran assistance agency Combined Arms, The Pathway will create a more consistent continuum of care for survivors. It will also help the Greater Houston Area better understand the scope, demographics, and needs of local trafficking survivors. It will inform the future programming of non-profits across Houston. The Pathway is a culmination of our years of experience working with victims and represents collaboration from a large and diverse group of organizations and individuals in the Greater Houston Area.



### STOPPING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: A RESTORATIVE PROGRAM FOR SEX BUYERS.

All industries, including criminal ones, operate through supply and demand: if demand decreases, the supply will follow. For the human sex trafficking industry, 'supply' is the sexual labor of victims compelled through force, fraud, or coercion. The demand comes from sex buyers. Our new program is a non-judgmental, male-led discussion group for convicted sex buyers. Law enforcement will refer men with a history of buying sex to our program, where they will learn to challenge their perceptions of masculinity, sexuality, relationships, and their role in society. Stopping Sexual Exploitation (SSE) program will disrupt demand for human trafficking, therefore forcing traffickers to reduce supply by exploiting fewer people. SSE soft-launched in November 2020 with a pilot group and will be officially implemented in early 2021.



# I DARE YOU

A Podcast by United Against Human Trafficking



Our mission to end human trafficking is daring; human trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar industry that spans local, regional, and global communities. There are millions of trafficking victims, millions of traffickers, and millions of buyers. They not only exist worldwide, but they reside in our own communities. Our podcast will empower individuals with practical, actionable ways to combat trafficking starting in their own neighborhood. By intersecting, data-driven facts, inspiring stories, and practical application, our podcast will equip community members to be effective anti-trafficking activists.



## HOUSING ASSISTANCE FOR TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS.

We hear this story far too often: a human trafficking survivor completes the first part of their recovery and then, after all that hard work and courage, they find they are limited in being able to move forward. Thus, they return to the “life.” It’s frustrating. It’s tragic. And most of all, it’s preventable. Lack of housing stability can be a major reason why survivors stay in trafficking situations or fall back into them. Survivors, who worked so hard to forge a path to recovery should not have to retrace their steps. With this in mind, we are expanding our Case Management Program to include rental assistance for survivors of human trafficking in early 2021.

# TAKE ACTION

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## PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY

by volunteering with us.



## EDUCATE YOUR TEAM

by inviting us to train your community.



## AMPLIFY OUR WORK

by giving a gift.

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## THANK YOU!

Our incredible supporters made these accomplishments possible in 2020.

When you give to UAHT, you:

- Prevent victimization •
- Empower victims to break free •
- Connect survivors to care •
- Equip the community to serve survivors •



**UNITED AGAINST**  
**HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

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