

ROTARY ACTION GROUP AGAINST SLAVERY

RAGAS NEWSLETTER

<https://ragas.online/>

This Rotary Action Group is not an agency of, or controlled by, Rotary International.



HAPPY NEW YEAR

Bob Deering - RAGAS Board Chair

As you read this, we have come through the holiday season and it is my hope that each and every one of you had a joyous time and were able to have wonderful experiences with your loved ones. For the over forty million people in this world forced into forced labor, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude and forced marriages worldwide, I wish I could say the same thing to them. We have scratched the service but there is still much to be done and we need your help to get the job completed.

Although the term "Human Trafficking" is used in the United States to represent "Modern Slavery", these two terms are, as founder and former chair of RAGAS, Mark Little tells us, in fact two separate issues. Mark states "In my view Trafficking is simply a mechanism or a conduit that brings people into slavery. It is one process of enslavement itself, not a condition or a result of that process. Put another way, Human Trafficking is smuggling, plus coercion or deception at the beginning of the process and enslavement at the end. My simple definition of Modern Slavery is that it is "the total control of one person by another for the purpose of economic exploitation"." No matter what we call it, people in human bondage is wrong and it is up to the citizens of the world to stand up and solve the problem.

January is Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Although we need to be working around the clock, let's make those around us aware of the inequities to those 40 million world citizens. Sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security, January 11, 2023, is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, also known as #WearBlueDay. On this day, Blue Campaign invites you to do your part in raising awareness of the crime – and it is as simple as wearing blue. Why blue? It is the international color of human trafficking awareness. Just find your favorite blue outfit or article of clothing, take a picture of yourself wearing it, and post it on your preferred social media platform using the hashtag #WearBlueDay.

WHAT'S NEW WITH BLUE? SAVE THE DATE: #WEARBLUEDAY IS THIS MONTH

National Human Trafficking Awareness Month

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BLUE CAMPAIGN

#WearBlueDay

Leading up to #WearBlueDay, Blue Campaign will share resources on our website and social media channels on ways to learn more about the indicators of human trafficking and how to help spread the word in your communities. For the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Blue Campaign, combating human trafficking is a year-round effort. Follow Blue Campaign on social media (@DHSBlueCampaign on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#)) and check out our future newsletters for what's coming up throughout the year.

For more information visit the [Blue Campaign](#)
To report suspected human trafficking: 1-866-347-2423

To get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888
or text HELP or INFO to BeFree (233733)



HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS HAPPENING IN THE UNITED STATES.

WEAR BLUE ON JANUARY 11th TO RAISE AWARENESS

 **BLUE CAMPAIGN**
The Blue, The White, and The Red Campaign

 January 11
#WearBlueDay
@DHSBlueCampaign

January 11th is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day!
Join the [Virginia Office of EMS](#) in wearing blue to help bring awareness to Human Trafficking! Share your photos on social media with [#WearBlueDay](#) [#VirginiaEMS](#).

For more resources and training to help First Responder combat human trafficking, visit bit.ly/FirstResponderAgainstHumanTrafficking



DHS Updates

The DHS PROTECT Campus Symposium: Human Trafficking on College Campuses

DHS Blue Campaign and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) invite you to join our Partnership for Response-Oriented Training and Education to Counter Trafficking on campus (PROTECT), a no-cost one-day symposium on human trafficking and college campuses in recognition of National Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Attendees will hear from a panel of human trafficking experts working in a variety of fields, all with one goal in common – to help combat this horrific crime and protect victims. The symposium will take place in-person on January 23, 2023. The student and faculty session will run from 1 - 4 p.m. CST at the University of Arkansas Little Rock. More info to come on the morning session for public safety and law enforcement.

- Registration for students and faculty: bit.ly/3Wggvst

DHS Blue Campaign: Human Trafficking Youth Forum

Caretakers and adults who work with youth are invited to join DHS Blue Campaign for a virtual forum on human trafficking and youth. Hear from Blue Campaign, Department of Justice (DOJ), DHS, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), National Human Trafficking Hotline-Polaris, and Love146 to learn how to talk to youth about online safety; gain knowledge of human trafficking trends and how they affect the youth population; and increase awareness of available resources for youth victims and individuals working with youth. The webinar will take place January 31, 2023, 10 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. EST.

- To learn more or register, visit: bit.ly/3iN8mgq

DHS Blue Campaign: Recognizing and Responding to Human Trafficking

For National Human Trafficking Prevention Month, DHS Blue Campaign invites you to attend one of our webinars on recognizing and responding to potential cases of human trafficking. Members of the public are invited to attend this webinar where representatives from Blue Campaign will provide an overview of what human trafficking is, the indicators, how to report a suspected human trafficking situation, and available resources to raise awareness in your communities. The dates and times of the webinars are as follows:

- Session 1: Tuesday, January 10th, 2023, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm ET
- Session 2: Tuesday, January 17th, 2023, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm ET
- Session 3: Tuesday, January 24th, 2023, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm ET (Offered in Spanish)

We encourage you to register via the following links:

- (English) Registration <https://bit.ly/3VXsuv6>
- (Spanish) Inscription <https://bit.ly/3Fx0CXU>

BLI Corner

Airlines for America Partners with DHS and DOT

Airlines for America (A4A) recently announced that it will partner with DHS and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to combat human trafficking through the Blue Lightning Initiative (BLI), which trains airport personnel and tenants on how to recognize potential human trafficking indicators and report their suspicions to federal law enforcement. Through this partnership, A4A will collaborate with DHS and DOT to provide virtual training courses for all A4A staff members. Read the full press release [here](#).

More than 200,000 aviation industry employees have gone through BLI training. To learn more, visit go.dhs.gov/Z3L.

CCHT CORNER & FROM THE FIELD BLUE CAMPAGIN

CCHT marks two-year anniversary and FY 2022 contributions to DHS's counter-trafficking mission

In October, the Center for Countering Human Trafficking (CCHT) marked its two-year anniversary as the first unified, inter-component coordination center for countering human trafficking and the importation of goods produced with forced labor.

Throughout fiscal year (FY) 2022, the Center took significant steps to advance counter human trafficking law enforcement operations, protect victims, and enhance prevention efforts by aligning DHS's capabilities and expertise. Some of those accomplishments in the areas of operational support, victim protection, training, and outreach include:

- Supporting multiple, nationwide large-scale operations across the country with funding, subject matter expertise, coordinated intelligence, and interagency coordination
- Establishing the Labor Trafficking Initiative to build the capacity of HSI special agents to initiate and develop robust, proactive labor trafficking investigations
- Leading investigative and outreach initiatives in connection with the passage of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act
- Coordinating with DOJ and field offices on the first high-profile investigations of importers in the United States who knowingly imported goods produced with forced labor.
- Increasing counter human trafficking efforts through training, outreach, and the delivery of victim protections
- Signing an MOU with Liberty Shared to receive information which will support HSI investigations of companies benefiting from forced labor abroad
- Making improvements to the Continued Presence (CP) program, including a 10% increase from the number of CP applications processed in FY 2021
- Securing a contract to create an online CP application process, and
- Transmitting to Congressional leadership an Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-cleared legislative proposal on CP based on extensive listening sessions with law enforcement and victim service providers. The proposal highlights necessary statutory changes to CP that would provide clarification and reduce barriers, ensuring that CP is fully available, accessible, and utilized by law enforcement and civil attorneys to assist victims

This increased DHS level of focus is also reflected in the number of successful human trafficking investigations conducted in FY 2022 by HSI. While official year-end statistics are still pending, initial results indicate a significant increase in human trafficking arrests and convictions.

Look for more details on the CCHT's progress in the FY 2022 DHS Countering Human Trafficking Year in Review, to be released in January 2023.

From the Field

Joint HSI-FBI Miami investigation results in 60-year sentence, over \$14 million in restitution.

A joint HSI/FBI investigation into a South Florida sex trafficking ring yielded a 60-year prison sentence for the ringleader, and a judgment of over \$14 million to be paid in restitution to his victims. The defendant was also ordered to forfeit over \$3 million.

William D. Foster, 50, was sentenced in September 2022 for heading a sex trafficking organization that exploited dozens of women and girls for more than 20 years. At any given time, up to 15 women and girls lived with Foster and were forced to work at South Florida exotic dance clubs and engage in commercial sex. Foster falsely told the victims that he would invest their earnings so that they could retire in their 20s, then kept the money they earned from working six days a week.

Foster used psychological coercion and violence to keep his victims compliant. He required many of the victims to go on liquid diets, get unsafe weight loss surgeries, and take anti-anxiety and anti-psychotic medications without proper diagnoses. Foster also had sex with victims, some of whom were minors. He transported his victims to other states including New York, New Jersey, Michigan, and Nevada, for the purpose of engaging in prostitution.

If a victim attempted to leave, Foster would threaten financial ruin and other harm. If a victim left, she left with nothing. Law enforcement officers recovered one of Foster's victims from a Detroit hotel room after she called the National Human Trafficking Hotline, a reminder that outreach is an important part of DHS' counter-trafficking policy.

More detail on the investigation can be found [here](#).

WEBINAR IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND ROTARY



Save the date: January 26 at 9am EST. President Biden declared January 2023 National Human Trafficking Prevention Month. In partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Office of Public Liaison, The Rotary Action Group Against Slavery (RAGAS) and The Rotary Club to End Trafficking will host a Webinar with a speakers from the U.S. Department of State's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Office and a Survivor Leader. Participants will learn how the TIP Office combats human trafficking through the "4P" framework: prosecution, prevention, protection and partnership. Join us for this virtual event on January 26 at 9 am EST.

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iCiO2OukSES1GN8_-kr43g

Our Mission

The TIP Office leads the Department's global efforts to combat human trafficking through the prosecution of traffickers, the protection of victims, and the prevention of human trafficking by: objectively analyzing government efforts and identifying global trends, engaging in and supporting strategic bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, targeting foreign assistance to build sustainable capacity of governments and civil society, advancing the coordination of federal anti-trafficking policies across agencies, managing and leveraging operational resources to achieve strategic priorities, and engaging and partnering with civil society, the private sector, and the public to advance the fight against human trafficking.

THE NEW GENERATIONS ARE THE FUTURE OF ROTARY AND RAGAS

The Rotary Club of Quito, District 4400, has been the dean club of Ecuadorian Rotarianism for 96 years, and has been at the forefront of the changes Rotary has undergone. For quite some years we have seen that the continuity of our club depends on preparing our youth for future challenges.

This is the reason that 3 years ago Rotary Club of Quito decided to make an alliance with the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery RAGAS and create the first Interact youth club to raise awareness and prevent the largest and most lucrative and corrupt business known as modern slavery.

This club bears the name of the two organizations that sponsor it:

Interact Quito Against Slavery RAGAS which functions in one of the most prestigious high schools in this capital, Colegio Tomas Moro International School.

Currently 20 young people are members of this club and together with their academic advisor work on projects in the 7 areas of Interest and are specially focused in peace and conflict resolution.

In these few years they have participated in an event on the television network CNN - Freedom Project, and in addition supporting various organizations such as the Foundation Alas de Colibrí and are currently working with the Dunamis Foundation.

Both foundations work with restoring the lives of minor girls who have been victims of human trafficking.

Cinthia Chediak
RAGAS Board Member
South America Coordinator



2022 ROTARY INSTITUTE TRAILS TO PEACE IN SALT LAKE CITY

Many thanks goes to RI Director Vicki Puliz for hosting an inspiring, fun and informative week at Zone 26/27 Institute.

It was so great to share our work of RAGAS with RI PE Gordon McNally, RI Director Vicki Puliz, RI CEO John Hewko, RI Representative from Brazil, Marcelo Haick. Bob Deering and I presented on the work of RAGAS and how to engage Rotary Districts in the fight to end Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking. Thanks you, RI PE, Gordon McNally and RI Director Vicki Puliz for your dedication and continued support of this very important issue.

- Photos from the team of Randy Rascati and Wade Nomura. Thanks to Randy and Wade! 2022 CNTS/CETS/Institute - Rotary 5190 - 2014 District Conference (smugmug.com)
- Program Book <https://online.fliphtml5.com/wvhbn/ojta/#p=1> with listing of the presenters for each of the Peer-to-Peer sessions, speakers, entertainment, sponsors and more. <https://rotaryzone2627.box.com/s/dgv3lpsdth77l5y3khgop44j2i7te7e>
- Videos of keynote speakers: <https://bit.ly/bigwest2022>
RAGAS Chair Emeritus, Dave McCleary

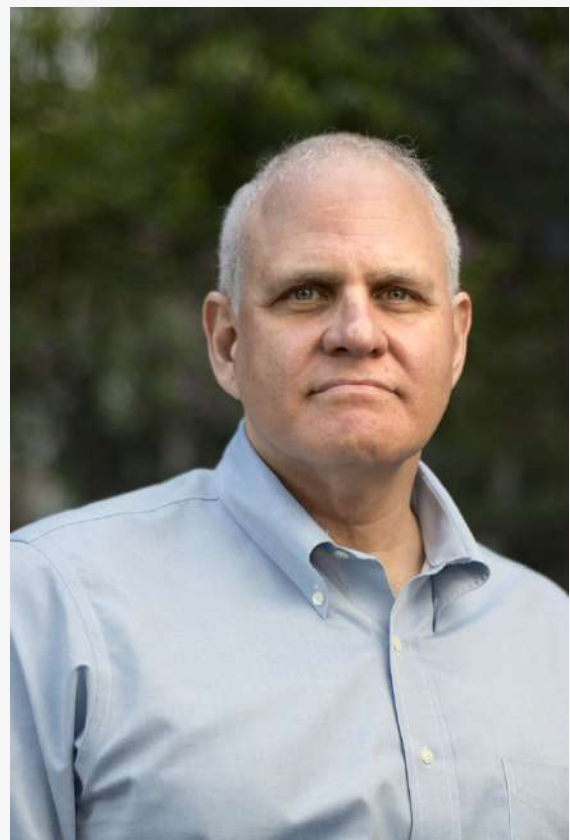
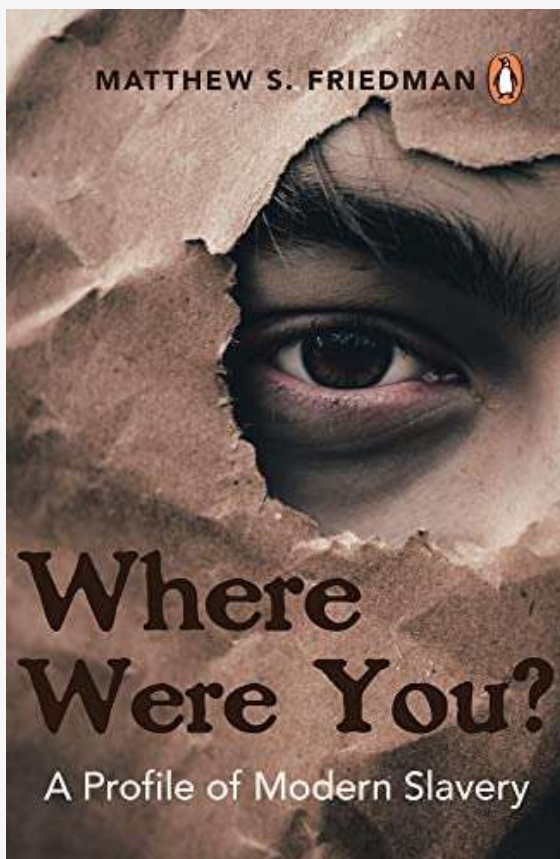


MUST READ BOOK FROM MATT FRIDMAN

Please celebrate a milestone with me: my new Penguin book, WHERE WERE YOU?: A PROFILE OF MODERN SLAVERY, has been published and is available worldwide. In this memoir, I explore the early days of meeting modern slavery survivors and recount true stories of enslavement in Asia. I recall painful moments that literally changed my life, reflect on the different approaches to fighting human trafficking over the last 35 years and give an account of the early beginnings of the fight against modern slavery before the phrase “human trafficking” was adopted. As I reflect on the deeply personal lessons learned, my first and foremost goal for this book is to motivate more people to join me in helping to fight this global crime.

Here is a short fireside chat (9 minutes) to describe why I wrote the book.

Matt Friedman
CEO
The Mekong Club



UPDATE ON NEPAL REMOTE SCHOOL

Enhanced Library

The key question for many members of RAGAS is "how can a Rotary Club be effective in the fight against human trafficking?" The purpose of this article is to provide one model for clubs who wish to provide effective help to at-risk people and prevent survivors of trafficking from being re-trafficked.

Sadly, there is no lack of opportunity to enter the fray, because there are so many types of trafficking and so many parts of the world where it is occurring. Whether the fight is against sex trafficking, bonded labor, forced begging, child marriage, unpaid or exploitative factory labor, organ harvesting, forced recruitment of child soldiers, or forced marriage, the need to combat human trafficking is ubiquitous and in every continent.

The best way to stay optimistic that things can improve is to focus on all the organizations that are working to help. Many of these organizations are listed in a RAGAS (Rotary Action Group Against Slavery) document that I cite at the end of this article.

A year ago, the Rotary Club of Falmouth, Cape Cod (RCFCC) formed a subcommittee of their international committee, which exclusively focuses on human trafficking; this article will detail the committee accomplishments of the year. The Falmouth Cape Cod club partnered with a very impactful NGO called Her Future Coalition which helps women and children who are either at high risk of being trafficked or are survivors of brothel slavery and need skills and education in order to remain free from the degrading work in the brothels.

Together they accomplished the following:

- > The club implemented a district grant to provide furniture and computers for HFC's new Kolkata Learning Center in the Sonagachi slums. The Learning Center is currently serving hundreds of survivors and at-risk young people.

- > The club developed a remote teaching program (English and Math) for at-risk girls in a rural part of Nepal. Rotarians and other volunteers currently teach five days per week over zoom, with classes for young children, teens, and teachers at the newly founded school there. The school was founded using an HFC grant, by a trafficking survivor who got a college education (with the help of HFC) after being freed.

- > The club provided several hundred books and educational toys for the library at the school in the Newakot district of Nepal. The books needed to be hand delivered, due to the lack of a secure package delivery system in Nepal. The club found travelers to Kathmandu who agreed to bring over the suitcases and deliver them to the school and attached hostel.

The books were provided by a RAGAS grant combined with a library drive at the Falmouth Public Library.

- > A new dormitory for at-risk girls is currently being built on the site of the school. RCFCC has contributed substantial sums for construction and for furnishings for the dormitory.

- > RCFCC has joined with the Providence RI Rotary club and they have been awarded a district grant to provide solar power and battery backup at the dormitory / hostel. This will make the communications with the school / hostel remote teaching program more robust, since power unreliability frequently interrupts the learning, for the at-risk children. ESRAG, the Environmental Sustainability Action Group has been providing technical assistance on this project for the Falmouth Club.

> RCFCC has provided laptops in order to start teaching spreadsheets and keyboarding for Nepali girls from the hostel, who have no access to computers. These were delivered in the spring of 2022.
> RCFCC has given talks throughout our district about the issue of human trafficking and the programs that can be partnered with to combat trafficking. We also have spoken at international venues (like RCEHT). Many of the district clubs have contributed to the accomplishments listed here.

RCFCC has helped sell jewelry made by survivors of brothels who have been trained as jewelry-makers by HFC, to keep them from being re-trafficked due to lack of skills. HFC buys the jewelry at retail prices and resells it on their web site and at fairs (and through helpers like our Rotary club) in order to help the survivors find buyers for their products and make a living outside of brothels. The focus of our efforts has been in Nepal and India, which are epicenters of trafficking, in particular sex trafficking and bonded labor. The villages in which the Nepal programs are educating children, teens, and teachers, have a culture in which trafficking to the brothels of India are a way of surviving, to supplement grueling agricultural labor; other means of earning a living have not previously been available. The new generation, with their math and English skills, will be able to make a living and provide new sources of income and new ideas to their communities. The ripple effect, increasing the village standard of living and changing village attitudes is the very definition of sustainability.

The programs in India are in slum areas / red light districts of major cities, particularly Kolkata; the children and young girls who live in these places are at tremendously high risk of being trafficked. The girls who are educated or given skills training, are not only saving themselves and their families from lives in the brothels, but also becoming advocates for other girls and women in their communities.

There are so many ways to become involved without huge investments of time and money. A club can do one of the following:

1. Have a jewelry party or a raffle to sell HFC jewelry made by survivors (go to HFC web site -see citations for the url)
2. Raise money to outfit one room of an HFC dormitory, to house at-risk girls (approximately \$1500)
3. Apply for a district grant after contacting HFC (or the NGO of your choice) to ask what they might need. Contact info@herfuturecoalition.org
4. Raise funds to send an at-risk girl to school in India through the HFC Sponsorship program (\$300 per year) through the HFC website, see citations
5. Contact msrobinsinger@gmail.com to see if you can partner with the Falmouth Cape Cod club on a project.

Many of you are already working on impactful programs to end trafficking. Please share your work in this newsletter so other clubs can find ways to help. Spread the word and provide detailed information about how to help!

Citations:

Her Future Coalition <https://herfuturecoalition.org/> See the "Take Action" tab

RAGAS Community Awareness & Prevention Education Toolbox, Part C/ Human Trafficking/Modern Slavery Prevention Education Curriculum Sources, NGO's & Curriculum Sources

You are formally invited to...



BEYOND NET ZERO THE CANADA HUMAN TRAFFICKING DECLARATION



M MEKONG
CLUB



"...for the Canadian government to be the first government in the world to pledge zero tolerance towards human trafficking and forced labour slavery."

A full-day conference spotlighting leading policy insiders, experts, survivors, and fellow partners paving the way to end human trafficking and forced labour slavery in Canada.

Canadian Museum for
Human Rights
85 Israel Asper Way
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 0L5

April 2 to 3
2023



[Click the logo to register](#)

RAGAS SOCIAL MEDIA

RAGAS communication

You can receive the information by following us on social media!

- [RAGAS Facebook](#)
- [RAGAS LinkedIn](#)
- [RAGAS Twitter](#)
- [RAGAS Instagram](#)
- [RAGAS YouTube](#)



LOOKING FOR A WAY OUT?
帮助您找方法 ¿ESTÁS BUSCANDO UNA SALIDA? ¿NECESITAS AYUDA?
STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING
NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE
888-3737-888
or Text "Help" to 233733 (BeFree)
IOWA VICTIM SERVICE CALL CENTER
800-770-1650
or Text "iowahelp" to 20121
IT HAPPENS HERE IN IOWA
Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking & Slavery
www.iowanah.org
Rotary 

TAKE ACTION

We are not defined by who we are, but by our actions. To contribute to ending modern slavery, you can:

- Become a RAGAS member from [here](#).
- Donate to RAGAS, or organisations working on ending modern slavery.
- [Contact your local Coordinator](#) to volunteer for RAGAS.
- Invite a RAGAS speaker to your local club meeting to talk about modern slavery.
- Initiate a Global Grant project to fight against modern slavery.

Engage with Rotary clubs that dedicates to ending modern slavery, including:

- District 5950 [Rotary eClub to End Human Trafficking](#),
- District 5710 [Rotary eClub of Community Action Against Human Trafficking](#),
- District 5280 [Rotarians Fighting Human Trafficking](#),
- District 5810 [Rotary Satellite Club of Greenville to End Human Trafficking](#)
- District 1260 [Ware Rotary Satellite Club Rotary for Slave Free Communities](#)
- District 5030 [The Pacific Northwest Ending Sex Trafficking](#)
- District 5840 [To Combat Human Trafficking](#).
-