

## **LOCAL AND REGIONAL IOWA ANTI-TRAFFICKING GROUPS**

### **Northwest Iowa (and parts of Nebraska and South Dakota)**

#### **SIouxLAND COALITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING - *based in Sioux City***

The Siouxland Coalition against Human Trafficking is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 started in 2014. Our mission statement is “To work toward abolishing all forms of human trafficking through education, advocacy and collaboration”. Our main focus in education is prevention. We give presentations and trainings throughout our area. If distance or the needs of the group require someone outside our Coalition to give the presentation, we find a qualified resource. We have tables at local community events with some giveaway items, a question wheel, and handouts. We have held conferences on human trafficking and one on the porn epidemic and how it relates to human trafficking. We have had billboards on human trafficking. We do TV and radio interviews throughout the year and have developed PSAs for radio and TV. With permission, volunteers place stickers and posters about human trafficking in area businesses, schools and agencies. We have a self-guided exhibit (440 sq. ft.) that can be in schools, churches and other places for a week at a time.

In January, National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention month, we engage local city/county governments by asking that they issue a Proclamation (that we provide) acknowledging the month. Last year we had some businesses light up in blue (dark blue is “the color” for human trafficking) for January.

We are a member of the Iowa Network against Human Trafficking and have a volunteer trained as a facilitator of their DPS authorized hotel/motel training. We are working to encourage involvement of businesses in and to provide the “learn” section of the Iowa Businesses against Human Trafficking (IBAT) initiative. We work with the Set Me Free Project to provide training in various local schools. We encourage activities such as the Red Sand Project for schools and youth groups.

Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm, January-June and August-November, and are open to the public.

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### **Southwest Iowa**

#### **SOUTHWEST IOWA COALITION ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING - *based in Council Bluffs***

The Southwest Iowa Coalition on Human Trafficking formed in 2017. All organizations participating in the coalition are cooperating organizations; however, Jennie Edmundson

Hospital Foundation, Catholic Charities and the two Council Bluffs Rotary Clubs have taken leadership roles. The coalition consists of the following organizations: Ameristar, Catholic Charities, Charles E. Lakin Campus, CHI Mercy Hospital, Council Bluffs Centennial Rotary, Council Bluffs Noon Rotary, Council Bluffs Police Department, Seven Counties that make up the Fourth Judicial District, FBI/Victim Advocate, Harrah's, Heartland Family Service, Hope Net Ministries, Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital, Pottawattamie County Attorney's Office, Pottawattamie County Victim Witness Coordinators, Promise Partners, Salvation Army, Visiting Nurses Association, Women's Center for Advancement of Omaha and Women's Fund of Omaha. Several community members and independent professionals also serve as members of the coalition.

We established a steering committee to lead the work as well as seven committees in the areas of: Community Awareness/Marketing, Community Presentations, Hotel & Motel Training/School and Youth Education, Conference, Fundraising, Law Enforcement, Medical Training and Services to Survivors, to plan goals and objectives. We are now in the process of evaluating/prioritizing those goals and will then set up appropriate committees to implement them.

The Coalition meets every other month.

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## **North Central Iowa**

### **NORTH IOWA COALITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING *based in Mason City***

We hold monthly zoom meetings and are building our membership, networking and creating partnerships within 9 community sectors. Our goal is to create a working coalition where each member will serve in a specific sector where they have interest and expertise. The groups will identify needs and strengths in their sector and then select 1-2 goals as their focus. Ideally we will build 9 groups working on specific goals relating to human trafficking. Our sectors include, Education, Healthcare, Faith Community, Business/Employers, Police/Criminal Justice, Media, Technology, At-Risk (Marginalized) Community, and Family. We are in the process of creating surveys that will be sent to hundreds of community members who are employed or involved in one or more areas. Their feedback will be important as we identify and prioritize needs and develop sector goals. We are also working on developing a website that should be up soon.

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## **Central Iowa**

### **PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE –**

#### ***Des Moines and Polk County***

The task force was formed in 2011 with its purpose being "To create awareness of human trafficking in the community and to act to end it not only in Iowa but nationally and internationally".

Some of the things the task force has done to achieve this are: 1) Trained 75 hotels and over 300 employees on what to look for and what to do if trafficking in a hotel is suspected. 2) The Iowa Legislature passed a bill in 2019 requiring all businesses that provide lodging to have their entire staff trained on what human trafficking is and what to look for and how to report it. Failure to do so would prevent them from doing business with entities paying with public funds. Our group collaborated with the Iowa Dept. of Public Safety as they developed a training video for this program. The Task Force in conjunction with other NAHT coalitions also developed a training video which is posted on the Dept of Public Safety's website for hotels and motels to use. 3) Each summer we go to the State Fair and place stickers on all the portable restrooms telling people what to do if they suspect trafficking is occurring around them. It also gives a victim the numbers to call or text if they want to get help. 4) The task force works and supports many of NAHT's programs. For instance, we have a representative on the Legislative Committee which develops a list of bills NAHT feels should be a priority to get introduced and passed during the current session. The committee calls upon all task force members to contact their legislators when a call to action is required. 5) This past year we worked with the Secretary of State's Office to help them develop the Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT) program. 6) A Task Force subcommittee was formed to assist in getting the Des Moines metro area cities to develop ordinances regulating Massage Businesses. There was great concern that many of these businesses were merely a front for illegal sexual activity. The majority of cities surrounding Des Moines did get ordinances passed and many illicit massage businesses moved from the area.

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### **CENTRAL IOWA SERVICE NETWORK – *Central Iowa, from Minnesota to the Missouri border.***

The Central Iowa Service Network is a group of persons who are interested in human trafficking and what is happening in Central Iowa as it pertains to the subject. Its primary purpose is information sharing; it is not a work group like most coalitions. It is made up of advocates, coalition leaders, advisors, CEO's of treatment facilities, and law enforcement.

The group meets once a quarter on the last Friday of January, April, July and October from 12 noon to 1:30 p.m. Given the distance some members would have to travel to attend a meeting, we will most likely continue to have our meetings via Zoom. Anyone who has news they would like to share about their organization, such as upcoming programs, personnel changes, success stories, etc. is encouraged to do so. Anyone in attendance may share. We typically have a main

speaker who presents something on the subject of human trafficking. We also get regular updates from: the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking, the Human Trafficking Coordinator from the Iowa Attorney General's office and from our lobbyist during the legislative session.

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**L.A.S.T. WATCH COALITION – *Marshalltown and Marshall County***

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**NEWTON SAYS NO TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING – *Newton***

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**Northeast Iowa**

**TRI-STATE COALITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SLAVERY– *based in Dubuque; serves part of NE Iowa, SW Illinois and NW Wisconsin***

The Coalition, begun in 2014 by members of the area Catholic communities of women religious, has expanded to include women and men dedicated to the elimination of this dehumanizing crime. The Coalition “engages in education and advocacy to eradicate human trafficking. Members cooperate with other organizations with similar goals.” In addition to presentations to numerous religious and civic groups, the Coalition has trained the city’s bus drivers and some rural police staff. Thanks to a grant, the Set Me Free program has been implemented in the schools as students learn in grade-appropriate ways about both sex and labor trafficking.

Utilizing public media, the Coalition has sponsored billboards and a bus wrap. Participation in events have included a booth at the Dubuque County Fair, showing a film during January’s Human Trafficking Awareness Month, a 5K run at the University of Dubuque, a table at the recent Juneteenth celebration, Dubuque Farmers’ Market and Kennedy Mall. Members have also done hotel/motel training for the past several years, and participated in the video production team for the state’s hotel/motel training mandate. Currently, members are encouraging participation in the Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT) initiative by offering assistance with the learning component to those businesses who have signed up, and encouraging others to sign on.

Each year, we work with city and county government for proclamations in January. During the past year, we have also developed a website and Facebook page. We are grateful to have been one of five awardees of the governor's Outstanding Anti-Trafficking Service Award in 2022. We are members of the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and the US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking.

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## **Eastern Iowa**

### **CHAINS INTERRUPTED/ UnCHAINeD Coalition – Cedar Rapids region**

Chains Interrupted hosts the UnChainEd Coalition, which is a community coalition in Eastern Iowa that comes together to fight against Human Trafficking. It is open to the public - individuals, community organizations and businesses. Each meeting connects people, allows them to network together, provides education on a subject surrounding human trafficking, provides local, state and national updates, volunteer opportunities, and assigns an action step for members to complete.

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### **JOHNSON COUNTY HUMAN TRAFFICKING COALITION – Iowa City and Johnson County**

Our mission is to encourage community awareness of human trafficking and strengthen the support of survivors in our community through collaboration with local service providers. We provide community and professional educational activities throughout the year and upon request. We have participated in awareness campaigns that include radio ads, Coralville Mall window displays, support of speakers, and film showings.

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*[humantrafficking-ia.org](http://humantrafficking-ia.org) & [facebook.com/jhtcinfo](https://facebook.com/jhtcinfo)*

### **ATTACKING TRAFFICKING – Davenport**

Attacking Trafficking is a faith based volunteer organization located in Davenport dedicated to ending human trafficking in all forms and providing hope and healing for survivors. We seek to accomplish this through awareness, education and advocacy. We are a tax exempt 501 (c) 3 and have existed since 2011.

Until 2019, Attacking Trafficking had been providing community presentations and working with local legislators as needed to improve Iowa HT code. We have shifted our focus away from the in person presentations in favor of the many excellent online trainings available, though we have recently created presentations for those in the medical field. Our last major awareness campaign involved a collaborative effort with Free the Girls, where 3500 bras were collected and sent to survivor networks in third world countries. There, the survivors learned how to become entrepreneurs and become financially independent.

Within the last year, we've sponsored a bus ad in collaboration with the Congregations of the Humility of Mary to raise awareness about the buyer's role in Human Trafficking. Our annual prayer service in January featured a retired police detective who spoke on Human Trafficking in Davenport. Our meetings involve input from survivor advocates from Braking Traffik. We will again collect emergency items for survivor backpacks in support of their work. We are also working with local financial institutions on ways to help survivors establish financial credit.

We have established a fund to assist survivors with emergency housing funds not addressed by local short or long term programs. We've named this Nora's Fund, in honor of one of our charter members who died in 2019.

We meet monthly by Zoom.

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**SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS HUMAN TRAFFICKING COALITION – Clinton**

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