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Homeland
Security
Blue Campaign

The Blue Campaign Newsletter

June 2012, Issue 4

OUTREACH AND TRAININGS

DHS Publishes First-Ever Language Access Plan

Last month, DHS published its first-ever Limited English Proficiency plan (“LEP plan”) to address the language needs of persons with limited English proficiency. The LEP plan demonstrates the Department’s commitment to breaking down language barriers and providing meaningful access to homeland security programs and activities.

The Blue Campaign fully embraces these principles and recognizes the importance of effective communication with diverse populations in our efforts to combat human trafficking. Many of the Blue Campaign’s informational videos and materials for the public are available in multiple languages. The Blue Campaign is also committed to utilizing the LEP plan to identify ways in which increased language access might be incorporated into current practices.

The release of the LEP Plan is the culmination of a year-long Department-wide effort to improve language access, as required by Executive Order 13166. In leading this effort to develop a robust language access plan and program, the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties collaborated with DHS Components, engaged with and received feedback from community stakeholders and federal partners who provided valuable insight on areas for improvement and innovative methods for providing language access.

DHS Mandates Training for Contracting Professionals



In February 2012, DHS made the Blue Campaign's Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 52.222-50 Combating Trafficking in Persons training mandatory for all DHS contracting professionals. The training is specifically tailored for the U.S. Government acquisition workforce on combating human trafficking using the pertinent provisions of the FAR. The FAR promotes the Federal Government's zero-tolerance policy on TIP and provides remedies,

including debarment, for the acquisition workforce to use against contractors who engage in human trafficking.

To date, over 1,000 DHS employees involved in the acquisition process have completed the training. As a result, several other agencies have made the training mandatory for their acquisition staff, or are creating their own mandatory instructional tools using the DHS training as a baseline. All U.S. Government acquisition workforce personnel are able to take the training on the Federal Acquisition Institute Training Application System (FAITAS) web site that can be found at: www.FAI.gov.

Blue Campaign Announces Release of Human Trafficking Awareness Video for First Responders

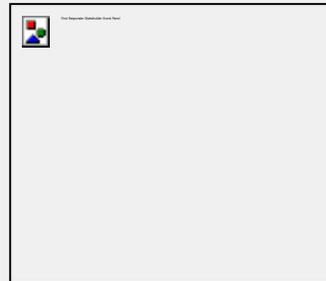
The Office of Health Affairs (OHA), in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), through its efforts to halt human trafficking by holding a stakeholder event with the medical first responder community on March 19, 2012.

More than 35 individuals from Federal agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGO), the private sector, industry associations, and State and local government

entities attended the event. DHS led the moderated listening session on issues related to ongoing efforts to prevent and combat human trafficking. During the event, DHS unveiled the Human Trafficking Awareness Video for First Responders, which provides guidance to first responders on how to identify possible victims of human trafficking.

The video, geared specifically towards the emergency medical and fire communities, also provides training in identifying symptoms and environmental indicators that they may come across in their daily work. The video available to the public can be found at:

<http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/human-trafficking-awareness-training.shtm#3>.



“According to estimates, as many as 30% of human trafficking victims will have an encounter with a healthcare professional during the time they are being trafficked,” said Dr. Alexander Garza, Assistant Secretary and Chief Medical Officer for OHA. “First responders are critical partners in the fight to eradicate this modern day form of slavery.”

During the forty-minute listening session, stakeholders were encouraged to ask questions and provide suggestions to a panel of speakers that included: Assistant Secretary and Chief Medical Officer for OHA, Dr. Alexander Garza, Senior Counselor to the Secretary of DHS, Alice Hill, USFA Deputy Administrator, Glenn Gaines, and FEMA Deputy Administrator, Rich Serino. OHA also distributed human trafficking awareness materials for first responders’ use in their line of work, including: first responder indicator cards, a three-minute coffee break training to educate others about the crime, and a one-page fact sheet with information about the Blue Campaign and the Department’s anti-human trafficking activities.

USFA Outreach to Fire and Emergency Medical Services Stakeholders

The USFA distributed informational packages to the 50 State training directors as part of their awareness efforts to reach the nation’s first responders. These packages included a cover letter from U.S. Fire Administrator Ernest Mitchell introducing the Blue Campaign, a DVD containing the human trafficking awareness video for first responders, an indicator card geared toward first responders, and a human trafficking awareness poster.

USFA displayed Blue Campaign materials and distributed indicator cards and DVDs at the EMS Today, Fire-Rescue Med, and Fire Department Instructor conferences held earlier this year. USFA also developed a first responder-specific coffee break training to promote awareness to first responder personnel. To date, this special coffee break training has been sent to over 43,000 first responder stakeholders.

International Outreach

In February 2012, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Acting Commissioner David Aguilar, ICE Director John Morton, and DHS Assistant Secretary for International Affairs Alan Bersin travelled to Central America to meet with international counterparts to discuss the United States Government’s ongoing commitment to collaborating on combating transnational crime – including human trafficking – and working to ensure a more safe, secure, and resilient global supply chain. Secretary Napolitano signed Letters of Intent with representatives from the governments of Guatemala and Panama to coordinate efforts

on combating trafficking in persons.

In March 2012, Secretary Napolitano and U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder visited Ottawa, Canada to participate in the Cross-Border Crime Forum with Canadian Minister of Justice, Attorney General Rob Nicholson, and Canadian Minister of Public Safety Vic Toews. Secretary Napolitano, Attorney General Holder, and Minister Toews also signed a Memorandum of Understanding to pledge cooperation between their respective agencies in the sharing of information related to smuggling and human trafficking cases.

While visiting heads of state in New Zealand in May 2012, Secretary Napolitano signed a Joint Statement on Combating Trafficking in Persons in the Pacific Islands Region with New Zealand Immigration Minister Nathan Guy.

Congressional Outreach



On May 17, 2012, the Blue Campaign participated in "One-DHS" Day on the Hill. In addition, in the report on the House Appropriations bill, the House Committee applauded DHS for its efforts to bolster human trafficking training and awareness through the Blue Campaign.

ACTeam Training

In April 2012, ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) held a curriculum development conference to build an advanced human trafficking training which will initially be provided to the Anti-trafficking Coordination Teams (ACTeam). Subject matter experts from HSI, FLETC, ICE Academy, Department of Justice (DOJ) Human Trafficking Prosecutions Unit, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and Department of Labor's Office of the Inspector General attended to help develop the course. The group is jointly creating a

first-of-its-kind course that will bring together agents, prosecutors, and victim specialists for a one-week training that will cover topics such as: trafficking victim interviewing, seizing evidence in human trafficking cases, and human trafficking prosecutorial challenges.

Blue Campaign Training Available

Human trafficking is a hidden crime, and the first step to combating it is to identify victims so they can be rescued and help bring their perpetrators to justice. The Blue Campaign has developed a training program to help increase awareness and educate the general public on the indicators of human trafficking. To learn the indicators of human trafficking and how you can report it, take our general awareness training that can be found at: <http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/human-trafficking-awareness-training.shtm#content>.

FLETC developed a specialized training program for law enforcement officers to educate them on the various ways they might encounter human trafficking in the line of duty and how they can support and protect victims when discovered. If you work for a law enforcement organization and you are interested in providing this computer-based training to your colleagues, please contact the Blue Campaign at: BlueCampaign@hq.dhs.gov.

NOTABLE CASES

Indianapolis-Based Multi-State Prostitution Ring Dismantled: Complex Ring Transported Dozens of Women on Weekly Basis

Gregorio Hernandez-Castilla, 34, of Indianapolis, was sentenced on May 9, 2012 by U.S. District Judge William T. Lawrence to 41 months in prison after pleading guilty to conspiring to operate an interstate prostitution ring with his two brothers.

This prosecution was the result of an extensive investigation by multiple law enforcement agencies, including: HSI, FBI, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department; the Marion County Sheriff's Department; and the Addison, Ill, Police Department.

The three brothers headed the Hernandez-Castilla criminal organization which had been operating for a number of years in the Indianapolis area, largely under the direction of Jose Luis Hernandez-Castilla. The brothers would acquire women to act as prostitutes, on many occasions smuggling them into the United States from Mexico and Central America. Once here, many were often without a means by which to make

money, and thus would engage in prostitution to pay off debts they owed the brothers for subsidizing their entry into the country.

In addition, the brothers directed another group of individuals who acted as local managers by running prostitution operations out of apartments and houses located throughout Indianapolis and in surrounding states, including Michigan, Illinois and Ohio. The women engaged in prostitution were rarely allowed to stay in any one location for more than a week, and the operation employed numerous drivers who would transport the women from one site to another on a regular basis.

The organization itself operated almost exclusively within the Hispanic community, advertising its services through the distribution of business cards bearing advertisements and telephone numbers for auto repair or western wear outfitters. These business cards were known within the Hispanic community as contact numbers for arranging appointments with prostitutes.

[SOURCE: <http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/1205/120509indianapolis.htm>]

Guilty Plea to Conspiracy to Engage in Trafficking of Minors

Neang Prom also known as Pocahontas and Eric Bell pled guilty in a Tampa, Florida sex trafficking case. According to the plea agreement, Prom and Bell recruited minors to engage in prostitution by offering the minors a place to live. Prom and Bell would take sexually explicit photos of the minor victims and place those photos on the internet to solicit clients for prostitution services, and would require the minor victims to give them the proceeds from prostitution. All of the victims were between the ages of 15 and 17 years old.

Eric Bell previously pled guilty for his role in this case and is scheduled to be sentenced on June 20, 2012. This case was investigated by the Clearwater Area Human Trafficking Task Force, the FBI, and HSI.

[Source: http://www.justice.gov/usao/flm/press/2012/may/20120510_Prom.html]

Northern California Man Sentenced to Nine years in Federal Prison for Sex Trafficking Teens

In April 2012, a former Sacramento, California man was sentenced to nine years in federal prison on charges stemming from a probe by HSI and the FBI that linked him to a scheme to trafficking teenage girls.

Mahendar "Mike" Singh, 40, pled guilty in January to the sex trafficking conspiracy. Singh was found guilty of conspiring with his wife to operate a prostitution enterprise between spring 2011 and summer 2011 in Sacramento County and multiple Bay Area

counties. Mahendar Singh admitted to recruiting teenage girls to provide sex services in exchange for money and drugs and to knowing that at least one of the teenagers was a juvenile. He also admitted that he and his wife were able to maintain their victims' services by providing them with money, clothing and drugs; promising them a family-like environment; and by using threats and physical force. The defendants relied on Internet websites to advertise the victims and cell phones to make arrangements with customers.

"T[his] sentence is a victory not only for the young victims in this particular case, but also for human dignity and the rule of law," said Clark Settles, Special Agent in charge of HSI San Francisco. "HSI is fully committed to working with our law enforcement partners, both local and international, to combat the crime of human trafficking. We encourage anyone who suspects that human trafficking is occurring in their community to report it to authorities immediately."

[Source: <http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/1204/120419oakland.htm>]

Final Defendant Sentenced in International Human Trafficking Scheme

A former ICE Top 10 Most Wanted fugitive was sentenced to three years in prison for crimes related to an international conspiracy to compel women in the Ukraine to work in exotic dance clubs in metropolitan Detroit, Michigan. The sentence comes after an extensive investigation by HSI.

Veniamin Gonikman, 56, was apprehended in January 2012 by HSI special agents after being deported from the Ukraine. He is the ninth and final member of the charged conspiracy to be convicted. Between September 2001 and February 2005, Gonikman, together with his son, Aleksandr Maksimenko, a U.S. citizen, and Michael Aronov, a Lithuanian national, operated Beauty Search, Inc., a business that brokered and managed Eastern European women who performed in exotic dance clubs in the Detroit area.

"The defendants in this case preyed on young and vulnerable women from a foreign country. These women were brought to America with promises of education and travel, and, instead, forced to work in seedy strip clubs," said Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent in charge of HSI Michigan and Ohio.

The lead defendants in this case, Maksimenko and Aronov, pleaded guilty in 2006 to forced labor, immigration, and money laundering charges. Maksimenko was sentenced to 14 years in prison and ordered to pay \$1,570,450 in restitution to the victims. Aronov was sentenced to seven-and-a-half years in prison and ordered to pay \$1,000,000 in restitution.

Six other defendants were also convicted in 2006 for their respective roles in the

conspiracy, including: Duay Jado, a Greek national, who was sentenced to four years in prison for setting a victim's car on fire to retaliate for her escape and to intimidate the other victims; and two Ukrainian nationals, Eygeniy Propenko and Alexander Bondarenko, who were convicted of visa fraud to facilitate the victims' illegal entry into the United States. The case was investigated by ICE HSI, the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service, and the U.S. Department of State.

[Source: <http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/1205/120523detroit.htm>]

AWARDS

HSI Special Agents Honored by DOJ

Two HSI special agents from Arizona received awards from the acting U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona as part of the DOJ National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

HSI Special Agents Evangelina Cardenas and John Koski were among six law enforcement officers and prosecutors honored during a ceremony at the U.S. Attorney's Office on April 26, 2012 for their work providing vital support and services to crime victims.

Cardenas, a special agent assigned to HSI Tucson, was lauded for her work as an HSI victim assistance coordinator, a position she has held since December 2009. In the course of her work, Cardenas has responded numerous times to human smuggling drop houses, hospitals, and other locations to work with victims of violent crimes such as trafficking, assault, sexual assault, and hostage taking.

Koski, a special agent assigned to HSI Flagstaff, was honored for his investigative work on human trafficking cases, particularly a forced labor investigation. Koski's close coordination with other Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and his keen investigative work brought trafficking victims to safety and helped bring traffickers to justice.

Both agents were recognized for their caring response to victims and their work in bringing together Federal, State, and local government and NGOs to ensure trafficking victims receive vital victim services, resource referrals and support throughout the justice process.

[Source: <http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/1204/120427phoenix.htm>]

JP Morgan Chase/HSI Award

ICE HSI and JP Morgan Chase recently received the Association of Certified Anti

Money Laundering Specialists' first-ever private sector/government partnership award at this year's International Money Laundering Conference. The award was presented to HSI and JP Morgan Chase as a result of their partnership, enhanced through the HSI Cornerstone Outreach Initiative, to find innovative ways of detecting and identifying human smuggling/human trafficking networks.

Anyone who suspects instances of human trafficking is encouraged to call the ICE HSI Hotline at 1-888-3737-888. Anonymous calls are welcome.

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