

“Selling Bodies, Stealing Lives: The Global Sex Slavery Crisis in the 21st Century”

The Women’s Studies Committee of South Texas College is hosting its fourth annual conference to address the horrifying realities of the Human Sex Trafficking trade. Almost one million people are trafficked across international borders each year and countless thousands more are kidnapped or sold within their own countries. Worldwide, sex trafficking is a 12-billion-dollar-a-year business. The sale of women and children is one of the fastest growing criminal industries in the world. Most of these women and children are forced to work as prostitutes and are often sold multiple times. They are required to pay off their debt for “freedom” while their owner makes tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars. To control them, pimps and traffickers physically and psychologically brutalize sex workers, threatening to kill family members of the unwilling.

The conference will address both the supply and demand side of the sex trafficking industry. We will question what cultural, social, economic, and psychological conditions have led to the tragic explosion of demand for trafficked persons and the marketing of sex tours to the third world. We will explore whether legalized prostitution and the growing social acceptance of pornography create tolerance for the sexual exploitation of women. We will also focus on the increasingly globalized and privatized economic conditions that perhaps foster the growing market in human flesh worldwide, displacing millions of people and leaving them vulnerable to the wealthy and the powerful.

Our goals are to raise awareness about the pervasiveness of the sex-trafficking business, to explore the deeper causes of sex trafficking, and ultimately to take part in the larger international conversation about how to stop this insidious crime. We hope to address these questions and to consider forms of resistance to this deplorable exploitation of millions, which undermines basic respect for human rights and dignity.

Main Location:

Cooper Center, Pecan Campus
South Texas College
3200 W. Pecan Blvd
McAllen, Texas

Agenda

Tuesday, April 6th

6:30 – 7:30 pm Opening reception.

7:30 – 9:00 pm Film “Playground”

Wednesday, April 7th

8:30 – 9:00 am Registration

9:00 – 9:15 am Opening Remarks

9:15 – 10:15 am Keynote Speaker: “The Business of Global Sex Trafficking”
Siddharth Kara, Fellow on Human Trafficking, Harvard University and author of *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Global Slavery*

10:15 – 10:30 am Break

- 10:30 – 11:30 am “International Human Trafficking: Analyzing Foreign National Case Law to Understand the Crime and the Criminal”
Laura Lederer, JD Vice President, Global Centurion and adjunct professor, Georgetown Law Center
- 11:30 – 12:00 pm Book Signing
- 12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:00 pm “Demand: the Common Denominator in Sex Trafficking”
Samantha Healy Vardaman, J.D. Senior Director, Shared Hope International
- 2:00– 2:45 pm “Central America: Land of Origin, Transit, and Destiny”
Ana Salvado, Costa Rica
- 2:45 – 3:00 pm Break
- 3:00 –3:45 pm “Used Pathways: Domestic Minor, Youth Sex Trafficking in Eastern Europe”
Andrea Powell, Executive Director, Fair Fund
- 3:45 – 4:30 pm "The Journey into Hell: Rescue Workers Talk About Their Lives in Russia, Moldova, and Ukraine” **Kate S. Transchel**, PhD, Lantis Professor of History, California State University, Chico, California
- 4:30 – 5:00 pm “The Importance of Government Collaboration with NGOs in Combating Human Trafficking: A Comparison of the Czech Republic, Poland and Ukraine”
Marie Bezdicsek, Graduate, California State University, Sacramento
- 5:00 – 5:30 pm “What Drives the Need for International Sex Trafficking: Supply of and Demand for Human Commodities in a Capitalist Society”
Melissa Torres, MSW, PhD Student/Research assistant, Graduate College of Social Work, University of Houston
- 5:30 – 6:30 pm Dinner
- 6:30 – 7:30 pm Featured Speaker: “The Price of Sex: Women Speak”
Mimi Chakarova, Photojournalist, UC Berkeley and Stanford University

Thursday, April 8th

- 9:00 – 10:00 am “Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking”
Anna Rodriguez, Founder and Director, Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking
- 10:00 – 11:00 am “Commercial Sex Exploitation and Child Sex Trafficking”
Marisa Ugarte, Director, Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, San Diego, CA
- 11:00 – 11:15 am Break
- 11:15 – 12:00 pm “The Experience of Sex Trafficking Victims in the U.S. Legal System”
Terry Coonan, Executive Director of the FSU Center for the Advancement of Human Rights, Law and Criminology Professor, Florida State University
- 12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch

- 1:00 – 1:30 pm “Addressing the Needs of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Victims: Pathways to Effective Service Delivery”
Olga Turner, Resource Development Specialist at National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)
- 1:30 – 2:00 pm “Prosecution of Human Traffickers in the Sex Trade as Sex Offenders: the Need for a Trafficker Registry”
Geneva Brown, Assistant Professor of Law, Valparaiso University School of Law, Indiana
- 2:00 – 2:45 pm “Community Awareness: The First Step in Rescuing Victims”
Maria Trujillo, Executive Director, Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition
- 2:45 –3:00 pm Break
- 3:00 – 3:30 pm “Overview and Structure of the Human Trafficking Prevention Taskforce”
Denise Donnelly and **Kay Woodard Hotz**, Attorney General’s Office
- 3:30 – 4:00 pm “The Coordination of Human Trafficking Services in Central Texas”
Jenny White, MSSW, Case Manager, Refugee Services of Texas
- 4:00 – 5:00 Panel: Human Trafficking – A Presentation and Panel on State /Local Issues and Challenges
Moderator: **Corinna Spencer-Scheurich**, Attorney, South Texas Civil Rights Project
Panelists: **Diana Velardo**, (University of Houston Law Center, Clinical Supervisor, Crime Victims Coordinator)
Bill Bernstein (Mosaic Family Services, Dallas, Deputy Director)
Olga Delarosa (United States Attorneys’ Office, Victim Witness Specialist, U.S. Department of Justice, Southern District of Texas)
Furqan Sunny Azhar, (Immigration Attorney, Dallas)
- 5:00 – 5:30 pm **Omeheira Lopez Reyna**, Coordinator of the National Commission Against Human Rights Violations in Mexico.
- 5:30 – 6:30 pm Dinner
- 6:30 – 7:30 pm Featured Speaker: “Lost Innocence”
Somaly Mam, Human Trafficking Survivor, author of “The Road to Lost Innocence”

Friday, April 9th

- 8:30 –10:20 am “Human Trafficking 101”
Billy Sifuentes, Human Trafficking Liaison, Austin Police Department
- 10:20 – 10:30 am Break
- 10:30 – 11:15 am “The Role of DHS-ICE in Human Trafficking Cases”
Alfred Hollenbeck, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, DHS-ICE
- 11:15 – 11:50am “The Role of the FBI in Trafficking Cases”
Eduardo Izaguirre, SSA-FBI

- 11:50 – 12:30 pm “Sex Trafficking Cases from Bexar County”
Kirsta Melton, Assistant District Attorney, Bexar County District Attorney’s Office
- 12:30 – 1:15 pm Working Lunch
- 1:15 – 2:00 pm “Inter-agency Collaboration on Human Trafficking: Drawing on Experience from Past Cases”
Christian Burchell, Bexar County Sheriff’s Office, Human Trafficking Task Force Leader
- 2:00 – 3:00 pm “Immigration Remedies and Other Benefits for Human Trafficking Victims: Law Enforcement and Legal Options Available to Foreign National Victims of Human Trafficking”
Erica Schommer, Attorney, Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid
Furqan Sunny Azhar, Immigration Attorney, Dallas

Agenda as of 16th March.

This agenda is tentative and subject to change.