

TRUCKERS AGAINST TRAFFICKING

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To some, the word “slavery” might evoke horrific mental images of a pre-Civil War era, and we may even try to sanitize those thoughts with the self-assurances that this was a shameful reality from the pages of history. In truth, modern slavery denies freedom to an estimated 40.3 million individuals globally, with children comprising one in four of its victims. Human trafficking has been reported in all 50 states, where hundreds of thousands of victims are exploited for commercial sex or labor.

Traffickers use force, fraud, and coercion to secure their victims. Some victims are lured online, kidnapped out of schools, shopping malls, or on the streets. Through fear and intimidation, they are forced into slavery with threats of violence toward family members, fear of exposure to law enforcement and/or immigration authorities, and through degrading humiliation.

In 2012, the American Trucking Association joined forces with TAT in the quest to enlist the trucking industry to aid in the fight. The goal is to train and educate truck drivers to be the eyes and ears of the road and truck stops, with numbers and in ways the police simply can't, and to alert authorities to suspicious situations. To date, some 794,905 members of the trucking industry are TAT trained, and since 2009 when TAT began through the end of July 2018, truckers have made 2,432 calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. These calls reported a total of 655 cases of potential human trafficking, involving 1,215 potential victims, almost half of those being minors.

You only have to log into Facebook or listen to the news to know that there is an encroaching epidemic in our country that is a multimillion dollar industry, leaving us all feeling helpless. However, this past May, Cottingham & Butler stepped into the arena of difference-makers, by hosting ATA member Rhonda Hartman for a learning session, where she was able to offer tremendous insight into the world of human trafficking and the impact that TAT is making in countless lives every day. C&B Jeans Day participation raised \$1,565, and then this past August, TAT was also invited to participate in C&B's Transportation Summit, which afforded excellent exposure to companies new to TAT.

Being chosen as a featured recipient of Cottingham & Butler's 2020 Jeans Days would give all employees an opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of both victims and survivors of human slavery.

Here's what one \$5 donation can provide to help educate the drivers of a small trucking company:

- 5 training DVDs
- 250 wallet cards
- 40 window decals
- 25 Everyday Heroes posters

To find out more about Truckers Against Trafficking, visit www.truckersagainsttrafficking.org.