



USC
Suzanne
Dworak-Peck
School of Social Work
Trauma Recovery Center

HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIM SERVICES & LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION EVENT

2025



**WEDNESDAY,
JANUARY 22ND 2025**



10:30AM – 2:30PM



**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA CARUSO
CATHOLIC CENTER**



**AN EVENT IN HONOR OF HUMAN
TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH**

EVENT **AGENDA**

10:30 AM

Networking & Breakfast

11:30 AM

Welcome from Saving Innocence:
Sara Elander & Alan Smyth

Update on Operation Reclaim Rebuild:
Sgt. Jeff Walker (LASD)

Welcome from USC School of Social Work:
Rosemary Alamo, Ricardo Ornelas,
Sarah Caliboso-Soto

12:00 PM

Lunch by Chick Fil A &
Rutts Hawaiian Cafe

12:30 PM

Keynote by Rebecca Bender

01:00 PM

Expert Panel

02:00 PM

Conclusion & Networking



MEET

OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER REBECCA BENDER

Rebecca Bender is an entrepreneur, activist, author, and TEDx speaker recognized as a trailblazer in the fight against human trafficking. After escaping her trafficker in 2007, she completed her master's degree and launched a nonprofit organization. Through her specialized training programs, Rebecca has equipped over 140,000 professionals, including the FBI, Homeland Security, local law enforcement agencies, undercover units, and more. Her online school, Elevate Academy, is the largest of its kind globally, helping nearly 1,700 survivors become job-ready after escaping trafficking. An award-winning thought leader, Rebecca was appointed by the U.S. Attorney General to the National Advisory Council, where she helps inform Congress on policies related to human trafficking and serves as an advisor to prominent nonprofits and government agencies. She also acts as a subject matter expert on investigations nationwide and is frequently called upon to testify as an expert witness. Rebecca graduated from the UCLA Film School and has executive-produced several projects addressing human trafficking. She believes that entertainment is one of the most powerful tools to impact cultural.

MEET OUR PANELISTS



Holly Priebe-Sotelo

Dr. Holly Priebe Sotelo is an Associate Professor of Social Practicum Education at the University of Southern California (USC), Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Since 1991, Priebe Sotelo has been practicing social work, with years of experience in K-12 public education, public child welfare, mental health, probation, and higher education. Her topics of expertise include human trafficking; child abuse and family violence, school-based violence, bullying and crisis response; intergroup mediation; and diversity and equity. Priebe Sotelo has presented to school districts internationally, nationally, and locally, on topics of school-based violence, including making television and radio appearances, and cited as an expert from CNN, KABC, KNBC, Telemundo, Univision, KPCC Radio, KNX Radio, KCET, Los Angeles Times, and others.



Dr. Debra Waters-Roman

Dr. Debra Waters-Roman is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Licensed Clinical Psychologist in the state of California. Dr. Waters-Roman currently serves as a Clinical Associate Professor at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Prior to joining USC, Dr. Waters-Roman worked for the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services. As a mental health clinician, Dr. Waters-Roman has been providing mental health services to survivors of trauma for the last 35 years. Dr. Waters-Roman also works for a community based mental health organization and provides services to survivors of intimate partner violence, child abuse, human trafficking, clergy abuse and sexual abuse. In addition, Dr. Waters-Roman specializes in providing services to children on the autism spectrum and their families.



Sherri Harris

Sherri Harris is a Victim Assistance Program Specialist (VAPS) for Homeland Security Investigations' (HSI) Los Angeles field office. Sherri has been involved in the anti-trafficking community for over 20 years in various capacities both at the Federal and local level. Sherri recently returned to So. Cal. from 8 ½ years in Washington DC where she spent 4 years with the Dept of Homeland Security's (DHS) Victim Assistance Program as the liaison to the Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Programs. Prior to joining HSI, Sherri was a Project Officer at the HHS Office on Trafficking in Persons, overseeing Federal anti-trafficking grants such as the National Human Trafficking Hotline and enjoyed working with the various Federal anti-trafficking working groups.

As a VAPS, Sherri supports victims of federal crimes as they move through the investigative process by ensuring victims have access to the rights and services to which they are entitled by law. Sherri collaborates with HSI Special Agents and others to discuss significant case information or assessment of ongoing victim needs, planning for operations, and coordination of victim assistance efforts. Sherri's goal is to ensure community partners are available to support victims as they stabilize and start to rebuild their lives.

Prior to her work with the Federal government, Sherri was a founding member of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force and spent 13 years building the foreign national victims programming and worked with over 250 victims of human trafficking. One of Sherri's favorite aspects of her job is walking alongside victims as they progress through the criminal justice system ensuring they feel safe and secure in the process. Her other passion is providing training and technical assistance on various topics such as working with foreign national victims, victim-centered investigations, and identifying resources in hard to serve communities. She has a M.Ed. from Azusa Pacific University and a Master's in Public Health (MPH) from Loma Linda University. Sherri enjoys international travel, has been to over 30 countries and wishes she was fluent in Spanish.

MEET OUR PANELISTS



Panida Rzonca

Panida Rzonca, JD, is Directing Attorney at the Thai Community Development Center where she manages the delivery of comprehensive social and legal services including trauma-informed, culturally, and linguistically appropriate victim's rights representation and legal services including affirmative immigration relief, labor claims, victims' rights advocacy, restitution, victim representation in a criminal setting, civil legal assistance, and family reunification. Panida graduated from Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles, CA. She is a Past President of the Thai American Bar Association and received the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association Best Under 40 Award in 2021. Panida currently serves as a Commissioner on the California Access to Justice Commission.



Gary Furuyama

Detective Gary M. Furuyama is a 34-year veteran of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. In 2006, he promoted and transferred to the Sheriff's Department Major Crimes Bureau as an Undercover Vice Detective. In 2015 he was re-assigned to the newly formed Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Taskforce. His current job duties include investigations involving commercial sex and labor trafficking. Detective Furuyama has also worked numerous investigations involving the commercial sex trade, pimping, pandering, and human trafficking. Detective Furuyama is also a Sheriff's Department instructor that routinely teaches for his department, other law enforcement agencies, and various non-sworn entities.



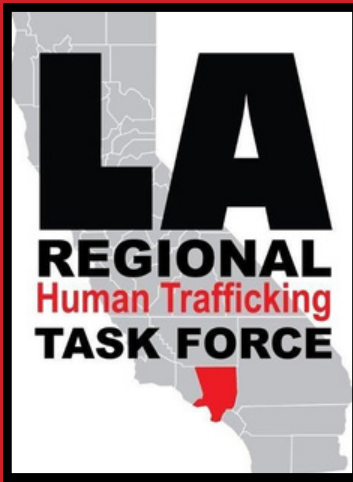
Lashea Jones

Lashea Brown has dedicated the past 3 ½ years to serving survivors of human trafficking at Saving Innocence, where she provides crisis support, intensive case management, and victim-witness testifying assistance. Armed with a Master's Degree in Public Health, Lashea approaches human trafficking as a public health issue, using her unique perspective to address the complex, underlying needs of survivors.

Her passion for this work led to her promotion to Lead Case Manager, with a focus on Task Force operations. In this role, Lashea has been instrumental in developing and refining crisis protocols to ensure interventions and resources are both effective and efficient. She works closely with community partners, law enforcement, and government agencies to build a seamless and integrated support system that meets the diverse needs of survivors.

In addition to her role as Lead Case Manager, Lashea also draws on her Bachelor's Degree in Ethnic Studies and extensive experience in reproductive health to facilitate specialized programming for pregnant and parenting survivors. She has created curricula and has organized events designed to provide essential support and resources for these individuals.

With a deep understanding of both the immediate needs of individuals in crisis and the broader systems of care, Lashea remains dedicated to fostering lasting, positive change through collaboration, strategic planning, and compassionate, survivor-focused service.



LARHTTF SUBCOMMITTEES

JAN ↘
22

VICTIM SERVICES

APRIL ↘
24

VICTIM SERVICES

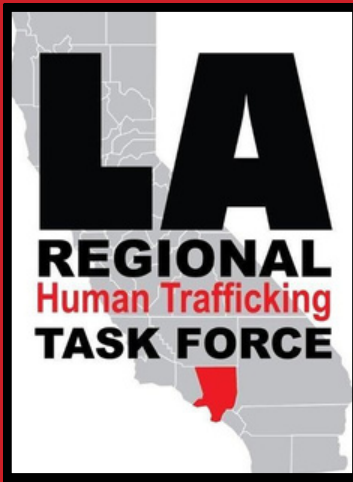
JULY ↘
24

VICTIM SERVICES

OCT ↘
23

VICTIM SERVICES

LED BY **SARA ELANDER**; SAVING INNOCENCE



LARHTTF SUBCOMMITTEES

**IF YOU'D LIKE TO SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE VICTIM SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE:**



[CLICK THIS LINK](#)

**IF YOU'D LIKE TO SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE LABOR TRAFFICKING
SUBCOMMITTEE:**



[CLICK THIS LINK](#)

**IF YOU'D LIKE TO ADD YOUR
ORGANIZATION TO THE LARHTTF VICTIM
SERVICES PARTNER DIRECTORY:**



[CLICK THIS LINK](#)



ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER HT TASK FORCE

THE ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE (APIHTTF) OF AAPI EQUITY ALLIANCE AIMS TO SERVE ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER (API) VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND TO RAISE AWARENESS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE API COMMUNITIES.

APIHTTF WAS FOUNDED TO BRING TOGETHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO BETTER ASSIST THE EVER GROWING NUMBER OF API VICTIMS DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY HUMAN TRAFFICKING BY EFFICIENTLY WORKING TO PROVIDE ALL THE NECESSARY SERVICES FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS THAT, ALONE, EACH ORGANIZATION WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO OFFER.

TO JOIN, EMAIL JJU@AAPIEQUITYALLIANCE.ORG

JAN ▾

24

APIHTTF

APRIL ▾

25

APIHTTF

JULY ▾

25

APIHTTF

OCT ▾

31

APIHTTF

PROGRAMS

1

CRISIS RESPONSE & COORDINATION

Saving Innocence provides Crisis Coordination & Response to survivors of CSE and all forms of Human Trafficking. This can include on-site advocacy and case management, housing coordination, crisis transportation, short term food assistance, safety planning, and ensuring all basic needs are met. Crisis Response and Coordination are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Who qualifies?

- Any survivor of CSE and/or Human Trafficking in Los Angeles County.
- Note: if a minor is involved, the Child Protective Services Hotline will be called and DCFS will be notified.

How long are services provided for?

- Crisis Coordination & Response services are offered for as long as deemed necessary by the responding Case Manager and their supervisor. Individuals can consent to Advocacy & Case Management services to extend services.

How do I contact Crisis Response?

- Our public crisis hotline number is 888-616-HEAL (888-616-4325).

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ADVOCACY & CASE MANAGEMENT

Advocacy & Case Management provides one-on-one mentorship, emotional support, independent living development, and access to resources and referrals to partner organizations that provide for a client's identified needs. Our Advocates, Case Managers, and Lived Experience Experts are extensively trained in CSE and all forms of Human Trafficking and provide trauma informed/responsive care to ensure clients are treated with compassion and thoroughness. Advocates & Case Managers utilize Advocacy Plans and SMART goals to assist and support clients with identifying their needs and achieving their goals.

Saving Innocence prioritizes accessibility and cultural competency by partnering with culturally specific services to provide comprehensive care and by translating materials into Spanish, Simplified Chinese, and Korean. Services are offered in Spanish by bilingual Case Managers and interpreter services are available free of charge.

Who qualifies?

- Individuals of all ages impacted by CSE and/or Human Trafficking in Los Angeles County.

How long are services provided for?

- Advocacy & Case Management services are available for up to one year.

How do I make a referral?

- Complete our Saving Innocence Referral Form and send to intake@savinginnocence.org.
- Call our Referral & Intake Hotline 888-315-9260 to complete self referral or to gain access to referral form.

3

WORKSHOPS

Saving Innocence offers a variety of workshops to enhance and support Advocacy & Case Management services for current clients. Clients can be referred to workshops by their assigned Saving Innocence Case Manager or Advocate.

Growth Group is a support group that focuses on trauma-informed interventions for individuals who identify as a survivor of CSE or Human Trafficking with an emphasis on process and organic conversation that arises from group participation. Growth Group provides a safe environment for participants to process through their experiences and find emotional support.

- This support group is held in Spring and Fall cohorts in two 8-week sessions.
- Participants must be between the ages of 18-24.

Life Skills is a summer workshop series that provides participants with comprehensive opportunities to learn and grow in independent living skills and self-sufficiency. The workshops are designed to connect participants to resources and support them as they build independent skills. Each session focuses on a different life skills topic, such as Healthy Cooking, Hair Braiding, and Housing Navigation.

- This workshop series is held from June to August, meeting weekly.
- Participant minimum age requirements vary by session topic, ranging from ages 12-24.

Mommy & Me is a support and educational group designed for pregnant and parenting clients to learn and discuss child development topics related to pregnancy, childbirth, and the first 5 years of their children's lives. It is an opportunity for pregnant and parenting clients to connect with other moms who are going through similar joys and challenges of motherhood.

- This support group is held in Spring and Fall cohorts in 8 week sessions, meeting bi-weekly.
- Participants must be actively parenting children between the ages of 0-5.

4

VICTIM TESTIFYING SUPPORT

Victim Testifying Support provides court support and advocacy for individuals asked to testify against a trafficker or in a trafficking-related case. Services include in-person court support and advocacy, food assistance, and short-term housing through hotels for the duration of testifying (if needed).

Who qualifies?

- Any identified victim or witness of CSE and/or Human Trafficking who has been subpoenaed to appear in court for a trafficking-related case in Los Angeles County. Note: A subpoena or DA referral is required for these services.

How long are services provided for?

- The duration of the court hearing with an additional 30 days of emotional support and linkage to outside services.

TRC@USC

The path toward hope, healing and wellness for survivors of crime begins at the Trauma Recovery Center at USC

USC
Suzanne
Dworak-Peck
School of Social Work
Trauma Recovery Center

Providing safe and culturally sensitive mental health and supportive services for those who have been affected by crime.

Our Services

All services are provided free of charge

- Mental Health
 - Individual and group therapy
 - Assessment and treatment plans
 - Medication evaluation and support
- Care Coordination
 - Case management
 - Referral and advocacy
- Community Outreach and Training
 - Partnership development
 - Victim-centered education

We provide support for ALL crime-related trauma, including child abuse and neglect, sexual assault, battery, community violence, human trafficking, or grief and loss.



Clinic Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM (PST)

In-Person or Virtual

Bilingual services available

Contact Us



866.345.8777
trcsowk@usc.edu
bit.ly/TRCatUSC

GET IN TOUCH

SAVING INNOCENCE



Sara Elander; Assistant Director of Programs



sara@savinginnocence.org



(424) 355-1760

USC SUZANNE DWORAK-PECK SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



Sarah Caliboso-Soto; Assistant Director of Clinical Programs



scalibos@usc.edu



(213) 821-4292