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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

WRITTEN BY KAREN WALKOWSKI



I recently had dinner with the former District Governor of District 5950 who was the District Governor when I was President of my local Rotary Club. Bob was the person who asked me to lead, what became the Rotary Initiative to End Human Trafficking in Minnesota in 2017. As we were reflecting on what has happened with this initiative which started five years ago as a three-year project in Minnesota amazed us both.

Bob's wisdom, leadership and commitment gave power and longevity to this important initiative. It was Bob who had the vision to know that something as important as this initiative would take longer than one year to get going, so he worked with his successors AND three years of leadership in a neighboring District (District 5960) to make a three year commitment to support the work of our team. A year later, District 5580 which serve northern Minnesota, North Dakota, northwestern Wisconsin and part of Ontario joined the effort so we expanded the mission of the initiative which became known as the "Tri District Rotary Initiative to End Human Trafficking.

Two years ago, knowing that the three-year commitment was completing, I approached our District leadership asking for their assistance. I knew that work was just beginning, and we needed to establish a model that was more sustainable than the model that had been created for the initial initiative. THUS the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking was born with the support and assistance of yet another District Governor, Tom Cump.

As I now look to end my tenure as the Charter President of the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking, I am excited to see a club that not only is sustainable but is expanding in its influence within Rotary and in communities around the world. In the two years since this club was formed, 5-6 other clubs focusing on ending human trafficking have been formed. Many traditional clubs have also started project in their local communities focusing on educating young people on avoiding becoming victims. We have established a great relationship with the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery (RAGAS) and with other non-profit organizations. We have members from four continents who are committed to expanding influence in their countries/continents. And we continue to expand the awareness at Rotary International about this critical human rights travesty.

This will be my last letter to you as I will be ending my tenure as President of the club. Michelle Seets will become President as of July 1 and I know that this club will continue to grow and thrive under her leadership. Thank you for the honor of being your President for the last two years.

LGBTQ+ Youth, Homelessness, and Human Trafficking

Written By: Veralice Navarro

June 1st marks the start of PRIDE month, a celebration of all LGBTQ+ members and their identities. This celebration honors the 1960 Stonewall Uprising and its role as a tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the 60s. All across the nation, members of the LGBTQ+ celebrate their identities

The Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking also wants to highlight the overlap between the LGBTQ+ community and human trafficking.

Members of this community, more specifically youth, are disproportionately vulnerable to human traffickers. LGBTQ+ youth are disproportionately more likely to be forced out of their homes and be outcasts of their communities due to their sexuality and gender identities. A lack of funding in homeless shelters and the discrimination of the LGBTQ+ community in some spaces, leave these youth with very few resources and safe spaces. A lack of bed spaces and shelters willing to take them in leaves many to find refuge in the streets. From here this homeless population from this community is incredibly vulnerable to traffickers and sexual exploitation. Reports are that within 48 hours of being on the streets, one in three homeless youth will be recruited by a trafficker into commercial sexual exploitation. The individuals captured by traffickers are victims of physical, mental, and sexual abuse. The abuse coupled with a lack of resources and the stigma surrounding same-sex prostitution leads to a continuous cycle of abuse.

The LGBTQ+ community's presence in human trafficking is often ignored and shunned from the spotlight. This community relies on specialized outreach and support programs, and they need funding.

The Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking wants to highlight organizations and programs to help LGBTQ+ victims of homelessness and human trafficking:

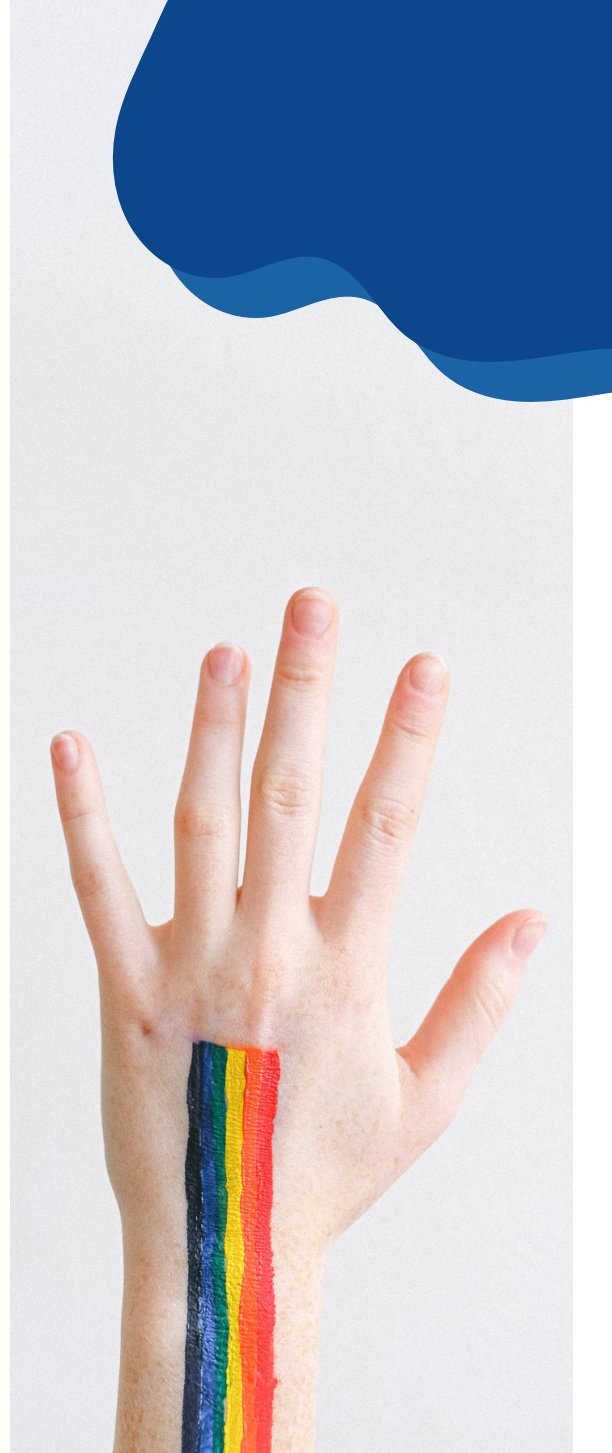
[THE TREVOR PROJECT](#)

[NATIONAL COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS](#)

[THE ALI FORNEY CENTER](#)

[LARKIN STREET YOUTH SERVICES](#)

[MY FRIEND'S PLACE](#)



RECENTLY AT ROTARY



Brightna Hu

Marketing Intern, Communications Committee

Hi RCEHT community! I'm so excited to be a RCEHT marketing/ communications intern this summer! I'm a Marketing major and Studio Art Minor at Boston College who loves to cook, draw and hike. I am passionate about social justice, such as climate change, and being in RCEHT will be my first time learning in depth about and fighting to end human trafficking. I hope that I can use my Marketing skills to help spread awareness and inspire action in others.

Hello Rotary community, I'm excited to join your team as a marketing/communications intern here at the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking. I am an Advertising major and am used to navigating an ethically gray work space and am excited to use my skills to make some positive change in the world. This is the first time that I have worked with a nonprofit so I'm excited to dive deep and learn all of the ins and outs that I can to help move the club forward. I hope to use my skills not only to spread awareness but help others act and continue the fight to end human trafficking.



Vera Navarro

Marketing Intern, Communications Committee

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



"In July this year, we will be holding the **5th Asia Region Anti Trafficking Conference** online"



THANKS TO HELEN SWORN

The aim of the conference is to develop multi-sector learning and partnerships to improve our responses to the issues of human trafficking and slavery in Asia and beyond.

It is a great opportunity to be updated on the trends and changes in the region and its impact for the future to establish the realities of our context. Also for us to learn from each other the best practices in what we do in our contexts and identify key industries and contexts for collaborative action."

Learn more about the event [here](#) and buy tickets [here](#).

NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK

RCEHT is evolving and growing. As we continue to do so, the communications committee would greatly appreciate any feedback you have on how to improve the newsletter.

Please complete [this form](#) to submit relevant information or news you would like to share with the club in the next month's release. The more we collaborate and connect with each other, the stronger our club is in creating effective change to achieve our Rotary mission.

CLUB UPDATES



Through Twitter, RCEHT can reach broader and wider audiences. Please follow our newly created account [here](#) and promote within your own network.

Twitter is the Communications Committee's newest addition to our social media strategy. RCEHT will be joining many other Rotary clubs, such as Rotary North East, Rotary District 9213 and more. Twitter is a great platform to spread awareness about human trafficking, connect with and support other Rotary clubs and accounts dedicated to the same cause, and learn about time-sensitive, important and relevant news.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING *WINS*

As our topic “human trafficking” can get quite dreary and depressing, this corner is meant to bring some light and remind us why we do what we do! Here are just **TWO** success stories:

70 MISSING CHILDREN RECOVERED!

In a three-week operation, known as “Operation Lost Souls,” in West Texas, Texas authorities successfully recovered 70 children ranging in age from 10 to 17 who were victims of sex trafficking, physical and sexual abuse. To read more, click [here](#).

FORMER NISKAYUNA RESTAURANT OWNER SENTENCED FOR LABOR TRAFFICKING

The owner of the now-closed Thai Thai Bistro in Niskayuna, New York is sentenced to 5 years probation after pleading guilty to labor trafficking. To read more, click [here](#).

JUNE HOLIDAYS

As a global organization Rotary is fortunate to celebrate many holidays around the world. This month the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking wants to highlight three holidays



Pride Month : Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Pride Month is currently celebrated each year in the month of June to honor the 1969 Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan. Pride gatherings are rooted in the arduous history of minority groups who have struggled for decades to overcome prejudice and be accepted for who they are. These gatherings include massive rallies, pride parades, parties, workshops, concerts, and countless more LGBTQ+ events to attract participants from all over



World Day Against Child Labor: Launched by the International Labor Organization to focus attention on the global extent of child labour and the action and efforts needed to eliminate it. Each year on 12 June, the World Day brings together governments, employers and workers organizations, civil society, as well as millions of people from around the world to highlight the plight of child labourers and what can be done to help them.



Juneteenth : Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. Its origins date back to 1865 in Galveston, TX and its total celebration varies from a day, to a week, to a month. Juneteenth commemorates African American freedom and emphasizes education and achievement marked with celebrations, guest speakers, picnics and family gatherings.