

ROTARY CLUB TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

MAR/APR 2026 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Guided by Rotary's message, "Find your cause and get involved," our club has committed its energy to confronting one of the most urgent human rights crises of our time. Human trafficking affects millions worldwide, exploiting vulnerability, poverty, and lack of opportunity. Our commitment is rooted in action.

We are raising awareness in our community, building partnerships locally and globally, and supporting efforts that prevent trafficking while helping survivors rebuild their lives.

This is not a distant issue; it exists in cities and neighborhoods everywhere, including our own.

Sustaining this work requires more than simple intention; it requires people and resources. We invite you to support this cause through active participation, membership, and fundraising efforts that enable us to expand our impact and reach those who need help most. Rotary has shown that sustained, focused effort can create lasting change. Its decades-long fight to eradicate polio proves what is possible when commitment meets collective action. We bring that same determination to ending human trafficking.

The call is simple, but powerful: find your cause and get involved. This is ours. And through service, advocacy, and action, we are helping lead a movement to restore dignity, freedom, and hope to those affected by human trafficking.

Yours in Rotary, Basseyy Kooffreh
President 2025–2026
Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking



HIGHLIGHTS

[PRESIDENT'S LETTER](#)

[MEMBER SPOTLIGHT](#)

[BOARD UPDATE/CLUB NEWS](#)

[SUCCESS STORY](#)

[CALL TO ACTION](#)

[EDI UPDATE](#)

[CALENDAR](#)

ADVANCING VICTIM IDENTIFICATION: A RECENT TRAINING CONTRIBUTION AT ICMEC



The International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC), with support from the U.S. Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP), conducted a four-day Victim-Centered Interviewing (VCI) training for members of the Indonesian National Police from 2–5 March 2026 in Jakarta. The program brought together investigators from cybercrime units, Women and Children Protection (PPA) units, and national police training institutions to strengthen investigative practices involving victims of child sexual abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and other forms of gender-based violence.

The training emphasized trauma-informed investigative approaches, ethical interviewing techniques, and the importance of protecting victims' dignity and psychological well-being during investigations. Sessions addressed emerging online exploitation trends, legal frameworks governing child protection, trauma impacts on victims, evidentiary processes, and multi-agency cooperation mechanisms necessary to effectively investigate and prosecute crimes involving child sexual exploitation and abuse.



International expert Lance Lueck, representing the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery (RAGAS), delivered three instructional sessions focused on victim identification, a critical early step in trafficking and child exploitation investigations. The sessions addressed the importance of rapid and accurate identification of victims, practical indicators used to recognize victims of child sexual abuse and trafficking, and the distinctions between behavioral, emotional, and physical indicators investigators may encounter.

Participants also discussed the challenge that many victims do not initially self-identify during police encounters and examined practical approaches for recognizing those indicators in real investigative situations. The instruction included a case-study-based discussion in which participants shared examples from their own experience and applied victim identification concepts to strengthen investigative awareness and practice.

Submitted by Lance Lueck



Laura is a social psychologist and full professor at Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky, where she teaches undergraduate courses and leads an interdisciplinary minor in Human Trafficking Studies. She also teaches graduate students at the University of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński in Warsaw, Poland. Within the American Psychological Association, she serves on the Committee for Global Psychology and as Secretary of the Society for General Psychology and Interdisciplinary Inquiry.

Her journey began in a Rotaract Club in Rome during her PhD. She became president of Rotary Club Roma Centenario, then served in the Rotary Club of Whittier, California. Through the Rotarian Action Group Against Slavery, she discovered the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking. Its virtual, globally connected format made joining a natural step.



DR LAURA DRYJANSKA

After an assistant governor encouraged members to consider leadership, her prior experience as club president gave her confidence. “I was equally inspired by the strong women who built this club.” She says

It sounds like administrative procedures and the extraordinary cultural diversity of its membership, all united for a common cause.

Rather than statistics, she sees the faces of survivors. “I have met people whose resilience humbles me”. She understands how psychological manipulation and trauma bonding make leaving exploitation profoundly difficult. As a mother of two young children, she is deeply committed to building environments where all children and youth can thrive and develop healthy relationships.

Her priorities align with the club's mission: raise awareness, educate communities, reduce vulnerability, and stop demand for human trafficking. She wants to grow membership, empower current Rotarians into greater leadership, and welcome college students. She is committed to continuing our work endorsing and funding anti-trafficking initiatives, a process she's especially proud of, given our members' expertise.

“I am a mom who treasures watching my children grow, play, and learn. As a family, we love to travel and discover new cultures, a joy that reflects my bicultural roots and my belief in the richness of cross-cultural connection.”

Rotary service is about bringing your full self, your story, gifts, expertise, and connections to improve lives around the world. “I am humbled by what our members do globally and believe every one of them has an amazing story worth sharing. I welcome ideas and collaboration from all.”

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Michelle Tupy is a purpose-driven professional currently based in Moncton, New Brunswick, specializing in strategic communication, stakeholder engagement, and community outreach. Her career has spanned grassroots organizations and national charities, consistently advancing missions rooted in gender equity, survivor empowerment, and inclusive community development.

She currently serves with Shelter Movers New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, an organization dedicated to providing free moving and storage services to individuals and families fleeing abuse. Though not a direct practitioner in the anti-trafficking field, her role regularly places her in stakeholder and internal conversations where sex trafficking is a critical and recurring topic.

She firmly believes that trafficking is a crisis that demands open dialogue rather than silence and it is that conviction, combined with the communities she serves daily, that drives her commitment to raising awareness and lending her voice to this vital cause.

Michelle RCEHT is joining as an Associate member



Michelle Tupy



Patti Mellard

Patti Mellard, a Rotarian for 37 years, speaks volumes about her dedication and commitment to service. She currently holds the role of Secretary/Treasurer of the Community Action Against Human Trafficking Rotary Club, joining to strengthen communication and collaboration within the organization.

Her anti-trafficking contributions are significant, having authored and implemented four Rotary Global Grants focused on human trafficking education and victim assistance, alongside numerous District grants dedicated to supporting victims and survivors. These achievements reflect her ability to translate advocacy into meaningful and concrete action.

Her grant writing expertise, stakeholder engagement skills, and decades of Rotary service make her a tremendous asset to the club, bringing not only professional capability but a genuine and heartfelt investment in ending human trafficking and supporting those affected by it.

Patti is joining RCEHT as an Associate member

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE UPDATE

In July 2023, the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking introduced its Economic Development Initiative (EDI) as a long-term strategy to prevent human trafficking by expanding opportunity and creating sustainable employment in vulnerable communities. EDI acts as a facilitator connecting Economic Development knowledge resources to organizations and projects that have need of those resources to create meaningful change.

There is a strong temptation and a great deal of pressure from the social impact following public to deliver rapid results. This leads to flashy projects with lots of pictures of smiling faces that don't deliver meaningful results. There is a reason that the billions of dollars of social impact aid to disadvantaged countries over the last five decades have not produced meaningful changes in socio-economic well-being.

REVIEW OF PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Mukangule Agricultural Enterprise — Zambia

Partner: Community Conservation and Economic Development (CCED)

Goal: Build food security and income pathways for displaced youth through agricultural training and sales.

Description: A displaced rural tribe had no natural internal food resources, forcing members to walk hours a day to get fresh vegetables and fruit. CCED is facilitating the creation of new local gardening that is focused on selling to its own community.

EDI Contribution – Business Coaching for CCED Leadership, Starlink Communication System

Status: CCED in its report to its primary donors has recorded this as its most successful project to date. Clever Musonda, CCED Directors stated of EDI contributor Colin Christensen's contribution, "Collin has been very handy in shaping what CCED has done and achieved in the last year of operations."

We have a goal to extend Colin's coaching to the farmers themselves. There is still work to be done to get the Starlink system fully functioning.



NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

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.

Jerome Fleischer School — Lusaka, Zambia

Partners: Zambia Messianic Fellowship & Messianic Jewish Africa Support Foundation

Goal: Pair academic education with entrepreneurship training and business development to move graduates into real jobs and income.

Description: JFS provides education for orphans but has been frustrated in not having a viable path for those students to achieve meaningful employment. EDI, making use of Colin Christensen's proven system, will be providing self-employment training and support to students in the 12th and 11th grade so they have a path to income upon graduation.

Status: Upon starting the project, we immediately encountered problems in providing the necessary training due to a lack of online communication capabilities. EDI has provided funds so JFS can secure a Starlink system. Initial training of 'trainers' (teachers) commenced in April.



Theodora Africa/Theodora Ghana Virtual Assistants (TGVA) – Accra, Ghana

Partners: Podolny Group International, TGVA Foundation, TG Virtual Assistants, Rotary Club of Accra Spintex, Muslim Family Counseling Service

Goal: Create sustainable outsourcing business to provide employment and ownership opportunities for young women forced into sex trade or at risk for same.

Description: TGVA uses a unique model focused on demand for specific types of work within developed countries. It creates outsourced businesses to serve those markets and uses those to train and develop young women who otherwise have no opportunities for genuine, well-paying careers.

Status: EDI partner TG Virtual Assistants has facilitated a training program run by its partner, the Muslim Family Counseling Service. TGVA, which is in its 7th year, is now a profitable entity. It and its sister non-profit, TGVA Foundation, will be taking on the responsibility for the continuing training of the Muslim Family Counseling trainees, looking to create careers for them as it has for the women who currently are enjoying successful careers at TGVA.



Submitted by Michael Podolny

CTDC: A GLOBAL DATA HUB HELPING SHAPE STRATEGIC RESPONSES TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Submitted by: Mark Heuchert

In the fight against human trafficking, clear data and reliable information are powerful allies. The Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC) is the world's first global data hub on human trafficking, developed through an unprecedented collaboration among major counter-trafficking organizations and designed to help policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and advocates better understand the scope, trends, and characteristics of trafficking worldwide.

What Is the Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative?

The CTDC is a centralized global repository of human trafficking case data contributed by partner organizations from around the world — including the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Polaris, and Liberty Shared. It brings together the largest harmonized collection of counter-trafficking case records ever assembled, with data on more than 150,000 victim cases across nearly every region of the world and visualizations accessible through interactive tools.

Unlike many public datasets that offer general estimates or high-level summaries, CTDC provides detailed, de-identified data drawn from real case management systems and sources such as hotline contacts, giving users insight into who victims are, how exploitation occurs, and where trafficking has been identified.

The Interactive Map: Seeing Patterns Across the Globe

One of CTDC's most compelling features is its interactive map, which visualizes trafficking data geographically. While the map doesn't display exact victim coordinates for privacy and safety reasons, it shows country-level trends and patterns that help illustrate where certain types of trafficking are reported and how those patterns vary regionally.

Key trends you can explore include:

- Regional distributions of trafficking cases
- Types of exploitation (e.g., labor vs. sexual exploitation) by region
- Demographic profiles such as age and gender trends
- Comparisons among countries to see where particular vulnerabilities or response gaps may be present

This map is a powerful visual tool that brings data to life and supports evidence-based decision-making — especially for organizations and networks working to target resources where they are most needed.

How Rotary Members Can Use CTDC

Rotarians and Rotary clubs engaged in anti-trafficking initiatives can leverage the CTDC resource in several ways:

- **Strengthening Proposals and Presentations:** Use CTDC data visualizations to support proposals for service projects or grant applications with evidence about trafficking patterns.
- **Education and Awareness:** Share insights from the map with club members and community partners to broaden understanding of global trafficking dynamics.
- **Partnership Development:** Inform collaborations with local and international anti-trafficking organizations by grounding conversations in shared evidence and trends.
- **Informed Advocacy:** Use trends from CTDC to advocate for specific policy reforms or resource allocations that address identified needs.

In a world where human trafficking is a complex and multifaceted crime, the Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative provides a vital foundation of evidence and insight. For Rotary members committed to ending trafficking, this tool can deepen understanding, shape strategy, and strengthen our collective impact.

For more information

visit: <https://www.ctdatacollaborative.org/>

RCEHT BOARD SUMMARY: MAR/APR 2026

Below are **topics** from the meetings on March 5 and April 2.

Let a board member know if you have any questions or comments!

- **Welcoming RCEHT President Elect:** Laura Dryjanska
- **Rotary International Convention:** Which members/associate members are going
- **Membership:** Associate membership for Michelle Tupy approved
- **Brainstorming:**
 - Future speakers and action days at club meetings
 - Future presidents and Board members
 - Further engagement of associate members
- **Programs & Projects Committee:**
 - Until end of FY2025-2026:
 - In April: reviewing 9 grants received in February and March
 - Accepting grants until May 15
 - FY2026-2027: Accepting only in August, September, and October

DONATE TO OUR FOUNDATION

Our primary focus this year is our Economic Development initiative where we are looking to provide seed funding to support entrepreneurs starting businesses as options to trafficking.

THE TOTAL FUNDRAISING GOAL FOR OUR PROJECTS ARE \$10,000.

If just 1/2 of our mailing list gave \$100, we would blow past our goal.

So please consider a donation now!

LINK FOR DONATIONS:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=525MMAAWSPK54

VISIT RCEHT SOCIAL MEDIA
PAGES.



PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE: CHANGES IN PROCESS FOR RCEHT GRANT APPLICATIONS

Since the beginning of 2026, RCEHT has received many more grant applications. In order to deal with the increase in applications, the following changes have been made regarding the process of review by the Programs and Projects Committee:

1. **FY 2025-2026:** applications must be received by May 15, 2026
2. **Starting FY 2026-2027:** applications must be sent between August 1 and October 31

In addition, applicants are reminded that RCEHT considers applications that meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. **Education/Prevention** programs addressing ending Human Trafficking
2. **Collaboration grants with other Rotary Clubs and organizations** that work on global anti-trafficking projects
3. **Economic Development Initiatives** that address the root causes of vulnerability to human trafficking

Join our Rotary network to end human trafficking

Traffickers are organized, so we need to be too. The Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking (RCEHT), a 100% virtual club, is building our Rotary network via our Associate members, who are already members of community-based Rotary clubs. RCEHT hosts 2 meetings a month where Rotarians everywhere can join to share ideas, listen to speakers related to ending human trafficking, and network with others committed to this fight. Associate members are also invited to support our club's Economic Development Initiative where we are working to implement solutions in high risk areas via our local Branches.

If you would like to learn more, please join us at an upcoming meeting by E-mailing President@endHTrotaryclub.org or contact our membership chair at membership@endHTrotaryclub.org.



CALENDAR & UPCOMING EVENTS

2026-27 LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our club is full of opportunities to serve. See below for a brief description of our many Board positions, committees and task forces.

Reach out to the RCEHT President via president@endhtrotaryclub.org with any questions or interest in helping! Good ideas don't get implemented without the hands to get the job done. Many thanks to those who are already stepping up to volunteer!

Welcome the 2026-2027 Board of Directors

President: Basseyy Kooffreh

Immediate Past President: Lisa Podolny, Michelle Seets & Karen Walkowski

President Elect: Laura Dryjanska

Secretary: Open- Michelle Seets acting

Treasurer: Karen Walkowski

Membership: OPEN - Lisa Podolny acting

Programs and Projects: Erin Maloney

Foundation Chair: Lisa Podolny

Fundraising: Mary Fiadese

PR: OPEN

Director(s) at Large: Maria Julia Moreyra, Mark Zorko, & Toni Lucas

STANDING MEETINGS

The General Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month @ 7:00 AM CT (US / Canada). Visit our website for details.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

SPEAKER

Francine Bono - Neri

DATE

MAY 14, 2026 @7:00 AM CT

Visit our [website](#) to learn more

Current Committee make up for next term

- Economic Development: Michael Podolny
- Branch: OPEN
- Speaker: Maria Julia Moreyra
- Sunshine: Toni Lucas
- Social: Anne Delain Clark

MEETING BASICS

We have social time 15 minutes before and after each Business Meeting.

We also have time allotted to share what you are up to regarding human trafficking.

You are welcome to invite others, just don't post the meeting link on social media and let President@endHTrotaryclub.org know who is coming so we know to let them enter the meeting space.