

# ROTARY CLUB TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

# MAR/APR NEWSLETTER



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Belonging to a Global Rotary Club brings unique challenges. I discovered one of those as I started writing this President's letter. I live in Minnesota which is located in the northern part of the United States, bordering on Canada. Those of us who live here celebrate the coming of spring as we watch the snow melt, the temperatures become warmer, the leaves start blooming and we enjoy the warm rays of the sun. However, those of you who live in other parts of the world don't understand the joy I feel as much!



Instead, I hope you read this issue of our club's newsletter. It is packed with many activities of our club and the organizations we enjoy informal and formal partnerships. We also celebrate four new members! Welcome to all of you.

As we grow in membership and activities, the need for funding to support incredible projects that are starting to come to our Programs and Projects Committee for consideration is increasing. You will be hearing more about the specific needs in the weeks to come. But if you can support our growing needs, please see the article on page 3 for details on how to donate to the club foundation.

Thank you for your support of our club and more importantly, on our quest to end human trafficking in every community!

Karen Walkowski  
Charter President  
Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking

## HIGHLIGHTS

[PRESIDENT'S LETTER](#)

[MAIN ARTICLE](#)

[NEW MEMBER  
SPOTLIGHT](#)

[CLUB NEWS & BOARD  
UPDATES](#)

[SUCCESS STORY](#)

[CALENDAR](#)



# NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



**Seema Balwani**

For over 25 years, Seema has worked on critical research, policymaking, and innovative solutions to advance our understanding of climate impacts and improve the sustainability of oceans. She has a B.A. from Columbia University, a Masters of Marine Affairs from the University of Washington, and an M.B.A. from the University of Hawaii. Seema enjoys travel, language study, watercolor painting, sketching, literature, art, theater, food (cooking and eating), gardening, and water sports.

Seema is joining as an Associate member of the RCEHT.

Matt's 40-year career in information technology has always been coupled with a commitment to peace building and positive social change. He has worked in commercial software development, academia, and with not-for-profit organizations in Australia and South Africa. During the last seven years, he has written half-a-dozen peer reviewed academic articles about human trafficking, and published two books.

Matthew is joining as a full member of the RCEHT.



**Matthew C. Clarke**



**Lance Lueck**

Lance is a Former US federal law enforcement officer living in Jakarta, Indonesia. Passion to stay in the fight against trafficking and child exploitation

"I am a new Rotarian and would like to assist this chapter with its mission to fight trafficking and child exploitation."

Lance is joining as an Associate member of the RCEHT.

"My name is Ernest Adonoo, or simply refer to me as Eli. I am a curious and friendly to people who willing to share their ideas and problems. I thrive on engaging conversations, providing creative ideas to solve problems through brainstorming. I want to join the Rotary club to connect with like-minded individuals who are dedicated to making a positive impact on their communities. I believe in Rotary's values of service above self and want to contribute my skills to meaningful projects. Joining the club would also offer an opportunity for personal growth and learning from other with diverse experiences and perspectives."

Eli is joining as a full member of the RCEHT.



**Ernest Elikplim Kwabla  
Adonoo**



**Lucy Bloom**

Lucy serves as Director of Impact Strategies for Altus Solutions, supporting Engage Together, Justice U and legislative efforts.

"My husband and I residents Olathe, KS, and have three grown sons and two grandchildren. I love music and horses."

Lucy is joining as a full member of the RCEHT.

# BOARD UPDATES

Rotary  
Club to  
End Human Trafficking



## RCEHT BOARD SUMMARY: MAR/APR 2025

Below are topics from the meetings on March 6 and April 3.

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

- Membership: Voted to approve 5 new members:
  - Ernest Adonoo (Full)
  - Seema Balwami (Associate)
  - Lucy Bloom (Full)
  - Matthew Clark (Full)
  - Lance Lueck (Associate)
- President-Elect Bassey Kooffreh: report from training at PETS (President-Elect Training Seminar)
- Programs & Projects: Keeping in contact with 7 endorses and inviting them to attend meetings / tell us about what they are up to
- RI Convention 2025: Talked about ways to promote RCEHT at Convention in Calgary and how to organize involvement for attendees (June 21-25)
- Upcoming club meeting topics: reviewed and planned

### CLUB LEADERSHIP TRAINING

April 26th - 8:30am - 2:00pm  
Chaska Community Center

FROM KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION: IMPLEMENTATION

Rotary  
District 5950



I am pleased to share an open and free invitation to attend the In-Person & Virtual Club Leadership Training for District 5950, scheduled for **April 26th**. It would be wonderful to have more of our members participate in this important training.

Please register for the event here:

[District Club Assembly & Implementation](#)

**Apr. 26, 2025 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time (UTC-05:00)**

**Chaska Community Center**

**1661 Park Ridge Dr Chaska, MN 55318**

This Club Leadership Training is free to all Rotarians and is open to current Club Presidents, Club President-Elects, future leaders, Club Committee Chairs and Members, Club Executives, Club Board Members, and all Rotarians interested in learning more about Rotary.

With Much Appreciation  
Bassey

## 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. More details can be found in our November / December [newsletter](#).

THE TOTAL FUNDRAISING GOAL FOR OUR PROJECTS ARE \$9,000. 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](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=525MMAAWSPK54)



# EMPOWERING VICTIMS OF GENDER - BASED VIOLENCE IN ARGENTINA

SUBMITTED BY MARIA JULIA MOREYRA

*María Julia Moreyra is an attorney in Argentina and magister of international relations, specializing in gender- based violence and human trafficking. She is one of the directors of the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery (RAGAS), Speaker Chair at the Rotary Club End Human Trafficking, a Rotary Peace Fellow, and a Rotary Positive Peace Activator.*

As a lawyer in Argentina who specialized in the fight against gender violence, I have been grieved by recent developments in my country. Argentina has a history as a pioneering country in addressing gender issues and had even made significant legal advances to protect women and promote diversity. But recently, the country has taken several steps back with the closing of the Ministry of Women (at national level), the elimination of subsidies for victims of gender-based violence, and the shrinking in size of the number of people manning hotlines by which victims of violence or human trafficking can report their situation or seek help.

I am a **Rotary Peace Fellow**, having gained invaluable experience in the complicated issues surrounding human trafficking during my time at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. I have also completed **Rotary's Positive Peace Academy**; and in 2020 was selected to become a Positive Peace Activator. The Pillars of Positive Peace, a cornerstone of that program, serve as an important guide for addressing issues like gender-based violence and human trafficking. Coupled with more than 25 years' experience addressing gender-based violence, I was highly motivated to draw upon all that I have learned to help the women of my country.

Out of this milieu, a special project was born, with the help of local and international NGOs such as **FULAC**, Fundación 100% Platense, Proyecto Palomas, and **Network SE4U**, the Rotary clubs of La Plata Sur and Berisso, to whom I am extremely grateful, and the **Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP)**.

From Pain to Hope brought together a group of 15 women, all victims, and survivors of gender-based violence, for a six-month program in La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina, where they were guided on a path of healing by an interdisciplinary team of psychologists, social workers, lawyers, medical doctors, and government officials.

These women were treated to an atmosphere of listening, empathy, and discretion. They were allowed to share their personal stories of long-term suffering, experience with the systemic failures in the justice system, and lack of a support network to lean upon. Their stories were met with compassion and understanding.

The need for such programs is evident. La Casa del Encuentro **conducted a study** in 2024 that documented 318 deaths at the hands of gender violence, the equivalent of one every 27 hours. **In another report**, the government's office in charge of prosecuting human trafficking and exploitation said it had received 5,776 reports of trafficking through a special hotline between 2021 and 2024, of which 321 included victims with mental health conditions or disabilities. Of those, 68% were women, 75% were adults, and 60% involved sexual or labor exploitation.

As part of From Pain to Hope, each case was analyzed through the lens of the eight Pillars of Positive Peace. This served to identify what pillars had been weakened, and which they could draw upon for strength, to empower them to be able to build lives free from violence and to build support networks so they would no longer have to face feeling all alone in their struggles.

Members from the La Plata Sur and Berisso clubs shared Rotary's concern for the welfare of all individuals and its commitment to creating lasting change in communities around the world.

There were moments of deep emotion, as participants, who did not know each other beforehand, found connection through their shared experiences, discovering that they could express their feelings freely without judgment.

A particularly moving and emotional part of the program came during a carpentry workshop led by a local architect at the San José Seminary in La Plata. Thanks to the generosity of Priest Andrés Rambeaud, this serene, century-old setting surrounded by nature allowed the women to relax, enjoy each other's company, and express their creativity.

The project represented a turning point for these women with many ongoing benefits:

- An increased resiliency demonstrated by each participant
- Increased support from local and international organizations like FULAC, the Fundación 100% Platense, the Palomas Project, and SE4U (an organization linked to the United Nations.)
- The opening of new institutions such as Caritas and Nuestra Señora de la Piedad Parish, both in La Plata, to help victims of gender-based violence and human trafficking
- Increased access to authorities for urgent assistance
- The creation of a solid support network between the participants

The project ended on 30 November 2024, but the healing and empowerment continues. It remains an example of the transformative power that is available thanks to Rotary, the IEP, and the guidance of the Pillars of Positive Peace.



Participants in From Pain to Hope join hands in a powerful symbol of the program's motto: "We are not alone."

# SUCCESS STORY



#MyFreedomDay Success!

Submitted by Veronica McDaniel

Message from CNN's Leif Coorlim:

"That's a wrap! I want to say a huge heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you for making CNN's 9th Annual #MyFreedomDay a massive success. From live shots across five continents to three incredibly powerful packages, your dedication to this issue was on display to the whole world for a full 24 hours!"

Last week's #MyFreedomDay was a huge success and totally inspiring as kids activated against child exploitation on their school campuses in over 100 countries.

I started compiling a LIST of schools' and NGOs' videos and photos to be able to share with schools throughout the year. Next year we will organize 10 years of #MyFreedomDay. Stay tuned for updates on #MyFreedomday 2026 next March!

For further action throughout the school year please reach out. Again, here are several student-developed resources available for anti-slavery education:

- Student-led group Playbook: For help planning year-round events at your schools, here is a comprehensive guide for students and their teacher facilitators for student advocacy in their communities.
- Ethical Consumption Guide for Teens: Part of taking a stand on the issue is voting with your wallets, influencing your families and peers to shop thoughtfully while thinking about how lives are affected on the other side of your products.
- See junior **Hana Gertsacov's** draft of teacher materials here on this website. Please let me know if you have feedback for her.
- Senior **Kaixuan Guo's** paper pg 378 "Ideal Human Trafficking Victims versus Reality: A Content Analysis of US-Based NGO Websites"
- Fill out this survey for high school senior **Ellie Ryan**.

If interested in leadership development see the Youth Leadership Academy program here.



Submitted by Cindee Sapoznik

RCEHT club member Cindee Sapoznik told us that her organization, 2myPlace, will be holding a program at Kennesaw State University (Atlanta, GA). RAVAW - Raising Awareness of Violence Against Women - is a newly created group on campus. One of the Board members of 2myPlace, Kevin McNeil (the Twelve Project), who is a national speaker and activist for abuse and trafficking, will be joining RCEHT club member Cindee at the presentation.

2myPlace is expecting 30-50 students and guests. This is the first of relationship between the University and 2myPlace in helping educate and bring awareness to the issues facing our community, campus.

2myPlace is grateful for the opportunity to share their work.

## COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT CHILD TRAFFICKING

RCEHT endorsee Love146 recently shared with us a video from their website. Less than 3 minutes long, the video asks experts to answer 4 common questions about child trafficking:

1. What's a common misunderstanding about child trafficking?
2. What's the difference between prevention and awareness?
3. What puts kids at risk of trafficking and what protects them?
4. What advice do you have for parents and caregivers of youth?

The video is available at this link:

<https://love146.org/videos/4-question-in-trafficking-prevention/>

VISIT RCEHT SOCIAL MEDIA  
PAGES.



## MIXING ROTARY, AN ENDORSEE, AND THE UNITED NATIONS

RCEHT has understood better "the forgotten war" in Sudan because of information shared by club member Audrey Moore, CEO of Lift Up the Vulnerable (LUV), an anti-human trafficking organization and RCEHT endorsee.

Recently, RCEHT Board Member Erin Maloney remembered that her friend François Diatta, from UNHCR (the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), was currently working in Sudan. Erin wondered if it would be worthwhile for the two of them to meet. She was delighted to learn that François, Audrey, and LUV Chief Program Officer Eugenio Kirima met virtually in early April.

At her LUV presentation at the RCEHT meeting on July 24 in which she will focus on the realities of human trafficking taking place in the conflict in Sudan, Audrey is planning to present to members information on the Sudan crisis and its impact on refugees, IDP (Internally Displaced People), and the host community.

For a look at some of the data on the situation in Sudan, see the link to UNHCR data [here](#).

## 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. We have a number of membership types, but our primary ones are Full and Associate. Associates are already members of community based Rotary clubs, but can unofficially join our club to stay more connected with our activities. 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.

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

### Who we endorse

Our club endorses non-profit groups dedicated to ending human trafficking. For an up to date list visit our [website](#). Interested in suggesting a group for us to endorse? Submit ideas to [President@endHTrotaryclub.org](mailto:President@endHTrotaryclub.org) for review and consideration.

## MAKE PEACE VISIBLE CONFERENCE



The **Make Peace Visible Conference** is a unique gathering of global, regional, and local leaders committed to building sustainable peace by addressing the intersections of food security, clean water, health, and human rights. This action-oriented event is hosted by **Rotary District 5960**, bringing together **Rotarians, nonprofit professionals, and community changemakers** for an inspiring weekend of learning, collaboration, and action.



VIDEO LINK: <https://youtu.be/AmS-TZl98is>

**Rotarians & Nonprofit and Community Leaders in Hunger Relief, Clean Water, and Human Rights should attend.** Learn how to **enhance your Rotary projects**, connect with fellow members from **120 communities**, and collaborate with global and regional leaders to make a greater impact. Participate in a **District-wide service project**, hear from **world-class speakers**, and gain actionable strategies to **address hunger, health, and peacebuilding** in your community. Access **cutting-edge insights and best practices** from **renowned experts** in food security, water access, and peacebuilding. Build **new partnerships** with Rotary clubs and other organizations, and leave with the tools to **strengthen your mission and expand your impact**.

**Conference Dates:** May 1- May 3, 2025

**Location:** Mystic Lake Center, Prior Lake, MN

The **Make Peace Visible Conference** isn't just another event—it's a **power-packed experience** featuring:

- Globally recognized keynote speakers
- 26 breakout sessions to choose from ([link](#))
- Unmatched Rotary fellowship
- An Inspiring service project and hands-on learning

**Time is running out!** The special reduced hotel room rate at Mystic Lake Casino and Hotel ends April 2—don't miss your chance to save on both your stay AND your registration!

**Here's the Deal:** Register for the full Make Peace Visible Conference by April 1 (April Fools' Day!), and you'll get \$25 off conference registration for each night you stay at Mystic Lake Casino and Hotel.

**How to Claim Your Discount:** Book your hotel room at [Mystic Lake Center](#) and Hotel before April 2 to lock in the best rate. Send your confirmation to Kathy Hughitt, [kathy.hughitt@rotary5960.org](mailto:kathy.hughitt@rotary5960.org). Receive your exclusive discount code and save up to \$50 off the registration!

Don't wait—secure your hotel and register by April 1 to maximize your savings and your experience!

**Register now:** [LINK](#)



# COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS



## Programs & Projects

**Meetings:** 3rd Thursday morning of month (8 AM Central Time)

**Description:** Makes recommendations to Board whether to...

Endorse a particular project

Fund a particular project (by reviewing grant applications)

**Where we need help:** We welcome interested committee members!

## Membership

**Meetings:** Non-Virtual (Phone Calls & Emails) **Description:** The Membership Committee is responsible for recruiting, welcoming and guiding new members as they join our mission to end human trafficking.

**Where we need help:** We warmly welcome new committee members who are interested!

## Fundraising

**Meetings:** None at this time

**Description:** Responsible to raise funds to support projects and programs approved by Board

**Where we need help:** Assistance to help raise

1. Funds for Branch members: \$250 USD/year or \$2500 per Branch
2. \$5,000 USD for EDI project (\$500 USD for pilot project)
3. Increase fund balance to contribute as a partner for District/Global grant partners (goal= \$2,000 USD)

## Foundation

**Meetings:** AdHoc (usually bi-monthly)

**Description:**

The Rotary Foundation exists to support Rotarians and their clubs in the charitable activities that clubs choose and undertake themselves. The mission of The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International is to enable Rotarians to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the improvement of health, the support of education, and the alleviation of poverty. RCEHT Foundation is our club's foundation and it provides financial support to non-profit organizations and projects that are making a difference in the fight against human trafficking.

**Where we need help:** see Fundraising Committee :)

## Public Relations (PR)

**Meetings:** 5th Thursdays and as needed

**Description:** We have an active committee who puts together the newsletter, club website and social media.

**Where we need help:** We always welcome content that is written and ready to publish! Share articles or social media posts with us for publication.

## Social

**Meetings:** None

**Description:** Brainstorm and organize social events for our club. These can occur as a part of our meetings or outside of our meetings.

**Where we need help:** If you are interested in this committee let us know!

## Branches

**Meetings:** As needed

**Description:** We currently have 2 branches in Africa. These are groups of 8 or more club members who live geographically close to each other who are interested in working together on end human trafficking efforts. **Where we need help:** We could use mentors to work with our new Rotarians!

## Sunshine

**Meetings:** None

**Description:** Keeping in touch & getting to know one another better  
**Where we need help:** Non-USA residents are emailed, please open your email

We have birthdays. Let me know of other significant life events.

## Speaker

**Meetings:** None

**Description:** Brainstorm, schedule and communicate with speakers for club meetings.

**Where we need help:** Speaker ideas are always welcome!

## Economic Development Initiative (EDI)

**Meetings:** As needed

**Description:** Work to establish sustainable, scalable, locally owned business activities in areas where human trafficking is prevalent.

**Where we need help:** This is a complex project that will include identifying and mentoring entrepreneurs as well as funding projects through partnerships or fundraising. Attend the meeting on October 10th to learn more!

## President-Elect (OPEN Board Position)

This position allows you to play a crucial role in guiding our club while preparing to serve as President. It is a chance to develop leadership skills, collaborate with dedicated members, and contribute to the long-term success of our initiatives. As President-Elect, you will support the club's leadership by assisting the current President in presiding over meetings in their absence, attending board meetings. You will work closely with club leaders to develop strategic goals and action plans. Additionally, you will be participating in leadership development opportunities such as the Presidents-Elect Training Seminar (PETS). This role offers a meaningful opportunity to influence the future of our club and inspire others through service. If you are interested in taking on this leadership position or would like to learn more, please reach out to [President@endHTrotaryclub.org](mailto:President@endHTrotaryclub.org)

## Fundraising Chair (OPEN Board Position)

The Fundraising Chair is responsible for the strategic direction and management of the Club's fundraising activities. These activities include organizing fundraising events and assisting the clubs on setting fundraising goals and developing strategies to achieve them. The Chair also publicizes club fundraising accomplishments and encourages contributions to support club goals. Additionally, the Chair promotes participation in fundraising events and special giving opportunities such as the Paul Harris Society. Furthermore, the Chair coordinates donor appreciation events within the district to ensure that donors receive appropriate recognition. If you are interested in taking on this leadership position or would like to learn more, please reach out to [President@endHTrotaryclub.org](mailto:President@endHTrotaryclub.org)

## Public Relations (PR) Chair (OPEN Board Position)

The Public Relations (PR) Chair oversees the Club's communication efforts, ensuring that its activities, achievements, and initiatives are effectively shared with members and the broader community. The PR Committee is responsible for managing the Club's newsletter, website, and social media platforms, keeping them updated with relevant and engaging content. Meetings are held on the fifth Thursday of the month and as needed to coordinate efforts and plan communications strategies. If you are interested in taking on this leadership position or would like to learn more, please reach out to [President@endHTrotaryclub.org](mailto:President@endHTrotaryclub.org)

# CALENDAR & UPCOMING EVENTS

## 2025-26 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 President [president@endhtrotaryclub.org](mailto: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!

### Current Board make up for next term: 2025/26

- President: Bassey Kooffreh
- Immediate Past President: Lisa Podolny, Michelle Seets
- President Elect: OPEN
- Secretary: Mary Fiadese
- Treasurer: Karen Walkowski
- Membership: Toni Lucas
- Programs and Projects: Erin Maloney
- Foundation Chair: Lisa Podolny, Michelle Seets
- Fundraising: OPEN
- PR: OPEN
- Director(s) at Large: Maria Julia Moreyra

### Current Committee make up for next term

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

## 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

Apr 24, 2025 7:00 AM  
General meeting

Visit our [website](#) for details.

Jun 12, 2025 7:00 AM  
Action Day  
TBD

Visit our [website](#) for details.

## ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

**21-25 June 2025**  
**Calgary, Canada**

**Theme: Magic All Around**

See <https://convention.rotary.org> for more information