

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Rotarians,

Thank you for all your support, effort, and love for Rotary. Every Rotary member makes a huge difference in the club's success to reach new levels. When evaluating all that transpired over the last few months, how far our club has come, and how our club has managed to stay its course.

I feel that, as Rotarians, we are all called upon, as stated in our theme for this year, to: **"Create Hope in the World"**

You may ask yourself, "But how am I, in (fill in country name), going to achieve this?" One significant way is to join a club like the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking, a completely online club whose membership spans the globe. We can't always be in the same place at the same time, but our club members adhere to the 4 priorities set forth by Rotary International:

### **1 – As Rotarians we must increase our impact.**

People of action are effective problem-solvers. Why do Rotarians achieve so much? We invest in relationships. We make decisions grounded in evidence. We know how to mobilize our networks to create solutions that last. And we're always learning from our experiences in projects, clubs, and careers.

### **2 - As Rotarians we must expand our reach.**

People of action activate and inspire others, giving them hope that the world can change for the better - and that they can be part of that change. We know there are many people seeking both a greater sense of purpose and the kind of person-to-person involvement the digital realm can't provide. We have what it takes to be their first choice.

### **3 – As Rotarians, let's enhance participation.**

People of action strive to understand the needs of others. Rotary is a great organization because we create meaningful relationships across decades and Continents. But just like the people and communities we serve; our participants need to feel seen and heard.

### **4 – As Rotarians, we must increase our ability to adapt.**

People of action are inventive, entrepreneurial, and resilient. We know what we stand for and why it matters. We are driven by a sense of optimism - a belief that we are and will continue to be essential to our communities, to the world, and to humanity.

Over the last year our club has welcomed new members that have jumped in with both feet, helping in so many ways. I truly appreciate the enthusiasm of all of our members, especially when it comes to our fundraising and participation in our events. Each one of us brings our unique talents to the table, please don't hesitate to be involved and join a committee that interests you. Rotarians are people of action, connecting the world. In my experience, the level of local and global networking and mentorship is limitless. Wherever you travel, look for the Rotary logo and you will know you have a friend in that town. If you are interested in serving our global community please consider joining our Rotary club.

Yours in Rotary,

Lisa Podolny

President 2023-2024

Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking



## HIGHLIGHTS

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# UPDATE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## Honing Our Economic Development Initiative Focus

Why do we think we can pull off an economic development initiative that can change the trajectory of financial well-being in areas where trafficking occurs? There are all kinds of groups that, on the surface, look to do precisely what we say we are going to do. I've held up the [principles of Lean Impact](#) as our role model for executing this. Doesn't this book tell us that we shouldn't just copy what others are doing? If programs do what we propose, shouldn't we get our egos out of the way and team up with one or multiple of them?



Michael Podolny  
membership chair.

Over the last few months, I have spent a ton of time researching, reading, and talking to people involved with these programs. And one finds some very interesting information as one researches.

- First, despite all the various organizations doing entrepreneur training, microlending, or combining the two, one is hard-pressed to find any particular region or area where overall economic well-being statistics show improvement.
- Second, virtually every organization you look at defines success in very limited transactional terms. They measure success by either the number of business formations made, having their loan repaid, or a combination of the two.

*I am going to make a bold statement. If this is the success metric these organizations have chosen, their goal, they will have little success in actual economic development.*

*Having worked for half a century with thousands of small businesses in every industry imaginable, I will say without qualification that business formation and/or the repayment of a loan is hardly a measure of a business being successful or a significant contributor to economic development. Success is a business surviving and thriving over a long period, growing, creating employment, and returning wealth to its community. That's real business success and the kind of success that begins to raise economic development.*

I will use an analogy that might resonate better with those who might not be business-oriented: children. Let's compare birthing a child versus raising a child to be a competent adult capable of sustaining themselves and contributing to society. Having raised three children to adulthood (Hi, President Lisa!), It is the latter that is the true measure of success. And it is also way harder, requiring sustained effort over a long period.

If we are serious about fighting the underlying cause of human slavery, we have to commit to this longer goal. Here are the 'definition of success' statements for the RCEHT Economic Development Initiative.

### Specific Project Progress Update

Progress is being made on our initial pilot project (the new name for the initial test we will be doing). We've held two meetings with representatives in Ghana. We are honored to have Past President Nana-Asare and current President Mary Arabe of the Rotary Club of Tamale joining Past President Jonas Ayi and Past President of the Rotary Club of Accra Spintex in developing the pilot project. President Arabe provided our working group with some sage counsel. She advised that we must focus on groups that want what we are offering. She noted numerous Rotary projects in the past where Rotarians felt they knew what a community wanted but were incorrect, leading to wasted money and effort.

The Ghana contingent has taken responsibility to identify groups that would benefit from our program and be open to it. The North American contingent has the task of defining the requirements for the various participants.

Yours in Rotary,  
Michael Podolny  
Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking

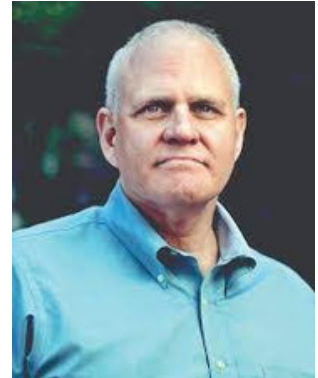


# HUMAN TRAFFICKING MONTH

## Grant approval to support Human Trafficking prevention film

The Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking approved a grant to support the Mekong Club's creation of a short film designed to prevent human trafficking into scam centers. Our club also sponsored the submission of a RAGAS grant for this project.

*The following information was taken from Matt Friedman's grant requests:*



Matt Friedman

The situation is complex: hundreds of thousands of people from handfuls of nationalities have been forced into online criminal activities. While some countries are trying to address this issue, criminals adapt, change locations, and upgrade their operations and techniques to avoid identification. There are two types of victims here. First, there are people who have lost money and suffered shame from falling for online scams. Second, there are hundreds of thousands who are forced to work in these scam centers, enduring terrible treatment and human rights violations, such as restriction of movement, physical and sexual violence, debt bondage, and being openly sold between enslavers on online platforms.

This commercial will shed light on the human trafficking scam trade issue, with a focus on the victims who are tricked and deceived into working in scam centers.

This short film aims to raise awareness to encourage those who watch it to thoroughly check out an overseas job offer before accepting it. It represents the first public service announcement on this topic. It will be extensively shared on selected television stations and social media platforms across Asia. It will also have a call to action in seven languages. The video was developed with pro bono technical support from three advertising agencies across the world. The production value is at a very high professional level.



The grim realities of the number of human trafficking victims in scam centers are growing by the thousands every month. Attached is a photo from the recent film shoot.

Questions about this project? [Check out the FAQ](#)

# CLUB NEWS



## BOARD UPDATES

### RCEHT Board Summary:

The RCEHT Board meets on the first Thursday of every month. Below are the main topics from the first two meetings of the year: January 4 and February 1.

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

- New members: 5 full members and one associate member
- RCEHT Economic Development Program:
  - Recommendations from members to 1) Start small and 2) Work through local partners
  - Ghana as the first test site
  - Looking at current Rotary programs working against HT
- Anti-HT Pledge: Reviewing how to have individuals, Rotary clubs, and other organizations throughout the world commit to making a pledge against human trafficking
- Grant Proposal: Approved funding of PSA (public service announcement) video, via Matt Friedman and The Mekong Club

### 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.

## NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

My name is John Ghar in South Sudan in a state called Aweil. I am secondary school graduate in New Life Ministry school in 2019.

we want to create a directory of all the members of this club so that we can leverage each other's strengths and perspectives

My professional activity that I have done is to draw flowers on the bedsheets and build the houses, my skill can help the mission to prevent human trafficking by training some others people.



Audrey Moore

## News and Noteworthy Resources:

Lift Up the Vulnerable held a really interesting panel discussion focusing on economic development and empowerment issues (food security, jobs, and family reunification) for trafficking prevention month. The recording can be found [here](#).





# SUCCESS STORY

During January (2024) while acknowledging Human Trafficking Awareness Month in the United States, 2myPlace (a nonprofit in Georgia) and the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking, sponsored a panel of 5 experts from organizations throughout GA- working towards the same goal to stop sex trafficking.

“Not in My Neighborhood...oh Yes it is” was the name of our program. People are either not aware or in denial that Sex Trafficking exists in their neighborhoods. Discussed were the perils facing our youth today. “Online grooming or “sextortion” has become the top recruitment tool for traffickers”. Social Media needs to be monitored in the home before granting access to children. It’s important to set passwords, not accept “friends” on social media sites, and check the settings on their phones, to insure they are not revealing their location or private information. Also warning not to walk alone, hang in parking lots, at shopping malls, or talk to strangers.



Cindee Sapoznik,  
CEO and founder of 2myPlace,  
organized the event and panel discussion.

The CDC reports that youth aged 11-14 spend an average of nearly nine hours a day in front of a screen. Children’s Advocacy Center of Georgia, served over 748 youth in 2023, from exploitation and/or abuse. Kids today need protective factors in their lives: a strong network of “safe” and supportive adults; equip them with life skills and educate them on how to remain resilient, confident and aware of their surroundings and contacts, at all times.



We received many questions and connections following the program. It was very well received.

Many thanks to Cindee Sapoznik for organizing this event!

More details can be found [here](#).

# CALENDAR & UPCOMING EVENTS

## CURRENT OFFICERS & OPEN POSITIONS

### CURRENT BOARD

- President - Lisa Podolny
- President Elect Nominee - **OPEN**
- Secretary - Mary Fiadese
- Treasurer - Karen Walkowski
- Past President / Foundation Chair - Michelle Seets

### **Committee Chairs on the Board**

- Programs & Projects - Erin Maloney
- Membership - Bassey Kooffreh
- Public Relation- **OPEN**
- Fundraising - Karen Walkowski
- Economic Development- Michael Podolny
- Speaker - Maria Moreyra

### **Committee Chairs not on the board (non-voting)**

- 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 MEETING

### SPEAKER

[Kim Miller](#)

### DATE

March 28, 2024

Kim has a background in education and social work and is a passionate advocate for equality and social justice. Her role at Blue Dragon combines her skills, knowledge and experience to support and inspire people around the world to understand and take action on the issues that impact disadvantaged young people in Vietnam - including poverty, modern slavery and human trafficking.

VISIT RCEHT SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES.

