

The Los Angeles County Unity Coalition

Rescue and Restore – Press Advisory

For Immediate Release

Press Contact:

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Mónica Carrasco 626-239-5498

Cindy Norman 213-814-9221

Lacountyunity@gmail.com

Los Angeles County-Wide Events to Mark January 11th the NATIONAL DAY OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

Press conference on Monday, January 5th 2009
at 11 am at the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West Ave 26 # 100
Los Angeles, CA 90065

Thousands of men, women and children are trapped into commercial sex slavery and labor exploitation in Los Angeles County

The Los Angeles County Unity Coalition, is mobilizing local communities to mark the National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness on January 11th. Hundreds of interfaith communities: churches, synagogues, temples and mosques will watch a public service announcement and learn how to combat human trafficking on the weekend of January 11th. A demonstration is planned for Sunday January 11th at the Artisan Building in Old Town Whittier.

Event: Press conference on January 5th, 2009 at 11am;

Where: Los Angeles River Center and Gardens 570 West Ave 26 # 100 Los Angeles, CA 90065; 323-221-9939

What: 1) Announce the National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness (1/11/09)
2) Unveil schedule of county-wide events taking place on January 11th
3) Receive a **free copy of a PSA**, Southern California Coalition members have been working on which can be used in community programming
4) Learn about LACUC's efforts to fight trafficking
5) Hear from State Board of Equalization Chair **Judy Chu**, Arcadia Police Department **Chief Bob Sanderson**, [Jennifer Silliman](#), [Deputy Special Agent in Charge Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement \(ICE\) Office of Investigations in Los Angeles](#), Attorney **Wafa J. Hoballah**, , and The Salvation Army NETS Director/Trafficking Victim Services Coordinator **Rohida Khan**, about their current work to combat this problem.

Who: The Los Angeles County Unity Coalition (LACUC)

The Los Angeles County Unity Coalition *is* a group of prominent civic, nonprofit organizations, individuals and faith based organizations working together to combat

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modern day slavery in Los Angeles County. The many Unity Coalition members include but are not limited to: Commission on the Status of Women, National Council of Jewish Women-Los Angeles, the Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, The Southern California Division of the Salvation Army, Captive Daughters, CHIRLA, the Jewish Labor Committee, Downtown Women's Center and Oasis USA.

The scheduled activities to mark the National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness on January 11 include, "Freedom Moves... Stomp Out The Traffick" in Old Town Whittier at the Artisan Building at 6737 Bright Ave., featuring the Mosaic Dance Team performing "You Are Loved" from 1 to 3 pm, and several screenings of our public services announcement at several LA County Faith Communities. List of interfaith communities viewing the PSA will soon follow. **PLEASE NOTE that the full list of county-wide events, locations and lead organizations will be provided to the members of the press on January 5th, at 11 am at the press conference.**

Facts about Human Trafficking

What is Human Trafficking? Human Trafficking occurs when vulnerable persons are entrapped through some type of force, threat or fraud to engage in commercial sex or work. It is a form of brutal modern day sex and labor slavery, increasingly controlled by organized crime.

Scope of the problem: Shockingly, U.S. State Department officials opine that nearly one million children are forced in to the sex trade each year. U.S. government experts estimate that as many as 27 million persons worldwide are trafficked; of that number 17,500 new victims are brought into the US each year. This State Department estimate does not include the hundreds of thousands of domestic persons who are also exploited in labor and sex situations. Thus, when the number of domestic persons trafficked are added to the number of foreign human trafficking victims, the grim reality of the full scope of the toil on lives becomes clear. Untold hundreds of thousands of persons are possibly exploited in the U.S. each year.

Conditions of slavery: Victims live in cramped conditions, denied the most basic of food and medical care. The majority of trafficking victims are entrapped in commercial sex, forced to provide sexual services to strangers multiple times a day with no chance of escape. Locally, victims can be found in local restaurants, factories, or massage parlors, serving long hours for little or no pay. As egregious, most are not allowed time off- even when sick- or permitted to go outside their prisons of sex and work exploitation.

Call to Action: This unimaginable horror to vulnerable persons, most of them young girls, must end. *LACUC* and its collaborative partners are committed to ending this brutal force of modern day slavery and needs your help. The awareness day, and its attendant activities, signals a formal "call to action" for all who wish to work to end the exploitation of vulnerable persons. Individuals can get involved through their financial support of organizations working to identify, rescue and rehabilitate victims; learn more about the issue; or volunteer to conduct awareness trainings or victim outreach. To find out what you can do or for more information call:, Mónica Carrasco 626-239-5498 or Cindy Norman 213-814-9221 or email us at lacountyunity@gmail.com

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www.lahumantrafficking.org