



IMAGINE | FREEDOM

Empower Trafficking Survivors
One Gift At A Time

PLANTING SEEDS AND DEEP ROOTS

January 28, 2025

TNL Performing Arts Center

5:30 p.m. — 7:00 p.m.

Presented By

Survive & Thrive Advocacy Center



Thank You for Your Support

Thanks to supporters like you, the Survive and Thrive Advocacy Center has educated **over 21,000 people** since its founding 10 years ago—planting seeds of knowledge about human trafficking and how we can all work together to prevent it.

With deep roots in this community, we've also partnered with trusted organizations to support **over 250 survivors** on their journeys to healing and empowerment.

As we reflect on the past decade, we are inspired by what we've achieved together and eagerly anticipate many more opportunities to make an even greater impact over the next 10 years and beyond.

Scan to Donate Now



Event Program

Opening & Introductions

Robin Hassler Thompson, STAC Executive Director

Gratitude Award Remarks

Ann Kozeliski

Award Presentation

STAC Board of Directors

Closing Remarks

Nipa Thakkar Eason, STAC Board President

STAC Board of Directors

Nipa Thakkar Eason, President
Susan Turner, Past President
Melissa Wright, President-elect
and Treasurer
Khia Thomas, Secretary
Cicely W. Brantley
Daniela Donoso
Douglas M. Harris
Jae Hee Kim
Alicia Smith

STAC Staff

Robin Hassler Thompson, JD, MA
Executive Director
Graciela Marquina, MSW
Community Services Advocate
Charlie Jackson, MS
Community Services Advocate
Karley Gordon
Administrative Assistant
Special Projects Coordinator



Gratitude Award Winners

Marina Anderson, Statewide Human Trafficking Training Specialist, FL Dept. of Children and Families

Since April 2020, Marina Anderson has been the featured speaker at 16 of STAC's Third Friday online webinars, locally produced programs reaching this community as well as the rest of the nation and world. Her expertise is vast and she shares her knowledge on topics ranging from sextortion and gangs to social media and working with underserved populations. Now a Statewide Human Trafficking Training Specialist at the Florida Department of Children and Families, Marina's training programs are among the most well-attended. In her prior role, she assisted STAC and others throughout the Panhandle with client needs and referrals. Marina is smart and caring. She infuses her educational programs with information about important trends, always making these events extremely interesting and compelling.

Capital City Youth Services (CCYS)

CCYS, the area's youth and runaway shelter, has supported and assisted survivors of human trafficking for many years. STAC has worked with CCYS to help shelter and provide services and support to youth and families impacted by sex and labor trafficking since STAC's inception. In 2024, CCYS welcomed STAC as a formal partner on a federal housing grant award which has brought a new and stronger focus on housing for trafficking survivors to this area. Since a large proportion of CCYS clients have been trafficked or are at severe risk of being trafficked, more youth and families are receiving a more comprehensive level of services and support than ever before. This collaboration and CCYS leadership will continue to benefit the youth and families of Florida's Big Bend for years to come.

Dr. Michelle Gayle, Deputy Superintendent, Leon County Schools

Dr. Michelle Gayle is a caring and involved leader. She was key to expanding the presence of human trafficking information and awareness throughout the school system in 2024. Dr. Gayle led by raising the importance of this issue in many ways, including inviting STAC to present at numerous Leon County Schools training programs and events with school social workers and administrators. This resulted in students who were in trafficking situations getting needed support. In 2025, Dr. Gayle continued to support trafficking survivors and help prevent sex and labor trafficking in the community by coordinating and organizing presentations to the Leon County School Board and to the community, including hosting a community-wide training event co-hosted by the Tallahassee Leon County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls, where she is a member and co-chair.

Legal Services of North Florida (LSNF)

Legal Services of North Florida has been a tremendous partner to STAC since its inception when STAC's offices were co-located with LSNF. Over the years, LSNF has represented many survivors of human trafficking working with STAC and other community organizations and advocates to provide immigration relief and support and collaborating on various initiatives and community events. They are always there to assist trafficking survivors and to partner with STAC on training programs, ensuring that LSNF attorneys and staff are trained to recognize human trafficking, and making sure these programs are accredited by the Florida Bar. LSNF is a strong and steadfast community partner, providing vital legal services and support to sex and labor trafficking survivors.

Leon County Government

Leon County has focused on ending human trafficking in this area for years, and has been a strong supporter of STAC as well, starting with funding its free business training program (STACPRO), adopting an anti-trafficking policy in procurement, sponsoring Imagine Freedom, and this year engaging STAC to train the entirety of Leon County staff on how to recognize and respond to human trafficking in all Leon County workplaces. In 2024, STAC worked with Leon County human resources to train more than 300 staff members and this training is now part of the Leon County learning management system. Special recognition goes to County Administrator Vince Long and human resources staff Anitra Thomas and Mary Barley for their hard work in making this training such a resounding success.

Renee Starrett

Renee Starrett retired in 2024 after working with STAC for seven years. Because of her efficiency and dedication, STAC could assist hundreds of survivors and provide training and education to thousands. Renee was instrumental in creating a strong foundation for STAC's operations and for taking the lead in many key areas too numerous to mention, including planning and organizing Imagine Freedom and training events. Renee worked tirelessly to create new ways for STAC to carry out programming, and her expertise and professionalism are unmatched. She also carried out the seemingly endless executive and administrative tasks with grace and good humor, always helping the agency to run smoothly and efficiently. Renee has been a STAC donor and volunteer, and her contributions have been great.

*A special thank you to Ann Kozeliski
for the beautiful Gratitude Award artwork.*

Liberation \$5,000
Sponsors

Anonymous Donor
Alicia Smith
Robin and Dan Thompson

IEC Foundation
Independent Electrical Contractors Foundation



Dignity \$2,500
Sponsors

TSC
TALLAHASSEE
STATE COLLEGE

fiore
communications
integrated marketing

Dr. Kenneth Kato
and Nan Nagy
Debby Kearney
Susan Turner
Melissa Wright

Solidarity \$1,000
Sponsors

Rachel Cameron
Judy Gagnon
Beth Gallups
Carol Lees Gregg
Leon County
E. Talley Morgan, CPA, LLC.

Anne and Colin Phipps
Nipa Thakkar Eason
Larry Schrecker, Truist Investment
Services
Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare
Michael Winn
Zonta Club of Tallahassee

Catering Highlight

STAC is proud to partner with **Sameer Jain**, a member of the US Advisory Council on Human Trafficking who is also an entrepreneur, businessman, and one of the first survivors of labor trafficking STAC assisted. Tonight, guests will enjoy delicious Indian food prepared by the family business, Indian Kitchen. Partnering with survivors is essential to STAC's work and a great idea for the whole community. It shows our commitment to empowering survivors and recognizing their skills and expertise in many fields. (To learn more about Sameer and his journey, listen to Episode 4 of our Imagine Freedom Podcast at surviveandthriveadvocacy.org/ifpodcast.)



Special Thank You For Their Generous Donations

Food Glorious Food - Birthday Cake
Capital City Bank - Beverage Bar
Debby Kearney - Charcuterie and Decor



Get Involved & Make a Difference

To learn more about human trafficking in our community and what you can do to get involved:

- Sign up for free STACPRO Training
- Download and share our Youth and Caregivers Toolkit
- Sign up for a free STAC webinar
- Explore free resources on our website
- Subscribe to our Imagine Freedom podcast
- Support survivors of human trafficking and donate today

Visit Our Website to Get Started

(850) 597-2080

STAC@surviveandthriveadvocacy.org

SurviveandThriveAdvocacy.org

For More Information Outside this Area Contact

National Human Trafficking Hotline

1 (888) 373-7888 or Text "**BEFREE**" to **233733**