

2024 Annual Report

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Our Mission

The Global Center on Human Trafficking (GCHT) is dedicated to reimagining the response to human trafficking in communities in the U.S. and around the world by empowering survivors and embedding their lived experiences and insights in research, policy and practice.



“Without survivors, this field cannot do this work. We are the group with the insights and understanding of human trafficking at it’s rawest level. GCHT understands survivors should be integrated into every step of the work.”

~ Star Boozier, Survivor Leader and Montclair State University Student

The Global Center on Human Trafficking embodies Montclair’s commitment to serving the public interest and to engage closely with communities we serve to solve the most pressing problems of society.

A global crisis that affects every community, human trafficking disproportionately impacts racial and ethnic minorities, women and girls, LGBTQI+ individuals, persons with disabilities, and other historically marginalized and under-served communities.

The GCHT leverages the expertise of the entire MSU faculty, staff, and students across a wide spectrum of disciplines to work together with survivors and leading public, private, and academic partners worldwide to better understand the problem of human trafficking and develop survivor-informed research, policy and practices to prevent and address trafficking in persons.



The Global Center on Human Trafficking works hand-in-hand with survivors and lived experience professionals to prevent human trafficking in all of its forms according to

4 Pillars

1. Survivor Empowerment
2. Innovation in Policy and Practice
3. Research and Knowledge
4. Next Generation



The Global Center on Human Trafficking seeks to achieve impact, by measuring our success across these key metrics:

- Partnerships Established
- Engagement of Montclair Faculty, Staff, and Students
- Education and Awareness Raising
- Survivor Empowerment and Engagement
- Program Participation
- Training and Technical Assistance Provided to Law Enforcement

2024

in a snapshot

14

Lived Experience Professionals Engaged in Research, Policy, and Practice.

6

Potential Survivors of Human Trafficking Referred for Services or to Law Enforcement

1,051

Montclair Faculty, Staff, and Students Trained on Human Trafficking

1,301

Community Members Trained on Human Trafficking

90

Law Enforcement Personnel Trained

30

Partnerships Established across the United States

5

Global New Partnerships Established

16

Montclair State Departments Engaged

GCHT Publishes Results of National Expert Roundtable

Understanding and Improving Law Enforcement Investigations of Human Trafficking: Focus on Sex Trafficking



Convened by the Global Center on Human Trafficking in collaboration with Federal Homeland Security Investigations Foundation and Fermata Discovery, this report shares the findings of a National Expert Working Group comprised of the nation's leading anti-trafficking law enforcement, service providers, lived experience professionals, and Montclair State University faculty.

[Read the full report here](#)

“Recognizing historical trauma is important, but recognizing existing data points around the current trafficking epidemic in communities of color is more actionable by law enforcement.”

Law Enforcement Agent

The partnering report “Understanding and Improving Law Enforcement Investigations of Human Trafficking: Focus on Labor Trafficking” anticipated release summer 2024.

Attorney General Platkin Kicks off GCHT 2nd Annual Legislative Breakfast Examining Housing and Shelter for Survivors

As part of our **Innovation in Policy and Practice Initiative**, GCHT convened legislators, policymakers, advocates, survivors and lived experienced professionals from across the state to examine gaps in short and long term housing services for survivors and victims of human trafficking, examining our current laws, policies, and practices, and how we can address them collectively. This event amplified the voice of survivors and lived-experience professionals and honored those who have made outstanding contributions to New Jersey's anti-trafficking efforts, attended by esteemed guests NJ Attorney General Matthew Platkin, Assemblyman Sterley Stanley, Senator Nellie Pou, Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez, Assemblywoman Speight, Assemblyman Gabriel Rodriguez, and more.

14

Speakers and Panelists

189

Attendees

11

Event Partners

7

Student Volunteers
Engaged



Putting the 'G' in GCHT:

This academic year, the Global Center on Human Trafficking (GCHT) has made remarkable strides in expanding its global partnerships. Understanding that tackling human trafficking requires a united, international effort, GCHT has actively sought out and forged connections with universities, organizations, and experts across the globe.

In 2023-2024, GCHT team members embarked on a series of international visits, meeting with leading universities and organizations dedicated to combating human trafficking. GCHT also welcomed a variety of international speakers ranging from academics to survivor leaders to share their stories and expertise at our events, workshops, and conferences. These speakers have brought fresh perspectives from all corners of the world, helping to deepen our community's understanding of human trafficking's complexities and the unique ways different regions are addressing this issue, all while GCHT focused on building meaningful collaborations with organizations based overseas.

The GCHT Welcomes Uni Graz!

From October 23- 25, 2023, a group of 17 students and two faculty from the University of Graz Law School in Austria visited Montclair State University as part of a Criminal and Public Law Perspectives class on Transnational Crime and Justice – Human Trafficking. Dr. Daniela Peterka-Benton, Academic Director of the Global Center on Human Trafficking and an Associate Professor in the Department of Justice Studies served as the stateside partner for this transatlantic learning experience.



The Intersection of Substance Abuse Harm Reduction Strategies and Human Trafficking: A Panel Discussion

Substance use disorder (SUD) is common among victims of human trafficking. Existing SUDs may be used to force individuals into trafficking or they may experience facilitated drug use to keep them compliant. Substance abuse is also not an uncommon way for survivors to cope with the trauma resulting from their trafficking experience.

Funded by an educational grant from Open Society Foundations, GCHT partnered with the Department of Justice Studies to bring several survivor leaders, anti-trafficking experts, and healthcare professionals to discuss how SUDs and trafficking are related and how survivors with SUDs can receive the best possible care for their recovery. Partnering with 7 on and off-campus partners, we saw 50 virtual attendees attend this panel, and 81 views on YouTube.

Community Engaged Learning: The Intersection of Libraries and Human Trafficking

In response to the first case of human trafficking in New Jersey identified by a library social worker, GCHT is leading a community-engaged learned research project, the first of its kind, examining the role of libraries in addressing human trafficking.

Significant progress has been made on the project including the engagement of 9 advisory members, who hold different positions titles within the library system. GCHT staff and interns are in the process of surveying libraries across New Jersey to increase understanding of the role that libraries play or can play in preventing and addressing human trafficking.

GCHT Hosts Kingsley Abrokwa, Child Labor Trafficking Expert from Ghana



In partnership with the Department of Justice Studies, and the Department of Management and Business Analytics in the Feliciano School of Business, the GCHT welcomed Mr. Kingsley Nana Kwame Gyamera Abrokwa to Montclair. Mr. Abrokwa is a Child Labor Expert from Ghana for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Mr. Abrokwa has a wealth of experience in the field of human trafficking and child protection through his work with the United Nations and also possesses research expertise with blockchain and Geographic Information Systems to monitor and prevent child labor in Ghana's cocoa sector. During his short 2-day stay on our campus, Mr. Abrokwa gave three lectures sharing his expertise.

The GCHT is also a proud partner of the Hope Education Project, Act for Change, Savana Signatures, and Norsac and is excited to continue to expand our partnerships in Ghana.

GCHT Hosts HSI for Law Enforcement Training



Homeland Security Investigations and the Global Center on Human Trafficking at Montclair State University hosted a one-day comprehensive training to improve human trafficking investigations and interactions with survivors and victims for law enforcement on all levels, seeing over 90 attendees and 15 speakers.

Training agenda included:

- What is Human Trafficking?
- Prosecutor's Perspective
- Immigration Relief for Victims
- Investigative Case Study
- Survivor and Victim Engagement Panel

Lived Experience Anti-Trafficking Professional Partnership Program (LEAPP)

LEAPP is committed to the ethical and equal engagement of lived experience professionals in anti-trafficking policy, research and practice. We believe survivors should be involved in all anti-trafficking work, from concept, to development and action.

In an effort to fulfill this commitment and ensure that individuals with lived experience are ethically and equally engaged in the anti-trafficking community, GCHT has come together with survivors to conceptualize the **Lived Experience Anti-Trafficking Professional Partnership Program (LEAPP)**. LEAPP facilitates collaboration between lived experience professionals and the anti-trafficking field. LEAPP is a space where lived experience professionals from across the United States and the anti-trafficking field can partner in a sustainable, ethical, and inclusive manner.

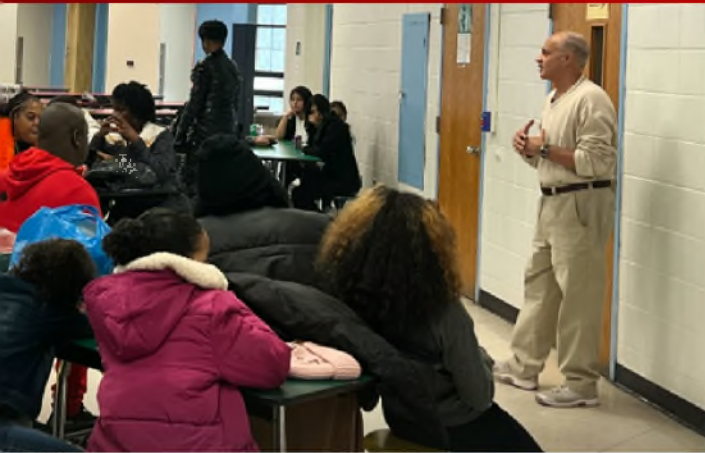
Knowledge is Power!

Educating and Raising Awareness of Human Trafficking

The Global Center on Human Trafficking has been involved in dozens of events across campus, within the community, and virtually including these highlights:

- Possibilities Program
- Training Resident Assistants
- 9/11 National Day of Service
- Virtual HT 101
- Who Are the Victims? - Presentation
- The Intersection of Human Trafficking and the Healthcare Industry
- Homecoming- Student Engagement
- OVC Workshop in support of Bella Channel Mentoring Program
- Human Trafficking Training for Libraries
- On-campus events with Child Labor Expert Kingsley Abrokwa
- Homeland Security Investigations- Training
- Survivor Panel presented on-campus to University of Graz Students
- Law Enforcement presented to University of Graz Students Panel
- Anti-Trafficking opportunities within the Federal Bureau of Investigations
- Student Appreciation Week
- Breaking the Silence Panel
- Co-Sponsor of Montclair's Pop-Up Shop for students
- Identifying community vulnerabilities, programmatic gaps, and needs
- I Strive Grand Opening in support of Bella Channel Mentoring Program
- Friends Day at Montclair State University
- Co-Sponsor of A Path Forward: Creating Supportive Entrepreneurial Ecosystems for Trauma Survivors
- Human Trafficking Training for Libraries
- Shop for a Cause benefiting the GCHT
- Legislative Breakfast
- Moderator and host of the Harm Reduction Panel
- Partnership and Education sharing with Seton Hall Law School

Partnerships are Key to Our Success



Multi-Disciplinary Partners at Montclair State University

- Department of Residence Life
- Department of Athletics and Recreation
- Volunteer Center
- Theta Phi Alpha
- Rocky's Closet
- Red Hawk Pantry
- Department of Justice Studies
- Feliciano School of Business
- Feliciano Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Department of Pre-Law Studies
- Department of Political Science and Law
- Department of Child Advocacy and Social Work
- School of Communications and Media
- Department of Public Health
- Department of Psychology
- Montclair State University Police Department
- Bonner Leaders
- Harry A. Sprague Library

Community Partners

- Sweet Earth Co.
- William Patterson University
- Long Branch Library
- Bella Chanel Mentoring Program
- Library Link NJ
- NJ Coalition Against HT
- Family Service League
- HR Recovery Initiative
- Volunteer Lawyers for Justice
- Legal Services of New Jersey
- Covenant House - NJ
- The Knotty Vines
- Kitchen Table
- Pound Ridge Partnership
- Pound Ridge Newcomers and Neighbors Club
- Shop Pound Ridge
- You Are More Than
- Restoring Ivy Collective
- Heal Trafficking - Speaker's Bureau
- Robert W. Van Houten Library
- Somerset County Library System
- Pennington Public Library
- Piscataway Public Library
- Sussex County Library System
- Robert W. Van Houten Library at the New Jersey Institute of Technology

National/International Partners

- Fermata Discovery Inc., New York
- Gallaudet University, Washington, DC
- Global Association of Human Trafficking Scholars, Global
- Hope Education Project, Ghana
- Kingsley Abrokwa, Ghana
- University of Graz, Austria
- Asociación Colombiana de Egreso de Protección Estatal, Columbia
- Priority Wellness, Nicaragua
- International Organization for Adolescents
- Oliver Wyman, Global
- Survivor Alliance, Global

2025

our vision

As the GCHT enters its fourth year, we are excited to announce some of our plans for next year:

The Center will continue to strengthen legislative partnerships by planning and executing the 3rd Annual Legislative Breakfast addressing the issue of mental health and human trafficking. To ensure ongoing collaboration on legislative issues the Center plans to host follow-up events to the legislative breakfast.

The Center will expand its training and development mission and plans to offer non-credit-bearing online professional development courses that are open to all interested professionals. Additionally, we plan to expand our work with the survivor community through the establishment of a Survivor Leadership Academy and a soft launch of the Lived Experience Anti-Trafficking Professional Partnerships (LEAPP) Bureau.

In the coming year, we will continue our research on the role of libraries in anti-trafficking efforts and hope to establish collaborations with faculty, staff, and students on anti-trafficking research projects. Furthermore, the Center will host a professional development conference for teachers and teacher-students in collaboration with Seton Hall University to prepare them for the newly state-mandated anti-trafficking curriculum.

Lastly, the Center plans to expand its engagement with the campus community to include the continuation of the Center's various student programs, the annual visitation program with the University of Graz Law School, collaboration and co-sponsorship of campus/student events, and educational opportunities such as the certificate program in Global Human Trafficking. We also will continue to be a partner to the campus community by offering HT 101 workshops and other awareness and education opportunities, as requested.