



# Human Trafficking Update

August 2019

EDITORIAL

## Planting Seeds of Healing: The Samaritan Women

Jeanne Allert came to Christ in 2003 while a successful business leader in Washington DC. Four years later, she gave up her lucrative career to launch The Samaritan Women, a nonprofit organization to support at-risk girls who couldn't get help anywhere else.

As the Founder and Executive Director of The Samaritan Women, Jeanne leads an organization that has provided housing and support services to more than 100 trafficking survivors from across the nation. The Samaritan Women has also launched The Institute for Shelter Care to train and equip new shelters across the country to meet the increasing need for specialized services.

We sat down with Jeanne to learn more about this faith-based organization and how God is working through it to achieve its vision: That any survivor, anywhere in the nation, will have access to qualified, compassionate care.

### How did you hear the call to serve girls and women who have been trafficked?

I was not raised in a church family, but I found Christ as a personal conviction, and things happened very quickly after that. I didn't know anything about missionary work or ministry, but I had a friend whose daughter was struggling through a variety of life challenges. The Lord pressed Luke 12:48 on my heart and I



*Jeanne Allert, Founder and Executive Director, The Samaritan Women*

realized I could do so much more with what I had been given. That was the fuel that convinced me to close my business, and to use much of my personal savings to start The Samaritan Women.

I began to study the plight of those who were trafficked, and I learned how few services there were available to them. That became intolerable to me. I knew God wanted me to do this work.

### What does The Samaritan Women do?

We have a 23-acre campus in Baltimore. From there, we provide services for survivors, with a keen focus on helping these girls and women come back into society.

We began as a restorative care shelter, and we have grown to add programs that teach others how to do this same work successfully. It's hard for shelters and programs to be successful and sustainable long term. But by sharing what we've learned, we can ensure that more survivors are served and given the right kind of care and support.

### What have you learned about caring for survivors over the past decade?

First, we've learned that smaller is better. Our residence houses 14 women, and the smaller ratio of women to staff helps ensure that survivors—with a myriad of physical, mental and spiritual health issues—get the attention they need.

Second, restoration takes time. The average length in our facility is 19 months – our restorative care program is designed to be 2 years. Now, a lot of our women end up going to college – and you don't want to disrupt their academic studies by requiring a move. So, we added a graduate program that allows them to stay for another 2 years. Some women have been with us for 5 years.

### High attrition rates are a common problem among shelters for trafficking survivors. Do you experience high attrition rates as well?

In the beginning we did – we had attrition rates of 70 percent in the first 90 days. But after we changed our program to be more structured and mapping out a progression of care, we reduced attrition down to 30%.

Over the long term, isolation and the lack of community is a huge impediment to successful re-entry. The very nature of trafficking is isolation; survivors believe that they are persona non grata in

the world. We had to address that belief, and we did it by adding our Graduate Program which allows women to move to supportive independent living

There are a lot of impediments to social re-entry. The average age of intake for us is 20, and on average they have been trafficked for 4.3 years. That means they were trafficked as children, so school was interrupted. They have no job skills. Their socialization was interrupted, and nearly 80 percent of them are dealing with some form of addiction.



### What turned your attrition rates around?

In 2013 we did a thoughtful reassessment of the program, thinking long and hard about what was working and what wasn't. We did a reboot to add more structure to our program. That's when we started to see a dramatic shift in retention.

Our residents taught us what they needed. They needed a much more methodical approach to healing. They needed us to break the healing process into increments. They needed us to give them the space to gain competencies over time.

We created a care model that has five phases, each of which includes metrics for measuring progress, and giving women opportunities to grow in autonomy, voice and choice. That's made all the difference in their success.

Think of it as you would injuries on the battlefield. You have a unit driving bodies off the field. You have the MASH unit that provides the emergency care to stop the bleeding. You have a hospital unit for surgery. Then you have a rehab center. So often in shelters for those who have been trafficked, we make the mistake of going right from the battlefield to rehab. That approach doesn't work.

### Is that what led to the launch of the Institute for Shelter Care?

Yes. We created the Institute after over 12 agencies came to us, asking to learn from us. So, we went from being a shelter, to a shelter that plants other shelters. We may be able to serve 18-30 women a year. Each shelter we train multiplies that impact.

Participants go through an 8-month curriculum that teaches them how to establish a solid entity, business and administration practices, understand the population they're serving, define services and create and evaluate their program, develop community partners, and work with the church. We just finished training four shelters, and we will launch 8 more into training in March 2020.

We stay with each shelter for 3 years. The first year is training. The second is their launch year. The third is their "release" year. Throughout the process, they get mentorship, support, site visits, and other tools to ensure they are sustainable.

### How many shelters do you want to train?

Today there are 144 shelters in the United States, with an average of 6 beds each – that's fewer than 1,000 beds nationwide. In 5 years, we'd like to train and release 29 sustainable shelters. which will serve an additional 1,500 survivors.

### How can people help?

First, pray – because Satan is not going to be thrilled with our taking back God's daughters.

We're also trying to raise a substantial amount of money. We need introductions to people who can grasp the vision and contribute sustainable gifts. We need kingdom builders who are driven to help us on the national sphere.

We also need people who can open doors to career opportunities for survivors. In our facility, nearly 80 percent of women here were in college and on honor roll. They need the opportunity for an education, and for a good job so they can build a good life on a living wage and feed themselves and their families. We've had women be highly successful in a variety of jobs, from forklift operator to personal assistants for business leaders. We need more employers to offer second-chance positions.

We can't just love on these women and expect results. We need to bring out faith-based passion together with a business-like discipline. Christians are leading the charge against trafficking and toward healing. But that lead is ours to lose if we don't engage with a drive for excellence.

Learn more about The Samaritan Women from [their Website](#), and read [their recent profile](#) in the Baltimore Sun.

**National Human Trafficking Hotline**

**1-888-3737-888**

**Text: 233733**

## What It's Like to Attend the Institute

As the Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Initiative ([NOVA-HTI](#)), Kay Duffield has been a well-recognized and respected leader in the fight against human trafficking for nearly a decade. As a participant in the Institute's pilot program, she took away many important learnings about the challenges specific to running a successful residency program and how to overcome them. She shared a bit of her experience with us.

### What led you to participate in the Institute?

NOVA-HTI has been providing victim services since 2015. We have referred clients to The Samaritan Women, and being in the same geography, we know many of the same people.

When NOVA-HTI decided to expand our services into housing for survivors, we wanted to learn from the Samaritan Women. We spent time on their campus and going over their program. In just the first day, we experienced a dramatic shift in our perspective – the problems with the traditional approach of moving right from the battlefield to recovery, and how hard it is to help people when they remain in an unhealthy environment, with the same unhealthy contacts in their lives.

**FAITH. JUSTICE. FREEDOM**  
**NOVA-HTI**



*Kay Duffield, Executive Director, Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Initiative (NOVA-HTI)*

Nine months later, Jeanne contacted me to ask if we would be part of the Institute's pilot program. It felt like an answer to prayer and a confirmation we were moving in the right direction. So many shelters close in the first year because they don't have the training or funding. So, we have been equipped to do the work we want to do.

### Why do you think the Institute is so necessary, regardless of your deep understanding of the issue of human trafficking?

We think we know what we need to know to provide adequate services. The truth is we don't. Our first week of our onsite intensive training wasn't about trafficking – it was about Board governance. Answering questions to determine whether our Board and governance structure is ready for a residential program.

The training has made a huge difference. Because of what we have learned, we are going to rebrand. Because now we have expanded vision, and we want to ensure our brand captures our vision and where we are headed.

The Institute is also with you every step of the way. Helping you address questions like how you organize your staff. What the program will cost to run. What the curriculum will look like. Their program is an excellent model, and we'll be using the same.

It's important to recognize that not every survivor is ready for a residential program. The right intake person will help assess through that first phone call or

video call where that survivor is. If they're not ready for residential, that's OK. We'll help them find what they need.

### What's next for NOVA-HTI as a result?

We will continue to engage in education to prevent trafficking. We still have a speakers' bureau trained to do presentations, so we have multiplied our expertise several times over to engage the community.

Then our demand disruption and outreach are very important. We are the only organization I know of that is doing outreach to the buyers. We're having incredible conversations with men who tell us that they are addicted, and that they want help. We're connecting them with support groups to get the help they need and want.

And we'll continue providing services and open housing for survivors. Our vision is to open multiple houses of different levels. In the first phase, they'll be able to stay for 6 months. Then other steps will be available to them. We'd prefer to have them get that support here, and not need to send them to other geographies.

### How can people get involved?

We have an ambassador program, which we just started this year. That's a great way for people to get involved, even if they don't have a lot of time.

We also need financial help to provide these services. If anyone is willing to help us with property and housing, we would welcome that, as we get our residential programs up and running.

## Young People Speak Up During National Night Out

**RELEASE:** Earlier this month, the nation commemorated National Night Out, a police-sponsored event that encourages communities to work and live together in harmony. Youth for Human Rights volunteers participated in the events in Washington, D.C., by educating the community and police officers about human rights and trafficking.

Youth for Human Rights is advocating for federal legislation that would require all states to provide training programs to police officers on how to spot and address instances of suspected human trafficking.

[Learn more.](#)

## Uber Drivers Trained on Trafficking in DC

**WTOP:** In honor of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, Uber trained its drivers in the District how to spot and report riders who may be victims of human trafficking. The training sessions included insights from law enforcement and advocates.

The training was an expansion of programs that Uber introduced in 2016. Training is being conducted in multiple countries, including through Latin America.

The Uber app also includes information on how to help stop human trafficking.

[Learn more.](#)

## International Airport Designated a Safe Place

**RENO GAZETTE JOURNAL:** The Reno-Tahoe International Airport has been designated a Safe Place for victims of abuse or human trafficking. The designation was awarded by the Children’s Cabinet.

All employees at the airport will be trained on how to identify and assist victims. The airport will be able to provide support and resources to anyone who looks for assistance, including young people running away from an abusive situation.

About 4.2 million travelers go through the airport each year. The airport is one of 65 local businesses that take part in the Safe Place program, which includes the local bus fleet, McDonald’s and several restaurants and retailers.

[Learn more.](#)

## Survivor Creates Technology to Help Victims Get Help

**CBS NEWS:** Lina Thompson was trafficked in Europe for nearly 10 years. And when she moved to Florida, she saw many of the same old problems. She decided to do something about it.

Knowing that most victims have access to a smartphone, Lina and her husband created coded stickers that can be put up in public places, like airports and public restrooms. When a person scans the code, they get a link that tells a victim how they can get help. The information is available in multiple languages.

**Thompson is seeking volunteers** to help put these stickers up in public places. Those who want to help can send a note to [info@twentyfour-seven.org](mailto:info@twentyfour-seven.org)

[Learn more.](#)

## Advocates Urge DC Council to Reconsider Legislation

**Legislation** has been introduced in the District that would decriminalize sex work. But two advocates say that it goes too far by also decriminalizing pimping and the running of brothels – undermining the safety and well-being of trafficking victims.

In an editorial that appeared in the **Washington Post**, Tina Frundt, founder and executive director of Courtney’s House, and Yasmin Vafa, cofounder and executive director of Rights4Girls, argue that the policy is misguided and dangerous. They note that other protections that exist under the law are not enough to protect victims and children:

“The truth is the sex trade cannot be fixed no matter what “protections” are put in place; it virtually always causes physical and psychological trauma. In fact, [field research](#) from nine countries, including the United States, found about 75 percent of women in prostitution were raped, 68 percent suffered post-traumatic stress disorder at levels similar to combat veterans and as many as 95 percent experienced physical assault.”

Instead they offer an alternative solution: adoption of the [Equality Model](#).

“As the prevailing policy approach globally, the Equality Model has been implemented successfully in a variety of countries, including Norway, Iceland, Sweden and France. Under this approach, the act of selling sex is decriminalized — an important and necessary shift because most individuals enter the sex trade as children and are often trapped because of criminalization — but acts of pimping, paying for sex and brothel-owning remain prohibited.”

[Read the full op-ed.](#)

# Human Trafficking Update

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*A regular newsletter created by the Human Trafficking Task Force of the Annandale United Methodist Church*

*Submit story ideas and questions to Kristine Grow, Editor, [krstngrow@gmail.com](mailto:krstngrow@gmail.com)*

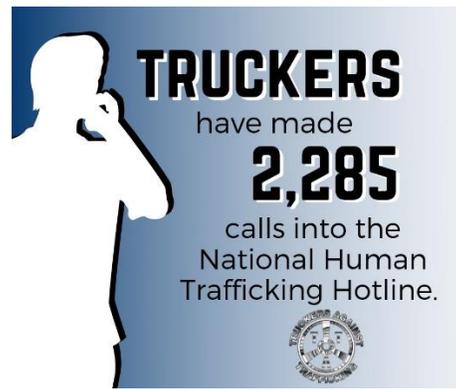
## Job Board

Feeling the call for a new career – one that makes the world a better place? Here are some organizations fighting human trafficking that need your help.

The Human Trafficking Institute is hiring for two part-time positions based in Merrifield, VA: **Accountant** and **HR Manager**. To learn more, visit <https://www.traffickinginstitute.org/job-opportunities/>

Polaris is seeking a **Director of Communications**, a full-time position that is responsible for leading Polaris strategy on the public release of its research and achievements. To learn more, visit <https://careers.foliomag.com/job/director-of-communications/50084861/18006/>

RJI is looking for an **Engagement Specialist** responsible for internal and external communications that support the national movement to prevent human trafficking. To learn more, visit <http://rvaji.com/careers>



## New Tool for Truckers

**DC VELOCITY:** Many truckers use the CarrierLink app on their smartphone to stay in touch with their main offices. Now that app includes a feature that will allow truckers to report suspected trafficking to the National Human Trafficking Hotline with just one touch. The app is used by about 150,000 people.

[Learn more.](#)

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