

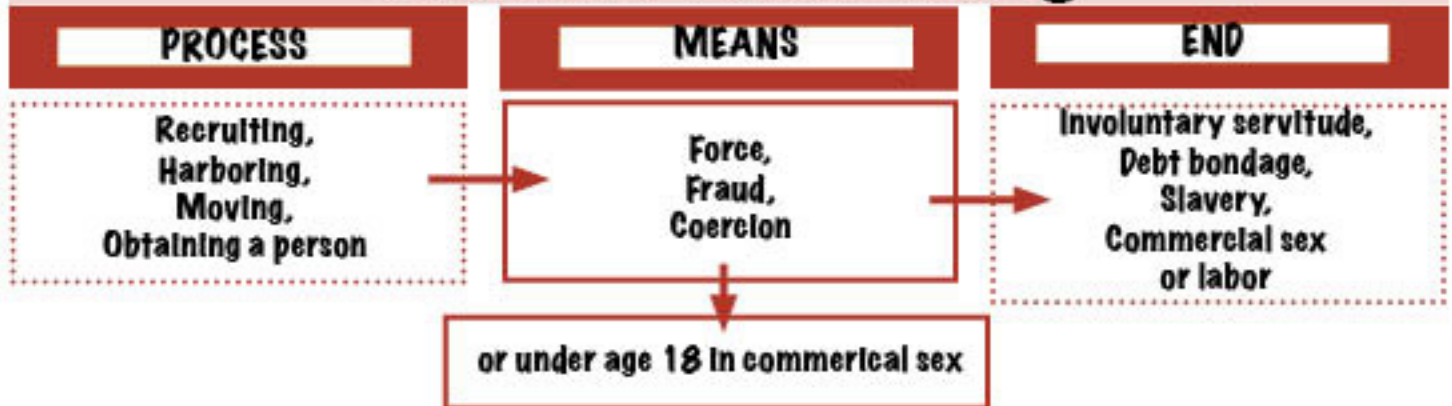


January 11th

National Awareness Day:

Human Trafficking — Modern Slavery

Key Elements in the Definition of Human Trafficking



A leading U.S.-based international marriage broker matched Katerina, a young Siberian woman, with Frank Sheridan, an American who soon after her arrival in the U.S. kept her a virtual prisoner in his home. He took away her identification papers and cut all the phone lines to the house.

During one violent rage, he beat Katerina and dragged her around the house by her legs. When she told him she was leaving him and going back home to Russia, Frank stabbed himself and accused her of doing it. He then said he would post bail for her, if she promised to return to him and be a dutiful wife.

Katerina fled instead to a domestic violence shelter. Later her husband was killed in a fight with police.

Mail order brides can be at risk for bride trafficking. There are laws to protect them, but these women often have no knowledge of the U.S. laws and their rights.

Florencia Molina, enticed to Los Angeles by a woman from Mexico, was promised a job and free accommodations. "I came to the United States with lots of dreams, but when I got here, my dreams were stolen," said Molina, 33, whose three children stayed with her mother in Mexico until she could earn enough for their schooling.

She worked at a dressmaker's, sewing roughly 200 party dresses over 12 hours. Later, the shifts often stretched to 17 hours a day. Molina was locked into the shop at night — sleeping with a co-worker in a small storage room, without the option of showering or washing her clothes.

The shop manager paid Molina roughly \$100 a week, confiscated her identify documents, and told her she would be arrested if she went to the authorities.

Finally she got permission to go to church and there found a person who helped her get to the proper authorities.

"(Human trafficking) is not only thriving, but growing. Recent estimates of this illegal global trade are as high as \$32 billion, if both the sale of individuals and the value of their exploited labor or services are taken into account." (2005 Trafficking in Persons Report, TIP pg. 34)

"We remain committed to acting as a voice for the voiceless — an advocate for the prostituted woman or child, the exploited domestic worker, the trapped agricultural laborer. Their bondage demands our attention and is worthy of our efforts.

You are (an important) partner in the growing, truly global coalition, heeding the call for abolition!"

Ambassador Mark P. Lagon
2005 TIP Report

Visit these web sites to learn more:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/>

<http://www.ecpat.net/EI/index.asp>

<http://www.captivedaughters.org/>

<http://www.sdssisters.org/slavery/>