



Gavin Newsom
Mayor

Theresa Sparks
Executive Director

San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking Minutes

September 13, 2010 - U.S. Asylum Office, 75 Hawthorne St., 3rd Floor

I. Welcome and Introductions

No agency announcements were made.

II. Asylum Office Presentation

Mollie Isaacson, from the Asylum Office, explained that the mission of the Asylum Office is to offer protection to refugees. She went on to explain that a refugee is a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail her/himself of the protection of that country. Asylum Officers fulfill the Agency's mission by: interviewing and assessing refugee applications, writing up a legal analysis of the applicant's situation and explaining to the applicant her/his rights and protections. Since trafficking victims may or may not be refugees, during the interview phase, Asylum Officers evaluate the individual and if they suspect the individual is a trafficking victim they give her/her information about their unique rights and protections. 8 offices, like the Asylum Office in San Francisco, exist in the United States, primarily in urban centers. In 2009, approximately 25,000 individuals filed for asylum, 2,000 – 3,000 of whom filed in San Francisco.

Mollie then went on to describe the Department of Homeland Security's "Blue Campaign"—a DHS-wide initiative to combat human trafficking through enhanced public awareness, victim assistance programs, and law enforcement trainings and initiatives. Through the campaign, DHS has created several online resources, a PSA and trainings, to name a few of the initiatives. Mollie then showed the group the PSA. SFCOHT members agreed that the PSA would be great to show during Awareness Month.

III. Ideas and Engagement Survey

See below under the Public Awareness Committee update.

IV. Committee Updates

a. Public Awareness

The Public Awareness Committee met during the month of September to continue planning events and strategies for the coming months, which include:

- Community Forum: the Committee is planning a community forum next spring, but needs more direction from the entire Collaborative about such a forum and has developed a short survey to get input from the group. The survey also seeks to capture input about the Collaborative, as a whole. Hard copies of the survey were passed out during the meeting, but will also be emailed out to the group during the coming week.
- Brochure: Copies of the SFCOHT brochure were emailed to the Collaborative prior to the meeting and were also available to be viewed in hard-copy during the meeting. Members present gave a few final comments/edits about the brochure, but all agreed that it was a wonderful tool and beautifully done.
- A Calendar of Events: the first Calendar was emailed to members at the beginning of September. The Calendar went out to approximately 280 people and 90 or so (or 30%) opened it up. It's a great way to spread information about upcoming events and activities that member organizations are doing. If you'd like your event to be captured in the next Calendar, please be sure to submit information about your event to Laura Marshall by the 1st of each month.



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- Awareness Month: members of the Committee met with the SF Public Library during the month. The Library is interested in hosting an event during Awareness Month and has reserved the Koret Auditorium for February 2nd for us, for such an event. The library will help with outreach for the event by posting it on their website, making flyers, and putting it in their newsletter. We are hoping to have a reading by an author or a movie showing on that date. Members from Not for Sale mentioned that they were working on a curriculum to accompany the book, "Sold" for high school students that they'd be happy to share with the Collaborative. An individual from Not for Sale also mentioned that she was working on a bibliography of books on the subject of trafficking. A brief discussion ensued about the movie "Very Young Girls," which was brought up as a recommendation to show during Awareness Month.

The Awareness Committee will meet next on **Wednesday, October 27, 2010, at 1:00 pm**, at 25 Van Ness Ave., Suite 140. All are invited to attend and get involved in the Committee's planning.

b. Legislative Monitoring

Members of this Committee brought up pending Federal legislation introduced by Patrick Leahy entitled the, "Refugee Protection Act of 2010." This legislation refines and revamps procedures related to filing for asylum, including, for example, the rule that you have to file for asylum within one year of arriving in the U.S. – which is very challenging for many victims to do.

c. Data Collection

No report.

d. Governance

No report.

V. Other Topics for Discussion

Next SFOAHT Meeting:

Members were asked whether their agencies would like to host the next SFOAHT meeting and the Mayor's Office volunteered to host, see details below:

2010 Meeting Schedule:

Date/Time: **Monday, November 1, 2010, 12:00 am – 2:00 pm**
Location: City Hall, Room 421