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NAU Yuma Instructors And Students Host Presentation On Human Trafficking

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POSTED BY: [STELLA JIMENEZ](#) NOVEMBER 1, 2015



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Northern Arizona University social work students pose during the “Coming Out of Hiding” presentation held Wednesday evening.

CALEXICO – Human trafficking isn’t something thought about or discussed on a daily basis; in fact it is often a subject people tend to avoid. For this reason, the Arizona Foundation for Women and students from the Northern Arizona University (NAU) social work program held a presentation entitled, “Coming Out of Hiding,” at the Women’s Improvement Club in Calexico Wednesday evening.

“As social workers in the making, our student body looks for ways to educate the community about important topics such as human trafficking,” said Karina Gutierrez, an NAU Yuma social works student.

According to the U.S. State Department, human trafficking ranks second in the criminal industry and is the world’s fastest growing criminal enterprise. Human trafficking is expected to over take drug trafficking, which currently holds top position. “Being closer to the border, the student body thought Calexico would be a great place to have a presentation where the binational community can attend and learn about the topic,” said Gutierrez.

According to statistics, millions of men, women and children around the world are currently victims of either

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human, labor or sex trafficking. Human trafficking is considered a form of modern day slavery, as defined as the act of compelling or coercing a person's labor, services or commercial sex act.

Labor trafficking is defined as labor recruiters, contractors, and employers who use violence, threats, lies, debt bondage, and other forms of coercion to force people to work against their will in different industries. Sex traffickers use violence, threats, lies, debt bondage, and other forms of coercion to force women, men and children to engage in commercial sex against their will.

"We see a lot of trafficking in this area (Calexico/Mexicali)," said Rose Marie Lichtenfels, an NAU Yuma and Mesa Community College instructor. "There are quite a few individuals that are being trafficked into this area for labor and sexual prostitution. We have also seen a significant increase in Native Americans that are being taken from the reservations for the purpose of sexual trafficking."

According to the group, the majority of those kidnapped in the sex trafficking trade are U.S. citizens while the majority those being illegally trafficked to provide labor in nail salons and strip clubs are from other countries. According to guest speaker Hector Huerta, Calexico, Mexicali, Matamoros and Chiapas are the most vulnerable and susceptible areas for human trafficking.

In Calexico, only two known cases have been reported. Commonly victims choose not to report to proper authorities because they are afraid of being deported. However, statistics show that 2.4 people are trafficked into forced labor yearly in the United States, explained Huerta.

Those who attended the presentation received various flyers with information and had the opportunity to ask questions as well as express concerns. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services currently has a campaign to rescue and restore victims of human trafficking, and they encourage victims or anyone who



QUOTE OF THE DAY



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suspects a person of being trafficked to contact their offices immediately for assistance.



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1 COMMENT

ON "NAU YUMA INSTRUCTORS AND STUDENTS HOST PRESENTATION ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING"



james shinn | November 2, 2015 at 10:10 AM | Reply

Great work by future social workers! Human trafficking will end only