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FREEDOM  
NETWORK  
USA

ANNUAL  
IMPACT  
REPORT



Freedom Network USA

# Letter From the Director

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## Greetings!

I am so excited to join the Freedom Network USA at this pivotal time. With 15 years of experience in supporting effective, meaningful programs to prevent human trafficking and respond to survivors, the Freedom Network USA is uniquely qualified to lead the development of policies, programs and strategies that will define the next generation of human trafficking programs in the United States.

Freedom Network USA members know the reality of human trafficking in the United States. They work every day to provide housing, food, medical care, legal representation, mental health care, human kindness and comfort to workers from all walks of life who have been exploited. They provide compassionate services and critical education to workers in the fields, factories, streets and homes throughout America. They collaborate with survivors who step forward to speak to law enforcement, courts, media, researchers and communities. They are the everyday heroes who make sure that survivors are supported, communities are educated, and the programs are effective.

I am honored to put my experience as a lawyer, organizer, program manager, grant writer, advocate and feminist to work in support of the members of the Freedom Network USA. By gathering the experiences of all of our members, we are more than the sum of our parts. We are the largest provider of specialized services for human trafficking survivors in the U.S. We are the best advocates for effective policies and programs. We are the strongest training and technical assistance provider with an unmatched depth of experience and expertise.

This report offers only some highlights of the amazing accomplishments of 2015. Just wait until you see what we can do in 2016!

Gratefully,



Jean Bruggeman  
**Executive Director**

### About Us

Freedom Network USA is a national alliance of experienced advocates advancing a human rights-based approach to human trafficking in the United States. Our members believe that empowering survivors with choices and support leads to transformative, meaningful change. Together, we influence federal and state policy through action and advocacy. We guide the discussion narrative by prioritizing the self-determination and empowerment of survivors in the development of policies, procedures and programs. Our members work directly with survivors whose insights and strengths inform our work. And through our national effort, we increase awareness of human trafficking and provide decision makers, legislators and other stakeholders with the expertise and tools to make a positive and permanent impact in the lives of all survivors.

### Organizational Changes

Freedom Network USA entered a new era in 2015. After the Steering Committee laid the groundwork in early 2015, Freedom Network USA welcomed its first Executive Director, Jean Bruggeman, in September. Bruggeman, an attorney and previously a member of Freedom Network USA, brings over 15 years of experience in the anti-trafficking field. Most recently, she served as a Human Trafficking Fellow with the Office for Victims of Crime within the U.S. Department of Justice. Jean hit the ground running, working with the Steering Committee to establish new strategic goals, initiate independent organizational status, and develop policies and procedures to execute a new vision for Freedom Network USA.

Freedom Network USA formally incorporated in Washington, D.C. in October and plans to file for non-profit organization status with the IRS in early 2016.

*“These organizational changes are necessary for Freedom Network USA to enhance membership and our voice in the anti-trafficking movement. These changes will help us bring a human rights-based approach to a larger audience and ensure survivors get the support they deserve.”*

- Erin Albright, Give Way to Freedom



### Kathleen Morris **Chair**

Freedom Network USA has given me an incredible array of partners and allies who support me in my day to day work serving survivors. It has been essential to our program to do the best work we can do on behalf of survivors. Freedom Network USA also provides a real world, experience-based perspective on how big picture policy conversations and decisions affect survivors. The value of this network to professionals, survivors and the larger anti-trafficking in persons movement cannot be overstated. I am wholeheartedly committed to supporting the essential connections Freedom Network USA fosters to better support individual survivors as well as improved systems and services on a larger scale.



### Dan Werner **Vice-Chair**

Freedom Network USA is the antidote to what is often a hype-and misinformation-driven response to human trafficking. This is why Freedom Network USA is so important, and why I chose to be a board member. By pulling together individuals and organizations working directly with human trafficking survivors, our response is driven by the experiences of the survivors we serve. At so many levels, from determining how best to serve survivors' immediate needs to raising our collective voices in "big picture" political issues, such as immigration reform and labor policy, Freedom Network USA has unsurpassed legitimacy. This is incredibly important work, and I'm proud to be a part of it.



### Suzanne Tomatore **Board Treasurer**

I am on the Board as a longtime member and past Co-Chair to help bring Freedom Network USA smoothly into its next incarnation as a non-profit. I recently completed a course in non-profit financial management, and it was a perfect opportunity to put it to good use! I am happy to serve as inaugural Board Treasurer.



## Amy Fleischauer **Board Secretary**

Almost everything I know about human trafficking I have learned from Freedom Network USA. It has been exceedingly helpful to have a network of experts working directly with survivors readily available to engage in nuanced dialogue and provide support as we address the deluge of complicated cases, media requests and competing philosophies on this topic. As I have become a more experienced member of the anti-trafficking movement, it seemed like a natural fit to provide support to the leading human rights-based anti-trafficking network in the country. I feel both proud and honored to be a member of the Freedom Network USA Board.



## Florrie Burke **Board Member**

In the early days of anti-trafficking work, we had a vision to form a network of people on the ground in order to support each other, promote human rights and most importantly, to ensure that trafficked persons have access to justice, safety and opportunity. As a founder, I bring institutional memory and a continued passion for social justice. I am thrilled to continue to develop and contribute to the movement through my work as a member of the Freedom Network USA Board.

## OUR GOALS

**Promote**  
a rights-based approach

**Collaborate**  
with allies and survivors to address  
the root causes of trafficking

**Improve**  
services and response to survivors

### Conference

The 2015 annual Conference, entitled “TVPA: Past, Present and Future,” was held in Washington D.C. on April 21 – 22. The conference focused on the evolution of the anti-trafficking movement since the **passage of the** Trafficking Victims Protection Act in 2000. The event saw record attendance with a diverse audience comprised of social service providers, legal service providers, federal and local law enforcement, federal agency representatives, academics, funders and other community organizations.

Freedom Network USA emphasized the importance of utilizing a human rights-based approach in working with survivors of both sex and labor trafficking throughout the conference and especially during two key plenary sessions. The first, led by survivors and the authors of “Understanding the organization, operation, and victimization process of labor trafficking in the United States,” (Urban Institute October 2014) served as the backdrop for multiple sessions, making labor trafficking a key theme throughout the conference. The second, Freedom Network USA: The “Who,” “What,” and “Why,” included the inaugural presentation of our position on end-demand tactics to anti-trafficking work and illustrated the development and application of the human rights-based approach.

The 12th Annual Paul and Sheila Wellstone Award Ceremony and Reception was held on the evening of April 21. Freedom Network USA was thrilled to welcome Pronita Gupta, Deputy Director of the Women’s Bureau at the U.S. Department of Labor as the keynote speaker. Longtime ally, Damayan Migrant Workers Association was the 2015 Wellstone Award recipient. Since 2002, Damayan has been educating, organizing and mobilizing low-wage Filipino workers to fight for their labor, health, gender and immigration rights. Led by Filipino women domestic workers, they operate at the cutting-edge of the movement against human trafficking. The award was accepted by Executive Director Linda Oalican and Campaign Coordinator Leah Obias.

*“This was the best conference I’ve been to in a long time. Extremely well-organized, great variety of topics and so many amazing advocates to connect with. I look forward to participating in future conferences.”*

*2015 Wellstone Ceremony and Reception (Left to Right: Tiffany Williams, Leah Obias, Linda Oalican, Florrie Burke)*



## Looking Ahead

Increasingly, the conference serves as the Network's opportunity to promote survivor-centered practices and the rights-based approach to a broader audience, including professionals in intersecting fields. Freedom Network USA recognizes that many of the root causes of human trafficking can only be overcome through collaboration. Too often, human trafficking is discussed as a solitary phenomenon without taking into consideration the multiple factors that create vulnerability or the comprehensive response necessary to successfully address the needs of victims and survivors. For this reason, the 2016 conference will focus on intersecting issues and building a movement through collaborative initiatives. "Bridging the Gap: Building a Movement through Partnership, Prevention, Protection, and Prosecution," will take place April 4 – 5, 2016 in Chicago.

*"[Freedom Network fosters] inclusiveness of all forms of human trafficking - so nice to not feel isolated in recognizing the existence of labor trafficking."*



### Membership

Our members continue to be at the forefront of the anti-trafficking movement through the implementation of best practices in legal and social service programs, development of innovative prevention strategies, supporting survivor advocates, and seeking justice through the courts. Here are a few highlights of their amazing work in 2015.

#### **CAST National Survivor Network and the New US Advisory Council on Human Trafficking**

Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) developed the National Survivor Network (NSN) in 2011. Since that time, NSN has been an essential stakeholder in the anti-trafficking movement, serving as a voice of all trafficking survivors. Several members of NSN were appointed to the US Advisory Council on Human Trafficking in December. “The passing of the Survivor Empowerment Act and the appointment of these eleven survivor leaders sends a powerful message to the country. It is a victory for all survivors, including those still being exploited,” said Ima Matul, Survivor Coordinator for CAST and appointed council member. Congratulations to CAST and the NSN for all the amazing work they are doing to support existing and emerging leaders in the survivor movement.

#### **Civil Litigation Victory**

The Southern Poverty Law Center and the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), both Freedom Network USA members, won a landmark human trafficking case against Signal International Shipyard in New Orleans in 2015. This win was named a ‘historic verdict’ in the field of human trafficking when the plaintiffs were awarded a multi-million dollar settlement. The five plaintiffs, skilled laborers who were recruited from India, were brought to the US under recruiters’ false promises of green cards and U.S. residency. Upon arrival, the men were instead made to live in cramped “man camps” near the shipyard and held captive by the debt they were tricked into acquiring and threats to their immigration status.

#### **Coalition of Immokalee Workers Receives Presidential Award**

John Kerry presented the Presidential Award for Extraordinary Efforts to Combating Trafficking in Persons to the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) on January 29. CIW’s Fair Food Program has received international praise as an innovative model that successfully prevents and addresses forced labor in the tomato fields. This is the third consecutive year that a Freedom Network USA member has received this honor.





## Looking Ahead

Our members are the backbone to the organization. As more organizations engage in this important work, Freedom Network USA must diversify and grow. The Membership Committee will be working to develop a formal way to integrate survivors and allies into the membership structure in 2016. We look forward to welcoming new members who share our values and commitment to a human rights-based approach to addressing human trafficking in the U.S.

### Freedom Network Training Institute

The Freedom Network Training Institute (FNTI) delivered four trainings in 2015. The full FNTI curriculum was presented, as usual, during the Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., giving an immersive introduction to new practitioners. Additionally, trainers presented three specialized trainings: in collaboration with Freedom Network USA member Coalition of Immokalee Workers in Florida, to a large crowd of law enforcement and prosecutors in Dallas TX in December, and for the Wage and Hour Division of the US Department of Labor in New York City.

### Training Highlight

Dallas TX – FNTI conducted a training for 280 law enforcement officials on December 4, in Dallas, TX. Freedom Network USA members Maria Jose Fletcher (Vida Legal Assistance) and Bill Bernstein (Mosaic Family Services) teamed up with law enforcement consultant John Vanek to present this full-day training to a captive audience comprised of local and federal law enforcement and prosecutors. Although the training was comprehensive in scope, providing information on the legal, social service, and law enforcement roles in anti-trafficking work, the training was customized to meet the unique perspective of the audience. The training was a great success thanks to our presenters and partners who made it happen!

### Looking Ahead

In addition to these trainings, FNTI co-chairs began to focus their attention on establishing connections with ally organizations, such as unions. Union outreach workers can help identify potential cases of trafficking within the workplaces they visit, and union investigators can help to document any abuses they find, preserving critical evidence for civil and criminal cases against traffickers. FNTI will develop specialized training curricula in 2016 targeted at these populations.



*FNTI Training in Dallas (Left to Right, Bill Bernstein, Maria Jose Fletcher, Jean Bruggeman, Melinda Smith, and John Vanek)*



## Social Service

In 2015, the Social Services Committee continued to support direct social service providers across the country through their monthly forums. Guest speakers presented on best practices, service standards, collaboration and challenges with topics ranging from how to work with the International Office for Migration (IOM) to exploring ways to implement identification and response policies within the healthcare system. Additionally, members worked with the Policy Committee on several large cross-cutting issues, including advocacy on federal legislation and policy issues related to service delivery.

## Looking Ahead

The Social Services Committee will present the first of their practice papers on Group Cases at the 2016 Annual Conference. Members of the committee have begun work on their second paper, which is a collaborative effort with the Policy Committee on Social Worker and Attorney Collaboration. They will continue their work to support social service practitioners and provide valuable education and training in 2016.



### Policy

Freedom Network USA members joined together on April 20, 2015 for Advocacy Day. Approximately 40 members hit Capitol Hill for meetings with legislators to share information on bills, including The Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act, The Survivors of Human Trafficking Empowerment Act and the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA). Thank you to our pro bono partner McDermott Will & Emery who provided expert assistance and coaching in advocacy, scheduling support and full use of their facilities again in 2015! We look forward to our next Advocacy Day when our conference returns to the Washington, D.C. area in 2017.

Legislative wins in 2015 include the inclusion of The Survivors of Human Trafficking Empowerment Act, increased access to restitution for survivors, and incentives for states to pass laws that allow survivors to vacate trafficking-related convictions as part of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA).

2015 was a busy year for advocacy efforts with federal agencies as well. As in years past, Freedom Network USA submitted both comments and a response to the 2015 Trafficking in Persons Report released by the Department of State. Additionally, Freedom Network USA led an effort, alongside several other anti-trafficking organizations, to recommend changes to the new Trafficking Victims Assistance Program (TVAP) funding opportunity announcement (FOA). Network members submitted an official response and attended meetings with high-ranking officials from the Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) to share their perspectives as direct service providers and the repercussions of some of the policy changes on the ground. In response, several key changes were made to the FOA, making the TVAP funded services more accessible and client-centered.

Collaboration with allies was a key priority for the Policy team throughout the year. Policy Co-Chairs joined forces with multiple organizations in key movements to address systemic issues that can lead to trafficking and exploitation.

### Working Together

**Partner:** Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)

**Issue:** Unaccompanied Minors

**Action:** Submitted official testimony to the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs.

**Partner:** International Labor Recruitment Working Group

**Issue:** H2B Guest Worker Visa

**Action:** Signed on to the effort with multiple immigrant workers' rights organizations. Published op-ed in The Hill.

**Partner:** National Network for Youth

**Issue:** Runaway and Homeless Youth Act

**Action:** Advocated for the RHYA, expressing the dire need for inclusive housing as a central root cause of trafficking.

**Partner:** Amnesty International

**Issue:** Decriminalization of Sex Work

**Action:** Released an official statement in support.

Lastly, Freedom Network USA, with pro bono counsel Fredrikson & Byron, P.A., submitted an amicus brief to the United States Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit in *Adhikari v. Kellog Brown & Root, Inc.* The plaintiffs alleged that thirteen men were recruited from Nepal to work in upscale hotels and restaurants by a U.S. government contractor. However, once they arrived, their documentation was confiscated, and they were informed they would be sent to work in a warehouse in Iraq. Twelve of the thirteen men were kidnapped by insurgents and executed while in route to their destination. The district court dismissed the claim based on the legal theory of subject matter jurisdiction, essentially asserting that the plaintiffs were not allowed to sue the corporation because they were employed outside of the U.S. Our goal was to educate the court about the particular vulnerability of foreign employees of U.S. Government contractors abroad to human trafficking, assert that the TVPA did create jurisdiction for this claim, and urge the Court to allow Adhikari's claim to proceed to trial.

## Looking Ahead

In the coming year, the Policy team's biggest challenge will be preparing for the reauthorization of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Other goals for 2016 include an increased focus on youth and Safe Harbor laws and publishing a comprehensive policy paper on protecting the human rights of sex workers and combatting human trafficking through decriminalization.





Freedom Network USA's communication efforts in 2015 were aimed both internally and externally. We released our first impact report covering 2014, increased our presence on social media, and implemented new tools to improve internal communication.

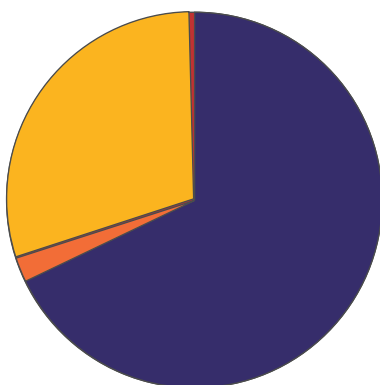
To accompany our Membership Committee's focus on in reach throughout the year, we dedicated efforts to highlighting and elevating the work of our members. We began a monthly member interview series which was featured on our public blog and our newly released internal membership newsletter. Efforts such as these are intended to increase transparency and capacity within the organization while reducing barriers for member collaboration and sharing of resources.

Also in 2015, we released our second Member Report. The report highlights the collective impact of all Freedom Network USA's participating members from January 2013 through December 2014 including client demographic information, trends in field and case studies from survivors. The full report can be accessed at [bit.ly/FNUSA2016report](http://bit.ly/FNUSA2016report)

Finally, Freedom Network USA adopted a new communication strategy which includes efforts to streamline our messaging, improve our infrastructure for internal communication, and optimize our online footprint to ensure we are reaching our intended audience in 2015. The tactics have been developed and will continue to be implemented in 2016.

## Finances

Freedom Network USA is grateful for the continuing support of our major donors, the Oak Foundation and the Foundation for a Just Society. Their generous support has allowed for the addition of the new executive director, increasing our capacity to engage in successful advocacy and visibility in Washington, D.C., and grow our membership and impact in 2016 and beyond. The increased attendance brought additional revenue from our annual conference over previous years. Other income includes annual membership dues and individual donations.



**Foundations - 68%**

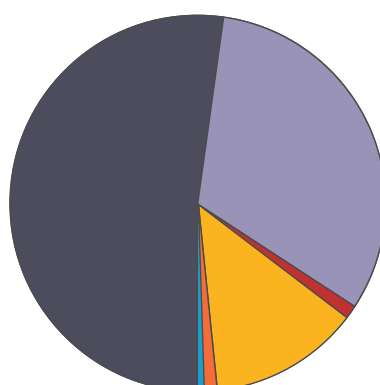
**Conference Fees - 29.4%**

**Member Dues - 2.2%**

**Other - 0.4%**

### Income

Foundations	\$175,000.00
Oak Foundation	\$100,000.00
Foundation for a Just Society	\$75,000.00
Member Dues	\$5,560.00
Conference Fees	\$75,649.00
Other	\$1,037.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$257,246.00</b>



**Personnel and Contractual - 52.2%**

**Travel - 32.2%**

**Training Cost - 13.2%**

**Occupancy - 1.1%**

**Office Supplies - 0.8%**

**Management and Admin Costs - 0.5%**

### Expense

Personnel and Contractual	\$147,150.31
Travel	\$90,680.74
Office Supplies and Costs	\$2,304.89
Training Costs	\$37,157.52
Occupancy	\$3,090.43
Management and Admin Costs	\$1,392.10
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$281,775.99</b>



## Freedom Network USA Members

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### ARIZONA

#### **International Rescue Committee**

Phoenix • [traffickingaz.org](http://traffickingaz.org)

### CALIFORNIA

#### **Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach**

San Francisco • [apilegaloutreach.org](http://apilegaloutreach.org)

#### **Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking**

Los Angeles • [castla.org](http://castla.org)

#### **The Katharine and George Alexander Law Center**

San Jose • [law.scu.edu/kgaclc](http://law.scu.edu/kgaclc)

#### **Legal Aid Foundatxion of Los Angeles**

Los Angeles • [lafla.org](http://lafla.org)

#### **Cindy Liou, Esq.**

San Francisco • [liou.cindy@gmail.com](mailto:liou.cindy@gmail.com)

#### **Opening Doors, Inc.**

Sacramento • [law.scu.edu/kgaclc](http://law.scu.edu/kgaclc)

### COLORADO

#### **Patricia Medige**

Denver

### CONNECTICUT

#### **International Institute of Connecticut (IICONN)**

Bridgeport • [iiconn.org](http://iiconn.org)

### FLORIDA

#### **Americans for Immigrant Justice**

Miami • [aijustice.org](http://aijustice.org)

#### **Coalition of Immokalee Workers**

Immokalee • [ciw-online.org](http://ciw-online.org)

#### **International Rescue Committee**

Miami • [rescue.org/Miami](http://rescue.org/Miami)

#### **VIDA Legal Assistance**

Miami • [vidalaw.org](http://vidalaw.org)

### GEORGIA

#### **Southern Poverty Law Center Immigrant Justice Project**

Atlanta • [splcenter.org](http://splcenter.org)

#### **Tapestri Inc.**

Tucker • [tapestri.org](http://tapestri.org)

### ILLINOIS

#### **International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA)**

Chicago • [iofa.org](http://iofa.org)

#### **Heartland Human Care Services**

Chicago • [heartlandalliance.org](http://heartlandalliance.org)

#### **National Immigrant Justice Center**

Chicago • [immigrantjustice.org](http://immigrantjustice.org)

### MISSOURI

#### **International Institute of St. Louis**

St. Louis • [iistl.org](http://iistl.org)

## NEW YORK

### **Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund**

New York • aaldef.org

### **Florrie Burke, FB Consulting**

New York • florrie.burke@gmail.com

### **City Bar Justice Center, Immigrant Women and Children Project**

New York • citybarjusticecenter.org

### **International Institute of Buffalo**

Buffalo • iibuff.org

### **International Organization for Adolescents**

New York • iofa.org

### **Kristin Heffernan, The College at Brockport**

Brockport • kheffern@brockport.edu

### **My Sisters' Place**

White Plains • mspny.org

### **New York Asian Women's Center**

New York • nyawc.org

### **Safe Horizon**

New York • safehorizon.org

### **Sex Workers Project, Urban Justice Center**

New York • sexworkersproject.org

### **Worker Justice Center of New York**

Kingston | Rochester | Albany • wjcny.org

## OHIO

### **Advocating Opportunity**

Toledo • advocatingopportunity.com

## TEXAS

### **American Gateways**

Austin • americangateways.org

### **Mosaic Family Services**

Dallas • mosaicservices.org

## UTAH

### **Annie Fukushima, University at Utah**

Salt Lake City • anniefukushima@gmail.com

## VERMONT

### **Give Way to Freedom**

Burlington • givewaytofreedom.org

## WASHINGTON

### **API Chaya**

Seattle • apiwfsc.org

### **International Rescue Committee**

### **Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network (WARN)**

Seattle • warn-trafficking.org

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

### **Ayuda**

ayuda.com

### **Human Trafficking Pro Bono Legal Center**

htprobono.org

[freedomnetworkusa.org](http://freedomnetworkusa.org)