

Find Out What You Can Do To Help

By Juliana Zhu, Esq.

“What if you’re in Information Technology? Or are a programmer? Maybe you can join in on what Google is doing and contribute to their data-driven Human Trafficking Hotline Network that helps disrupt human trafficking.”

In the past few years, when people find out my involvement in the fight against human trafficking, they pose this question to me: What can I do to help in this fight?

I use to ask the same question, and my answer to the question didn’t come to me overnight. By example, here are some highlights of what I’ve done. In Fall 2007, I met a friend who helped market jewelry made by girls who were trafficked for sex in Thailand, which made me realize the impact of spending and how it affects lives on the other side of the world. I don’t normally buy jewelry, but did on this occasion as it provided probably a month’s income for someone. At about the same time, a few other friends had started a human trafficking awareness group and we learned about what local organizations were doing to make a difference. For example, a few of us showed up for a group that made a short video clip of a freeze project (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QD_LP540I9k). There were film festivals with a focus on raising awareness. In 2008, I went to a couple of fundraisers held by CAST and IJM where I heard from people who work full-time in this fight. As a result of being inspired by the speakers, in 2009, I volunteered as an attorney and learned how to help trafficking survivors in the U.S. During my time there, I was sent to speak at a conference in China on the topic of the assistance available in the U.S. for trafficking survivors. Since

practicing law on my own, I’ve given pro bono legal advice to anti-trafficking non-profit organizations and continue to help raise awareness through this magazine and otherwise.

But what if you’re not in the legal field? What can you do to help? Even if you’re in the legal field, your path may be quite different from mine. First, it’s a good idea to learn about what your local organization is doing already. If time permits, you can show up at their events and meet people who are in the fight. Most NGOs are short on volunteers, resources, and money. Some do require longer term commitments and you may have a season where you will have more time. If not, you can donate something that they can use as a prize for a silent auction. Such as, if you’re an artist, you can give them a drawing or painting, or teach an art class attended by trafficking survivors. Graphic artists can help design flyers, posters, brochures, T-shirts, etc. (see *article about a comic book about trafficking in Vol. 1, Issue 1, 2012 of Cancer InCytes*). Photographers can take pictures at fundraisers. Writers can write stories to shed more light on the issue and give the problem a face. Actors, Directors and Producers can do similarly with their craft (see *article on Interview with Gregg Helvey in Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2013 of Cancer InCytes*) as well as teach skills in classes. Musicians can write songs, or perform in different venues to raise awareness and inspire hope, such as is

done by the organization Playing for Change (see *article in Vol. 2, Issue 2, 2013 of Cancer InCytes*).

What if you are a student? That’s even better. You can explore fields of study that can have a huge impact in preventing trafficking and not just helping trafficking survivors.

What if you’re in Information Technology? Or are a programmer? Maybe you can join in on what Google is doing and contribute to their data-driven Human Trafficking Hotline Network that helps disrupt human trafficking (<http://www.google.com/ideas/projects/human-trafficking-hotline-network/>).

But what if you’re a web designer? Or a physicist? A mom? A grandfather? A teenager? I don’t have all the answers, but I am sure that you can be creative and have something to contribute, whether teaching a skill or language to a survivor, or lending an empathetic ear. I invite you to send me your suggestions or your story of what you’ve done by email.

Sincerely,



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