

DIVERSITY in DUBUQUE

January 2025

A newsletter from the City of Dubuque's Office of Equity & Human Rights

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Holocaust Remembrance Day

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Lunar New Year

National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Awareness Month

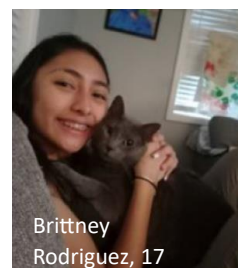
January's awareness month is especially important to recognize in Iowa. Our state ranks as the 13th worst for trafficking in the country. In Iowa, the majority of human trafficking is for commercial sex work, and almost 30% of those trafficked are children. This is not something that just happens on the other side of the world; it's happening here in your neighborhood.

According to the International Labor Organization, almost 50 million victims of trafficking exist worldwide. This is an increase from 2016 when the number was estimated at 40 million. About 5 million of those trafficked live in the U.S. By contrast, the population of Iowa is 3.2 million.

There is no demographic that is safe from this horrific crime. It impacts people of all races, classes, religions, genders, and national origins. It takes place in all countries. In the U.S., the most vulnerable include children in the foster care system, runaway and homeless youth, American Indians, persons with substance use issues, racial minorities, undocumented or migrant workers, persons with disabilities, and victims of domestic violence.

Traffickers can be strangers, acquaintances, or even family members. Humans are trafficked for commercial sex work, forced labor, and forced marriage.

(Continued on the next page)



Brittney
Rodriguez, 17



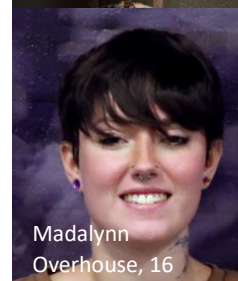
Maluki Jones, 16



Konner Johnson, 15



Evelyn Lopez, 17



Madalynn
Overhouse, 16



Muna
Abdulrahman, 14

These Iowa teens were reported missing in 2024. They are at a high risk of being trafficked or may have already been trafficked. Visit missingpersons.iowa.gov for their profiles and those of the hundreds of other missing persons.

National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month

(continued from page 1)

Forced Marriage

The ways in which persons, the majority of whom are women, are coerced into marriage can vary. Almost half of coercion is done through emotional threats or verbal abuse, however 22% of coercion is done through physical or sexual violence and/or threats of violence. Other methods can include physical isolation, being kidnapped, and removal from education. Forced marriage can earn a woman a possible lifetime of servitude, physical and sexual violence, and mental anguish and despair. Two in five of those forced to marry were children under the age of 16 years old.

Sex Trafficking

There are an estimated 6.3 million people worldwide, mostly women and girls, that have been forced into commercial sexual exploitation. Of those, 1.7 million are children. Sex traffickers use a variety of methods to entice their victims into commercial sex acts. Trafficked individuals almost always know, trust, or even love their traffickers. Traffickers find an emotional void in their victim and exploit it. This often includes the desire for love or acceptance, or it could be practical in the false promise of work, food, or shelter. Once a person is attached emotionally, they are pressured to have sex with clients.

Trafficked individuals are expertly groomed. Traffickers convince the person that their only value is in their relationship with the trafficker which erodes their sense of worth and their grasp on reality. Physical confinement and the threat of physical abuse are also deterrents to leaving. Many of them also depend on their traffickers for physical needs like food and shelter.



<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/statistics>; <https://www.ilo.org/>; <https://www.aclu-ia.org/en/press-releases/iowa-prisoners-paid-little-28-cents-hour>; <https://www.state.gov/humantrafficking-about-human-trafficking/>; <https://polarisproject.org/understanding-human-trafficking/>; image: <https://www.ijm.org/news/study-reveals-dramatic-rise-in-the-prevalence-of-internet-based-child-sexual-exploitation-in-the-philippines>

Forced Labor

You will find forced laborers in almost all industries, including:

- Container ships and tankers
- Manufacturing and construction crews
- Fishing vessels and agricultural fields
- Domestic servitude
- Legal and illegal mining and quarrying
- Restaurants, hotels, beauty and massage parlors
- Drug trafficking operations
- Armed conflict
- State-imposed

Armed conflict can prompt traffickers to force children to participate in the conflict. It also means the abduction of women and girls to marry fighters and endure all manner of sexual, physical and emotional abuse.

Forced labor can also be state-imposed such as in the prison system. For instance, Iowa's constitution allows for slavery and involuntary servitude of people convicted of a crime. Iowan prisoners are paid between 28 and 95 cents per hour. A tube of toothpaste in the prison commissary can cost more than \$6, which means they would have to work up to 21 hours to afford this basic necessity. No human, whether inside or outside of a prison cell, deserves to be treated inhumanely.

Forced laborers can expect:

- Low or non-payment of wages
- Debt manipulation
- Isolation and forced confinement
- Physical and sexual violence
- Confiscation of passports or IDs
- Degrading living conditions
- Deprivation of food, water or sleep
- Threat of deportation
- Hazardous and dangerous work conditions

As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Trafficked and enslaved persons have faces and names and loved ones just like everyone else. Their struggles are everyone's struggles. For the sake of a fair and just society, we must all work to end human trafficking once and for all.

A Note from the Office of Equity & Human Rights

I watched a video recently of a professor who offered her class the opportunity for each student to receive an automatic 95% with one condition: everyone in the 250-person class had to unanimously agree to this proposal. If even one person said no, the deal was off. If you think this was an automatic A for everyone, unfortunately it was not. Over twenty people in the class declined.

When asked why they declined the offer, all twenty of them gave the same answer: they didn't want someone else to get the same grade as them if they didn't study as much. The professor was not surprised and in fact told the class she had been doing this experiment for ten years and had yet to have a class unanimously agree.

So, what's the point of this frustrating story? Very simply, there's always someone who doesn't want someone else to have what they have, because they don't think they deserve it. Greed, selfishness, fear, and envy are at the heart of this situation and most of the world's problems.

Some may look at this situation and say that it's not about greed, it's about fairness, and to a certain degree, they might be right. But what about the student who's holding down two full-time jobs to be able to attend college? What about the student whose parent or beloved sibling died earlier in the semester? What about the student who suffers from chronic depression? Each of these people have struggled to find the time and/or the mental energy to study. Is it still unfair? What about the unfairness they have had to endure in life? If you are considering fairness or equity, it's important to look at all sides and all experiences, not just your own.

Today, the words diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) have become weaponized. DEI programs are being dismantled and reversed in both private and public sectors around the country. The word equity is being beaten down as unfair. However, equity is nothing more than giving everyone the tools they need to succeed. It is a word based on love and acceptance, whereas unfairness is a word based on hate and fear. Which word will you choose to live by? Will you stand for love and acceptance, or for hatred and fear?

Cultural Events Happening in the Tri-States

[First Friday](#) is a free downtown monthly community arts event with open galleries, artists' studios, and live entertainment, fostering community and celebrating arts in Dubuque. This month, events are held on January 3.

Henry Matthiessen III and Allen Eberle

Stoned Art Studio & Gallery @ Noon – 7 PM

Elizabeth Boggess

Outside the Lines Art Gallery

@ 4:30 – 7:30 PM

Skate Deck Art Show

Smokestack @ 7 – 11 PM

Tim Olson & Lena Happ Olsen

Voices Studios @ 5:30 – 9:30 PM

Multiple artists

Widdershins Artisan Gallery @ Noon – 8 PM

Andonia Giannakouros

Andonia Giannakouros Studio @ 6 – 9 PM



Carnegie-Stout Library Virtual Author Talks

Each month, a selection of authors discuss their books and expert topics. These events are virtual and live; however, recordings of the talks will be archived for later viewing. Registration on the library website is required.

[The Magic of Found Family](#)
with TJ Klune

January 15 @ 6-7 PM

Virtual or Watch Party in the
3rd floor auditorium



Volunteer Opportunity of the Month

[Salvation Army](#)

There are a variety of tasks needing volunteers. They are looking for help at the front desk, food pantry volunteers, and help in the garden. They are also looking for youth leaders and volunteers to teach piano and archery classes. Sign up to help with this organization or any of the 200+ other opportunities at volunteerdubq.com.



Cultural Events Happening in the Tri-States

Galena LitFest

The [Galena Public Library](#) is celebrating reading and writing in all its forms by providing a variety of presentations, readings, workshops, and conversations with bestselling authors.

Poets in Dialogue: Jenna Goldsmith, Theodore Williams
January 8 @ 6 – 8 PM (The Grape Escape, Galena, IL)

Midwest Bedrock: The Search for Nature's Soul in America's Heartland with Kevin Koch

January 11 @ 2 – 3 PM (Galena Center for the Arts, Galena, IL – also available through Zoom)

Writing a Mystery Can Be a Mystery! Writer's Workshop with Mary Ann Noe

January 14 @ 5:30 – 6:30 PM (Through Zoom)

Lessons Learned Writing History with Thomas B. Mack

January 16 @ 5:30 – 6:30 PM (Through Zoom)

A Night in Tita Rosie's Kitchen with Mia P. Manansala

January 25 @ 6 PM (Hawk Valley Retreat, Galena, IL)

[Ayurveda with the Clock](#)

Friday, January 10 @ 6–7 PM

Via Zoom

Ayurveda is known as the science of life and operates on the belief that our bodies are able to heal themselves. Emily Manternach will help you find ways to balance not only your number of tasks, but also finding the proper times to complete them. (Cost: \$20)



[Special Olympics Iowa Winter Games](#)

January 13–14 @ various times

Various locations

Athletes with intellectual disabilities from across the state compete in Alpine and Nordic skiing, figure skating, speed Skating, snowshoeing, and more. Come and cheer on these talented athletes.

AmeriCorps MLK Celebration

January 22 @ 5 – 8 PM

Multicultural Family Center

Guest speakers will highlight MLK's work and accomplishments in relation to current inequities and growing opportunities in our community.



Fabulous Fridays Artists Series

[St. Luke's United Methodist Church](#) and Online

January 17 @ Noon

Dr. Charles Barland, organ; Susan Hattel, clarinet; Ann Duchow, violin; and David Patterson, cello.

January 24 @ Noon

Dr. Keisy Peyerl Xavier, piano

January 31 @ Noon

Marcus DeJesus, guitar

[Pursuing Justice with Peggy Allen Towns](#)

Saturday, January 18 @ 10–11 AM

Online

Looking through the lens of the past, this presentation will reflect from the Civil War to Civil Rights in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s quest for justice, then and now. (Cost: \$5)



[IceFest](#)

January 18–19 @ Various Times

National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium

Before the invention of refrigeration, ice was harvested each winter from the Dubuque Ice Harbor (hence the name). This event will feature special winter-related programs including historic ice harvesting on the river, winter crafts, and snow sculptures to educate and entertain family members of all ages.

[Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration](#)

Monday, January 20 @ 7 AM

Q Casino + Resort

Come together to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This year's theme is, "Living As A Called Person: MLK and You and Me." The keynote will be delivered by Dr. John Stewart, who will explore the ways in which each of us is called to combat racism in our community. (Cost varies)

["Maya"](#)

January 22 @ 5:30–7 PM

Phoenix Theatres

The Tri-State Coalition Against Human Trafficking is sponsoring a free showing of the movie "Maya." This film educates viewers on the evils of human trafficking as well as techniques used by traffickers to ensnare their victims.