Dr. Kate Transchel: I'm going to introduce our first speaker. Chris Stambaugh is the executive director and founder of the Grace Network, and he'll tell you a little bit about what he does and give you some very vital information. Thank you, Chris.

Chris Stambaugh: I'm a young person, in case you can't tell. I talk like a young person. I hang out with young people for a living. I work in the inner city of Sacramento. And so if I'm talking like a young person from the inner city of Sacramento, it's because I am, and I've been working with at-risk kids off and on for the last eight years since right out of high school. First, I want to say thanks to Dr. Kate and the STOP program here at Chico State, and really all of the work and energy and time and effort into a week like this. We've done stuff like this in the past in Sacramento. It's a ton of work. So I just applaud Kate and her team for her effort.

I'm excited for a couple of reasons this morning. One, to share this content with you guys, but specifically I'm excited because there's a lot of young people in the room this morning, and when there's a lot of young people that have a passion, a commonality like this issue, that they're interested in fighting, it gets me pumped up because a lot of young people have a significant amount of resources to contribute to an issue like this and to fight an issue like this. Maybe you guys are aware that some of the stuff exists here in Chico. Maybe your awareness is that of, you know, this happens overseas, but maybe not necessarily in the United States. There's definite similarities, but maybe it looks different here in the U.S. versus in a country like Cambodia, where I have a lot of friends who fight child sex trafficking over there.
So I'm pumped. I'm pumped that there's a lot of young people here, and another reason why I'm pumped, and I shared this last night. I was sharing to an audience, but I'm also pumped because there's a lot of dudes in this room right now. And although this issue, and we've seen this in Sacramento, we've seen pimps and traffickers be males and females. This type of issue is perpetuated predominately by men. And if you guys are familiar with pimping or human trafficking or the sexual exploitation of minors or young adults, you guys probably know as well that this issue is perpetuated predominately by men. I do have some colleagues that work in Cambodia, like I mentioned, and they've actually seen, like, “reformed” pimps, like come out of specific communities of poverty in Cambodia, and rather than these individuals exploiting kids continuously, they're now trying to rescue the same kids that they used to exploit. Pretty amazing when transformation like that can happen in that individual's life. So I always like to highlight the young people. I always like to highlight the men in the room. So fellows, good job for being here this morning, even if it is required. Yeah. Just pumped that you guys are here. I'm just going to jump right into this. I have about 45 minutes to talk, which means I'll be speaking for about 2 hours and 45 minutes. I'm serious. [inaudible] Yeah. So some of this content is sexually exploited children in Sacramento.
So just a little bit about me. I go to a lot of stuff like this, and the content is always great, or the individuals always sharing about their organization, but I'm always sitting in the audience wondering “who is this person talking to me,” you know. Like, what's their background? What do they do, you know, what they come out of? What's their experience? So this is me. This is my life. This is my experience. I've been married to my wife, Melissa, for five years, going on six. I have a three and a half year old son named Kourage. We were sitting in the back seat of a car one day and said we should name our son something really cool like a name that means courage, and so let's name him Joshua. And then my wife was, like, let's just name him Kourage. I'm, like, OK, cool. You know. So we named him Kourage with a K. I have a one and a half year old daughter named Sala.

I've been working with at-risk youth for eight years, specifically in Sacramento. My wife and I did some humanitarian work down in Mexico at an orphanage there working with at-risk kids. I came back and started working with the homeless at-risk and exploited youth population in Sacramento, one of the roughest hoods in all of Sacramento -- Del Paso Heights if you guys are familiar with Sacramento. That's where we've been working, the Heights the last four years, working with street kids, runaways, throwaways. We'll get into some more of that content a little bit later. At that non-profit I was lead advocate for survivors of exploitation program. I started off literally with a backpack on my shoulders, hygiene items in my backpack, resource guides, and food, and we would hit the streets of Sacramento and just try and talk to any young person we saw out there, whether they looked homeless or not. And we would try and build relationships with them.
Get to know them, their names, their experience, their background, and whenever they were ready, we were offering them more resources that could have been accessed at our community center in Del Paso Heights.

But we would hit the river, and we would go along the river and just hand out food and hygiene and build relationships with all these young kids, 15 to 30 year-olds. Homeless, on the streets of Sacramento. Camping along the river. There’s one specific wall down there called the 420 Wall, right along the river. So me and my colleague would go down there. We’d spark up a doobie and smoke weed with these kids and just hang. I’m just kidding. We are in Chico, though. No, I’m just kidding. That’s a joke, OK. I was working. I was on the clock. I never drank. I never smoked. I don’t drink. I don’t smoke. But I just tell that as a joke, but, honestly, like, that’s the work that we were doing. Like hanging out the 420 Wall with the kids that are street homeless, that are smoking, you know, a little Mary Jane, you know. And we’d bring them pizza. They got the munchies, you know. We’d bring. I’m serious. You know, the amount of trauma and abuse and exploitation that some of these young people have experienced, that’s the only thing that they can, that they engage with that to try and numb, you know, some of their experience, you know. Some of their abuse. Some of their trauma. Like a child doesn’t wake up one day and says, “I want to be street homeless.” You know, like, that young person has been affected by some crap, you know. And so, you know, they camp out on the streets or along the river. Some of them, you know, drugs, alcohol, all sorts of different stuff. So that’s, yes.
So I was coordinating the survivors of exploitation program. We were working with what we call domestic minor sex traffic victims, meaning young people under 18 years old that have been exploited for sex or for labor, and we'd also work with young adults. So we call the transition age youth population 18 to 22 year olds.

Currently -- I resigned from that position this last fall, and I became a consultant with the federally funded anti-trafficking program, or anti-trafficking coalition, called the Rescue and Restore Program. That's in Sacramento. That's a coalition of service providers and law enforcement and FBI and all sorts of different individuals. And then in addition to that, I help lead the GRACE Network, which is a service provider network, which I'll get into a little bit more as well.
These are some of the collaboratives, coalitions, task forces. Like, some of the significant ones. Like, I'll be honest. GRACE Network is a faith-based anti-trafficking network. We're not exclusive. We work with the whole community. We target the faith-based community because there's a lot of people in that community that are passionate about fighting human trafficking. So one of the things that we do is we develop resource agreements with professionals in the faith-based community that are willing to provide their services pro bono or low cost to traffic victims. So folks like laser surgeons or doctors or lawyers or attorneys or [inaudible] or you're passionate about mentoring at-risk kids, you know. So we engage with the faith-based community, and then we help mobilize, train, and assimilate those individuals into all spheres of the anti-trafficking fight in Sacramento. But being a part of, sometimes we get a bad rap for being the faith-based community. We got a lot of passion. We got a lot of emotion, but sometimes we lack the true training and awareness to be fully effective in our passion and in our emotions.

So a lot of this stuff helps us become viable and reputable in the community. So things like the Northern and Central California Anti-Trafficking Team that's hosted by the US Attorney's Office in Sacramento, and then just a few weeks ago, I had the honor of representing the faith-based community at the Attorney General's Office. They're doing a human trafficking round table there. So we're sitting with some of the top law enforcement officials in the state of California, and we're giving them thoughts and advice and recommendations on how to fight children sex trafficking, specifically in the city of Sacramento.
All this making sense? Cool. I'm going to ask that question a lot because, honestly, if it's not making sense, feel comfortable to raise your hand and say this isn't making sense, OK?

So a lot of this dialogue right now, it's straight up in the context of the social worker. I'm not an attorney. I'm not law enforcement. I'm not county funded, or I don't work for the county. I'm not a mental health professional. I'm just a social worker, OK. I'm just an advocate or activist in the community working with traffic victims. And this is going to be really straightforward training and dialogue on the issue of child exploitation.

I'm going to skip the framework specifically for Sacramento because this is the most important thing in the issue of human trafficking: there is so much sensationalism when it comes to this issue. It's ridiculous. You guys seen the movie, "Taken"? Yeah. I'm a Liam Neeson, you know what I mean? I'm not. But I know folks like Liam Neeson. And when I first seen that movie, I'm, like, yeah, let's do this, you know. And thanks for laughing, you know. Even if you guys laugh the whole time, that's all right. Forget all y'all. No, I'm just kidding. But human trafficking doesn't always look like Liam Neeson -- you know, kicking butt overseas, strapped with a pistol, you know, recovering kids, you know, that have been exploited. That stuff does happen around the globe.
That stuff even happens with the FBI in Sacramento. However, at times, it can be a little bit sensationalized, OK. So not every individual -- we have a child welfare system in the state of California. So at times, even if I wanted to rescue a traffic victim, I can't roll up on a door, kick the door in, like, run in, toss a girl over my shoulder, guns blazing, hopping in the van, and driving out, you know. That's not what this issue looks like, specifically, at least in the city of Sacramento and in the state of California. Like, it's important that we deconstruct a sensationalized view of how this issue exists and paint a picture of reality so that we know how to address it in a realistic way. Does that make sense? Good.
So the youngest exploited girl that I've seen, and not just seen but I've worked with, is 13 years old. A victim of sexual exploitation in the city of Sacramento. The youngest girl that I've heard of was coming out of a community, an impoverished community called Oak Park in Sacramento. Is anybody from Sac? So you guys know what I'm talking about, maybe some of these communities. Oak Park, eight-year-old girl sold by her mother for sex so mom could do drugs, alcohol. All sorts of different stuff. Child abuse. Child exploitation is rampant in impoverished and at-risk communities. We'll get into that a little bit more later. In about four years, me personally, I've worked with about 250 documented homeless, exploited, and at-risk youth. I say documented because those are actual intakes that we provided. So an intake is a life assessment. Where this individual has been, where they're at now, where they want to be in the future. And then we would help build a case plan or help develop some goals or help develop them with something so they can move from crisis to independence or self-sufficiency, you know, whatever that might be.

There's a season where I was really depressed. I'll be honest. This field, man, sometimes...if you guys are passionate about this field, you also have to be passionate about taking care of yourself because this stuff is terrible, you know. At the end of the day, like, you can't just chum it up around the table and talk about the rape and exploitation of a child for profit and just, like, hey, I'm going to, you know, go to sleep at night completely normal. You know, completely fine. This stuff is terrible, but it doesn't mean that we can't make a difference. And so in a season of life, man, I was feeling depressed because we were literally seeing fresh cases of sexual exploitation on a weekly to bi-weekly basis.
One of those girls was a 19-year-old girl from Folsom coming out of the suburbs, straight A student, started running with the wrong dudes in high school. She was smoking a little bit of weed, drinking a little bit. These dudes got her caught on ecstasy pills, then they got her caught on, smacked out on heroin, and she's using all sorts of different stuff. So she's addicted to these drugs, and the only way she knows how to get the fix is she agrees to begin soliciting sex so that she can feed her drug addiction. And so these dudes are taking her from the nice suburbs of Folsom to downtown Sacramento off Alhambra Boulevard and pimping her out and exploiting her on the streets of Sacramento. So is it that girl's fault? Absolutely not. OK. Absolutely not. OK. Does that make sense? It's not that girl's fault that she's getting sexually exploited in Sacramento. Was she making the wrong choices in the beginning, probably, but is it ever right for an individual to be exploited for sex? You know, to be raped for profit. Absolutely not.

Even adult women who are prostitutes, you'd probably be -- we judge them a lot. We cast judgment on them. You would probably be shocked to hear about their experiences of childhood. The abandonment. The neglect. The abuse. The exploitation. Maybe they're a child sex traffic victim already, and now they're engaging in self-exploitation. The amount of trauma that, this level of trauma that affects these young people, it's deep, man. It's real deep. There's a ton of research happening on just to figure out how deep is this trauma truly.
You know, I heard an anecdote. They took a young girl, a 12-year-old girl that was being exploited for sex day after day after day, and they did her brain scan at a mental health clinic, and what they found was -- or they took a prisoner [inaudible] 20 year prisoner [inaudible] and did the same exact brain exam. What they found was in both of their brains, they had the same patterns. That they were both testing positive for extreme, extreme, extreme post-traumatic stress disorder. So 12-year-old child being exploited for sex and a 20-year-old prisoner who -- a male, a 20-year-old prisoner of war -- and they got this same exact brain scan. So that's the amount of trauma that affects a young person that's been exploited for sex.

So, yeah, so seeing fresh cases on a weekly to biweekly basis, I'm going to get into a little bit more detail. That girl's from the suburbs, and they definitely come out of the suburbs, but a lot of these kids are also from the inner city.
This is kind of a breakdown of my caseload and one of my colleague's caseloads. So, sadly, the majority of these kids, there's nobody looking for them. You know, they're not making the nightly news. They're blowing out of the foster care system. You know, they're fatherless. They're motherless. Maybe they're homeless within the home. Anybody want to take a guess what that might mean? Homelessness within the home, you know, maybe dad's incarcerated or dad's an alcoholic, and he's abusive, or maybe he's not around, or he's abandoned the child, and maybe mom's just around, and she's barely making ends meet. And so she's checked out emotionally. And so this child has a roof over their head at night, but are they getting the true love, care, and affection that a child needs? You know, are they being treated with intrinsic value and worth? You know. Like, that's homelessness within the home. Or maybe mom is self-exploiting, and she's also abusing alcohol, and dad's incarcerated. Is that truly a home? You know. You might have a roof over your head, but is it truly home? A home is where you get love, care, tenderness, affection. So a lot of these kids, nobody's looking for these kids. I met one dad in all the years of working with my specific caseload at this organization. One dad that came in with their child to try and figure out what was going to happen with him. So the majority of these kids are fatherless, not all of them.
I want to throw out a couple disclaimers. OK. Human trafficking is an extremely complex issue. So I'm not just going to lump it all into one thing, and say it looks exactly like this. You're going to hear from a lady in a little bit, you know, whose daughter was kidnapped and exploited. You know, this young girl is from the suburbs. So it doesn't always look the same, but this is just a breakdown of what we saw or what was the majority of what we saw. So 77 girls African American, 40 girls Caucasian, 19 Hispanics, 16 multi-racial, 6 Asian, 2 Native American. Sacramento is incredibly diverse. It's one of the most diverse cities in the whole nation. So we just estimate that probably about 90 of these kids have been exploited, and that's exploited for sex by another individual. That's survival sex. This young person, this minor is having to trade sex for a living. For food. For money. For safety.

I had one girl tell me she's just dating the baddest dude on the block because she doesn't know what else to do because she's trying to protect herself. You know, she said that to me herself. “I'm dating this guy because I'm scared I might get jumped, you know,” or whatever, and so she's trading sex for protection. She's trading sex for safety. So 100 percent of them have been propositioned. Every single girl practically that we talk to at one time or another they've been propositioned. Do you want to be prostituted? Do you want to be exploited? And these dudes know how to sell them dreams. Anybody know what that means? They know how to sell them dreams. Actually, let me just bump to the next slide. Actually, one slide after this.
So this is one of the misconceptions I like breaking apart, specifically for Sacramento. People understand this issue locally in the context of it being foreign born, but it's not always foreign born. America’s providing its own supply of children to be exploited to pedophiles and to rapists. So freeways and ports may be a factor. We always hear that about Sacramento. Oh, we have the 80 and the 99 and the 5 and the, you know, they're all connected to each other. But every single child that I talk to, they never said anything about freeways. And I would ask them where are you -- where do you live? What hood did you come from? Where do you, where did you live in Sacramento before you got caught up with the FBI or juvenile hall or on probation? And these four communities were always the communities that they told me about - North Highlands, Del Paso Heights, Oak Park, Meadowview. You talk to the majority of CSEC victims (Commercially Sexually Exploited Children), and they'll tell you themselves this is where they're from.

I highlight that to say that, Chico, you guys got your own impoverished and at-risk community. I'm positive you do because every community does. You guys know where the stuff is going down. You know, you guys know where to buy drugs. I'm not saying that you use drugs. You know where crappy stuff is happening in your town or city. Everybody does if you've lived here long enough. I can guarantee you that's where some really gnarly stuff is happening in your community. OK. Impoverished and at-risk contexts, contexts, is that a word? A poverty context. That's where a lot of these kids are that are affected by this issue, primarily. Not saying that's all of them, but, primarily, that's where a lot of them, where a lot of it is happening. And, again, man, these kids don't make the nightly news.
These kids are in the shadows of our society, and these are some of the reasons why. Sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, abandonment. The runaways, the throwaways. This isn’t a holistic list. Every child doesn't even have all of these. These are just some of the contributing factors. Runaways, throwaways, homelessness, street kids, foster kids. There is an extreme connection between the foster care system and kids that are vulnerable to being affected by sexual exploitation. That's how the GRACE Network got started. If I have time, I’ll share that story.

Mental health issues. Unaddressed trauma. Remember, I was talking about. The trauma is deep for some of these young folks. So deep, I can’t tell you how many times I’ve been cussed out over the years. You know, “blankety-blank blank,” and “F your mama,” too. You know. But I’m telling you, if I went through the same stuff that these young people went through, I might be cussing your mama out as well. I hope to be more motivational in some of this content than just informational. Sometimes I've been to stuff like this, and I walk away feeling depressed. But, dude, transformation is possible in the life of an individual that's been affected by this stuff. We've seen it over and over. You know, some girls cuss me out at the beginning. Fast forward two or three years later, and home girl and I are like this. She's not cussing me out anymore. She's actually calling me for help, and no matter how many times they've been re-trafficked or re-exploited, we always answer the call to help them out again. To bail them out again. To get them home again.
You have no idea when something might set in for them. When the light might come on. Hey, I want something different with my life. Does that make sense? We can't give up. We got to build consistency. We got to build rapport. We got to build trust. Some of these young folks have -- people have taken their trust, and just ripped it to pieces. So why are they going to trust me, especially I'm young. I'm in my late 20's. I'm white. I got a lot going against me from the beginning with some of these young folks. I might fit the profile for some of the johns that they're forced to service that night. But through trust building, with engagement, with contextualizing my engagement with them. I'll hop into that on the next slide. Contextualizing your engagement with an individual that's been exploited. Yeah.

Fragmented system. I want to be careful. I know a lot of dope social workers. Anybody need a translation on that? You guys know what dope means. I know a lot of dope social workers. I know a lot of dope folks that work for child protective services. I know a lot of not-so-dope individuals that work for child protective services and other organizations, you know. Like, there's always good people in the midst of bad people, but sometimes our system is fragmented. All sorts of systems. Sometimes our systems are set up. I'm not trying to get all political, but sometimes our systems are set up a little bit that, I think, is to keep people oppressed.
You know, the foster care system, and I’m not ragging it completely, but a lot of these kids are exploding out of foster care straight into homelessness. Straight into sexual exploitation. You know, kids emancipate from foster care, and the statistics are absurd how many of them are street homeless within two years of emancipation or prison. Or in sex exploitation or drugs or alcohol or whatever. So just fragmented, not completely broken, but just fragmented. I think one of the reasons why is we stress independence so much. Man, you guys know what extended adolescence is? We got dudes living with their mama, you know, in their late 20's, early 30's, you know. And so at 18 we’re giving kids in the foster care system the boot, well, ’til 21 now sort of. They’re having some complications with that. But we’re giving them the boot and saying, hey, you’re independent. We’ve equipped you with all the independent living skills you need. You've been through all of the ILP classes, independent living program classes. You're independent, 18. You're a young adult now. Boom. You know, these kids are vulnerable, man. We've actually seen more young people affected by sexual exploitation 18 to 20 years old than the average statistic that's normally quoted in the United States, which is 12 to 14 years old. I think 18 to 20 year olds may be more vulnerable than 12 to 14 year olds. But not a lot of folks are talking about transition-age youth. And I'm not disregarding minors that are being exploited for sex. Does that make sense? Yes. Good. Brainwashing, money appeal, broken families. I think fatherlessness is huge.
So this is what you guys are doing. The public's being educated on this issue. This is some of my tactics when I was working with these young folks. I would never lead off, “Are you a commercially sexually-exploited child? Like, we have to engage. Like we have to contextualize our engagement. You know, we talk a lot about this issue, but at the end of the day, these young people are just young people, you know. Like I had to become fluent in how they speak, you know, and what they're saying, and you guys are young folks so you know what's up. So just contextualizing, this is more for a social worker. Contextualizing your engagement. Learning about their background, culture, neighborhood, style of music, taste in clothing, preferred food. Some of these kids grow up in a poverty context. They've never been on the other side of the railroad tracks. They've never even been outside of the same hood that they were born and raised in. They've never seen the suburbs. They've never seen the ocean. They've never seen the snow.

Again, this is my context. This isn't necessarily the context for Chico or other communities, but this is the young, this is kind of the demographics of the young folks that we were working with. So just learning how to contextualize. That's how you help people.
Some of these young folks, we need a whole mindset change, mindset shift, you know. Like these kids have been treated as criminals in the past. They're still treated as criminals. They're literally arrested and charged for the solicitation of prostitution and placed in juvenile hall. Tell me, if a minor engages in illicit sex with an adult man, is that her just prostituting herself? No, that's statutory rape. That's an adult man having sex with a child. They can't do it legally. Legally, it says that they are a child sex trafficking victims, or they're a victim of sexual exploitation. And so a lot of these young kids, they didn't even know what I was talking about when I say human trafficking. They don't even know what I was talking about when I was saying sexual exploitation. Because for them, it's prostitution, but it's not prostitution. They're being prostituted. They're being exploited. But I would have to ask you has anybody ever tried to force you into prostitution, and if the answer was yes, I'm telling you, these girls have been treated as criminals. When I tell her you're not a criminal, you're not a victim, but you are a survivor. You're a survivor of just terrible, terrible things. Things that, things that an individual is never supposed to experience. That they were not created for them. Just to see their posture change or their affect change, you know, when I say you're not a criminal. It's huge. It's huge for these young folks. Another thing I tell them is you're safe. Every adult in this building cares about you and your safety. These kids have been unsafe almost their entire lives. Again, I'm talking [inaudible]. I don't want to lump it all into the same thing. I'm
talking about kids in the inner city context, poverty context, foster care context, juvie, probation, kids that are slipping through the cracks of another fragmented system like our public school system.

Dude, we got inner-city schools. We got, like, 40 kids in an extremely diverse zip code all going to one elementary school classroom with one teacher. You know, that's another fragmented system.

Yes. Yeah. [inaudible comment from audience] She said, “Is it a fragmented system or is it screwed up?” We can just say that. Is it screwed up that a woman who’s prostituting gets arrested for the solicitation of prostitution, but then there’s no charge against the pimp or the trafficker for pimping and pandering? Yeah. That’s screwed up -- or the john, and there's not much going on for the johns at all. Like, that's a terrible thing, you know. Like, honestly, like, I was saying earlier, the amount of abuse and exploitation and trauma that adult women have experienced as a child for engaging day to day in self-exploitation or what may appear to be self-exploitation, but they really got a trafficker or a pimp looming over their head, you know. And this is more like street level sex trafficking. Yes. Oh, five more. I better wrap this up. We can talk more afterwards.
So, fostering a relationship, educating the parents. Again, like, these kids being treated as criminals in the past from judges, the public defenders, attorneys, social workers, teachers, parents. Our mindset has to continue to change for the benefit and restoration of an exploited child.
Like, everybody comes into contact with exploited kids. It might not be sex trafficking, but kids that are being abused, kids that are being neglected, kids that are being abandoned -- educators, counselors, social workers, nurses, church leaders, law enforcement, peers. Like, sometimes you may have no idea what's going on in life of an individual, but you're smart. Like, you can tell when something's going on with something or with someone. Be willing to uncover what's beneath the surface in that young person's life. If you feel uncomfortable doing that, seek out an expert, you know, and they can help you.
Children need to know that they have intrinsic value and worth. They were never meant to be treated as a commodity. It takes an entire community to rally together to fight this issue wherever it exists. It's not just some law enforcement. It's not just some prosecutors. It's on every single individual in this room to respond, and if you don't feel that, you got to feel that. Like, I think, collectively, we've got more resources in this room, we have an arsenal of resources in this room, to fight this issue; maybe even more than law enforcement and prosecutors. But we are also, I believe, called to help resource them, resource their work. Some of you guys are called to go into that specific field. But every individual has a responsibility to respond to this issue. I think. Just really quick.
We’re not going to do Q&A right now. Just for, like, three minutes. GRACE Network. We launched the GRACE Network a couple of summers ago in response to the drastic needs for commercially and sexually exploited youth in Sacramento. And it started off with one young girl who a pimp used her situation with her braces. She had braces on her teeth. She had them for a couple of years. She grew up in foster care. These braces were fusing to her teeth, cutting into her gums, and at 17, he lured her into a lifestyle of being prostituted by saying, “Hey, I’m going to take your braces off.” I know this story sounds made up, but this is true. “I'll get your braces taken off, like, pull you out of your foster care placement, and, you know, we love each other. Let's run away together.” You know, whatever. He started pimping her out on the streets of Reno for an entire year, and at 18, I got a call from the victim specialist with the FBI asking if we had any kind of orthodontia resource in Sacramento to help her because he never got them taken off, and then just the thought of her living with the very things on her teeth that this dude used to get her, to recruit her to a lifestyle of being prostituted. I was, like, that's, you know, that sucks. So I sent out an e-mail to a bunch of my friends, family members, colleagues, and I said, hey, is anybody aware of an orthodontist out there that can get these braces taken off, and within hours we had five different orthodontists that were willing to help this young person.

After that, we had a young woman who had been exploited. Her traffickers put tattoos all over her body with his symbol, his name, and stuff like that. So we needed a laser surgeon to remove the branding. Some of these girls have it across their
chests, insides of their fingers, lower back, and so we found this laser surgeon who'd do it pro bono. So he started removing tattoos for girls that have been sexually exploited.

And we just, honestly, it sounds simple. We just been doing that almost ever since. There's a need in the community. There's a huge gap. There's all sorts of folks that are passionate about this issue. Let's find the folks that are willing to provide their services pro bono. Let's provide the support, the transportation, whatever, and let's scoop up this traffic victim, get them connected to what they need to be connected to. So, literally, we just been doing that ever since. We have a website. I don't know if you want me to show that right now. Or later.
So, again, we are faith based -- but, man, we're working with all sorts of different folks.
So this is our website.
I would say the biggest thing -- I have registration sheets here over on the table, but if you hop on this, you can actually register for our network.
E-mail, name, address, phone number.
Are you a business, church, government, or non-profit. What's your skill sets? What's your abilities?
We try and help assimilate people into all spheres of the anti-trafficking fight.
We've got monthly gatherings. So we got one next Wednesday evening at Origin Coffee and Tea in Rockland, right outside of Sacramento. I'm doing a training on what human trafficking looks like, specifically in Sacramento so people know how to respond. This is the most important thing. We have a resource line Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
These are all resource categories. So any kind of service, any kind of resource that a traffic victim has, like, we're just down to help meet the need. If it's not established in the community, then we'll establish it. OK. If it's, you know, a girl's been trafficked to Ohio, she needs to get back home, OK, there's a bajillion folks in the network that are just down to throw down the money to purchase that bus ticket or that airline ticket or whatever it is. It's really simple. It's grassroots. It's just -- let's just get it done, you know. I have, my background is being a social worker. So I provide the support through the process.
So this is our resource line right here. We’re definitely a resource for folks in Chico, if you guys ever need it. And within, the beauty of it is that we can provide assessment, and we can get them connected to the proper support. So instead of having to fundraise a million bucks and go open a new shelter, you know, we’ve researched all the shelters, transitional living programs, safe houses in Northern California. And so if we can provide an assessment for a young person that’s been exploited, then we can connect them to the proper program in the community. And so it’s not reinventing the wheel, and we’re doing a lot of training these individual programs to help resource them to work with traffic victims. Just all sorts of different stuff. And, again, just grassroots, launched with zero funding. One hundred percent volunteer driven, and only this fall was getting so large that I needed, either quit this or quit my other job, and so I decided to quit my other job, go full time with this, and then I fundraise my personal salary with my friends, family members, and colleagues. So we just want to make an impact.
That's about it. If you guys have questions a little bit later, sorry if I offended nobody. If I did, I'll see you out back. I'm just joking. Yeah. So it's kind of intense. I think just, sorry. Just one more comment. I talk too much, but, dude. I wanted to say this last night, and I didn't. A guy shared a statistic last night that 300 girls that have been, one of the top experts in the country said that there's, you know, they prosecuted 300 cases, you know, of domestic minor sex traffic victims, and out of 300 cases, only three girls have completely broken away from the life or the game. And I could feel it in the room. Man, I'm, like, this is depressing, you know. You can cut the, you know, the shock or the depression with a knife. Like, it's so thick. Great night last night, not dogging the night, but my hope with this whole issue is that people wouldn't walk away from things like this feeling down, depressed. Like, oh, man, I feel that.

You should feel that, and you should get upset, and you should feel emotion, and you should feel passion, but more than that, you should feel compelled to develop a strategic plan for you, like, what is your strategic plan. What is your gift, what is your talent, what is your ability, what is your treasure, what can you do as an individual, develop your individualized strategic plan, and say “this is how I'm going to fight this issue.” And so instead of walking away from a joint like this and feeling depressed, we walk away feeling pumped, you know. Like, if anything, an issue like this should make us feel excited. Not, I don't want that to sound weird. Like, not excited that it exists, but excited that we get to do something about it, and when we get to experience a transformation in a young person's life that's been affected by this, that's the fuel.
that feeds our fire for not just a few weeks or a few months, but for longevity. For years and years and years to come to continue fighting this stuff. So I hope you guys feel that. You students be pumped, more than just feeling like, oh, you know. Does that make sense? OK, good. Thank you.