

## WSIN Human Trafficking Conference 2018

The Western States Information Network (WSIN) held its second annual Human Trafficking Conference in February, with a focus on “Collaborating to Combat Human Trafficking.” Located in the Sacramento, California, area, the training conference attracted 288 attendees from 120 local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies throughout the United States and Canada and from various law enforcement backgrounds, including sworn officers/investigators, crime and intelligence analysts, and prosecutors.



Nineteen presenters addressed numerous topics in general session or breakout session formats. In addition to an overview of how WSIN and RISS support human trafficking investigations, survivor Elle Snow described her experience being trafficked for sex in northern California during her presentation on *Trauma-Informed Care: Illuminating the Complex Trauma of Human Trafficking*. Other topics included:

- Human Trafficking 101
- Online investigations
- Federal efforts to mitigate the commercial sexual exploitation of children
- Labor trafficking
- The importance of intelligence gained from custodial settings
- Investigation and prosecution of trafficking-related websites
- Illicit massage businesses and storefront brothels
- The steps involved in “john operations”
- The role of tattoos and branding
- How law enforcement can collaborate with nongovernmental organizations to rescue victims and provide services that will most likely keep them from returning to “the life”

The training received outstanding feedback from attendees. While many of the presenters demonstrated the benefit of collaborating with other law enforcement agencies and with nongovernmental, victim-support organizations, it is clear that more needs to be done. As WSIN Executive Director Kent Shaw pointed out, *“More human trafficking training and collaboration is needed to promote the apprehension of traffickers and rescue their victims, but we all also need to do better at preventing human trafficking from occurring in the first place.”*



WSIN Executive Director Kent Shaw meets with Randy Drake, Assistant Chief, Washington State Patrol and Chair of the Human Trafficking Subcommittee of ASCIA.



Attendees were provided various resources at the conference.

In addition to training courses, attendees had the opportunity to network during an afternoon event hosted by conference sponsors. This year's sponsors were American Military University, the California Narcotic Officer's Association (CNOA), the Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies (ASCIA), Hawk Analytics, Cummins Allison, CARFAX for Police, and the International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts (IALEIA) Golden West Chapter.

Resources such as visor cards with human trafficking indicators, shoe cards to provide to trafficking victims, and a variety of trafficking-related bulletins and reports from throughout the nation were also provided.

In addition, following the conference, attendees were provided an attendee roster from the event, and all WSIN Access Officers were emailed links to several documents from the "John Operations" class and a list of many human trafficking-related reports and other resources useful in learning about and combatting this crime.

The next WSIN Human Trafficking Conference is scheduled for May 2019 in the Sacramento area.