

THE HEART INITIATIVE

Fighting Human Trafficking in Montana and Beyond
A Student Organization at MSU
Bozeman, MT



Advisor's Note

Hello!

I have been the director of the MSU Women's Center for 28 years. I have enjoyed working with many young feminists, LGBTQ+ students, the MSU VOICE Center, the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies program, the Diversity and Inclusion Student Commons, the President's Commission on the Status of University Women, Native American Studies, and most recently, the Black Student Union, on a wide variety of projects, events, awareness-raising campaigns, displays, and celebrations. I feel very privileged to be among and working with those at MSU who concern themselves with social justice, human rights, and equality.

I am thrilled to be chosen as the new advisor for the HEART Initiative! I became aware of HEART during their first year at MSU and worked with then president, Michael Hollinger, on an ambitious inaugural event featuring a panel of survivors, law enforcement, legal professionals, and a distinguished MSU professor. I was extremely impressed by the content, the enormous audience, and the hard work that had obviously gone into the organizing and planning. I knew then that HEART was at MSU to stay! The extent of dedication and care that has gone into their events over the past years is amazing, and they have formed lasting relationships at MSU, in the Gallatin Valley, and throughout the state. HEART's efforts to bring awareness to the fact that human trafficking affects lives in the Gallatin Valley and around Montana, in addition to their activism makes them not only an outstanding student organization, but notable human beings and citizens. Thank you to HEART for this opportunity to support and assist them in their future efforts.

Betsy Danforth, HEART Initiative Advisor

In this Issue:

Speakers Series Summary.....	2
Shopping Ethically.....	3
What Surprises You about Trafficking.....	3
Studying MSU's Supply Chains.....	4
Organ Trafficking.....	5
HEART Moving Forward.....	5
Graduating Senior Bios.....	6

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Speaker Series Summary:

By: Joby Rosenleaf

For the first five weeks of the semester, the HEART Initiative invited five different people to speak on various aspects of human trafficking.

For the first week, there was a great turnout to hear Tara Bradford from the Gallatin County Human Trafficking Task Force go over the basics of human trafficking. Her presentation covered who is vulnerable to human trafficking and how to identify those vulnerabilities. A panel with representatives from HAVEN, Homeland Security, the Bozeman Deaconess Hospital, Blueprint, and the Salvation Army presented for the second week. Over thirty people attended that event, where the various representatives were able to discuss what human trafficking looks like and how it is addressed by different organizations. Those in attendance were also able to ask panelists about specific aspects of their role in the fight against human trafficking.

Week three also had a great turnout. For this week's speaker, Dr. Katie Woods spoke about her experience working as a medical doctor in refugee camps in Bangladesh and Jordan. She also went over why refugees can be more vulnerable to human trafficking than other groups.

For week four of the series, five panelists discussed the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People's crisis. Around twenty people were present to learn from the President of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Club, a graduate student in Native American Studies, and other indigenous students who have been impacted by the crisis.

The final week of the series covered Dr. Carolyn West's research examining images of black women in pornography. Dr. West came all the way from the University of Washington in order to speak at our event. Here is a link to her website:
<http://drCarolynWest.com/>

For those who couldn't make it to the events, recordings of each lecture are posted on our website! Visit
<https://theheartinitiative.wordpress.com/events/>.

All meetings for the remainder of the semester have been cancelled.

If you want to learn more about the HEART Initiative, visit

<https://theheartinitiative.wordpress.com/>

or email us at

theheartinitiative406@gmail.com

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram



OUR MISSION is to foster conscientious awareness of human trafficking occurring in Montana & globally, aid those working towards eliminating trafficking, & promote a community of compassion & respect.



What surprises you most about human trafficking?

At first I didn't understand the difference between smuggling and trafficking. Smuggling is a crime against a border, and trafficking is a crime against a person.

- Emma Sundeen

How human trafficking is connected to everything: the things we buy, the environment, racism... mind boggling

- Emma Folkerts

The vast amount of goods impacted by trafficking. It's almost impossible to avoid products that have been touched in some way by trafficking. It makes it very hard to be a responsible consumer, particularly on a budget.

- Katy Hilburn

The prevalence of trafficking and the massive, global scale of the issue, in spite of regulations and laws.

- Jess Otto

How many people are unaware that human trafficking even exists, let alone that it is occurring in Montana.

- Tessa Sawyer

Shopping Ethically

By Tessa Sawyer

As I've become aware of human trafficking and the wide variety of products it impacts, it has become a priority for me to ensure I'm spending my money ethically. As a consumer, it can be difficult and discouraging when faced with these choices. How do you know what companies are promoting environmental and human welfare? Here's a list (far from comprehensive!) of clothing brands that are working to end human trafficking. If you know other good brands, email us and we will add them to our list! Happy shopping!

Purpose Jewellery

Elegantees

The Tote Project

Eternal Threads

Ethic Goods

My Sister

ABLE

Raven + Lily

Z shoes organic

UNCVRD

Good Paper

Citizen and Darling

Thistle Farms

Starfish Project

Awaken Fair Trade

Dear Survivor

Free The Slaves

Freeleaf

Made 27

Milk and Honey Market

The Brave Collection

Trace Fashion

Mulxiplay

Nomi Network

Noonday Collection

Sari Bari

Demand quality, not only in the products you buy, but in the lives of the people who made it.

- Orsola de Castro

STUDYING MSU'S SUPPLY CHAINS

By Emma Folkerts

My senior project identifies opportunities for ethical procurement practices at Montana State University (MSU). Violations of human rights and environmental standards are well documented and pervasive in university, government, and corporate supply chains. Research suggests violations result from low-bid competition, a lack of monitoring and transparency, and the complexity of global supply chains. Universities are in a unique position to promote human rights and operate ethically.

For my thesis, I have conducted nearly 20 interviews with individuals who buy goods and services for MSU. I hope to better understand buyers' current perceptions and the system in which they operate. I have also interviewed international labor rights experts and individuals from other institutions. MSU procurement agents describe current regulations, cost, time, and awareness as limiting factors in prioritizing human rights and environmental standards in procurement. There is support for reform.

Today, it is common to see labels differentiating products, from "FairTrade" and "locally-made" to "non-GMO" and "rainforest alliance certified." Given the history of exploitation, it is not surprising that there is precedent for a market in ethically sourced products. In the 1800s, for instance, slave-free sugar was not the norm. Maple syrup producers appealed to abolitionists and others by advertising maple syrup as the ethical option. It came with the tagline, "Suffer not your cup to be sweetened by the blood of slaves." This direct message can still be used to differentiate products today. Though sadly, it is easy to fund violations of human rights and violence through everyday purchases, and universities are not exempt from this risk.

This work is an uphill battle as reports show rampant violations exist even in the highly regulated supply chains of the US government. For example, in 2014, researchers documented violations in its purchases of electronics, apparel, and food. An awardee of a US government contract pled guilty to violating the Clean Water Act. Not only is child labor tied to US government supply chains, but so are deaths caused by safety violations. There was an "order form for Marine-licensed apparel found in the ruins of the Tazreen factory in Bangladesh, tying U.S. military exchanges to the death of over 110 workers in a fire traced to plant safety violations." Although child labor, excessive hours, torture, fraud, human trafficking, and violence are strictly prohibited in the supply chains of the US government based on international and domestic commitments, exploitation occurs. The US government is proactive and still identifies violations—universities must face the music.

In recent years, climate change activists and students concerned about the prison industrial complex have rallied their universities to divest from exploitative institutions. The unBUYnd student organization at Brown University calls on Rhode Island to ensure the state does not fund violations of rights through their purchases. One hundred and fifty students from Divest Harvard recently stormed the field during a Harvard-Yale football game to bring attention to the schools' investments in the fossil fuel industry. At MSU, students part of Sustainability Now (SNow) similarly campaigned the MSU Alumni Foundation. As their website explains, "Reinvest MSU works toward establishing Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) standards for our endowment managed by the MSU Alumni Foundation (MSUAF)."

From the interviews, I learned that cost, quality, time, and awareness are currently the greatest obstacles to prioritizing human rights in procurement at MSU. Although every participant was aware of sweatshops, no person has suspected violations of human rights in MSU's supply chains. The worker protections that were mentioned, such as the Equal Pay for Montana Women Executive Order, apply to workers in Montana, not to workers in poor countries where the majority of abuses are documented. I examine the human rights records of MSU vendors, including Dell, Nike, Under Armor, Sysco, and Cisco. Despite regulations aimed at promoting fairness and worker rights, it is clear that at the very least, MSU has the potential of funding human rights violations. This breaks international, national, and state law.

Organ Trafficking

By Ellie Jackson

Organ trafficking, which is the sale and purchase of human organs for transplantation, accounts for 10% of all transplants worldwide. These include heart, lung, liver, and kidney transplants, with kidneys being the most prominent. Organ trafficking is illegal in most countries; however, the shortage of organs for transplants is what fuels the industry. In 2016, for example, over 100,000 people were in need of kidney transplants in the United States; however, only 17% of those individuals received a transplant. Therefore, individuals in need of a transplant may seek help elsewhere. Commercial transplants often occur in countries including Pakistan, Egypt, India, and Turkey. This industry attracts patients from developed countries.

Typically, the low-income members of society are the ones selling their organs to high-income individuals for financial gain, meaning these individuals are vulnerable to exploitation. Additionally, there have been cases where victims of sex or labor trafficking have been exploited for organ trafficking because traffickers will recruit donors from a place of vulnerability. Just like all other forms of trafficking, the extent to which this occurs as far as the number of annual transplants that occur, is largely unknown. Since few government regulations have focussed on stopping the organ trade, medical communities and media attention have helped raise public awareness about the issue. To learn more about organ trafficking and how the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is responding, visit

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/intro/emerging-crimes/organ-trafficking.html>.

Moving Forward

Based on the University's guidelines for club meetings, HEART will not be hosting face-to-face meetings for the remainder of this semester, until further notice. The Office of Student Engagement recommended using a virtual meeting space to replace face-to-face meetings, which HEART will consider moving forward. There are no events planned for the rest of the semester. As the situation evolves and progresses, we will update members via email.

For reliable news and resources regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, visit,

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

New to the anti-trafficking movement?

Or just want to brush up on your knowledge?

Here are some resources from the Department of Health and Human Services, HAVEN, and the Office of Trafficking in Persons that provide definitions of different types of trafficking, red flags for identifying victims of trafficking, and resources.

HAVEN Human Trafficking Advocate Resource

file:///C:/Users/CSCGuest/Downloads/Human%20Trafficking%20Tools%20for%20Action-AmySadosky.pdf

Labor Trafficking Fact Sheet

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/orr/fact_sheet_labor_trafficking_english.pdf

Sex Trafficking Fact Sheet

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/archive/otip/resource/fact-sheet-sex-trafficking-english>

HEART's 2020-2021 Leadership

Co-directors: Ellie Jackson and Mack Harris

Chief Editor: Emma Sundeen

Treasurer: Joby Rosenleaf

Social Media Coordinator: Marty Smith and Jess Otto

Task Force Liaison: Tessa Sawyer

Secretary: Katy Hilburn

Sierra Tucker

Sierra Tucker will be graduating with a degree in Cell Biology and Neuroscience with a Spanish minor. At MSU, she was on the track team for 2 years and served as HEART's Vice President and Treasurer. Additionally, she mentors students through her work as a teaching assistant in classes like Cellular and Molecular Biology. Her first summer after graduation, Sierra plans to work at a summer camp in Colorado. She wants to take several years to travel and explore, before attending a graduate school or medical school. In between academic pursuits, Sierra can be found trail running in the mountains around Bozeman.



Emma Folkerts

Emma Folkerts, who has served as HEART's president for the last two years, is completing a Directed Interdisciplinary Studies degree in political science, economics, and sociology. During her years at MSU, she served as Chair of the Survivor Fund Board and worked with the VOICE Center as an advocate and peer educator. After graduation, she plans to volunteer in El Salvador with the US-El Salvador Sister Cities Project before attending graduate school to learn more about refugees and migration. She may be coming back to MSU in a position to promote ethical procurement in the future!! When not studying and fighting injustice, Emma is most likely trying to find a dog to hang with or climbing rocks.

Alena Haugo

Alena Haugo will graduate with a Psychology degree this spring. She has been involved with HEART, the VOICE Center, and is currently an advocate with Haven. For the first year after graduation, she plans to take some time enjoying not being a student, as well as travel and volunteer. She plans to attend graduate school to study forensic psychology or apply to law school. She wants to continue working with the court systems and survivors of gender-based violence. In her limited freetime, Alena likes to read, take naps with her cat and fight the patriarchy and other oppressive forces.



**HEART is saying goodbye to three awesome seniors!
We are so grateful for all of your hard work and can't
wait to see what your future holds!**