



NEWSLETTER

Winter 2024: Volume 6, Issue 1



**GLOBAL
ASSOCIATION
OF HUMAN
TRAFFICKING
SCHOLARS**

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Introduction Letter from Karie McGuire



Dear GAHTS Members,

As we come to the close of Human Trafficking Awareness Month, it is more important than ever that we unite and share resources to move forward awareness, policy, and services for trafficking survivors. Our efforts at GAHTS are filled with hope for a better future for survivors and those who are in need of our research and support. As we enter a new year with hope and solidarity, every day we witness trauma and human rights violations around the world. I don't know about you, but it is hard for me not to think about how current events impact vulnerable populations, and those already suffering due to being trafficked or displaced. Ongoing conflict, war, and violence puts many people at risk for the dangers of human trafficking, and our continued attention to the needs and safety of people during this time are crucial.

Our efforts and advocacy towards a greater good and better future for all people around the world can only grow stronger in collaboration together. As the co-chair of the GAHTS Networking Committee, this year in 2024, we hope to offer more ways to connect and collaborate through larger virtual gatherings and mentorship/collaboration with peers and colleagues. GAHTS offers the space for us to share ideas, learn from one other, and gain knowledge about human trafficking in a global context. Whether you are a current or future research scholar, developing scholar, advocate, or lived experience expert, there is a place for everyone to be heard, and for connection to be made. We hope this year, and ongoing, to create professional and personal connection between members at all levels, to deepen the work that is being done around the world through the community at GAHTS.

The GAHTS Winter 2024 Newsletter will feature a 2023 progress report, resources to enhance your professional development, and spotlight on researcher Cheri Mays.

- Karie McGuire, DSW, LCSW, CHES
Widener University, Center for Social Work Education
GAHTS Research Scholar Member

21st Annual International Human Trafficking & Social Justice Conference

Now accepting presentation submissions through
March 31st for the IHTSJ Conference hosted VIRTUALLY on
September 18-20, 2024.

Submit your presentation at
<https://www.traffickingconference.com/present>



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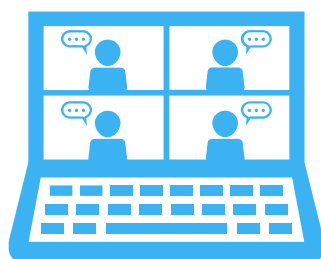
GAHTS 2023 Progress Report

2023 was another successful year for the Global Association of Human Trafficking Scholars. Below are some of the highlights:



Increased
Membership to
620 MEMBERS!

Converted our Monthly Webinars
to Monthly Dialogues to promote
more connection, conversation,
and collaboration!



Secured FREE online access to the
Journal of Human Trafficking for
GAHTS Members, making research
more accessible to all!

Stay tuned for many more exciting developments to GAHTS coming in 2024!

Valuable Resources:

GAHTS Members have access to these free resources on our website:

- Library of **825+** publications related to human trafficking
- Calendar of upcoming events and conferences
- List of professional development resources ranging from helpful websites, tools, global networks, and on-demand webinars
- FREE online access to the Journal of Human Trafficking

Outside of these great resources, GAHTS Members also receive helpful mentorship from Research Scholars. Visit our website to read members' mentorship experiences. **Also, stay tuned for more to come as we expand our mentorship opportunities!**

Find all of these resources on GAHTS website: <https://www.gahts.com/>





Spotlight on a Researcher:

Cheri Mays, PhD, LPC-S, NCC, CDVC

As a professional, Cheri Mays has three parts: educator, counselor, and researcher. As an educator, she is a Core faculty member in the CACREP-accredited Counseling program at Northeastern State University (NSU). She predominantly teaches in the master's counseling program preparing future clinical mental health counselors, addiction counselors, and school counselors to work in the field of mental health; however, at the undergraduate level, she developed the inaugural Human Trafficking course at NSU. This course will be included in the new Forensic Psychology minor. She now teaches this course once a year.



As a counselor, she is credentialed as a Licensed Professional Counselor-Supervisor in the state of Oklahoma, a National Certified Counselor, and a Certified Domestic Violence Counselor. Her clinical experience of over 25 years includes working with individuals and families who have experienced domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse, and sex trafficking. Currently, she has a counseling private practice where she works with all age groups from children to adults.

As a researcher, she has mostly focused on human trafficking, specifically how to prepare mental health professionals to counsel individuals who have survived sex trafficking. She began this journey in 2012 at another university when one of her students asked her to be the mentor for their senior project on preparing volunteers to work with survivors. This provided Cheri an opportunity to connect and volunteer her counseling services with this upstart organization for survivors of sex trafficking. When she went to the professional literature, she found limited information about how to best counsel these individuals. After discussing the issue with her dissertation chair, they decided to fill a gap in the literature with this topic. The title of her dissertation was "Counseling Sex Trafficking Survivors: Considerations for the Mental Health Profession". Within this dissertation, two studies were completed: Manuscript 1 - Content Analysis of Competencies for Counseling Survivors of Sex Trafficking and Manuscript 2 - Early Career Mental Health Professionals' Preparedness to Address Survivors of Sex Trafficking. Both manuscripts were adjusted to meet publication requirements. [Manuscript 2 has been published in the Journal of Human Trafficking](#) and Manuscript 1 has been accepted, but not yet published at the release of this newsletter. Her research journey continues to explore the best ways to train current and future clinicians of the mental health profession to best counsel this population.

