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# PAATH 15 combats human trafficking along Route 15

By [Karissa Shatzer](#) Published: January 19, 2016, 5:25 pm Updated: January 19, 2016, 7:29 pm

Route 15 runs through Pennsylvania from Maryland to New York. The highway carries all kinds of things; Midstaters, out-of-staters, goods, and unfortunately, human trafficking victims.

“They’re in our area. It’s very transient,” Rhonda Hendrickson of YWCA of Greater Harrisburg said. “They don’t just stay in Harrisburg with their victims. Traffickers are going to be moving them back and forth and, in the case of some people, they’re trafficking individuals right out of their homes.”

To stop trafficking along Route 15 is a project called Pennsylvania Alliance Against Trafficking in Humans – Route 15, or PAATH 15.

The first goal is to help victims.

“Every victim’s story is different,” said Susan Mathias, CEO of Transitions of Pennsylvania. “We’ve had all ages involved with being trafficked and all sexes, men and women, are involved, as well.”

“We’re trying to make an intervention and help them have a different life,” Hendrickson said.

To date, PAATH 15 has helped about 35 victims do that. The project also focuses on education.

“I know people may be thinking, ‘gosh, there’s no human trafficking in my area,’ but there is, and part of what we do is educate the community on what trafficking really looks like,” Hendrickson said.

Since the launch last fall, PAATH 15 has been inundated with training requests. The project also brought the right professionals to the table to make sure they can move swiftly, as fast as the traffickers.

“Because healing someone after they’ve experienced is one thing, we need to prevent it,” said Terri Hamrick, president and CEO of Survivors, Inc.

To learn more about PAATH 15, visit

[https://www.facebook.com/PAAgainstTraffickinginHumans/photos\\_stream](https://www.facebook.com/PAAgainstTraffickinginHumans/photos_stream) or <http://www.ywcahbg.org/human-trafficking#.Vp6oGPkrLIU>.