



## Executive Summary

In connection with our year-round anti-trafficking work, IOB has worked for the last **10 consecutive years** to eradicate sex trafficking surrounding the Super Bowl through partnerships with top law enforcement, local nonprofits, and government agencies in host cities across America. IOB was honored to come alongside leaders already doing incredible work to stop human trafficking in Atlanta, including the International Human Trafficking Institute, Wellspring Living, the Dream Center, the Salvation Army and others. Highlights of our Linking Freedom In Our Backyard operation in Atlanta 2019 include:

- Engaged **more than 400 volunteers** in anti-trafficking education and advocacy
- Throughout the Atlanta metro, **six-hundred convenience and corner stores were equipped** to recognize and report human trafficking. An **additional 1,281 are being trained** through partnerships with the Georgia Association of Convenience Stores and Atlanta Retailers Associations.
- Store managers and clerks provided **two very valuable tips on missing children** from IOB's materials, which were immediately turned over to law enforcement and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children for further investigation.
- **15,000 Missing Children's books were distributed** predominantly to convenience stores and official Super Bowl volunteers throughout the Atlanta Metro.
- **13 of the 34 children in IOB's Missing Children's book were recovered** within one week of Super Bowl.
- Through collaborative efforts, IOB **placed 1,200 Freedom Stickers** in restrooms stalls during its outreach event, creating a pathway of FREEDOM for those trapped in HT.
- **IOB released a 3 minute film** showing the effectiveness of our Freedom Stickers ahead of Super Bowl LIII, which has been acclaimed as one of the best HT films ever produced.
- IOB's work was featured by **BBC America, CNN Freedom Project, NPR**, and others.
- IOB provided **six qualified leads and 123 tips on victims of trafficking** to law enforcement.
- FBI, in partnership with IOB and many other agencies, announced **169 arrests, including 26 alleged sex traffickers and 34 who allegedly attempted to engage in sex acts with minors and 9 recoveries of minor victims** in their 11-day pre-Super Bowl operation.
- 13 IOB volunteers participated in nine strip club, street, bus, and online outreach events with Dream Center ATL. **Seven adult victims left their situations through their efforts!**

## IN OUR BACKYARD

IN OUR BACKYARD (IOB) is a national leader with more than a decade of dedication to the fight against sex and labor trafficking. IOB links arms in the fight against human trafficking by empowering communities to prevent this atrocity and creating access to freedom for victims of human trafficking (HT). Exposed to the devastating realities of HT, IOB Founder Nita Belles was driven to take action to stop the exploitation of children, women, and men. Her book, *In Our Backyard*, has been acclaimed as the primer on human trafficking in America. IOB is known for placing Freedom Stickers in all 50 states and working to eradicate sex trafficking surrounding the Super Bowl for 10 consecutive years.



### *10 years of Super Bowl*

In connection with our year-round anti-trafficking work, IOB has worked for the last 10 years to eradicate sex trafficking surrounding the Super Bowl through partnerships with top law enforcement, nonprofits and government agencies in host cities across America. **Our involvement surrounding the Super Bowl is an opportunity to raise awareness of human trafficking and mobilize regular citizens to fight this atrocity year-round.** The operation began in 2010 and has continued in every Super Bowl host city since.

Statements have been made that the Super Bowl is the largest human trafficking event. Some have also asserted that sex trafficking does not increase surrounding the Super Bowl. These are both myths. The truth is, **human trafficking happens 365 days a year in every**

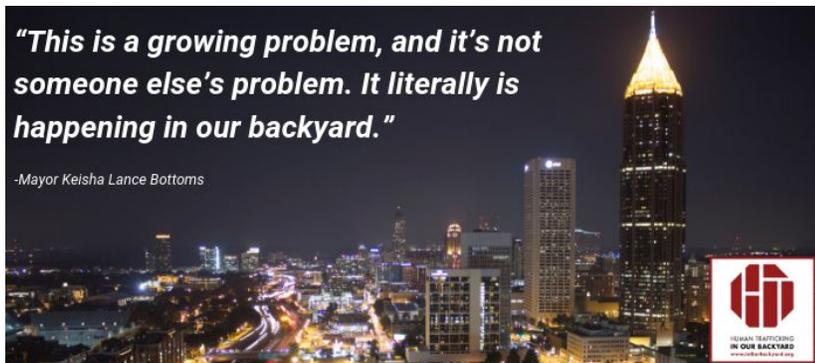
The **Super Bowl** doesn't increase human trafficking-**Sex buyers** increase human trafficking

-Nita Belles



zip code in the United States and does increase when there is increased demand due to conventions, sporting, and entertainment events that attract predominantly male populations with disposable income. **The Super Bowl is not the cause of sex trafficking, but it has become a catalyst to end it in host cities across America over the last 10 years.**

## The ATL



The purpose of IOB's collaborative work surrounding the Super Bowl is to bring attention to this atrocity and come alongside the host community as we take coordinated and effective action to stop human trafficking surrounding the Super Bowl and beyond. IOB recognizes geography, climate, politics, culture, socioeconomic, gender,

and racial factors have implications on how we collaboratively address human trafficking and works together with local partners to ensure the work is informed. Last year IOB named this initiative, *Linking Freedom In Our Backyard (LFIQB)*, reflecting our core values of sustainability and collaboration that **always result in increased, ongoing anti-trafficking efforts after we have departed.**

Hundreds of conversations and multiple trips over the course of a year culminated in a 10-day operation surrounding the Super Bowl in Atlanta in 2019. IOB was honored to come alongside leaders already doing incredible work to stop human trafficking in Atlanta, including the Atlanta Police Department, the Dream Center, FBI, the International Human Trafficking Institute, the Salvation Army, and Wellspring Living. IOB collaborated with these agencies, as well as its partners Securus, the National Center on Missing & Exploited Children, the National Association of Convenience Stores, the Georgia Association of Convenience Stores, and the Atlanta Retailers Association to stop sex trafficking surrounding the Super Bowl and beyond. IOB engaged more than 400 volunteers in anti-trafficking education and advocacy, **including 30 who dedicated more than a week of their time at their own expense to ensure the success of the operation.**



IOB's tenth operation surrounding the Super Bowl represented **the best of the collaborative work required to eradicate human trafficking.** Words are not adequate to express our appreciation of the amazing partnerships and the life-saving work being done across Georgia. Strong partnerships with like-minded advocates were essential to our work.

IOB would like to thank:

Atlanta Police Department: We appreciate Sgt. Britton and his investigators for their leadership and professionalism in harnessing efforts to stop this criminal activity surrounding Super Bowl and beyond. We are particularly grateful for their efforts to engage IOB, other agencies, and other nonprofits.

International Human Trafficking Institute: We appreciate the leadership of Deborah Richardson and IHTI and their many years of experience and work in the civil and human rights movements. She was instrumental in providing connections and getting all of the Missing Children's books printed. She is leading the Atlanta Fights Human Trafficking 2020 strategic plan to traffic-proof vulnerable persons and prevent demand.

Wellspring Living: Wellspring Living is an exemplary national model for residential programs and their academy. We appreciate Mary Frances Bowley, a well respected leader and pioneer in this movement, for connecting us with many of the incredible leaders we worked with in Atlanta.

Dream Center: was instrumental in providing connections for IOB's work and graciously involved the IOB team in their street outreach (see more below on Outreach).

Salvation Army: everyone with the Salvation Army in Atlanta that we worked with is deeply committed to serving and helping to stop human trafficking. They went above and beyond and we are so grateful. Their organization provided large in-kind support for IOB's surveillance operation, many connections and support throughout our time, and also brought the canteen truck to the LFIOB event.

North Metro Church: provided delicious meals for the IOB core team throughout our stay. The food was not your average casserole - it was gourmet! Big thanks to Barbara and her team!

National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS): Jeff Lenard, VP of Strategic Initiatives for NACS came to Atlanta to participate in our LFIOB event. The partnership with NACS has opened many doors for convenience stores across the nation to receive training!

Georgia Association of Convenience Stores (GACS): Angela Holland, Jennie Nesspor, and several of their members participated in the LFIOB event and outreach. GACS has been instrumental in making connections to their members for CSAT training. GACS partnership with IOB is a model for other state convenience store associations across the nation.



## Sponsors

IOB's anti-trafficking work surrounding the Super Bowl and beyond was made possible by more than \$25,000 in cash and nearly \$20,000 of in-kind sponsorships from organizations, companies, and churches across Georgia and the U.S.



## Linking Freedom In Our Backyard Event

On Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019, **four-hundred volunteers** showed up at an event – Linking Freedom In Our Backyard (LFIQB) – at Mt. Paran Church to learn more about human trafficking and distribute awareness materials—including Freedom Stickers and Missing Children's books—to convenience stores. This 5<sup>th</sup> annual event is an extension of IOB's national, year-round Convenience Stores Against Trafficking program, which grew out of IOB's Super Bowl efforts. **Six-hundred** convenience and corner stores throughout the Atlanta metro were equipped to recognize and report human trafficking. Through IOB's partnership with the Georgia Association of Convenience stores, IOB has trained 281 stores in 17 different companies across the state in the last six months. The Atlanta Retailers Association also signed on to partner with the CSAT program and will distribute training and Freedom Stickers to their 1,000+ members over the next three months. We appreciate their sponsorship as well!



Store managers and clerks provided two very valuable tips on missing children from IOB's materials, which was turned over to law enforcement and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children for further investigation.



The feedback from volunteers and convenience stores was tremendous and laid the foundation for mobilization of IOB's work with convenience stores year-round across the nation. Volunteers and employees shared:

*"I've been to lots of trainings on human trafficking, but there was nothing for me to do. This was the first time I felt like I could really take action and help."* - LFIQB Volunteer

*"These children are missing and you are looking for them? In my home country, there are so many children missing and I don't think anyone is looking for them."* - Convenience store clerk

*"The manager was so supportive of what we were doing. As he was placing the Freedom Sticker, he kept asking us if he had it in the right spot and if it was straight...it was like he was hanging a family portrait."* - LFIQB Volunteer

*"I had a friend whose daughter was missing for 10 days. We were all looking for her. This is everyone's problem."* - Convenience store manager



### Resource Fair

IOB's inclusive outreach event facilitates collaboration among individuals and groups who share the common goal of stopping human trafficking through its resource fair. Each year volunteers are able to connect with local anti-trafficking organizations and collaboration continues after Super Bowl, resulting in **greater anti-human trafficking resources and efforts going forward**. Resource fair groups included:

Atlanta Redemption Ink: Transforming Painful Reminders Into Symbols of Triumph.

[www.AtlantaRedemptionink.com](http://www.AtlantaRedemptionink.com)

Covenant House: <http://www.covenanthousega.org/>

Dream Center – Out of Darkness: The purpose and passion of Out of Darkness is to Reach, Rescue and Restore all victims of commercial sexual exploitation that the glory of God may be known. <https://atldreamcenter.com/outofdarkness/>

End HT Now: Our goal is to build awareness to the fact that human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children is our problem because it happens in our backyards everyday. Our

mission doesn't end with awareness, we will become advocates for changes to the laws that govern human trafficking and support the victims by helping them escape "the life."

<http://endhtnow.com/>

Fulton-DeKalb Hospital Authority: to decrease health disparities & promote the general health of the communities. <https://www.thefdha.org/>

*"It was amazing to see all the different organizations working together, especially with all of the division that I see elsewhere. We were able to join into all the work that was already happening in Atlanta. I loved seeing how much Atlanta is already doing to fight human trafficking."*

– IOB volunteer, Kym

King's Treasure Box: <https://kingstreasurebox.org/>

Rescuing Hope: enlighten the public about sex trafficking in America, educate potential victims and first responders, and empower advocates and survivors. <https://www.rescuinghope.com/>

Salvation Army's Haven ATL Program: is a cohesive program that helps transition women who have fallen victim to Commercial Sexual Exploitation, by empowering them to live a healthy and sustainable life. <http://www.havenatl.org/>

Send Relief: <https://www.sendrelief.org/>

Street Grace: To end the demand for domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) in the U.S. <https://www.streetgrace.org/>

Wellspring Living: Wellspring Living is transforming the lives of those who are at risk or victimized by sexual exploitation.

[www.wellspringliving.org](http://www.wellspringliving.org)

## Missing Children

IOB created and distributed booklets containing pictures and information on 34 children from Atlanta and surrounding areas retrieved from the National Center on Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) registry. 15,000 booklets were distributed, predominantly to the host city's 10,000 Super Bowl volunteers, and through the LFIOB event. IOB also distributed booklets through street and bus outreach throughout the week.

IOB was honored to have an analyst from NCMEC in our command center to increase effectiveness in recovering missing children throughout the week. 13 of the 34 children in IOB's Missing Children's book were recovered within one week of Super Bowl!

## Freedom Stickers

Through collaborative efforts, IOB placed 1,200 Freedom Stickers in restroom stalls to **create a pathway of FREEDOM for those trapped in human trafficking**. Freedom Stickers were created in collaboration with trafficking survivors, who directly contributed to their design and objective. Since their creation, more than 200,000 have been placed nationwide and have successfully led to multiple victim recoveries. Freedom Stickers are placed in public restroom stalls in high-traffic areas such as convenience stores, restaurants, hospitals, schools, bars, and government buildings. Public restrooms are the safest place for a victim to call or text for help.

## Human Trafficking - A Lifeline

IOB released a new **short film** showing the effectiveness of our Freedom Stickers ahead of Super Bowl LIII. The three-minute film is available [here](#) and has been acclaimed as one of the best HT films ever produced. It reveals the unique value of Freedom Stickers in creating access to freedom for victims of human trafficking.



IOB is encouraging individuals and businesses all across America to place Freedom Stickers in public restroom stalls. Anyone can [request Freedom Stickers](#) and distribute them in his or her own neighborhood to help fight human trafficking year-round!

## Awareness through Media

- CNN International Feature Video of ATL Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms and IOB:  
<https://www.cnn.com/2019/01/31/us/sex-trafficking-super-bowl-myth/index.html>
- BBC Facebook Watch Show - "Cut Through the Noise" - featuring IOB's event and Lifeline Film throughout:  
<https://www.facebook.com/BBCCutThroughTheNoise/videos/165791490970665/>
- NPR highlights that HT happens 365 days a year:  
<https://www.wabe.org/super-bowl-the-biggest-us-sex-trafficking-event-is-that-a-myth/?fbclid=IwAR38QmO4R-JqQNGEdPZs9Xg8VJ-9-mg6KtDT6vl-tLFeaXH2JKtnUGkdeIE>
- Social Good News features IOB short film – LIFELINE:  
<https://mysocialgoodnews.com/in-our-backyard-releases-new-video-to-raise-awareness-of-anti-human-trafficking-efforts-ahead-of-super-bowl-liii/>
- Channel 2 Action News feature on IOB's Linking Freedom In Our Backyard event:  
<https://cision.criticalmention.com/app/#/clip/public/e87415d7-172c-428c-96e5-6460e9c2770f>
- NE News Now Highlighting impact of Freedom Stickers:  
<https://onenewsnow.com/culture/2019/02/01/a-sticker-here-a-sticker-there-it-could-save-a-life>
- Volunteers bring awareness and training to convenience stores:  
<https://wkow.com/news/top-stories/2019/02/01/officials-use-super-bowl-to-raise-awareness-of-human-trafficking/>

- Featuring IOB partners, Dream Center and Wellspring Living: <https://news.yahoo.com/amhtml/victim-advocates-nfl-players-fbi-170037226.html>
- Feature on partner Wellspring Living's work in Atlanta: [https://www.cbs46.com/news/human-trafficking-the-dark-side-of-the-super-bowl/article\\_3ac75bd6-22fa-11e9-9072-d3e5e09d23f3.html](https://www.cbs46.com/news/human-trafficking-the-dark-side-of-the-super-bowl/article_3ac75bd6-22fa-11e9-9072-d3e5e09d23f3.html)
- International Human Trafficking Institute trains Uber, Lyft, Taxis, and Super Bowl volunteers: <https://www.atlantamagazine.com/news-culture-articles/breaking-the-chain/>

## Law Enforcement Support

IOB spent the majority of our time in Atlanta conducting our surveillance operation in an undisclosed location. Our operation funneled and analyzed large volumes of data, finding connections to domestic sex trafficking that could aid in law enforcement efforts to stop this criminal enterprise. This collaborative was between law enforcement personnel across the nation and nonprofit organizations with domestic sex trafficking expertise. **The operation laid a critical foundation for best practices in this field.** IOB board member and Human Trafficking Sergeant Molly McDade of Multnomah County Sheriff's Office led the operation, along with Nita Belles. **IOB provided 6 qualified leads and 123 tips to law enforcement as a result of this collaborative.**



"The thing I loved the most about working with IN OUR BACKYARD in the surveillance operation was the collaboration between everyone. Not one organization has the answer. We need everyone."  
 – IOB volunteer, Melissa

*Due to the sensitive nature of this operation, information sharing is very limited.*

[According to the FBI](#), there were "169 arrests during an 11-day investigation into human trafficking throughout metro Atlanta leading up to the Super Bowl. Among those arrested before the Super Bowl were 26 alleged sex traffickers and 34 who allegedly attempted to engage in sex acts with minors, according to the FBI. Nine juvenile victims of sex trafficking were rescued, including a 14-year-old. Nine other trafficking victims were also identified. The victims were all provided assistance and treatment." The FBI identified IOB as a partner in this work in its press release. IOB supported law enforcement during its operation in Atlanta, but does not claim these arrests or recoveries as its own.

## *Outreach collaboration with Dream Center*

IOB partnered with the Dream Center/Out of Darkness to support outreaches to victims and those at risk of sexual exploitation. Thirteen volunteers from IOB participated in four strip club outreaches, three bus outreaches, one online outreach, and one track outreach. The community from the Dream Center/Out of Darkness did an excellent job of planning numerous outreaches for the week and offering different trainings so many could serve along side of their team. Their team represented a passionate group of people that cared deeply for the plight of exploited women and children.



## **Fighting the other 364 days a year**

In connection with our year-round anti-trafficking work, IOB has worked for the last 10 years to eradicate sex trafficking surrounding the Super Bowl through partnerships with top law enforcement, nonprofits and government agencies in host cities across America. Our involvement surrounding the Super Bowl is an opportunity to raise awareness of human trafficking and mobilize regular citizens to fight this atrocity year-round.

**We are grateful for everyone who was involved and trust encouraged to continue working toward a culture where all people are empowered to live in freedom because even one victim of human trafficking is too many.**

*Report current as of 2/12/19. Additional updates on the outcomes of the operation will be provided in future revised versions.*