

2018 UPDATE



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF AWAKEN.

For a victim of sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) the path toward restoration is often a long and difficult one, but your support helps make that journey easier. The resources and encouragement Awaken offers can lead to remarkable outcomes. Women and children testifying against their traffickers, succeeding in school or securing new jobs, reuniting with their families, building healthy networks of support, and healing from past trauma – it's all made possible thanks to you.

Your financial support last year helped us reach 166 victims, a whopping 61% increase over the previous year. The youth intervention program for minors celebrated two successful years in operation and our prevention and community outreach efforts continued to raise awareness (even internationally) of this important issue. This past year also set the foundation for the opening of Awaken's new home in January 2019. We are excited to share these accomplishments with you in this 2018 update and hope you will be pleased with the impact your support has made!



IN 2018, 28% OF CLIENTS SERVED WERE MINORS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

Restoration: In total, Awaken served 119 adults and 47 minors in 2018. Various factors could have led to these record-breaking numbers such as increased awareness of Awaken, more case managers on staff, or higher rates of victimization. Whatever the reasons, Awaken is proud to be making an impact. Under the umbrella of the restoration program clients received a wide range of services including case management, counseling, mentorship, and direct assistance with education, employment, shelter, food, clothing, transportation and more. We are now excited to add long-term housing to this list of services. This past year, with the support of local companies and volunteers who generously donated labor and supplies, Awaken renovated a new home (also donated!) that will provide 18-24 months of rent-free housing for up to five women at a time.

Prevention: Reaching youth during their middle or high school years can help prevent this tragedy from happening to yet another minor. Awaken teaches an in-class modern-day slavery unit and presents at school assemblies, classes and youth organizations to raise awareness of sex trafficking and to educate

youth on how to prevent becoming victimized and to identify current or at-risk victims. This past year, we also started work on developing 5th and 6th grade prevention curriculum for teachers to use in their own classrooms. In 2017, Awaken taught over 1,936 students from 14 different high schools, middle schools, and youth groups.

City Transformation: This past year we reached 6,135 people through 54 different awareness and training events. Through these efforts, schools, law enforcement agencies, medical and social service providers, faith-based groups, and other stakeholders learned how to identify and serve victims. We trained local hotel/motel owners and managers, Nevada Specialty Court Judges, FBI Victim Specialists and Agents, Tahoe Forest Hospital nurses and doctors, and non-profits like the Empowerment Center and Nevada Urban Indians. Melissa Holland reached the national and international stage. She was a guest speaker at the End Sexual Exploitation Global Summit and was interviewed by the Wall Street Journal and the BBC.

This story was shared by Clara, just one of the many amazing survivors we work with.

I was 18-years-old with plans to start Nursing School at the University of Nevada, Reno. I had been invited to see a Snoop Dog concert in Las Vegas and was so excited. When we got to Vegas I was taken to get clothes, get my nails done, and I was introduced to some girls, and then we were left in the casino all night.

At some point the brother of the guy I went down there with started beating up his girlfriend. I didn't know why at the time, but I figured it out after the guy I was with turned to me and said, "You're gonna go get money."

I was in the life for 13 years, seeing 15 to 20 people a day. When you're in the game, you've got three choices about how your life is going to go. You're going to die, you're going to jail, or you're going to end up in an institution alone.

Awaken helped me get out. It was a safe place to go, I wasn't judged, I was able to go and draw how I was feeling. Awaken was there to support me when I had to offer my kids up to Washoe County Human Services while I worked on my sobriety. They picked me up to visit my children, took me to my mammogram, drove me to Step 2 when a bed was available. Awaken even paid my balance of student loan debt removing my financial barrier to return to college.

Just last year I was scared of dying and losing my kids. Now I'm coming up on a year in recovery, I have my kids and feel hopeful and empowered. I can pass a background check and work at Home Depot and I'm planning on going back to college in the fall.

Awaken has been my backbone through it all.

**THANK YOU FOR MAKING
THIS ALL POSSIBLE!**

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Awaken is a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency
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We love our volunteers!

- *Volunteer Hours Served: 5,203*
- *Total Volunteers: 749*
- *New Volunteers: 192*
- *Our amazing Professional Network helped 10 clients with pro-bono legal, dental, tattoo removal, and animal shelter services.*

The Awaken home is now open! Thank you to all the caring and generous donors and volunteers who made this dream a reality. You are heroes in our book. In this new home, women who were once told who they are, will be given the chance to find their new identity and reclaim the lives that were once stolen from them.

The Awaken Home aims to:

- Provide an 18 to 24 month, rent-free, home environment based on a community living model
- Help residents live honest, sober, and self-sufficient lives
- Connect residents with services to help them heal; including alcohol and drug treatment programs, mental health services and healthcare
- Provide educational and job training opportunities
- Nurture self-understanding through personal and spiritual growth
- Offer the time and support needed to recover from past trauma

