



## 2019 ISHA AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE APPLICATION

Entries must be for projects completed by **January 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019.**

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Title Director of Membership and Associate Membership Director

Association Texas Hotel & Lodging Association Email csquires@texaslodging.com

City Austin State TX Zip 78701

Phone (512)474-2996 Fax (512)480-0773

Association Staff Size 11

Associations Annual Budget (not including AH&LA dues):  Over \$500,000  Under \$500,000

Entry Category:  Education and Workforce Development  Events and Fundraising

Government Affairs  Member Programs  Public Relations  Communications

Please respond to the following questions on a separate piece of paper.

1. Goals & Objectives of Program
2. Target Audience
3. Results of Program
4. Evaluation Measures
5. How was the program presented to the Target audience?
6. Additional information

## 1. Goals & Objectives of Program

- a. In 2017, The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work, identified that there are almost 79,000 minors and youth victims of sex trafficking in Texas today. All told, Texas has more than 300,000 victims of human trafficking, including nearly 234,000 adult victims of labor trafficking. It is reported that the majority of sex trafficking activity occur in hotels. This is an epidemic that causes great harm to society. In order to help affect a change, THLA membership has aligned with Businesses Ending Slavery & Trafficking (BEST) to bring awareness and to personally train our members on how to recognize indicators and respond to human trafficking at their lodging property.

THLA's Membership goal for 2019 was to:

- Travel to Seattle in March to the BEST offices and obtain the BEST training certification so that we could provide in person training to our members.
- Extensively practice the training and be ready to travel Texas and train our members by June, 2019.
- Provide free hour and half long trainings to our members (whereas if BEST was to provide an event the cost would be \$1,200.00 plus travel costs).
- Provide a minimum of ten in-person events at member properties whereby either the Director and/or the Associate Director of Membership train a minimum of 200 employees by year end of 2019.

## 2. Target Audience

- a. THLA aims to train employees with an emphasis on the front of the house, housekeeping, food services and management. Employees within these departments are those who are most likely to observe behaviors of human trafficking. In these trainings, the THLA Membership Team teaches the indicators to look for and provides indicator summary cards to be shared with staff and posted in the various departments.

## 3. Results of Program

- a. To date the THLA Membership Team has exceeded our goals and has additional training events scheduled through the end of the year. An overview of what we have accomplished thus far is:
  - Certified 272 employees of Texas properties (Goal: 200)
  - Hosted a total of 10 events in Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Houston, Lubbock and San Antonio.
- b. We have established an enhanced new year end training goal to have trained and certified 300 employees and we are confident that we will meet and exceed this goal.

## 4. Evaluation Measures

- a. Feedback from both our members and our contacts at BEST has been overwhelming. Our members tell us that they are feeling more aware, knowledgeable and empowered. It is an honor to provide this training and know that we could be making the difference in someone's life while also protecting the interest of our members.

"Thank you for all that you and your team are doing for our Best Western hotels. Our Surveys are showing great and all positive feedback from your recent presentations. We are thankful for the dedication and commitment of THLA in providing this all important training on human trafficking."

- Tiffany Vuk, CHDM | Senior Manager | Marketing Activation

"I wanted to commend you for putting on such a terrific training. I thought your topics were relevant and right on point. Keep up the good work and if there is anything that we can do for you, please don't hesitate to call on us."

- Lieutenant Shy J. Reece | Vice Division | Houston Police Department

## **5. How was the program presented to the Target audience?**

- a. Originally, THLA provided BEST online training at no charge to our membership with marketing of this resource through announcements in our e-newsletter and via email. We began to realize that it would be more impactful to provide in-person training and the numbers prove it was the most effective way to go. To date, 72 lodging professionals have taken the online course; our in person training numbers are almost four times that amount.
- b. Our Membership Team conducts each in-person training with materials BEST offers including videos and extensive collateral that teaches employees how to identify signs of human trafficking, and how to safely intervene when they see potential trafficking. THLA and BEST have worked in collaboration to ensure that when available a local law enforcement officer attends the training to speak to the impacts human trafficking are having in the area and how the property can work closely with local officials to aid the in efforts of fighting human trafficking.

## **6. Additional information**

When Hannah Farkas, BEST Program Manager was asked what benefits BEST has seen from partnering with THLA she had the following to say:

- THLA was the first state association to partner with BEST to roll out free training to their membership.
- THLA is an ally of human trafficking prevention efforts in one of the most influential states in the country.
- THLA demonstrates leadership among hospitality associations in the effort to prevent human trafficking.
- THLA demonstrates leadership as you all partner with other associations and organizations in Texas to raise awareness to the issue.
- THLA goes above and beyond in supporting their own members and the community efforts to prevent human trafficking.
- One of the most significant ways we see this is that THLA sent individuals to Seattle to go through extensive training with BEST in order to be equipped as BEST trainers to deliver BEST's ITT training to their membership. THLA is one of the few state associations to show this type of leadership and commitment to the issue.