

Hear from Our Academy Participants



*“Overall, this is one of the best professional conferences I have ever been to. The hard work was obvious from start to finish. The materials in the manual are fantastic, and the sessions were diverse in scope, which had such value. I also loved that the presenters were given full freedom to cover their area of expertise and to talk about current needs, challenges, and victories in the field. The commitment of the staff, Dr. Pati, and her administrators was wonderful. **There is a feeling of “familial” support of the program from within, due to Dr. Pati’s courage and dedication.**”*

Many, many thanks for the wonderful opportunity to attend and learn. I loved it.”

Rachel Monaco-Wilcox, HTA’17
CEO and Founder, LOTUS Legal Clinic
Milwaukee, WI

*“The Academy was wonderful and very informative. St. Thomas has a beautiful campus that was easy to navigate! Thank you to all of those who helped you. I am sure that I will be taking other classes at the Academy! If I can ever be of assistance please let me know. I would love to see a course at some point taught about DCF and how we respond to human trafficking as I think that would be a good source of information for your attendees. **Thank you for your dedication to human rights! This is very important work you and your team are doing! Blessings and peace to you!**”*

Veraunda I. Jackson, Esq., HTA’16
Criminal Justice Coordinator
Florida Department of Children and Families
Orlando, FL



Center front: Kyla (a survivor of human trafficking), Dr. Roza Pati (right) and Michele Gillen (left), Participants of the Human Trafficking Academy 2017

“My favorite thing about the academy was that it exposed us to different professionals in the field. I also liked that it was interactive and it gave us a deeper look at the legal process for prosecuting human trafficking cases. I would like to hear more from medical professionals dealing with the mental and physical effects of human trafficking. Doctors, psychologist or social workers who can share actual stories from survivors and how they were able to help them. It would be great if survivors of trafficking agree to participate in the academy and share their stories.”

Yudelkys Beltran Altman, HTA’15
Private Attorney
Woodbridge, VA

“Dear Professor Pati: Salus et pax. I pray you are well. Many thanks again for the opportunity to attend the Academy. What a blessing! I was energized: at mass on Sunday I spoke about human trafficking during my homily. I did so in the context of preaching on the gift and the responsibility that human freedom is and the reality that this gift is “taken away” with modern day slavery - human trafficking. I plan to talk more about this topic in future sermons.”

Fr. Scott Francis Binet, HTA’14

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“Thank you for putting together this training on human trafficking. It was superbly executed and very educational. I appreciated the breadth of instruction on legal efforts, law enforcement actions and social services that target human trafficking. Thank you for bringing in such distinguished lecturers, and some exceptional public speakers such as Regina Bernadin, Michele Gillen, Maria Jose Fletcher, Benjamin Widlanski, Brenda Mezick, Barbara Amaya, and Sean Sellers.

I really enjoyed the entire week and appreciated the opportunity to network with professionals from across the country. Thank you, Professor Pati, for your tireless dedication to fighting human trafficking. It is truly inspiring!”

Cristina Narvaez, HTA'17
Deputy POLAD/Human Rights Officer
United States Southern Command
Miami, FL

“The atmosphere allowed great resources between all the different organizations, lawyers, law enforcement, advocates, outreaches and good Samaritans. I benefited from lots of great information and will be able to use the tools given in our organization to bring more precise training and information to our local communities and cities in Texas. Thank you.”

Raquel Fuentes, HTA'16
Beauty Will Rise Org.
Mont Belvieu, TX

“What I like most about the training was the diversity of perspectives offered by the variety of professionals that came to teach. I would have added more testimonies of survivors and their perspective on what has helped them in the short/ mid/ and long term.”

Camila Molina, HTA'15
UAC Clinician
His House Children's Home

“Dear Dr. Pati: I wanted to express my most sincere gratitude for organizing such a wonderful conference on Human Trafficking. The presenters were very well informed and relayed the information in "plain speak" making it easier to navigate through the maze of legal language and rules that I am not accustomed to as a clinician. I will be passing along the "good news" of what you and your very wonderful team are doing to help all of the survivors and those pending survivors that I know your good work will be reaching. It is very inspiring to know that you and all the wonderful professionals that I met this week are "on-board" in eradicating human trafficking. Please keep me informed of any upcoming training as I would be most eager to participate and I will be encouraging my colleagues to do the same. Could I please ask you to thank your support staff including, but not limited to your cafeteria personnel, volunteers, presenters and your gracious School of Law, Dean Garcia and the long list of distinguished professors that provided for such a memorable and informative experience? Dr. Pati... May God always keep you and all those you work with in safe keeping.”

Felix O. Padron, HTA'14
Clinical Director, FACES



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"This training was amazing! There were times I got the chills hearing all the real life stories. In my career I have seen a lot of things and this training brought me more knowledge."

Jannet Barajas, HTA'17
Program Manager, BI, Inc.
Santa Ana, CA

"I have enjoyed participating in this conference. The people you gathered are highly professional and committed personnel."

Barry Goodson, HTA'15
Tenured Professor of Criminal Justice
Columbia Southern University
Orange Beach, AL

"Dear Professor Pati: I thank you for the opportunity to have participated in the online course of the Human Trafficking Academy."

I highlight that the course was very helpful and interesting for my work in the Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC). I learned many important and useful aspects in order to improve my job and my professional life, in particular as a nun and especially to Christian faith. All speakers were very well prepared, competent, good professionals and committed to human rights. For me, it was very interesting to see how the United States has many organizations that fight against human trafficking and help people who are victims of trafficking and need help to recover. There are many good things happening and being done...but we still have a long way to go.

I was amazed with your words and your testimony. I realized that you have a sensitive heart and are very committed to fight for human rights. I hope someday to have the grace to meet you personally. Thank you for everything. I also thank all the staff at St. Thomas University School of Law, who worked so hard during the course. Congratulations."

Sister Raimunda Nonata De Aguiar, HTA'16
Coordinator
Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)
Rome, Italy

"Thank you for an amazing, productive and fulfilling week. I've been working exclusively in the field of anti-trafficking providing direct services to survivors for almost two years and despite the fact that I was well aware of some of the topics and terms the speakers brought forth, I can tell you the academy was one of the most comprehensive and effective trainings I've attended. I am thankful for your dedication, efforts and hospitality (as a vegetarian and eight-month pregnant participant, I appreciated very much the special accommodations...) and hopefully the Academy can continue to train the community to once and for all eradicate modern day slavery and aid the survivors properly."

Florencia Dominguez, HTA'14
Caseworker
International Rescue Committee



Barbara Amaya, Author, Advocate, and Survivor

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"Healing Through Art" Exhibit by Susan Buzzi

"I would be interested in additional training offered by the Academy. This academy was excellent! I think additional levels of the academy would be a great way for those within different fields to come together again, and learn from each other. In addition to having instructors teach the evolving crime of human trafficking. Over time, the methods of traffickers especially with technology change."

Christine Hillsley, HTA'17
Intelligence Research Specialist
Department of Homeland Security

"We really enjoyed the whole week...great information and great speakers. Thank you so much!"

Chad Miller, HTA'16
Deputy, Douglas County Sheriff
Omaha, NE

"This is the best training I have ever attended!"

Sergeant Arley Flaherty, HTA'15
Miami Beach Police Department

*"Dr. Roza Pati: I thank St. Thomas school of Law and by extension you for giving me this great opportunity to attend the 2014 human trafficking academy. Thank you also for the well sourced lecturers, they have been all wonderful. **The academy has been a big eye opener to me as a person and by extension, to Catholic justice and peace commission and the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops.** The latest annual report by the US State department of HT states that Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi are among the nation's that remain both sources and destination countries for men, women and children subjected to forced labor and sexual trafficking. I honestly take this as a challenge and do state on my part that CJPC is immediately taking this up as a matter of emergency to fully create community awareness on this sad subject. Attempts will also be made to work with CJPC offices both in Uganda and Tanzania on prevention and protection of human trafficking. I look forward to even closer and continued partnership between CJPC Kenya and St. Thomas school of law on this important topic. God bless the works of your hands!"*

Beatrice Odera, HTA'14
Catholic Justice and Peace Commission
Kenya



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“Dear Dr. Pati: It has been an honor and privilege to meet you and all the well knowledge speakers in this HTA training. I can say that this HTA has broadened my view to look further into the investigations that I do on a daily basis which many times deal with migrants in the Homestead area as well as runaways in some cases. The partnership between all departments is crucial which has given me the knowledge on who to contact when the need arises in my investigations. I wish to thank you and all your colleagues for a wonderful experience.”

Theresa Luquis-Hernandez, HTA'14
Senior Child Protective Investigator
Miami-Dade South

“Dear Professor Pati: It was so nice to meet you at the HT Academy in Miami. What an impressive training! I was so glad that my team from Kentucky could be part of it.”

Lisa Ramstetter, HTA'16
Human Trafficking Advocate
Catholic Charities of Louisville
Covington, KY



Dr. Roza Pati, Associate Dean Cecile Dykas, and participants of the Human Trafficking Academy 2015

“I thought the training offered by the Human Trafficking Academy was first class. You invited many excellent speakers and experts in the field who are directly involved in the area of human trafficking and shared with us information on cases they have worked on from beginning to end. Also, [I] really enjoyed watching all the material that was illustrated by videos. The daily lunch provided was delicious and the thematic presentations were excellent. I would highly recommend the training offered at the human trafficking academy and I am very glad I was able to attend and hope to have the opportunity to continue to learn more about this very important and current topic.”

Mary Iacobelli, HTA'15
LL.M. Student
St. Thomas University School of Law