



"Restoring Lives, Rebuilding Hope."

FOR IMMEDIATE  
Contact: Kimberly Benson  
901.487.6577  
buildingbridgestogether@yahoo.com

A Bridge of Hope  
P.O. Box 3960  
Cordova, TN 38088  
www.ABridgeOfHope.org

## **JANUARY IS NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH**

**Memphis, Tenn.**, January 21, 2013 – January is National Human Trafficking & Slavery Awareness Month. Today is a day that we honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his fight for civil rights. This fight continues and intensifies in our efforts against Modern Day Slavery – Human Trafficking.

Human Trafficking is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons: by the threat or use of kidnapping, force, fraud, deception or coercion, or by the giving or receiving of unlawful payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, and for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor. Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery whose victims include young children, teenagers, men and women and involves approximately 600,000 to 800,000 victims are trafficked across international borders annually; and between 14,500 and 17,500 of those victims are trafficked into the United States each year (**more than half of these victims worldwide are children**), according to the U.S. Department of State. Additionally, there are between 200,000-300,000 youth that are sexually exploited every year, in the United States annually.

“A Bridge of Hope is determined to do its part to help eradicate human trafficking and the effects of human trafficking by educating as many people as possible, to advocate on behalf of victims and advocate for change in communities, policies and laws,” said Kimberly Benson, president of Memphis-based A Bridge of Hope.

On Thursday, January 31, 2013 at 11:00 a.m. in the plaza between the city, county, and federal buildings, A Bridge of Hope will be collaborating with the offices of Shelby County Mayor Mark H. Luttrell, Jr., Memphis Mayor A.C. Wharton, Shelby County District Attorney Amy Weirich, U.S. Attorney Ed Stanton, III, TN State Representative Karen Camper, members of law enforcement, other officials, survivors, and distinguished guests, to do a proclamation signing/reading and a balloon release for previous victims; charging the citizens of Memphis, Shelby County, and the State of Tennessee to rise up, become aware of these atrocities that are going on in our communities, and to do their part. Together, each doing our part, we can bring slavery and human trafficking to an end in our lifetime.

For more information about services provided by A Bridge of Hope or Human Trafficking awareness and education, please contact Kimberly Benson or visit [www.ABridgeOfHope.org](http://www.ABridgeOfHope.org).