

Kara Napolitano

Summary Qualifications:

- Invested 10 years in anti-exploitation efforts in Colorado
- Supervised staff in the training curriculum development and delivery to approximately 10,000 professionals annually in a range of sectors including healthcare, child welfare and law enforcement and judiciary, personally training over 50,000 individuals across Colorado
- Created evidence-based protocol and partnership tools for allied professionals working in anti-exploitation efforts
- Project management experience facilitating and overseeing large-scale research initiatives in human trafficking and wage theft studies (qualitative and quantitative)
- Field experience in community-based research methods, survey design, and data analysis
- Launched second and third iterations of longitudinal study, the Colorado Project to Comprehensively Combat Human Trafficking. Supervising project team members representing a diverse mix of sectors, bridging research and practice
- Provided expert testimony in human trafficking and related cases, offering evidence-based analysis on survivor experiences, coercion dynamics, and systemic exploitation.
- Appointed to Governor's Colorado Human Trafficking Council Prevention Task Force 2018 and Equitable Access Task Force 2022
- Appointed to the Denver Crime Prevention and Control Commission as a Commissioner in 2022 to serve to reduce crime and recidivism in Denver, Colorado through 2025
- TED x Speaker, "Hidden in Plain Sight: Labor and Sex Trafficking in your community"
- Extensive knowledge of computer programs: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat, Zoom, Dedoose, Smartsheet, Salesforce, Form Assembly, Canva and Google Drive

Relevant Professional Experience:

Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking; Denver, CO

1/15-Present

Education and Partnerships Director

- Identify and foster state-wide anti-human trafficking partnerships and collaborations.
- Lead LCHT training curricula development and adaptations for targeted professional groups.
- Amplify LCHT research findings and priorities, including co-developing and leading partnership forums with statewide task force leaders and integrating data into trainings.
- Manage Training and Education Program staff.

Research and Training Manager

- Develop and deliver sector-specific and geographically tailored human trafficking curricula for healthcare providers, professionals working youth, and a range of other sectors.
- Supervise staff and volunteers to deliver anti-human trafficking trainings across rural and urban Colorado.
- Maintain partnerships with various communities and leaders across Colorado to advance Colorado Anti-trafficking Action Plans and LCHT strategic priorities.

Program Specialist

- Delivered introductory trainings on human trafficking and collaborated on training curriculum development, production and scheduling.
- Managed 24/7 Human Trafficking Hotline: Supervised 40 volunteer advocates, conducted quarterly debriefings, and delivered reports to anti-trafficking task forces.
- Managed grant reporting and deliverables that fund the 24/7 Human Trafficking Hotline.

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Metropolitan State University of Denver; Denver, CO 1/20-Present
Adjunct Professor

- Instruct senior-level, multi-disciplinary cross-listed human trafficking course.
- Develop syllabus and deliver all curricula, exams, assignments, and facilitate discussions.

Tree Top Child Advocacy Center; Breckenridge, CO 9/19-Present
Member of Board of Directors

- Support the Executive Director in the growth of a nonprofit child advocacy center dedicated to supporting young survivors of violence.

Delta 8.7 – United Nations University Center for Policy Research

Justice Working Group Member 9/20-5/21

- Chosen to work alongside a diverse, collaborative, and international group of human trafficking professionals and survivors to evaluate the international community's progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 8.7.
- Developed a policy guide intended for multilateral and national-level policy makers seeking to provide an evidence-based policy resource that is useful to global policy actors.

Human Trafficking Center; Denver, CO 9/14-6/16
Human Trafficking Index Project Manager:

- Directed research activities for center associates. Trained 14 associates on four projects resulting in the most efficient coding of data in the history of the organization.
- Contributed to writing and editing of 144-page Code Book for the Human Trafficking Index.
- Regularly used Microsoft Excel, Stata, and Google Drive to code, clean, and analyze data containing 156 variables for a federally funded research project.
- Coded, cleaned, and analyzed hundreds of thousands of data points for the index.

University of Denver; Denver, CO 3/15-1/16
Research Assistant-Colorado Wage Theft Study:

- Conducted qualitative research through semi-structured interviews with legal professionals, state representatives, victims' advocates, victims of wage theft, and employers to gain insight into legal barriers to resolving wage theft cases.
- Coded and analyzed interview data using Dedoose software to inform wage theft policy.
- Developed a standard database to record and track wage theft cases.

Education:

Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver 2016
M.A., Master of Arts in International Development
Concentrations in International Human Rights Law and Human Trafficking

School of Forest Resources and Conservation, University of Florida 2005
M.S., Master of Science in Forest Resources and Conservation

Warner College of Natural Resources, Colorado State University 2001
B.S., Bachelor of Science in Forest Management
Minor in Native American Studies

Kara Napolitano

Professional Training:

Shifting Attitudes: Effectively Interrupting Oppressive Comments in Ways that Heal and Transform (February 2019). Participant in full day interactive workshop for facilitators. Luna Jimenez Institute for Social Transformation. Denver, CO.

Network Leadership Training Academy (May 2018). Participant in 3-day interactive workshop for network leaders/practitioners to build, manage, and evaluate collaborative networks. School of Public Affairs Center on Network Science, University of Colorado. Denver, CO.

Effective Teaching - *EDU 222* (Winter, 2018). Education course at Colorado Mountain College, Breckenridge, CO. Course in Adult Education.

Publications:

Stoklosa, H., Wang, X., Meng, B. *et al.* A reliability analysis: human trafficking curriculum assessment tool (HT-CAT) for health care provider human trafficking trainings. *BMC Med Educ* 25, 413 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-025-06932-2>

Annjanette R. Alejano-Steele, Amanda A. Finger & Kara Napolitano (2024) How Do Local Efforts Address a Global Issue? Communities Need Good Data, *Journal of Human Trafficking*, DOI: [10.1080/23322705.2024.2303269](https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2024.2303269)

Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking (2023). The Colorado project to comprehensively combat human trafficking 2023. Prepared by Alejano-Steele, A.R., Connot, N., George, N., Finger, A.A., Napolitano, K. & Nason, C. Denver, CO: Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking. <https://combathumantrafficking.org/programs/research/colorado-project-2023/>

Miller, A.; Laser, J.; Alejano-Steele, A.; Napolitano, K.; George, N.; Connot, N.; Finger, A. Lessons Learned from the Colorado Project to Comprehensively Combat Human Trafficking. *Societies* 2023, 13, 51. <https://www.mdpi.com/2075-4698/13/3/51>

Annie Miller, Annjanette R. Alejano-Steele, Amanda Finger & Kara Napolitano (2022): The Colorado Project to Comprehensively Combat Human Trafficking: Community-Based Participatory Research in Action, *Journal of Human Trafficking*, DOI: [10.1080/23322705.2021.2019532](https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2021.2019532)

Delta 8.7 Justice Policy Guide (United Nations University Centre for Policy Research: New York, 2021). https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:8067/Delta87_JusticePolicyGuide.pdf

Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking (2019). The Colorado project to comprehensively combat human trafficking 2.0. Retrieved from Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking website: <https://combathumantrafficking.org/programs/research/colorado-project-2019/>

Miller C, Greenbaum J, Napolitano K, Rajaram S, Cox J, Bachrach L, Baldwin SB, Stoklosa H. Health Care Provider Human Trafficking Education: Assessment Tool. Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking and HEAL Trafficking; 2018. <https://healtrafficking.org/2018/12/assessment-tool-for-health-care-provider-human-trafficking-training/>

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Presentations/speaking engagements (highlights):

TEDx Breckenridge. (September 30, 2023). Hidden in Plain Sight: Labor and Sex Trafficking in your community [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-Jo-Ymvroo>

Napolitano, K. & Wilburn, K. (2023 - 2024). What Judges Need to Know About Human Trafficking. Colorado Judicial Conference – VAWA Institute. Vail, CO.

Trauma-informed Courts Working Groups (2022). Trauma-informed Courts: From Theory to Practice. Colorado Judicial Conference – VAWA Institute. Vail, CO.

Napolitano, K. (2021 - 2024). Creating Community-led Solutions to human trafficking in rural Colorado. Kempe Center's International Virtual Conference.

Napolitano, K. (2021 - 2024). Supporting Sustainable Community Responses to Human Trafficking in Colorado. Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance (COVA) Conference. Keystone, CO.

Napolitano, K. (2021, 2022, 2024). Intersections in Human Trafficking: How to work with the anti-violence and anti-oppression communities to end human trafficking in Colorado. Colorado Advocacy in Action Conference, virtual.

Napolitano, K. (2020 - 2024). Human Trafficking Training for Frontline Healthcare Professionals: How to Recognize and Respond. Colorado State EMS Conference. Keystone, CO.

Napolitano, K. (2019 - 2023) Human Trafficking of Youth in Colorado. Youth Diversity Conference. Denver, CO.

Napolitano, K. & Miller, A. (2019, 2023, 2024) Community Based Participatory Action Research. International Human Trafficking and Social Justice Conference. Toledo, OH.

Napolitano, K. (2019, 2024) Human Trafficking in Indian Country. Four Corners Indian Country Conference. Southern Ute Reservation, Ignacio, CO.

Miller, A. & Napolitano, K. (2021). Operationalizing a Comprehensive End to Human Trafficking. World Congress of Political Science, virtual.

Napolitano, K. (2020). Human trafficking: Informing Colorado's healthcare practice. American Public Health Association Conference. National, virtual.

Additional Skills and Experience:

- Spanish language classes in Antigua, Guatemala; San Jose, Costa Rica; and Cartagena, Columbia. Became proficient through immersion in Central and South America.
- Immersive travel experience in five continents and 120 countries over ten years
- Short-term volunteer work: Kabul, Afghanistan - GIZ; Kitgum, Uganda - Poverty Relief Africa; Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo and Usa River, Tanzania – unhoused youth.