



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Human Trafficking Legal Center Launches Harriet Tubman Fellowship for Labor Trafficking Survivors

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Human Trafficking Legal Center is thrilled to launch the Harriet Tubman Fellowship. The Fellowship is inspired by Harriet Tubman, the courageous American abolitionist who helped more than 300 people escape from slavery.

Inspired by Tubman's legacy of freedom, the Harriet Tubman Fellowship will provide support for trafficking survivors as they pursue individualized career training. The goal is to support these survivors as they seek long-term economic opportunities and leadership positions in the public and private sectors.

Evelyn Chumbow, Operations and Survivor Leadership Director at the Human Trafficking Legal Center, leads the Harriet Tubman Fellowship initiative. She designed the fellowship after reflecting on the question, "What is true freedom?"

To trafficking survivors, true freedom must include financial stability.

Freedom without the opportunity to rise economically is freedom in name only.

Survivors escape situations of forced labor in the United States only to confront tremendous obstacles. With little education or formal training, many trafficking survivors continue to be vulnerable to re-exploitation and plagued by poverty. Many labor trafficking survivors end up working in jobs remarkably similar to the ones they were trafficked into, enduring little pay, wage theft, and subpar working conditions.

In recent years, the anti-trafficking movement has evolved to compensate lived-experience experts of human trafficking for their valuable insights. But these positions can be precarious and frequently do not include adequate training or support.

The Harriet Tubman Fellowship will support seven labor trafficking survivors in the United States as they develop their leadership skills. Harriet Tubman Fellows will receive tuition support of up to \$10,000 each year for short-term certificate training programs, as well as a \$500/month stipend for two years. Fellows will participate in an in-person communications and policy advocacy training in Washington, D.C. They will also have access to resources to build their leadership and professional skills. The fellowship period is two years.

Announcing the launch, Harriet Tubman Fellowship founding director Evelyn Chumbow said, "As a survivor, I have always shared my story at speaking engagements to educate others. Yet when we are in this position as survivor leaders, we are only seen as survivors. Being a survivor

is not a skill set. We aren't provided with training for the positions that we are being hired to do. Many of us have never been given a dedicated training opportunity to establish the career of our dreams. The Harriet Tubman Fellowship will invest in labor trafficking survivors so that they can attain financial stability for themselves and their families and lead in their communities.”

The Fellowship application is currently open. The deadline to apply is March 31, 2024.

To be eligible for the Harriet Tubman Fellowship, an applicant must:

- 1) Be a survivor of forced labor or have lived experience of labor trafficking.
- 2) Live in the United States.
- 3) Have work authorization to work in the United States.

A selection committee of survivor leaders and allies will evaluate the applications to identify labor trafficking survivors who seek to lead in their communities. The Harriet Tubman Fellowship Selection Committee will screen applicants for their ambition to grow in the career path of their choice. Additional criteria include a desire to pursue educational programs, enthusiasm about professional growth, availability to engage in Fellowship activities, ability to thrive on a team, and a commitment to collaboration.

Please apply here: <https://htlegalcenter.org/our-work/harriet-tubman-fellowship/>

Due to funding limitations, the Fellowship is only open to individuals who identify as survivors of labor trafficking, forced labor, or domestic servitude.

The Human Trafficking Legal Center welcomes all labor trafficking survivor applicants for the Fellowship and does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, citizenship, age, religion, disability, status, genetic information, military status, or any other classification as provided by law.

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