

Press Release

Zontian Nola Theiss Recognized as Public Citizen of the Year by NASW

Nola Theiss, co- Chair of Zonta's Anti-Trafficking Committee and chapter past-President, was recognized by the National Association of Social Workers Florida Chapter as the Public Citizen of the Year 2008 at their annual conference held in Deerfield Beach, FL on June 6, 2008. She was honored for creating "an enormous chain reaction throughout the state and nation" by spearheading the Lee County Human Trafficking Task Force as part of an effort of the Zonta Club of Sanibel-Captiva in 2004. Nola was cited for "her conviction and dedication (which) has touched the lives of so many vulnerable human beings"

Nola formed Human Trafficking Awareness Partnerships, Inc. in 2006 in order to assist other communities in starting task forces or action projects appropriate to their own localized situations. She has worked with twelve communities around the country to start these projects. In addition, she has held workshops or participated in conferences nationally and internationally, including the Social Workers conference where she won their award.

Her mission is *to educate the public, law enforcement and social service professionals* about this crime that generates \$32 billion dollars annually and affects millions of people, including our own citizens. This summer, Nola will be teaching a course through Edison College and is working with Florida Gulf Coast University which will hold monthly symposiums on human trafficking. For information about these classes, please refer to the HTAP website www.humantraffickingawareness.org or contact her at nola@humantraffickingawareness.org or 239-395-2635.

Submitted by Cyndy Lorry