



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**A New Coalition to Prevent Human Trafficking
Receives 2022 Seattle Human Rights Commission Award**

Seattle, Washington – The Seattle Human Rights Commission selected Washington Against Sexual Exploitation ([WASE Forward](#)) to be honored with a Human Rights Leadership Award for their dedication to advocating for increased human rights for sex trafficking survivors. WASE Forward was honored at a special Seattle Town Hall ceremony on December 6, 2022, where the group received the award for outstanding Organizational Human Rights Leader.

WASE Forward is a new coalition that was formed in 2021. It consists of 34 organizations that are working together to advocate for better policies to support adults who have experienced sex trafficking and sexual exploitation in Washington. The partners of WASE Forward consist of nonprofit and government agencies who will work or will continue to work with survivors who have experienced trauma through sexual exploitation. WASE Forward is the only coalition in Washington that is survivor-led and empowers survivors to inform and develop policies that improve protection and services for adult survivors of trafficking. WASE Forward engages state law makers to create better survivor informed policies to support people who are most at-risk.

“We are working with Representative Tina Orwall on a bill that will create a network of healing, support, and transition services for adult survivors of sex trafficking,” explained Nature Carter, a co-founder of WASE Forward and a leader in the African American community who works to continue to reach marginalized communities to address intersections of violence. “Through this work, we are centering the voices of trafficking survivors, and prioritizing the needs of the communities most disproportionately impacted.”

WASE Forward is dedicated to supporting and uplifting survivors of sex trafficking in marginalized communities. This includes people from Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities, as well as members of the LGBTQIA2+ community.

In the upcoming Washington State Legislature session, WASE Forward is advocating for a bill that will increase services for adult sex trafficking survivors, as well as a proviso to conduct a statewide study on the harms that sex trafficking has on women and girls in the Black and African American community. If funded, this study and the data collected will be able to improve and inform policy decisions for many years to come.

The influence that WASE Forward is making will have a tremendous positive impact on marginalized people in the Seattle community, and all across the state. The work of WASE Forward is grounded in a foundational belief in freedom and a desire to bring more choice, justice, safety, and peace into the world for survivors, their family and friends, and all members of society.

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About WASE Forward

Washington Against Sexual Exploitation (WASE Forward) is a coalition of 34 agencies that was formed in 2021 to bring together leaders from many organizations to work together to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of vulnerable people in Washington state. The purpose of WASE Forward is to promote policies and practices that enhance support and justice for people with lived experience of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. WASE Forward is guided by a diverse leadership team including professionals with program, research, and lived experience of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. For more information, visit www.waseforward.org

About the Seattle Human Rights Commission

The Seattle Human Rights Commission was established in 1963 to advocate for justice and equal opportunity, to advise the City of Seattle on human rights issues, and to collaborate with the public and private sectors in order to educate them on methods to prevent and eliminate discrimination. The Seattle Human Rights Commission advises the Mayor, City Council, and City departments on human rights issues, elevates community voices to ensure a greater public awareness for human rights concerns, and creates actionable objectives for local officials. For more information, visit www.seattle.gov/humanrights.