How Might We
How might we decrease the demand for sex trafficked individuals in major metropolitan areas in the United States?

Description/Background
According to the International Labor Organization, there are hundreds of thousands of sex trafficking victims in the United States each year [1]. Men and women, adults and children, foreign nationals and U.S born citizens are victims of human trafficking [2]. Sex trafficking has become a major problem in the United States, grossing 32 billion dollars a year [2]. America’s wealth attracts human traffickers and rewards them with high profits [1]. According to a study in the Atlanta Journal Constitution, more than 5,000 brothels in the United States are disguised as businesses [3]. These brothels are located in areas such as massage establishments, strip malls, office buildings, and residential areas, that common citizens frequent completely unaware of their purpose [3]. The sex industry continues to grow in the middle of metropolitan cities. Its success largely relies on the community’s lack of awareness [1]. Opening the public’s eyes to the existence of sex trafficking industry in the community will result in the sex trafficking industry struggling to coexist in metropolitan areas.

While men and women from many different backgrounds and socioeconomic levels are guilty of soliciting sex at least once, there is a profile of the typical John, or sex solicitor. According to a government study, about 10% to 20% of men in the United States have purchased sex at one point in their lives. A majority of these men are married, lack a criminal background, and have attended college [4]. These men have a variety of reasons for buying sex. Some are seeking intimacy, some seek sex without intimacy. Others are thrill seekers, and others aim to control and harm others [4]. Whatever their reason for soliciting sex, the demand drives the illicit commercial sex market [4].

To combat the problem of sex trafficking, some communities have started John schools. John schools are programs that educate men regarding buying sex. In some areas, the schools are used as a sentencing option. Johns may be given the option to reduce their sentence or get charges dismissed if they attend John school. At John school, the John is educated in health consequences, impact on communities, impacts on survivors, victimization risks, impact on Johns, and legal consequences [6]. In a National Institute of Justice (NIJ)-sponsored study, it was found that John school education or treatment programs resulted in forty percent reduction in recidivism [5]. However, existing John schools have cited the fact that there is no follow-up or post-care as to why there is still recidivism among the Johns [6].

A number of groups have a stake in his field, including the communities surrounding this activity, sex traffickers, Johns, and the victims. As sex trafficking is dependent on the community’s lack of awareness, our project will aid in the decrease of sex trafficking in metropolitan areas [1]. By decreasing the demand for sex, the market value will decrease causing
sex traffickers to leave the sex industry [7]. By decreasing the number of Johns, the magnitude of
the sex industry will decrease. The decreased size of the sex industry will decrease the victims of
sex trafficking, which in turn will liberate victims.

**Project Goal**
Our focus is limited to the Johns and their interaction with the sex trafficking industry, using
John schools as a vessel to get our message across. This allows a safer angle to tackle the
problem when compared to directly dealing with pimps and victims on the streets. This also
allows us to bring awareness to the public while still addressing the increasing demand [9]. In
order to help the victims being trafficked, the Johns need to be more educated and aware of the
issue. There is also a gap in the legal system that fails to consistently punish the Johns for the
crimes they have committed. In a study done on men who buy sex, several men noted that the
current laws are not enforced and only 6% of the men in the study have criminal convictions
although they all admit to buying sex [9]. Targeting the buyers directly will decrease demand, in
addition to increasing awareness of abuse among buyers and first hand witnesses. Our goal is to
increase the education and awareness of the Johns about the impact of human trafficking on the
community in order to decrease the demand for sex.

**External Advisors**
Our advisors are Jeffrey Borowitz, Stephanie Davis, and Nicole Hill. Our first advisor is Jeffrey
Borowitz, a professor of Sociology here at Georgia Tech. Jeffrey is a valuable resource for us
because he is involved in data-driven projects focused on human trafficking. He works in the
context of the bigger picture to find technical solutions to the problem. He is very excited about
our project and will be a great resource for information gathering and brainstorming. Stephanie
Davis is our second advisor. She is now retired, but spent her life as a lobbyist trying to get
woman-focused legislation passed. She worked on bills regarding sex trafficking and also sat on
WGRP, a task force based on finding solutions to the prostitution problem in Atlanta. She is a
great resource because she has many relationships within our sphere of focus and knows the
political environment of Atlanta very well in regards to our issue. Our third advisor is Nicole
Hill. She is coordinating the Student Convening on Human Trafficking, a conference to be held
on November 15th, 2014. She works closely with the Center for Civil and Human Rights and is
able to connect us with other student groups that are working on similar projects.

**Objectives**

**Objective 1:** Design a program for an existing John school that provides a post-care tool for the
Johns to use.

Importance: This will give us a blueprint for the rest of the project. It dictates what resources we
will use, what mediums we will work through, and the people we seek out for help.

Necessity: Without this blueprint, we will be unable to create an post-care program that is
tailored to a specific John school.

Tasks:

a. Partnering with an existing John school
b. Assessing the existing program
i. We will talk to the teachers of the John school as well as Johns who have been through the school in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the school as-is.
c. Tailor program to the needs of the Johns and a specific John school while reinforcing the key teachings of the curriculum
d. Gather feedback and revise until all users are satisfied.

Potential problems: Problems include finding a John school that will partner with us and interpreting the John school’s needs incorrectly. We will address these problems by reaching out to several John schools with a wide net and ensuring that the John school’s goals and ours line up. We will also ensure to have open and constant routes of communication such that we are able to avoid misinterpreting the John school’s needs.

Measuring success: Success will look like a partnership with a John school and a plan for an post-care program which both sides agree upon.

**Objective 2:** Construct the John school post-care program designed in objective 1.

Importance: We will not know the efficacy, the flaws, or the needs of our program unless it is taken from plan to product.

Necessity: Without actually constructing the product, we will have nothing to offer the John schools and no way to actually make a difference.

Tasks:

a. Contact an expert in the medium chosen in objective 1  
   i. Medium being videos, mobile application, website, podcasts, etc…
b. Program the medium (if necessary)  
c. Film the videos (if necessary)  
d. Gather feedback and revise until all users are satisfied

Potential problems: Problems include technological barriers and knowledge gaps. We will address the issue of technological issues by enlisting an expert in the field that we choose. We will make sure to reach out to people who will help us design our project, possibly the App Studio or the Multimedia Lab. We will address knowledge gaps by keeping in constant communication with the John school as well as reaching out to the greater community that works to end sex trafficking.

Measuring success: Success is here defined as a final product that both the John school and our team are happy with. Most importantly, success will look like a product that the John school is willing to implement.

**Objective 3:** Implement our program to the Johns in the John school with which we have partnered.

Importance: This is an important step because it allows us to implement and test the efficacy of our product.
**Necessity:** Without this step, there is no way for us to actually make a difference or to contribute something to society.

**Tasks:**

a. Distribute the program to the Johns with a control group of equal size  
b. Create a timeline for our program including data collection  
c. Track usage of our program for the allotted time  
   i. Eg: end of module quizzes  
d. Work on the self-sustainability of the program so it does not require our team’s time and energy to keep running.  
e. Assessing the program: Our parameters of success will be based off this initial information we gather compared to the data we will receive after implementation. This includes a control group of at least 30 Johns that do not have our program and another group of the same size that has our program.

**Potential problems:** Some problems we may encounter for this objective include: the timeline exceeding the time we have left in Grand Challenges, legal barriers, a problem with the product that does not become apparent until we distribute it to the users, and that it may not be self-sustainable right away. We will address timeline issues by passing the project down to younger Grand Challenge students if they are interested. We also want to get involved with the International Institute for Human Trafficking in Atlanta, and we could form a task force through them to continue the project. Legal barriers will be addressed by contacting those people who have a lot of influence politically in the area and who also are invested in the John school. Errors in the product will be immediately fixed; we will ask for feedback after every module so our users can help us catch them. Sustainability is something that we will have to deal with and work continuously to ensure that the John school has the resources it needs; this also can be addressed through a partnership with the International Human Trafficking Institute.

**Measuring success:** We can measure the success of this step by comparing the recidivism rates of Johns who have not gone through John school, Johns who have only gone through John school and not the post-care program, and Johns who have gone through both the post-care program and the John school. However, these metrics will likely take years to give us results. A more immediate way to measure success is to measure the number of Johns who have gone through the post-care program. Another way to measure success is to use quizzes after our modules, to assess whether or not the Johns are retaining the information. We could have a control group of Johns complete a quiz three months after going through a John school without the aftercare program. The experimental group of Johns would complete the same or similar quiz after going through both the John school and the post-care program. This way, we could see if information is retained.
**Future Directions**

Once we assess the success of our tool in a John school, we plan on expanding to more John schools. Our program should be recognized as a tool for prosecutors to use with John schools or in place of John schools while the accused serve time for their crime. This tool might be tailored to the different John schools, but will generally stay the same. There are many men’s groups in businesses and other professional areas that could use our tool as well to try and stop the demand in an environment where it is might be more accepted.

**Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Duration (days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Find a John school to partner with (1)</td>
<td>1-Nov-14</td>
<td>31-Dec-14</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess the school and its success (1)</td>
<td>1-Jan-15</td>
<td>25-Jan-15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design a tailored program (1)</td>
<td>16-Jan-15</td>
<td>14-Feb-15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present design for feedback (1)</td>
<td>15-Feb-15</td>
<td>28-Feb-15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise the design (1)</td>
<td>1-Mar-15</td>
<td>4-Apr-15</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present design for approval (1)</td>
<td>5-Apr-15</td>
<td>18-Apr-15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact a multimedia expert (2)</td>
<td>15-Apr-15</td>
<td>29-Apr-15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program, code, film (2)</td>
<td>26-Apr-15</td>
<td>6-Jun-15</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present program for feedback (2)</td>
<td>7-Jun-15</td>
<td>20-Jun-15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Revise the program (2) | 21-Jun-15 | 25-Jul-15 | 35
Present program for approval (2) | 26-Jul-15 | 8-Aug-15 | 14
Implement the program (3) | 9-Aug-15 | 5-Sep-15 | 28
Establish self-sustainability of the project (4) | 6-Sep-15 | 17-Oct-15 | 42

**Budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel (gas or airline)</td>
<td>1 &amp; 3</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia software</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Equipment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile application/ Website fees</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,800.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**References**


