



## Human Trafficking Case Study *United States V. Alaboudi*

July 21, 2016

3:15–4:15 p.m. eastern time

**Presenters:**

Kevin Koliner, Appellate Chief, District of South Dakota, U.S. Attorney's Office  
Special Agent Michael D. Melcher, FBI, Case Agent

Jenise Pischel, Program Coordinator, Parkston Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, Our Home, Inc.

The material presented during today's webinar session will be available on the Human Trafficking Learning Community.

*The session will be recorded and will begin shortly.*

As with all technology, we may experience a momentary lapse in the webinar session. In the event of a problem, please be patient and remain on the line.

If the problem persists, please contact [dmclean@ovcttac.org](mailto:dmclean@ovcttac.org) for technical assistance.



# Poll

# SEX TRAFFICKING CASE STUDY: UNITED STATES V. MOHAMMED ALABOUDI



# SOUTH DAKOTA VICTIMS

- Disproportionately from reservation communities
- Sex abuse/rape victims
- Throwaway kids
- Chronic runaways
- Truancy/dropouts
- Emotional/mental instability
- Drug addiction
- Refugee community
- Not confined to any one demographic
- Extreme poverty

# INDIAN COUNTRY AND SEX TRAFFICKING

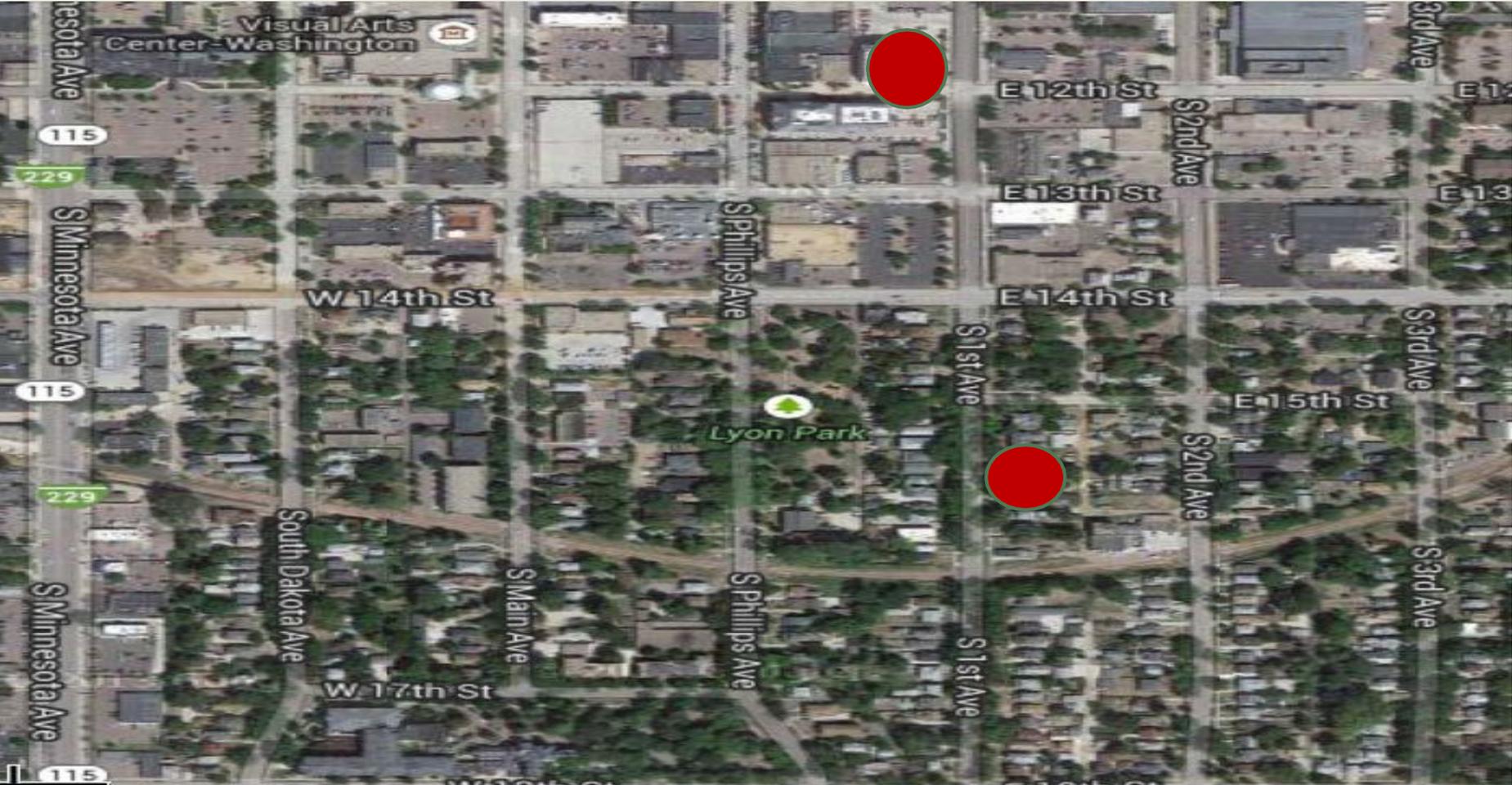
- In reservation communities, this crime looks different
- Not a classic pimp/prostitute/john scenario because small communities (people know one another), not much cash
- Might look like “survival sex” – forcing another to have sex for a place to stay, for alcohol, for money

# ABOUT MOHAMMED ALABOUDI

- Iraqi refugee
- Living on disability benefits
- Blocks from downtown Sioux Falls
- Multiple arrests, over 20 law enforcement calls



# UNDER OUR NOSE



# HOW INVESTIGATION STARTED

- NCMEC tip from a Backpage ad
- Local 14 year old girl identified
- Sting operation
- Emmanuel Nyuon arrested
- Mohamed Alaboudi identified early on as a player in the periphery and interviewed

# INITIAL INTERVIEW OF ALABOUDI

- Admitted he knew S.J.
  - “shocked” at her age
- Admitted girls party at his house
- Admitted that he has sex with a lot of them
- Denied drug use
- Denied all knowledge of prostitution

# EVOLUTION OF VICTIM DISCLOSURES

## SJ interviews:

- 01/25/2012
- 01/26/2012
- Forensic interviews
  - 2/1/2012, 2/2/2012, 3/20/2012
- FBI interviews
  - 2/24/2012, 2/27/2012, 10/10/2012



# INVESTIGATION OF ALABOUDI

- Additional victims identified
- Two sets of sisters
- Deeply embarrassing details
- Only identified because of their own arrests/treatment disclosures
  - Importance of training programs

# OBSTACLES

- No internet trail
- No use of credit cards/hotel rooms
- Very insular refugee community
- Victims with severe addictions
  - Cooperation = shutting off drug source
  - Cognitive impairment
- Transient lifestyles
- Deep embarrassment

# ADVANTAGES

- No romance/grooming here
- Victims despised Alaboudi and all of the men who came to his house
- Never underestimate the power of a scorned girlfriend
- Using customers as witnesses

# THE PICTURE THAT EMERGED

- Flop house for homeless drug addicts
- Refugee and drug community
- Many unidentified victims
- Many identified victims never located or refused to be interviewed
- Horrific violence
- Severe addiction









# THE TEAM

## Collaborating with the victim services team:

- Case Manager at Department of Social Services or Department of Corrections
- Family
- Treatment team

## Collaborating with the law enforcement team:

- FBI Victims Specialist - Sioux Falls Office: Gayle Scott
- Kevin Kolinier - Chief Appellate with US Attorney's Office
- Jeff Clapper - Assistant US attorney
- FBI – Michael Melcher

# CUSTOMERS

- Identified approximately 20 customers from 14 year old's phone
- Worked with state's attorney's office to pursue state solicitation charges
- Two state statutory rape convictions

# USING CUSTOMER AS WITNESS

- Identified most frequent customer
- *United States v. Jungers* to encourage cooperation
- Expect the unexpected (aka know your translator)

# TRIAL

- Victim testimony was key. Very powerful moments
- Multiple trials with the same witnesses is a challenge
- Some defense ideas backfired
  - Calling FBI Forensic Interviewer to point out inconsistencies
  - Calling victim's high school friend
  - Taking aggressive approach in general

# SENTENCING

- Convicted December 2013, sentenced March 2014
- Four concurrent life terms
- Powerful victim impact statements



# LESSONS LEARNED

- Relationships with law enforcement partners is a necessity
- Keep an open mind
  - Suspect? Victim? Witness?
- Know the roles of the team and stick to them
  - Presenting the team concept to victims worked.
    - Apply roles to decisions for interviews
    - Be consistent throughout investigation re: contact with victim



# INVESTIGATIVE TIPS

- Start spreadsheets of johns, victims, and pimps
  - Take pictures!
- Spreadsheets of telephone numbers, email and social media profiles
  - Look at every phone
  - Common numbers under different names in different phones

# LESSONS LEARNED

## What we learned from the treatment side:

- Meeting the client where they were at

## The hurdles

- Physical and emotional components
- Lengths of stay: Parkston Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (inpatient drugs and alcohol treatment program)

# WORKING WITH VICTIMS

- First step is to provide link to services
  - Get “safe” phone number for contact
- Maintain consistent contact throughout
- Pay attention to all leads. Those on the “fringe” might not be
- Persistence pays off

# COURAGE



**Questions?**

# CONTACT INFORMATION

Kevin Koler  
Appellate Chief  
United States Attorney's Office, District of South Dakota  
(605) 330-4400  
[kevin.koliner@usdoj.gov](mailto:kevin.koliner@usdoj.gov)

Jenise Pischel, MSE  
Program Coordinator  
Our Home Inc./Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility  
Parkston, SD 57301  
[jpischel@ourhomeinc.org](mailto:jpischel@ourhomeinc.org)  
605-928-7907

Michael D. Melcher  
Supervisory Special Agent, FBI  
[michael.melcher@ic.fbi.gov](mailto:michael.melcher@ic.fbi.gov)  
605-310-2863