Out of the Shadows and Into the Light: Rosen Hagood Helps Survivors of Human Trafficking

January 15, 2020

Along with perfect weather, beautiful architecture, history and quality of life, Charleston is a leader in something darker and much more difficult to spot: human trafficking. According to the 2019 annual report of South Carolina's Human Trafficking Task Force, there was a significant increase in cases in South Carolina last year. Hitting even closer to home, Charleston and Dorchester counties were in the top 5 for incidents and victims reported.

One Rosen Hagood family law attorney, Rene Dukes, is doing something about it. As a member of LAST (Lawyers Assisting Survivors of Trafficking), Rene is on the legal front lines of helping trafficking victims get the legal resources they need. Explains Dukes: "Many trafficking victims need assistance in dealing with criminal charges, family court issues, and a host of other legal issues resulting from their time in, basically, captivity. I want to be part of the people that say 'you matter' and the process that says 'I will help you.'"

As a member of LAST, a subcommittee of the Human Trafficking Task Force, Rene attends regular informational meetings as well as training sessions on techniques for communicating with trafficking survivors. This can be difficult because victims often do not self-identify and, even then, these individuals are often distrustful of anyone associated with the legal system.

Charleston is an attractive destination for traffickers for a number of reasons, including its geographic location and its role as a transportation hub. The human cost is immense, and though often seemingly invisible, human trafficking is a real, and growing problem. By helping provide legal counsel to victims, Rene is also helping them to rebuild their lives.

©2026 Rosen Hagood All Rights Reserved |