

Case Study

New Haven Bank Stops Human Trafficking

Data-Driven Detection Saves Sex Trafficking Victims





New Haven Bank

Headquarters: New Haven, CT

Assets: \$200M*

Core System: Fiserv - DNA



Human trafficking is a global crisis — the commoditization of people that drives hundreds of billions of dollars in illicit activity. Linked to the world's most heinous criminal networks, human trafficking occurs even in plain sight and in the quietest cities across the United States, impacting men, women and girls.

On Connecticut's Long Island Sound, New Haven is a peaceful Ivy League city with a rich legacy. But here too, human trafficking networks endeavor to secretly funnel illicit proceeds through banks and businesses, making local financial institutions key players in identifying and disrupting these crimes.

A Local Stand Against a Global Crime

For Monica Buckley, Vice President for Retail Banking and Compliance Officer at New Haven Bank, fighting human trafficking is a FINCEN initiative and personal passion. Deeply moved by human trafficking survivor Timea Nagy at a Nasdaq Verafin conference, Monica embarked on a journey of action spanning over a decade and shaping her work across every institution she's served. "It lit a fire under me. I knew if I could save just one person from this, it would be profoundly important."

That commitment quickly translated into action on the ground. "Most people never think you're going to see human trafficking locally, in your hometown. As a small bank in a collegiate city, criminals think we can't stop them. That couldn't be further from the truth. We're vigilant, we're informed, and we have the best detection solution available — Nasdaq Verafin."

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Human Trafficking Analytics: Precision Detection When It's Needed Most

Powered by artificial intelligence and consortium insights, Nasdaq Verafin's Targeted Typology Analytics for [human trafficking detection](#) analyze customer profiles, demographic data, and transactional activity, as well as millions of online adult classifieds for effective detection of potential human traffickers, fronts, and victims. The result — improved detection with low false positive rates, single-digit alert-to-case ratios, and low alert-to-SAR ratios. It is this precision detection that Monica and her team at New Haven Bank needed most when two young men exhibited behavior characteristic of sex trafficking victims.

Beneath the Surface: Patterns Reveal Cases of Sex Trafficking

It began with a young man who claimed he was new to the city from overseas, with family members fully funding his education at a prestigious local university. Yet his financial activity suggested anything but. No tuition payments, textbook purchases, or signs of student life — food, transportation, bookstore purchases or union fees. Instead, he made late-night ATM cash deposits, followed immediately by international payments to a foreign company in Asia.

Soon, a second individual appeared joining the first man on the same route and mirroring his suspicious behavior. This led to more late-night deposits and immediate remittances to the same overseas entity — and not exactly the financial behaviors expected of a college student.

Nasdaq Verafin's Human Trafficking analytics immediately flagged the activity, with the evidence aligning precisely with FinCEN red flag indicators. "It was textbook trafficking activity," Monica said. She launched an investigation, culminating in a Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) and a call to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Within 40 days, the activity ceased, just 10 days after FinCEN's deadline to review the SAR, the individuals disappeared, and their accounts were closed due to inactivity. "The precision and thoroughness of Nasdaq Verafin's Human Trafficking analytics significantly streamlined our decision to file. We knew exactly what we were looking at — and so did our senior leadership."



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A Mission Beyond Banking

Monica's mission extends beyond compliance. "In my heart, I believe those young men are safe," she said. "Being able to report that we intervened in these trafficking cases was a proud moment, and it easily justified our Nasdaq Verafin contract. The impact this software has when it saves a life — it's invaluable."

Now, Monica is tracking another case. Nasdaq Verafin flagged a trafficker based on age and a phone number linked to an advertisement on a local escort site. The system detected funneling activity — a hallmark of trafficking operations and commercial sexual exploitation. "The fact that a single phone number can be the starting point for Nasdaq Verafin to uncover something this significant is incredible," she said.

Despite being a small institution, Monica knows New Haven Bank is making a significant impact. "The traffickers go to sleepy towns, rural areas, anywhere they think they can hide and evade the law. Let them be warned — we have the skill; we've got the technology and we're not afraid to act."

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Contact us today to learn more about Nasdaq Verafin's Fraud Detection and Management, AML/CFT Compliance and Management, High-Risk Customer Management, Sanctions Screening and Management, and Information Sharing solutions.

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