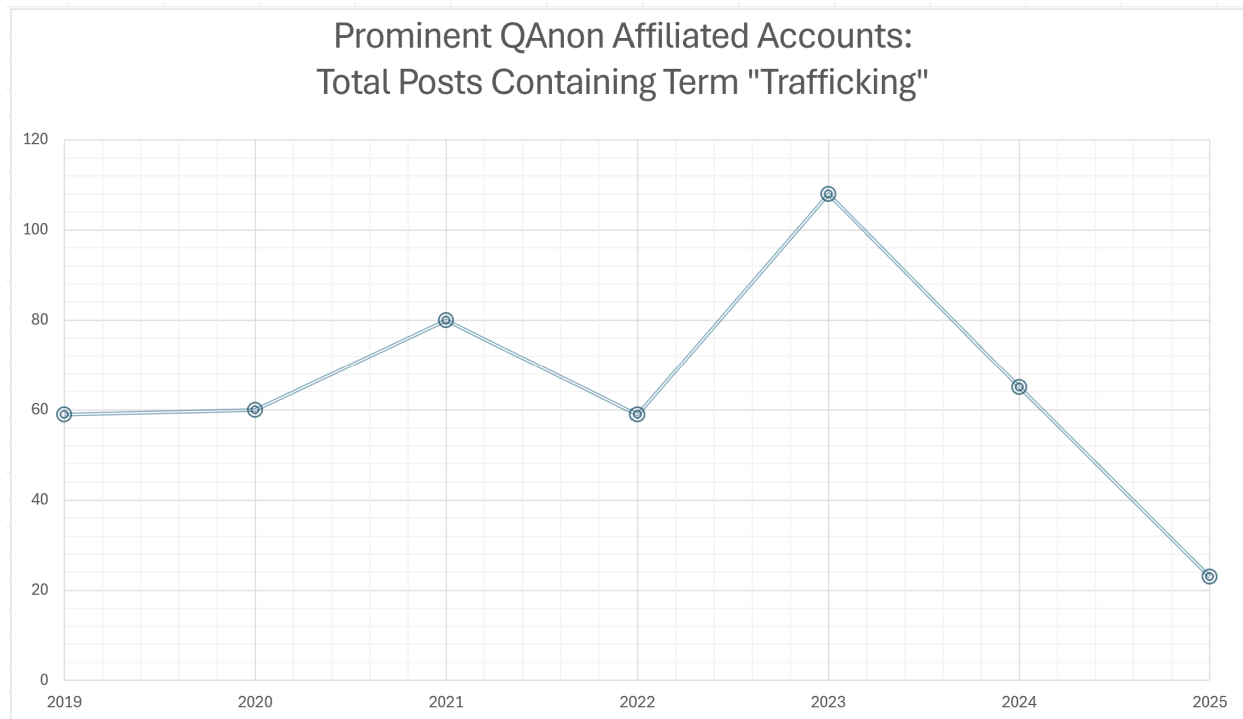


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEADLINE: Online QAnon related voices are making 64% fewer posts about human trafficking



A joint social media study from Montclair State University faculty in the Joetta Di Bella and Fred C. Sautter III Center for Strategic Communication in the College of Communication and Media and the Global Center on Human Trafficking shows a 64% decrease in the total number of posts about human trafficking made by prominent QAnon affiliated/adjacent accounts when compared to the highpoint of such posts in 2023.

Highlights from the study produced by the Center for Strategic Communication and the Global Center on Human Trafficking include:

- A 64% decrease in human trafficking posts from significant QAnon related accounts from 1/1/2025 to 7/20/2025 when compared to the same period in 2023 (the highest volume year of trafficking posts among online conservative voices)
- A 79% reduction in the total volume of human trafficking posts in the studied accounts between 2023 and 2025
- No posts from the QAnon related accounts studied reacted to proposed cuts to the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (despite such content generating 29.5M potential views from other online sources)

- **A greater than 50% reduction in views of human trafficking posts for 2025 from all studied QAnon affiliated/adjacent accounts, indicating potential diminished interest from their respective audiences**

“The very real problem of human trafficking was never seriously considered in accounts that regularly pushed absurd conspiracies about the topic; that they have no interest in ongoing, legitimate engagement with the issue is unsurprising,” said Dr. Daniela Peterka-Benton, Director of the Global Center on Human Trafficking and an Associate Professor of Justice Studies at Montclair State University.

“There are a range of possible causes for the diminished interest in human trafficking including growing public awareness about trafficking misinformation and concerns about trafficking discourse potentially having a negative effect on public figures,” said Dr. Bond Benton, Associate Professor of Public Relations in the College of Communication and Media at Montclair State University. “What hasn’t changed, however, is that real advocacy for trafficking prevention and survivor support remains desperately needed,” he added.

The full study, which can be found **here**, was conducted by Dr. Bond Benton from the Joetta Di Bella and Fred C. Sautter III Center for Strategic Communication and by Dr. Daniela Peterka-Benton, Director of the Global Center on Human Trafficking.

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About the College of Communication and Media: Founded in 2012, the College of Communication and Media offers a range of dynamic programs in communication and media to a talented and diverse student population of over 1,500. Offering degrees in film and television, social media and public relations, advertising, journalism and digital media, sports communication, animation and visual effects, and an MA in public and organizational relations, the College prepares the next generation of communication and media practitioners and leaders. The College houses award-winning student programs that include WMSC Radio, The Montclarion newspaper, Hawk Communications PR Agency, the Red Hawk Sports Network, Hawk+ OTT streaming platform, and News Lab, as well as the Center for Cooperative Media, which serves the public by working to grow and strengthen local journalism. Recent national College recognitions include an Edward R. Murrow Award, several Marconi Award nominations, and a College Television Award from the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

About the Global Center on Human Trafficking: The Global Center on Human Trafficking is a multi-disciplinary effort focused on developing innovative solutions to the global problem of human trafficking. Montclair State University, one of the most diverse higher education institutions in the United States, has a history of supporting social justice and human rights issues affecting communities across the world. What began as a university initiative spearheaded by a group of committed leaders, faculty and staff, has grown into a global center working hand in hand with survivors around the world to transform the response to human trafficking. It is dedicated to mobilizing collective action to develop

novel solutions to the complex problems of human trafficking so that all people may live free from human trafficking.

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