

Rebecca Bender, MACT
CEO & Founder Rebecca Bender Initiative and Elevate Academy

Born with tenacity and an entrepreneurial spirit, Rebecca believes that we are all more than the bad things that have happened in our lives. After escaping her trafficker in 2007, Rebecca was determined to make a new life for herself and her young daughter. She worked hard, eventually opening her own business and earning a Master's degree. While she was attending college online, Rebecca dreamed of launching a school for survivors of human trafficking - a place where anyone with lived experience could enroll and learn the skills and knowledge necessary to build a new life. In 2014, Elevate Academy was born and within eight years had served over 1200 students in 17 countries and nearly 580 U.S. cities across the nation. This innovative online school is thriving today and remains a place where survivors continue to connect, grow, and find tools to ignite their futures.

Rebecca is a CEO and a published author who has earned a distinct reputation as a trailblazer in the field. Her specialized trainings have equipped well over 115,000 professionals including FBI, Homeland Security, local law enforcement, community leaders, medical professionals, and more. An award-winning thought leader, Rebecca was appointed by the U.S. Attorney General to the United States National Advisory Council and serves as an advisor to some of our nation's largest nonprofits and government agencies. She assists as a subject matter expert for investigations and operations across the country, and is regularly called upon to testify as an expert witness. Rebecca is a highly sought-after speaker, consultant, and nationally recognized authority who is passionate about seeing people transform their lives so they can change the world. When she's not traveling and leading her team, you'll find her on the sidelines or in the audience cheering for her four daughters, listening to true-crime podcasts, or working on her next manuscript by the pool.