Richard Herrmann (left), director of the Mershon Center for International Studies, introduces the Mershon Center and Slavic Center Panel on Human Trafficking, "Trafficking and Civil Society: Denial, Distress, Danger." Panelists included (seated left to right) Ambassador Mark P. Lagon, Yana Hashamova, Kristin Silver, and Marguerite Hernandez. The panel was held in Jennings Hall on January 12, 2010.

The Mershon Center and Slavic Center panel on human trafficking brought together an interdisciplinary panel of experts who discussed the realities of trafficking and analyzed how the government, NGOs and civil society can work to curtail and combat human trafficking. Panelists included (seated from left to right) Ambassador Mark P. Lagon, executive director and CEO of the Polaris Project, Yana Hashamova, associate professor of East European Languages and Literatures and the director of the Center for Slavic and East European Studies, Kristin Silver, undergraduate psychology major and research assistant for the Center for Cognitive Science, and Marguerite Hernandez, graduate student in sociology.
Ambassador Mark P. Lagon, gave a presentation titled, "The Crucial Role of Civil Society in Fighting Human Trafficking: As Much in America as the World" as part of the Mershon Center and Slavic Center Panel on Human Trafficking. Lagon is executive director and CEO of the Polaris Project, a leading anti-human trafficking nonprofit organization. Before joining the Polaris Project, he served as Ambassador-at-Large and director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.

Yana Hashamova, associate professor of East European Languages and Literatures and the director of the Center for Slavic and East European Studies talked about film representations of trafficking in women during her presentation "Screening Trafficking: Prudent or Perilous?"
Marguerite Hernandez, graduate student in the Department of Sociology, gave a presentation titled "Challenges to Combating Human Trafficking: The U.S. NGO Response." Marguerite was previously awarded a Mershon Center student grant to conduct research for her dissertation, which will provide one of the first empirical views on relations between organizations and agencies combating human trafficking.

Kristin Silver, undergraduate psychology and International Studies major and neuroscience minor, gave a presentation titled "Fighting Human Trafficking: The Roles of Empirical Research and Citizen Activism." Kristin is currently completing her honors thesis on what Americans know about human trafficking and the empathy they feel for trafficking victims. She has been accepted as an intern at La Strada/Animus Association in Bulgaria and hopes to continue her research there after graduation.
Ambassador Mark P. Lagon, executive director and CEO of the Polaris Project fielded questions during the Q and A portion of the panel on human trafficking. The Mershon Center and Slavic Center panel, "Trafficking and Civil Society: Denial, Distress, Danger," drew an audience of almost 150 people.

Participants of "Trafficking and Civil Society: Denial, Distress, Danger" fielded a number of questions from audience members after their presentations. Richard Herrmann (far left), director of the Mershon Center, moderated the Q and A session, which produced interesting dialogue. Panelists included (seated left to right), Ambassador Mark P. Lagon, executive director and CEO of the Polaris Project, Yana Hashamova, associate professor of East European Languages and Literatures and the director of the Center for Slavic and East European Studies, Kristin Silver, undergraduate psychology and International Studies major and neuroscience minor, and Marguerite Hernandez, graduate student in the Department of Sociology. The panel on human trafficking was held in Jennings Hall on January 12, 2010.