

HRAP 2019

HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES PROGRAM



INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



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INTRODUCTION

2019 marked the 30th anniversary of the **Human Rights Advocates Program** (HRAP) at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR) at Columbia University. Founded in 1989, HRAP leverages the resources of Columbia University and those offered by NYC as a hub of NGOs and international organizations to provide human rights advocates like Charbonnel Nodjigoto with academic, skill-building, mentoring, and networking opportunities. Through seminars, participation in University courses, and workshops led by staff from leading human rights organizations as well as meetings with policy makers and funders, advocates share their experiences, reflect critically on their work, and plan future campaigns.

328 advocates from 91 countries have participated in this program since 1989. The cumulative reach of HRAP participants is extraordinary: alumni have worked with organizations whose memberships range from the thousands to the millions. They can be found at prominent human rights organizations, serving in their national governments and at the UN, and teaching at universities around the globe.

This 2019 cohort included advocates working on LGBT rights in Argentina, China, Ghana and Uganda; on indigenous peoples' rights in Mexico and Russia; with survivors of torture in Chad; on public health in South Africa; and on the promotion of civic consciousness in Armenia. This program report details the experiences of the 2019 cohort followed by a photo exhibition that highlights the contributions of HRAP alumni to the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe.



"In my childhood, I read newspaper articles about Martin Luther King, Gandhi, and Nelson Mandela. I admired that they all sacrificed so much to devote themselves to the struggle for freedom and human rights. I said, Why not me too?"

2019 Advocate Charbonnel Nodjigoto of Chad

30
Years
HRAP

2 THE ADVOCATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Mariano Ruiz

International Day
against Homophobia,
Transphobia, and
Biphobia Committee

Buenos Aires,
Argentina

It is hard to express what drove me to defend human rights. To be honest, I never thought of becoming a human rights advocate. I believe my personal history has a lot to do with it. I grew in a small city in the south of Patagonia, Argentina, where being a weirdo queer teenager made me face bullying and discrimination from an early

age, at a time when it was not a trending topic on Twitter, and people would not even talk about it. “Kids are playing,” people would say when they witnessed other boys punching me while playing soccer or when they called me “fag” just because I liked music and art. Society was not aware of the violence and oppression I was subjected to,

just because I was not as masculine as others expected me to be. Since I can remember, society reminded me I was different.

When I turned 18 and finished high school, I moved away from my family home to pursue my university studies in foreign policy in Buenos Aires, the capital of my country. Moving from a small town to the big city was a real change. I enjoyed being anonymous but at the same time, I started discovering how it is to live without being judged for who I was. Coming out was a big step. After my family and friends knew I was gay, everything turned real. I started to realize that we were still being oppressed, this time not by other kids like in high school, but by

and started fighting for equality. In the coming years, I got involved with lobbying for the equal marriage law, participated in campaigning activities and tactics, participated in protests, and was visible. In 2010, equal marriage became a reality. That opened the door to many other conquests such as the gender identity law and the repeal of the ban for blood donation. But equality is still not fully real and that is what keeps me inspired to drive change.

After some years of being a volunteer, I was able to get my first job at an international organization, which led to my international advocacy around LGBT+ rights. As a communications officer at the International

“Coming out was a big step. After my family and friends knew I was gay, everything turned real.”

society. We were still not equal. We didn’t enjoy the same rights. We could not donate blood, we could not get married, we could not express our love publicly without fear of violence, and many other nos.

My interest in defending social causes was always there. During my teenage life, I was always involved in community service, so realizing that I belong to a minority made me act for change. During a LGBT Pride Parade in the streets of my city I decided to take a stand

Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, I was able to promote and encourage LGBT organizations to take a stand for their human rights in the Latin American and Caribbean region. This unique opportunity allowed me to meet some of the bravest activists in the world and inspired me even more to continue sharing my experience for change in other countries.

My grassroots work has never stopped. I managed the Secretariat of Foreign Policy at

the Argentine LGBT Federation where I'm proud I was able to lead the first Diploma for LGBT Human Rights Defenders created in the South for the South with more than 400 participants. I built a program to assist LGBT refugees who left danger to find safety in Argentina. At the same time, I worked as a technical assistant for the Latin American Network of Trans People where I assisted different organizations from the region in the advancement of human rights of Trans people.

Attending HRAP at Columbia is a unique opportunity; I'm learning, networking and making long-lasting relationships that I'm sure will contribute to my professional development and will positively impact my community. It also made me realize that even though we work on different issues in different countries, we all pursue the same goal which is to be equal. I'm a human rights defender because changing the life of people is the best thing I can do.

FACULTY MENTOR

Oren Pizmony-Levy
Associate Professor of
International and Comparative
Education, Teachers College

CLASSES

Refugees, Forced Migration,
and Displacement

Sexual Orientation, Gender
Identity, and Human Rights

NETWORKING

New York City

American Jewish World
Service

Amnesty International USA

Arcus Foundation

Astraea Foundation

Catholic Relief Services

Fund for Global Human Rights

Global Philanthropy Fund

Global Philanthropy Project

LGBT Funders

Out in Tech

Outright International

SAGE

Scholars at Risk

StoryCorps

United Nations
Development Programme

United Nations
Human Rights Council

United Nations
Population Fund

UN Women

Washington, D.C.

Atlas Corps

Freedom House

Heartland Alliance

Human Rights Campaign

Inter-American Foundation

Latin American
Working Group

National Democratic Institute

National Endowment
for Democracy

Open Society Foundations

Robert F. Kennedy
Human Rights

SAGE

UN Foundation

U.S. Department of State

USAID

World Bank Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Current LGBT+ Issues in
Argentina, Institute for Latin
American Studies

How to be an Ally 101,
International House

Human Rights on the
Frontlines, ISHR

Human Rights of LGBT+
People in Latin America,
Sexual Orientation,
Gender Identity and Human
Rights class

LGBT People in Latin America,
Permanent Mission of
Argentina to the UN

LGBT+ Refugees in Argentina,
Refugees, Forced Migration,
and Displacement class

Refugees Issues in Chad and
Argentina, Institute for African
Studies and ISHR



Cecilia Ramírez Pérez

International
Indigenous
Women's Forum
Oaxaca, Mexico

Kutauraxá nu naara ja ni nditoñaná, te xaa ni ka'ña te ni satiuña na'va kú skua'rá. Kutauraxá nu FIMI te nu Columbia University.

My umbilical cord is buried in a remote town located in La Mixteca region, Oaxaca; it was planted under an agave plant known as the maguey after I was born. According to the Mixtecan worldview, the burial of my umbilical cord means I am connected to the land both spiritually and physically. I always go back to it. My ancestors and story started there.

I can say that I grew up in two worlds; one of them is called a "minority" within Mexico. Long ago, I realized that there are inequalities in the society around me; I have always wanted to understand them. Some years ago, I decided to study political science. I guessed from this place I could make social changes. Regarding my university education, I would like to mention that it was a great achievement because I was the first one in my family to go to university. I am one of five sisters who support one another as much as we can.

Neither your culture nor the location of your birth should define your future. Unfortunately, it is a reality for many people in my country, especially when we talk about Indigenous Peoples and/or indigenous communities.

While basic rights such as education, health, jobs, food, justice, and others have not reached Indigenous Peoples in Mexico, the violence that currently prevails throughout the country reached us quickly. We, as Indigenous Peoples, have values and cultural practices that can reverse the present situation. I do believe that culture should be the pillar to rethink our future as Peoples and to walk against the violence.

I consider human rights as a way toward social justice for indigenous communities and Peoples. In this sense, it is possible and feasible. To this date, I do not think that I have made wrong decisions and actions with regards to my contributions to human rights. Every day through my current role at the International Indigenous Women's Forum, I contribute to the long way towards human rights.

While it may seem that the realization of human rights is a long way off, we have to continue to walk toward it. I see myself as a hand or bridge to others, as much as I can be, on this walk.

Human rights are a way to break the inequalities and widen opportunities for everyone. This is how I understand the term “human rights.” While it may seem that the realization of human rights is a long way off, we have to continue to walk toward it. I see myself as a hand or bridge to others, as much as I can be, on this walk.

Even though major steps have been taken during the last years with regards to Indigenous Peoples’ rights, we must keep insisting and fighting collectively. I am not the only one, my decisions and actions are accompanied by others, mainly by women.

FACULTY MENTOR

Elsa Stamatopoulou
 Director, Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Program, ISHR
 Adjunct Professor, Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race & Department of Anthropology

CLASSES

Endangered Languages in the Global City
 Human Rights and Development Policy
 Rural Development

NETWORKING

New York City
 Amnesty International USA
 Arcus Foundation
 Center for Economic and Social Rights
 ESCR-Net
 Endangered Language Alliance
 Fund for Global Human Rights
 Guttmacher Institute
 SAGE
 Scholars at Risk
 StoryCorps

Washington, D.C.
 American Bar Association
 Center for Human Rights
 Civitas
 Latin America Working Group
 National Congress of American Indians
 National Endowment for Democracy
 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
 U.S. Department of State
 Washington Office on Latin America
 World Bank Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT

Human Rights on the Frontlines, ISHR



Charbonnel Nodjigoto

Association Jeunesse pour la Paix et la Non-Violence

Ndjamena, Chad

My name is Nodjigoto Charbonnel. Over the past 19 years in my country of Chad, I have been promoting human rights, peace, democracy, and good governance. I have been campaigning against the use of torture and supporting victims of human rights violations.

I am the founder and executive director of Association Jeunesse pour la Paix et la Non-Violence, a human rights organization in Chad. My organization promotes human rights, peace,

The inspiration for my human rights work comes from my background. I was born and grew up in Chad which has experienced 45 years of civil war followed by massive human rights violations. My country also experienced a dictatorship for eight years. My father was a prisoner for 18 months during which time he was subjected to torture and ill treatment. All of this has contributed to my desire to defend human rights.

“In my childhood, I read newspaper articles about Martin Luther King, Gandhi, and Nelson Mandela. I admired that they all sacrificed so much to devote themselves to the struggle for freedom and human rights. I said, Why not me too?”

and non-violence in the community. We provide free-of-charge medical, psychosocial, and legal support to victims of human rights violations, refugees, IDPs, victims of sexual violence, and abandoned children. We run programs focusing on the empowerment of women to fight against inequality, discrimination, poverty, and harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation.

In my childhood, I read newspaper articles about Martin Luther King, Gandhi, and Nelson Mandela. I admired that they all sacrificed so much to devote themselves to the struggle for freedom and human rights. I said, Why not me too? That’s why I created my organization in 2000 to promote human rights, democracy, and good governance in order to bring peace

to Chad and to support victims of violence. My passion for human rights, justice, and peace has made me a human rights advocate.

While I have all lost a great deal in my life—including the job that funded my organization—and have faced pressure and intimidation, I am

very proud to struggle for human rights and freedom in my country. I prefer to see myself on the frontlines as a defender of human rights and democracy. Through my work, I want to take citizens of my country from the darkness to the light where there is respect for human rights.

FACULTY MENTOR

Andrew J. Nathan
Class of 1919 Professor of Political Science, Department of Political Science
S. Garnett Russell
Assistant Professor in International and Comparative Education
Director, George Clement Bond Center for African Education, Teachers College

CLASSES

Education, Conflict, and Peacebuilding
Human Rights and Development Policy
Refugees, Forced Migration, and Displacement
Transitional Justice

NETWORKING

New York City
Amnesty International USA
Arcus Foundation
Bellevue/ NYU Program for Survivors of Torture
Center for Economic and Social Rights
Fund for Global Human Rights
Libertas Center for Human Rights
Scholars at Risk
StoryCorps
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Population Fund
UN Women

Washington, D.C.
American Bar Association Center for Human Rights
Civitas Public Affairs
Enough Project
International Center for Research on Women
Men Engage Men Alliance
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
U.S. Department of State
World Bank Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

A Discussion with the Columbia Human Rights Advocates, Mailman School of Public Health
Human Rights in Africa, Center for African Education, Teachers College
Human Rights on the Frontlines, ISHR
Refugees Issues in Chad and Argentina, ISHR and Institute for African Studies



Ektaa Deochand

SECTION 27

Johannesburg, South Africa

My parents are descendants of indentured labourers sent from India to South Africa in the late 19th century. Indentured labourers were a source of cheap labour under British colonial rule following the abolition of slavery, and many were subjected to degrading working conditions in the colonies. My family, like many other non-white South Africans, was later impacted by the laws of the apartheid regime. They were subject to racial oppression, and were forcibly removed from their home in the inner city. Only many years later, I would come to understand the impact that forced removals had on breaking up communities and segregating society based on race. My community's acceptance of their fate ignited a spark that would compel me to fight against this or any other similar injustice. Being raised and supported predominantly by women in an extended-family home further made me question the patriarchal belief systems I inherited because they did not represent the shifting gendered reality around me.

Growing up south of the city of Durban my family straddled two separate worlds—one of opportunity and the other of poverty. Despite being born into a constitutional dispensation, the experiences around me were antithetical to the aspirations of our new Constitution; a democratic society based on freedom, human dignity, equality and human rights. The ideal on paper was so far from the reality of a spatially and racially segregated society. Entrenched inequality meant that most people did not have access to healthcare, decent education, or housing.

I was inspired to turn to the law, which is the fundamental structure upon which society is based. The history of the South African liberation movement taught me that the law could be used as a means to challenge the status quo; reverse unjust decisions and make systemic change. During my articles of clerkship at a human rights law firm, I met hundreds of marginalized people and

communities who sought legal assistance: those whose homes were demolished; street traders victimized by police; grandmothers who had been denied social assistance; people who were refused access to healthcare because they were too poor; girls who were forced into marriage; and women in customary marriages who were left without protection of the law. During this time, I realized that the struggle for justice was not a singular period of time in our history, but was an ongoing movement which had to be taken forward by the next generation

of activists to continue the fight toward achieving a better society.

I found that my purpose in social justice was to challenge and develop the law to bring the vision of our Constitution to life so that it translated into meaningful change for those who have been oppressed by history and circumstance. My role at SECTION27 has taught me that it is the collective actions of ordinary people that has the power to make great change for the advancement of fundamental rights.

“During this time, I realized that the struggle for justice was not a singular period of time in our history, but was an ongoing movement which had to be taken forward by the next generation of activists to continue the fight toward achieving a better society.”

FACULTY MENTOR

Robert E. Fullilove
Associate Dean, Community and Minority Affairs
Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences
Department of Sociomedical Sciences, Mailman School of Public Health

CLASSES

Health and Human Rights Advocacy
Race and Health
Socio-Economic Rights

NETWORKING

New York City

Amnesty International USA
Arcus Foundation
Center for Economic and Social Rights
Center for Reproductive Rights
ESCR-Net
Fund for Global Human Rights
Guttmacher Institute
StoryCorps
United Nations Children's Fund
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Population Fund
UN Women

Washington, D.C.

American Bar Association Center for Human Rights
FHI 360
International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
U.S. Department of State
World Bank Disabilities
World Bank Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

A Discussion with the Columbia Human Rights Advocates, Mailman School of Public Health
Human Rights in Africa, Center for African Education, Teachers College
Human Rights on the Frontlines, ISHR
The Right to Health and Basic Education in South Africa, Health, Human Rights Advocacy class
The Right to Health and Basic Education in South Africa, Socio-Economic Rights class
The Right to Health and Basic Education in South Africa, International Human Rights class



Joanita Warry Ssenfuka

Freedom and Roam Uganda
Kampala, Uganda

I grew up in an atmosphere where men abused their wives and women and girls were treated as slaves in their own homes. It bothered me so much but at that time I was powerless to do anything.

When I lost my parents in 1996, I became a human rights defender. As an innocent 14-year-old girl, I had to protect myself and other young girls from older men who wanted to take advantage of us by giving us presents.

“After many years, I finally accepted myself.”

When I was a child, my mother always told me to protect myself. It was her voice that made me help vulnerable girls who had not received such a message from their parent. The protection I provided to girls led others to call me a lesbian. I had no idea what this meant. I went to the dictionary where I learned the meaning. Ooop! I can only imagine the look that took over this Catholic girl's face. I was glad to have a name for what I was.

Did I accept myself completely? Nope. I was born and raised a Catholic. I started the battle to change how I was feeling about other girls. Every time I did, my feelings for girls grew stronger. I tried fasting and prayers. The feelings grew even stronger. After many years, I finally accepted myself. In 2003, I started to meet with people who were like me. Although I was raised to be a human rights defender, I began to increase my efforts in 2003. I confronted my friend who was part of a group of boys that

beat up two boys who were found kissing in the male toilets. I pleaded with my friend and the other boys to stop. When they finally stopped, my friend asked me, “Are you also like them?” I did not answer him because all I cared about was the safety of the two boys. I have never answered his question; I am sure he knows who I am.

Freedom and Roam Uganda (FARUG) was formed later that year after the death of a student who committed suicide because she had been punished for being a lesbian in front of the entire student body. Even though I was still a student, I knew I had to do something. I volunteered with FARUG and later became a staff member. Since then I have contributed to a number of campaigns for increased visibility of LGBTI persons in Uganda, co-organized the

very first beach pride parades in 2012 and 2013, and have fought passionately against HIV and AIDS. While I have had many opportunities as a human rights defender, the opportunity to be part of HRAP is a milestone for me, FARUG, and the entire LGBT movement in Uganda. Through HRAP, I have sharpened my skills to better serve our community in Uganda while also raising awareness about our work back home.

FACULTY MENTOR

Dr. Theodor Sandfort
Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences (in Psychiatry), Division of Gender Health and Sexuality, Department of Psychiatry, Columbia University
Research Scientist, HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies, New York State Psychiatric Institute

CLASSES

Queer Theory, Religion and Their Discontents
Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Human Rights

NETWORKING

New York City
Amnesty International USA
Arcus Foundation
Fund for Global Human Rights
Global Philanthropy Fund
Global Philanthropy Project
LGBT Catholics Dignity New York
LGBT Funders
Out in Tech
Outright International
SAGE
StoryCorps
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Population Fund
UN Women

Washington, D.C.
Atlas Corps
D.C. Center
Freedom House
Heartland Alliance
Human Rights Campaign
National Democratic Institute
National Endowment for Democracy
Open Society Foundations
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
SAGE
UN Foundation
U.S. Department of State
World Bank Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Human Rights in Africa, Center for African Education, Teachers College
Human Rights on the Frontlines, ISHR
A Discussion with the Columbia Human Rights Advocates, Mailman School of Public Health and ISHR
The Current Situation of the LGBT Situation in Uganda based on the Reintroduction of the Homosexuality Bill, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Human Rights class



Maria Abrahamyan

For Equal Rights Educational Center
Yerevan, Armenia

Why am I a human rights advocate? I think everyone who wants to be happy should advocate for human rights. When people learn that I work in human rights, they sometimes respond in a controversial way. Some think that I am a romantic optimist who wants to save humanity while others see me as a selfless missionary who aims to change the world. There

Human rights are the core of my value system and the spine of my personality. I remember myself wandering about refugees and war in childhood, and questioning gender prejudices in elementary school and power relationships during my teen years (without referring to those terms and definitions of course).

“Human rights are the core of my value system and the spine of my personality.”

are also those who believe that I could not find a decent job in government or corporation so this must be a short-term occupation. Many times I have been asked if I am an alien from Mars.

So, why am I a human rights advocate? I have never asked myself this question before. The first idea that pops from my heart to my mind is very simple: I love and enjoy it. Maybe this question never entered my mind before because advocating for human rights is so natural for me.

As a Nietzschean, I know that the only person I can change and the only person I am responsible for is my simple self. While this may sound ironic, I don't want to save humanity or change the world. I might sound very selfish, but working in the human rights sphere and incorporating those values and seeing the world from a human rights perspective enriches me as an individual and gives meaning to my life. The sparkle that lights up my soul and gives it energy can be a simple piece of a declaration, a

human rights book, a new project, or a solution to a human rights violation. At the same time, injustice, inequality, and the refusal of rights can cause emotional and physical pain to me. The realization of human rights has become the source of energy and path to unfold my true self, to define my personality, and to change my world. This is an ongoing process. Recently, during a class exercise about our identity traits, the only identity characteristic I could not get rid of was that of being a human rights advocate.

I am inspired by a quote from *The Art of Happiness* by the Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler: “The purpose of this life is to seek happiness...and happiness is determined more by one’s state of mind.” Thus, I wonder: what is the foundation of universal happiness? I think the

key to a happy life is through human rights—they provide a system, a password, and rules for a sustainable and happy life for everyone on earth.

Although human rights are mostly associated with tragedy, problems, and pain, the reality is that it is the absence of human rights that causes tragedy, problems, and pain. Human rights are called to protect human dignity and set rules for our respectful and dignified cohabitation with all creatures on earth. That is why I believe that everyone who wants to live a happy life, consciously or unconsciously, is a human rights advocate. That’s the ideology I try to spread with the help of my work—whether it is an awareness raising campaign, human rights monitoring, human rights education, or legal research on local or international level.



Platon Shamaev

Algys-Blagosloveniye
(Algys-Blessing)

Republic of Sakha
(Yakutia),
Russian Federation

FACULTY MENTOR

Yasmine Ergas
Director, Gender and Public Policy Specialization
Lecturer in the Discipline of International and Public Affairs, School of International and Public Affairs

CLASSES

Gender, Globalization and Human Rights
International Perspective on Peace and Human Rights Education
Transitional Justice

NETWORKING

New York City
Amnesty International USA
Arcus Foundation
Center for Reproductive Rights
ESCR-Net
Fund for Global Human Rights
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Outright International
SAGE
Scholars at Risk
StoryCorps
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Population Fund
UN Women

Washington, D.C.
ABA Center for Human Rights
Civitas Public Affairs
Enough Project
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
U.S. Department of State
World Bank Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Columbia University
Human Rights on the Frontlines, ISHR
Stereotypes as Grounds for Discrimination: Women and the LGBT Community in Courts and Penitentiaries, Harriman Institute and ISHR

In order to tell you why I became a human rights advocate, I need to return to my childhood. My compassion for others has always stood out. When I was six years old, I started to help the elderly by volunteering to do small errands for them. Later at the age of nine years old, I started to read stories in magazines about the hard

My parents consistently showed me their intolerance for injustice. They have been fighting for the preservation of the Sakha language despite constant pressure for many years now. They have been teaching the language to children in the schools that they themselves organized. One of these two schools recruits

“My parents consistently showed me their intolerance for injustice. They have been fighting for the preservation of the Sakha language despite constant pressure for many years now.”

lives of people in Russia. I shared these stories with other people. Sometimes I even cried while retelling the stories.

In my teenage years, I discovered my strong resolve and great passion for justice. In the quarter where I lived, teenagers and children often turned to me with their complaints about the bullying they suffered at the hands of the older guys. I tried to help them deal with their offenders whenever I could.

children with an aptitude for the natural sciences. The school run by my mother is involved in preserving the Sakha language and culture.

I was inspired by the air of heroism and romance around the profession of the investigator which I chose for myself. My work as an investigator acquainted me with the real state of things. It was an eye-opening experience. I finally understood that I am more suited for the role of

defender, not that of investigator or prosecutor. While being a part of the prosecution system, I couldn't do much. I decided to leave the job of investigator to become a lawyer.

I rushed into my work as a lawyer with great energy and enthusiasm. Some cases were connected to the suppression of human rights, sometimes from the side of the authorities whose representatives would use their position to do harm rather than to help. Sometimes my clients were people intimidated by the thought of opposing the authorities or their representatives, even when it came to exercising their rights.

Meanwhile, I began travelling a lot and thinking a lot about how unfair it is that we live in the richest republic and yet have no access to these riches, making us relatively poor. There are many examples of countries poor in resources but still capable of providing a decent standard of living.

In New York City in 2014, I had a meeting with Mrs. Vera Solovjeva who was born in Yakutia. She now works in the USA as climate change researcher and indigenous rights defender. During that fateful meeting, we discussed the human rights situation of the Yakut people in detail. She invited me to participate in the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2015 to learn about the mechanisms available to help indigenous peoples. The experience gave new meaning to my life. I was overwhelmed by the understanding of how it is necessary to work on these issues. I continue to study the international mechanisms available to protect human rights and to participate in various awareness-raising events. I use any opportunity available to me to contribute to the protection of human rights.



Wisdom Kwame Bebli

Solace Initiative
Accra, Ghana

FACULTY MENTOR

Elsa Stamatopoulou
Director, Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program
Adjunct Professor, Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race & Department of Anthropology

CLASSES

Endangered Languages in the Global City
Human Rights and Development Policy

NETWORKING

New York City

Amnesty International USA
Arcus Foundation
Center for Economic and Social Rights
ESCR-Net
Fund for Global Human Rights
Guttmacher Institute
StoryCorps
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Population Fund
UN Women

Washington, D.C.

Indian Law Resource Center
National Congress of American Indians
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
U.S. Department of State
World Bank Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Human Rights on the Frontlines, ISHR
Origin of the People of the Sakha and their Native Language, Endangered Languages in the Global City class

My journey to becoming a human rights advocate often feels like a mystery to me whenever I reflect on its beginning, and how far I have come in terms of advocating for and defending the rights of the vulnerable, especially the LGBTQ+ community in my country. I have always been inspired by the great people who encouraged me and given me the opportunity to work in my field of social work.

Growing up in Ghana, a country with a history of hostility and hate speech toward the human rights of LGBTQ+ people, I had never imagined nor heard of a group or an organization championing the human rights of LGBTQ+ people in the country. In 2011, I was introduced to the Centre for Popular Education and Human Right (CEPEHRG) through a friend who asked me if I would volunteer to be a peer educator for

men who have sex with men (MSM). Since this was to take place in my community of Nima, a predominantly Muslim community, the work was to be conducted in the context of a health intervention program as part of a general strategy to reduce the prevalence of HIV&AIDS among MSM in Ghana.

When I started my work as a peer educator, a participant in one of my sessions confided in me that I had saved his life by encouraging him to get tested. He also told me that he had tested positive and was placing sole trust in me to support him. This was the first time someone had trusted me with their HIV test result. It was then that I realized the great responsibility I have for the lives of the many young people I was reaching out to in my line of work.

“This was the first time someone had trusted me with their HIV test result. It was then that I realized the great responsibility I have for the lives of the many young people I was reaching out to in my line of work.”

Given the hostility in Nima at that time, I was living in constant fear of the unknown and the possibility of violence every day of my life, because I worked and supported the MSM community.

I gained several years of experience understanding the needs and priority areas of work with the LGBTQ+ community in Ghana. This led me to a position at The Human Rights Advocacy Centre (HRAC) in 2014, a well-structured organization that advocates for the rights of the vulnerable in Ghana, including LGBTQ+ people. This is where I learned how to document cases of human rights abuses and to provide paralegal and other services related to the rights of marginalized groups. These included persons with disabilities, minorities, refugees, women, persons who were LGBTQ+, and people who might experience other forms of marginalization.

Five years later, I left my paid job to volunteer as the director of Solace Initiative where for the past two years my focus has been on implementing projects that build capacity, empower young LGBTQ+ people, educate people on their rights, and advocate for public policy changes. I have never regretted this shift because it has allowed me to add my voice to the voiceless. Everything I have experienced, the individuals I have worked with, and the challenges that exist in Ghana have shaped my life as a human rights advocate and defender.

I am happy today not because of what I have achieved so far in my life as a human rights advocate; I am happy to have the opportunity to serve a community of the voiceless. I believe that my sacrifices and the risks I have taken have a positive impact on the lives of the vulnerable in society, especially the LGBTQ+ community.



Ying Xin

Beijing LGBT Center
Beijing, China

As a woman and a queer person, my work deeply connects with my life experience and my goal to create a diverse, friendly and affirmative society to ensure that the LGBTIQ community in China can have equal rights.

is typical for a woman of her generation. They suffered domestic violence from their family or husbands—sometimes from both.

I want to write a different narrative for women in China. That's why I became an activist fighting

“I want to write a different narrative for women in China. That's why I became an activist fighting for gender equality and diversity.”

When I was eight years old, I found two diaries written by my mom. She revealed that she had been the victim of domestic violence at the hands of her father when she was a child. I remember that she complained how terrible it was to be born into such a cold family and how much worse it was to find a husband like my dad. After I read her diaries, I asked about her experience. I finally got the story about my mom's life which I never thought about when I was still too naïve to think about the unfair realities on this earth. We held each other and cried together. Eventually I understood why my mom was so emotional, even a little bit prissy, sometimes. Her story

for gender equality and diversity. My mom always hoped that I would find a good husband and become a government official so that I could earn a decent salary and have a stable life. I didn't fulfill the fantasy she had for me. I never felt that it's wrong to be me. I don't need to rely on a husband.

Most LGBTIQ people in China live a double life. They struggle with themselves, their families, and society. More than 80 percent of LGBTIQ people who are married have married heterosexual people. LGBTIQ people have three times the risk to get depression than heterosexual people have in China.

FACULTY MENTOR

Dr. Theodorus Sandfort
Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences (in Psychiatry), Division of Gender Health and Sexuality, Department of Psychiatry, Columbia University
Research Scientist, HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies, New York State Psychiatric Institute

CLASSES

NGOs and the Human Rights Movement: Strategies, Successes and Challenges
Queer Theory, Religion and Their Discontents
Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Human Rights

NETWORKING

New York City
Amnesty International USA
Arcus Foundation
Fund for Global Human Rights
Global Philanthropy Fund
Global Philanthropy Project
LGBT Funders
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Out in Tech
Outright International
SAGE
Scholars at Risk
StoryCorps
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Population Fund
UN Women

Washington, D.C.
Atlas Corps
D.C. Center
FHI 360
Freedom House
Heartland Alliance
Human Rights Campaign
National Democratic Institute
National Endowment for Democracy
Open Society Foundations
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
SAGE
World Bank Inspection Panel
UN Foundation
USAID
U.S. Department of State

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

A Discussion with the Columbia Human Rights Advocates, Mailman School of Public Health and ISHR
Fighting for Progress in Times of Backlash, 6th Annual OutSummit, OutRight Action International
Human Rights in Africa, Center for African Education, Teachers College
Human Rights on the Frontlines, ISHR
The State of Stigma and Discrimination, and Related Violence Against LGBTQ+ people in Ghana, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Human Rights class

Since 2009, I have been actively campaigning for LGBT rights and women's rights. I founded a LGBT organization in 2010 when I was a student in Wuhan along with some of my online LGBT friends. I joined a local Vagina Monologues to play a role of a lesbian. After I got my master's degree, I joined The Beijing LGBT Center as a full-time staff member; one year later I became the director of the center. From 2012 to 2015, I also worked as a co-curator for the China Women's Film Festival.

At The Beijing LGBT Center, I have led advocacy and awareness campaigns against conversion therapy for LGBT persons and for the removal of homosexuality from the CCMD-3 (Chinese Classification of Mental Disorder). I led the empowerment campaign for transgender leaders in China. What's more, I led our team to impact the psychology field to be LGBTIQ affirmative in China. I always believe that stories

can change people's hearts while data can change people's minds.

After 2013, I lead my team to conduct a national survey on LGBTIQ people in China, which included the largest LGBTIQ survey on discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in China. We conducted the survey in partnership with the United Nations Development Program and Peking University: the first national survey on living situation of transgender people in China.

Under my leadership, our center is playing a leading role in mental health work, transgender support, business diversity, and inclusion in China. I believe that it is important to cross borders to work together on human rights issue on this earth, that's the reason why I think HRAP is so important for all of us. If we want to go further, we need to go with others.

3 WORKSHOPS, CONVERSATIONS, AND LECTURES



Human Rights Watch offered the advocates a six-part workshop on Research, Writing and Documentation.

FACULTY MENTOR

Andrew J. Nathan,
Class of 1919 Professor of
Political Science, Department
of Political Science

CLASSES

Gender, Globalization and
Human Rights
NGOs and the Human Rights
Movement: Strategies,
Successes and Challenges
Sexual Orientation, Gender
Identity and Human Rights

NETWORKING

New York City

Amnesty International USA
Arcus Foundation
Fund for Global Human Rights
Global Philanthropy Fund
Global Philanthropy Project
Guttmacher Institute
LGBT Funders
Out in Tech
Restless Development
SAGE
StoryCorps
United Nations Development
Programme
United Nations Population
Fund
UN Women
Youth Equity Science, Global
Health Justice Partnership,
Yale University

Washington, D.C.

Atlas Corps
Civitas Public Affairs
Freedom House
Heartland Alliance
Human Rights Campaign
National Democratic Institute
National Endowment for
Democracy
Open Society Foundations
Robert F. Kennedy Human
Rights
SAGE
UN Foundation
U.S. Department of State
World Bank Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Human Rights on the
Frontlines, ISHR, Columbia
University
A Discussion with the
Columbia Human Rights
Advocates.

Research, Documentation, and Writing

Jane Buchanan

Deputy Director of the Disability Rights
Division, Human Rights Watch

Param-Preet Singh

Associate Director of the International Justice
Program, Human Rights Watch

Jane Buchanan and Param-Preet Singh led a six-part workshop that covered the conceptualization of a research project, interviewing victims and witnesses, interviewing perpetrators and accomplices, and writing.



Nico Cadena of StoryCorps introduced the advocates to oral history.

An Introduction to StoryCorps

Nicolas Cadena and Luigi Villanueva
National Facilitators, StoryCorps

Nicolas Cadena and Luigi Villanueva led a comprehensive workshop covering StoryCorps' mission, signature conversation style, operational procedures, tiers of service, style, community outreach efforts, and tool for communities while sharing some of the organization's work.

Fundraising

Erik Detiger
Founder and Managing Director, Philantropia, Inc.

With more than a decade of experience working in the field of international philanthropy and fundraising, Erik Detiger provided the advocates with an overview of concepts and strategies in international fundraising. The four-part workshop series focused on fundraising from institutional donors and individuals.

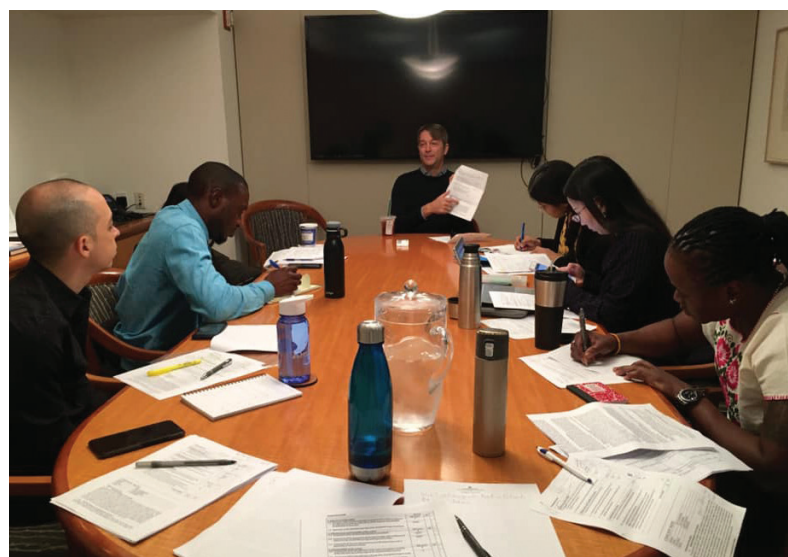


The advocates learned about the Theater of the Oppressed from Jeremiah Kyle Drake of The Riverside Church.

Theatre of the Oppressed

Jeremiah Kyle Drake
The Riverside Church in The City of New York

Jeremiah Kyle Drake of the Education Ministry of The Riverside Church in The City of New York introduced the Advocates to Theatre of the Oppressed, a forum of participatory theatre.



Erik Detiger led a multi-part workshop on fundraising.

Human Rights Documentation

Pamela Graham
Director, Humanities & Global Studies
and Director, Center for Human Rights
Documentation

Kaoukab Chebaro
Head, Global Studies, Columbia University
Libraries

The Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research at Columbia University holds an extensive collection of archives of human rights NGOs. Pamela and Kaoukab discussed the collecting program and the process of working with NGOs to preserve their records. They noted the value and importance of preserving the record of human rights advocacy. The CHRDR is also developing the Human Rights Web Archive, an online resource that captures and preserves the websites of human rights organizations and blogs. They demonstrated the HRWA and discussed the issues associated with preserving this information, and encouraged advocates to consider contributing their websites to this collecting effort.

Effective Presentations

Stephanie V. Grepo
Columbia University

The Advocates learned how to make concise and effective presentations on their work. Stephanie V. Grepo encouraged the Advocates to provide constructive feedback to one another as they learned to make powerful presentations.

Introduction to the Foundation Center

Tracy Kaufman
Community Outreach Manager,
Foundation Center

Tracy Kaufman offered the advocates a comprehensive look at the resources available through the Foundation Center's online resources and libraries in New York City and around the globe.

Video Advocacy

Isabel Pinheiro
Program Assistant, WITNESS

Isabel Pinheiro led a workshop on the effective use of video advocacy as a complement to traditional approaches to human rights advocacy. The Advocates learned the ways in which stories, visual evidence and personal testimony can be used as part of a human rights advocacy strategy to inform policy.

Beyond Data For Good

Jaclyn Sawyer
Lecturer in Social Work, Columbia University
Director of Data Services, Breaking Ground

This workshop was designed to build a critical foundation for doing human rights and social justice work in a datafied world. Participants in this workshop developed a basic "data literacy", by exploring building a dataset, working with data, and data storytelling. Throughout the workshop the advocates developed a basic framework for how to critique data-based projects and weigh the ethical considerations of using data about people and social welfare issues.



HRAP workshops are highly interactive.

Ethics and Compliance

Michael Silverman

Adjunct Associate Professor, SIPA, Columbia University

Michael Silverman, Adjunct Associate Professor at School of International and Public Affairs, led a workshop on the broader issues of managing organizations to meet their respective compliance and ethical challenges. He has held various offices specializing in strategic planning, program management, compliance and policy development in both the public and private sectors. He presented the Advocates with his book, *Compliance Management for Public, Private or Nonprofit Organizations* (2008), McGraw-Hill, New York, New York.

Surviving & Thriving in a Human Rights Context

Melba Nicholas Sullivan, PhD

This interactive workshop explored the impact of human rights work on staff well-being. Frameworks for understanding individual and collective survival strategies were introduced, as well as practices that promote individual, team, and organizational thriving. The workshop drew on psychology, mindfulness, and theater arts.

Maximizing Your Time in HRAP

Bakary Tandia

Case Manager and Policy Advocate, African Services Committee

Co-founder, The Abolition Institute

2010 Advocate Bakary Tandia helped the advocates to maximize their time in HRAP. He described the U.S. government system through the lens of advocacy and presented resources available to advocates in the USA. Tandia is a case worker and policy advocate at African Services Committee in New York City and a co-founder of The Abolition Institute which is working to end slavery in Mauritania.



The advocates learned about oral history at StoryCorps in Brooklyn.

4 SUPPORT

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights is grateful to the following for their financial support of the Advocates in the 2019 program.

Amnesty International USA

Anonymous

Arcus Foundation

Harriman Institute, Columbia University

International Indigenous Women's Forum (IIWF/FIMI)

The Sperry Fund

University of York Centre for Applied Human Rights



1. The first day of the 2019 HRAP took place in Upper Manhattan. **2.** The advocates travelled to Brooklyn for workshops with StoryCorps and WITNESS. **3.** Advocates consistently point to the peer-to-peer exchanges that take place throughout HRAP as one of the program's greatest benefits. **4.** Jessica Stern of OutRight Action International and Wisdom during the OutSummit.

5 TESTIMONIALS



The Advocates spoke to students on both the Morningside and medical campuses.

We at the Mailman School Department of Population and Family Health were honored to interact with the heroic advocates in the 2019 class. Their presentations of their work to our students were compelling. Their sharing of pertinent insights in our Health and Human Rights Advocacy class was a great contribution. In addition, we are delighted that their presence has led in a couple of cases to conversations about possible practicum experiences for our students in their respective organizations, on which we are following up. The inspiring examples of these advocates' work could not be more helpful as we try to underscore for our students the essential importance of rights-based approaches to public health problems.

JOANNE CSETE

Associate Professor, Population and Family Health, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health

It is truly inspiring working with human rights advocates from around the world, and the latest cohort of HRAPs was no exception. It gives me great satisfaction to share my lessons learned and expertise so they can go out there and build on their success. They have also enriched my life, sharing with me the serious challenges they face in the countries they work. I have been teaching HRAP participants about fundraising for over 10 years and keep in touch with many of them. It is wonderful to see the great impact these committed human rights advocates have after they leave New York enriched by the HRAP program and the connections they make.

ERIK DETIGER

Founder and Managing Director, Philanthropia, Inc.



Erik Detiger and the advocates at the conclusion of his workshop on fundraising.



If it's a boxed lunch, it must be HRAP!

Having the opportunity to speak to the advocates candidly around LGBTI rights in their countries was incredibly inspiring. The HRAP advocates' thoughtful questions helped me think through my organization's role and critically think of the next steps for the LGBTI movement. I hope they learned from me as much as I learned from them.

MARINA GONZALEZ FLORES

Program Associate, Global Philanthropy Project

It was an honor to spend time with the inspiring LGBTI activists in the 2019 HRAP cohort during their visit to Funders for LGBTI Issues in the fall of 2019. It is rare to have the opportunity to engage in candid such conversations about our research into the scale and scope of global philanthropic support for LGBTI issues with a group of leaders engaged in critical frontline work, representing organizations from around the world. The advocates were both eager to learn about our work and ask productive questions that I continue to reflect on to this day.

ANDREW WALLACE

Research and Communications Officer Funders for LGBTQ Issues

The HRAP Program has made contributions to Columbia's intellectual life for over three decades. Every year I look forward to the arrival of the new cohort of Human Rights Advocates. The fellows enrich our classrooms and campus life through an exchange of ideas and the development of skills of both the fellows and the students who benefit from having fresh insights about human rights challenges in the field. Local organizations and advocates in NYC also benefit. This year especially fruitful. I was fortunate to have two advocates, Mariano Ruiz (Argentina) and Charbonnel Nodjigoto (Chad) in my course Refugees, Forced Migration, and Displacement. It would be impossible to outline what a gift it is to have two practitioners in the classroom. Many of our students have extensive field experience themselves so our discussions were opportunities for the cross fertilization of ideas and exchange of best practices. Charbonnel shared how Chad differs from the countries of Europe and the United States, the primary focus of the course: its borders are open and the country manages the different populations that seek refuge there. Mariano presented on the challenges facing LGBTIQ refugees and how other states, including Canada, assist in the process. Mariano had extensive meetings with colleagues working with asylum seekers throughout the city and also volunteered to help process cases in the city, both to assist and to gain knowledge about how the process works in the United States. Both fellows also gave public presentations on their work for the Columbia community. I'm confident that their experience in the program will have a positive impact on their advocacy and I'm grateful for the opportunity to have worked with them. It goes without saying that I plan to keep in touch and follow their future endeavors.

LARA J. NETTELFIELD

Senior Lecturer in the Discipline of Human Rights, Department of Political Science and Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University

6 STAFF



2009 HRAP alumni Karyn Kaplan (left) and Florencia Ruiz Mendoza welcome the 2019 cohort to NYC.

- Irene Atamian**, *Business Manager*
- Elazar Barkan**, *Director, ISHR*
- Joanne Bauer**, *Senior Researcher, Business and Human Rights*
- Christine Caldera**, *Program Coordinator, Peace-building and Rights and Human Rights*
- Kristina Eberbach**, *Deputy Director, ISHR*
- Yasmine Ergas**, *Senior Advisor*
- Stephanie V. Grepo**, *Director, Capacity Building*
- Gergana Halpern**, *Assistant Director, Education*
- Purvaja S. Kavattur**, *Staff Associate*
- J. Paul Martin**, *Senior Scholar*
- Lara Nettlefield**, *Director of Graduate Studies*
- Sandra Paunksniene**, *Director, Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability*
- David L. Phillips**, *Director, Peace-building and Rights and Human Rights*
- Breandra Pichon**, *Finance Coordinator*
- Elsa Stamatopoulou**, *Director, Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program*
- Inga Winkler**, *Director of Undergraduate Studies*

7 HRAP ADMINISTRATION

STEPHANIE V. GREPO joined ISHR in 2008. During her tenure, she has increased the number of female participants in HRAP, secured funding to create openings in HRAP for LGBT and disability rights advocates, and encouraged HRAP alumni—who can be found in 90+ countries around the globe—to cooperate across class years and geographic boundaries. She has advised alumni on their work ranging from youth empowerment in South Sudan and Bosnia-Herzegovina to capacity building for Indigenous Peoples to advocacy around prisoners' rights in Nigeria and Zambia. In 2011, she created a summer program at ISHR through which Columbia University students have volunteered at organizations led by alumni of ISHR's fellowships programs around the globe. She has organized side events on advocacy tools and strategies at the Committee on the Status of Women and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Most recently, she designed and secured funds for ISHR's first MOOC.

With the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe from 2000 to 2007, Stephanie developed multi-ethnic experiential education programs in Kosovo; created and led a \$2 million euros grants program to support confidence-building projects at the grassroots level in Macedonia; worked on return and integration issues and led a field office of 10 staff in one of the most politically sensitive regions of Croatia; and served as the youth and education advisor to the OSCE Head of Mission in Serbia. She has observed elections

in Bosnia and Georgia. A lecturer at The New School since 2010, Stephanie has led graduate-level practicums with clients including the International Rescue Committee, Transparency International, and the Libertas Center for Human Rights. She earned a master's degree from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Her volunteer experience with resettling refugees through Catholic Charities led her to work in human rights.



NOURA BIRKL is an international student from France and a master's candidate for the degree in Human Rights Studies, offered at ISHR. Her thesis research has focused on attitudes

towards transit migration in Mexico. Prior to entering Columbia, Noura double-majored in Spanish and Psychology, and has had experience working as an intern with Amnesty International's Regional Office for the Americas in Mexico City and as an ESL primary school teacher in China. She also participated in the Student Volunteer Program over the summer, interning with the Aids Health Foundation in Mexico. Upon graduating from Columbia, Noura aspires to expand her work experience in the human rights field in New York City, acquired through her time spent as the HRAP assistant, before going back to her home in the suburbs of Paris. Noura scheduled the 2019 HRAP participants' networking opportunities in NYC and DC.



In July in Mexico City, 2003 Advocate **Lydia Alpizar** of IM Defensoras (left) and 2005 Advocate **Alejandra Ancheita** of ProDESC (right) presented a report on the situation facing women human rights defenders prepared for the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.

2005 Advocate **Alejandra Ancheita** has been awarded an honorary PhD from the University of Paris Nanterre. In her acceptance speech, she said, “In a context like Mexico where violence has become part of the landscape, sometimes the most difficult thing is to defend joy and protect hope. However, we cannot settle, now or never, with this imposition. Fear cannot become the basic premise of our lives.” Alejandra is the founder and Executive Director of the Mexico City-based ProDESC (The Project of Economic, Cultural, and Social Rights).



2008 advocate Dr. **Roger Luhiriri** of the DRC earned the Masters of Bioethics from UPenn in May 2019. Dr. Luhiriri is currently the ED of the Spine Africa Project. Previously, he was with Panzi Hospital in the DRC.



In April, 2016 HRAP alumni **Aehshatou Manu** of Cameroon and **Samuel Matsikure** of Zimbabwe ran into each other at the UN where Aehshatou was attending the PFII and Samuel was participating in a hearing as part of the preparatory process for the UN General Assembly high-level meeting on universal health coverage scheduled for September.

2010 Advocate **Agnes Apea Atim** was chosen by Vital Voices to join its inaugural VV Engage Cohort, which is made up of 22 women influencing and making policy from 17 different countries from around the world. Vital Voices launched the one-year fellowship to increase the capacity, decision-making power, and effectiveness of women leaders in public life.

HRAP alumni **Elina Horo** of India (2015 Advocate), **Marayah Fyneah** of Liberia (2012 Advocate), **Sandra Creamer** of Australia (2015 Advocate) and **Mary Akrami** of Afghanistan (2009 Advocate) participated in the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Akrami participated in a side event organized by the Irish Mission to the UN and Peace is Loud during which the film *Women, Peace and Power* was shown for the first time. It follows the stories of women activists, politicians, and citizens in Northern Ireland, Afghanistan and Liberia. Akrami is the ED of the Afghan Women Skills Development Center, which focuses on the needs of Afghan women and children. In 2003, the organization established the first known shelter for women at risk in Afghanistan.

During CSW63, HRAP, The Prospect Hill Foundation, and The Sperry Fund organized a capacity building workshop on *Empowering Women and Girls through Advocacy*. Speakers from WITNESS, StoryCorps, and Breaking Ground covered topics including data-based advocacy, video advocacy and storytelling. The 21 attendees came from countries including Burkina Faso, Indonesia, Nigeria, and South Korea.

9

HRAP 30TH ANNIVERSARY



ISHR marked the 30th anniversary of HRAP with a handbook on best practices in human rights advocacy, an alumni speaker series, and a photo exhibition. Columbia University highlighted HRAP on its university-wide social media channels including Twitter.

30 Years HRAP

Handbook on Best Practices in Human Rights Advocacy

As part of the anniversary celebration, 25 advocates contributed articles to a handbook on best practices from their advocacy work. The handbook is available on Academic Commons at

<https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/d8-a4es-0t12>





Alumni Speaker Series

1994 Advocate **Samuel Kofi Woods** (opposite page, bottom), 2009 Advocate **Karyn Kaplan**, 2012 Advocate **Kemal Pervanic**, 2015 Advocate **Sandra Creamer** (opposite page, top), 2017 Advocate **Carlos R. Asúnsolo Morales**, and 2018 Advocate **Marijana Savic** (below) spoke at Columbia as part of HRAP's 30th Anniversary (1989–2019) Alumni Speaker Series.



Anniversary Photo Exhibition

During the fall, a month-long photo exhibition was held on campus to highlight the contributions of 31 HRAP alumni to human rights around the globe. Following are photos from the exhibition.

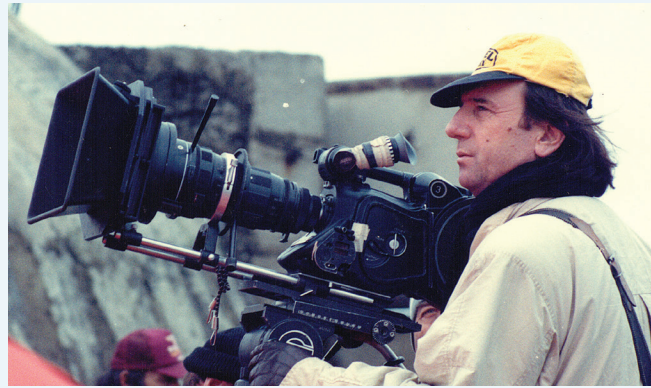


Photo credit: Afrim Spahiu

1993

1993 Advocate **Kujtim Çashku** is a film director, screenwriter, and producer dedicated to expanding human rights through film in his home country of Albania. Some of Çashku's most notable works include *Kolonel Bunker*, a story about the communist regime in Albania, and *Magic Eye*, a story about manipulation in today's media. Both of these works have been recognized at film festivals throughout Europe and won several international awards. Çashku has also directed several documentaries, such as *The Tears of Kosova* and *Equinox*. When not making films, Çashku serves as the head of the Academy of Film & Multimedia MARUBI, which he founded in 2004. The school is the first university for film and television education and training in Albania, and brings together students throughout the Balkans. Combining his passions for film, education, and human rights, Çashku founded the First Albanian Forum of Human Rights (Albanian Helsinki Committee). He also co-founded the International Human Rights Film Festival in Albania, which is now part of Human Rights Now.



Photo credit: Save the Children, Netherlands

1994

1994 Advocate **Samuel Kofi Woods II** is a Liberian journalist, academic, activist, and politician. In 1986, Woods began his activism as the student president of his university and a leader of the national student organization. After the outbreak of the civil war in 1989, Woods fled to Ghana. He returned to Liberia in 1991 to launch the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, which became the country's most prominent human rights organization. In the midst of the war, he wrote and distributed reports of human rights violations. He also established a radio program that focused on publicizing arrests and extrajudicial executions as well as educating citizens about their rights. In 1994, he founded the Forefront Organization to document the human rights abuses of the Second Liberian Civil War. In 1998, Woods was accused of sedition for exposing forced child labor in the country. Woods, his family, and his staff faced threats from government authorities, and many of his colleagues were murdered. Woods was forced into hiding and exile on multiple occasions. After the civil war ended, Woods served as the Liberian minister of labor and the minister of public works. Woods is pictured at the Stop the War on Children Global Symposium in 2019.



Photo credit: Amnesty International Philippines

1996

1996 Advocate **Aurora Corazon A. Parong's** dedicated fight against torture in her home country of the Philippines and internationally as well has been shaped by her own experiences in detention. Upon graduation from medical school, Dr. Parong sought community health work in the rural countryside, where health services were severely limited. She founded a health clinic in 1982, but was arrested three months later for allegedly treating a rebel. While the Philippines was ruled by a dictatorial government and under martial law, Dr. Parong was arbitrarily detained for one and a half years, and left to solitary confinement for some of that time. Upon her release, Dr. Parong joined the Medical Action Group, an organization of health professionals providing health services to victims of human rights violations. Initially, the organization focused on treating infections, but later developed bio-psychosocial services (a treatment approach that looks at health in the context of biological, psychological and social factors) for victims of torture and their families. She was the executive director of the Medical Action Group for six years, and then started working with Task Force Detainees, an organization that documents human rights violations. In 2007 she joined Amnesty International as the organization's Philippines

Director. Today Dr. Parong continues her advocacy work, pursuing justice for people who were tortured during President Ferdinand Marcos's authoritarian regime through the 1970s and 1980s.



Photo credit: Matt Stauble

1996

1996 Advocate **Twesigye Jackson Kaguri** was born and raised in Uganda in the village of Nyakagezi. Kaguri co-founded the human rights organization, Human Rights Concerns, to help victims of human rights violations in Uganda and to educate the public about their rights. In 2001, he founded the Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project in response to the devastating effects of AIDS in his hometown. The organization provides free education to children who have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS. In addition to two primary schools and a secondary a school, Nyaka also operates two libraries, a farm and nutrition program, a medical clinic, two clean water systems, and a support program for the grandmothers who care for as many as 14 children at a time. Since founding the project, Kaguri has also become an author. In *A School for My Village*, he shares how he came to build the first school and the struggles he faced during the first few years. In

2014, he published *Sitwe Joseph Goes to School*, a children's book about a young HIV/AIDS orphan who dreams of going to school. When not visiting the schools in Uganda or working at his office in Michigan (USA), Kaguri travels the country to speak with students and supporters about the organization.



Photo credit: NED

1999

1999 Advocate **Delphine Djiraibe** is internationally recognized for her work as a human rights lawyer and chief attorney at the Public Interest Law Center (PILC) in Chad, as well as co-founder of the Chadian Association for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights. She has been working on the Chad-Cameroon Oil and Pipeline Project since its inception as well as advocating social, economic, and environmental rights in Chad and for World Bank accountability and corporate responsibility in the disbursement of oil revenues. As a chief attorney at PILC and former president of the Chadian Association for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights, Delphine was part of the coalition that pursued the former dictator Hissène Habré and held him accountable for the atrocities.



Photo provided by Adrian Coman

2000

2000 Advocate **Adrian Coman** (sixth from the right) and his spouse, Claibourn Hamilton (fourth from the right), made history when their case for equal residency rights for same-sex couples was approved by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in 2018. Coman, a Romanian national, brought the case to the Romanian Constitutional Court in 2016 when the Romanian government denied EU residence rights to his American spouse. The Romanian court ruled against the request for a residency permit on the grounds that Romanian legislation prohibits marriages between same-sex couples. Coman and Hamilton appealed to the case on the grounds of sexual discrimination. The ECJ's landmark decision in favor of Coman and Hamilton's appeal established that the term 'spouse' is gender neutral, and thus requires all EU member states to recognize and grant residency rights for same-sex spouses on an equal basis. Since 2013, Coman has been coordinating the International Human Rights Program at the Arcus Foundation in New York.



Photo credit: UN Mission in South Sudan Public Information Section

2002

After HRAP, 2002 Advocate **Huma Khan** returned to her home country of India to work with and advocate on behalf of women survivors of sexual violence in Gujrat after the targeted attacks on Muslim women in 2002. Her work led to one of the rare sexual violence convictions in the riot cases of 2002. She has remained active and vocal on issues of sexual violence, arbitrary detention, and the targeting of minorities. In 2005, Khan was recruited to the UN Mission in Darfur to document and establish remedial measures for SGBV. In 2009, Khan started working in the autonomous Kurdish region of Iraq with the UN on post-conflict reconstruction, specifically supporting the development of legislative frameworks and the issue of conflict-related detainees. Between 2012 and 2017 she was the Women's Rights Team Leader for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. In 2016 she served as a Human Rights Officer in Sri Lanka, and later as an international consultant with UN Women in Ukraine. In the photo, Huma is training senior officials of the South Sudan People's Defense Force on the prohibition of sexual violence.



Photo provided by Patricia Guerrero

2003

2003 Advocate **Patricia Guerrero** is the founder and director of the Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas, a nonprofit organization that advocates for the rights of women displaced by Colombia's armed conflict. Patricia has represented the organization in front of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Colombian Government. She was also responsible for the construction of the City of Women (Ciudad de las Mujeres), which offers housing to displaced women and their families. Patricia serves on the ad hoc advisory committee of approximately 20 organizations and individuals as part of the International Campaign to Stop Rape and Gender Violence in Conflict with the Nobel Women's Initiative. In this photo, Patricia leads a workshop at the City of Women.



Photo provided by Alejandra Ancheita

2005

2005 Advocate **Alejandra Ancheita** is the founder and executive director of the Mexico City-based Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Project (ProDESC). Alejandra is a Mexican lawyer and internationally recognized activist for the rights of migrants, workers, and indigenous communities. ProDESC's work features an integrated approach, combining community education and organizing, corporate research, human rights litigation, and policy advocacy; thereby bringing about real structural change. Alejandra is one of the leading Latin American voices in the human rights movement. She has spoken in various international forums, such as the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights, the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society and the OECD Annual Meeting of National Contact Points, as well as arguing cases before the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights and the national courts. Alejandra is the 2014 Laureate of the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders.

Alejandra is accompanied by team members at the inauguration of the *Centro de Asistencia, Asesoría y Atención al Trabajador Migrante*, a project of ProDESC that provides free legal assistance and representation to both local and migrant workers.



Photo provided by John Caulker

2007

2007 Advocate **John Caulker** works on issues of natural resource policy, victims' rights, and community building in his home country of Sierra Leone. When John joined HRAP, he was the executive director of Forum of Conscience (FOC), an NGO dedicated to advocacy on the role of diamond mining in Sierra Leone's past war, along with the industry's negative impact on the environment. When he was the national chairperson of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Working Group, Caulker pushed the federal government to create a war victims fund based on a portion of the sale of the country's natural resources. John also mediated an agreement that allows members of the Amputees and War Wounded Association to participate in the TRC and Special Court processes.

During his time in HRAP, John met Libby Hoffmann, founder of the foundation Catalyst for Peace. Together, they established Fambul Tok (Krio for "family talk"), a face-to-face community-owned program that builds upon Sierra Leone's "family talk" tradition of discussing and resolving issues within the security of a family circle. The program works at the village level to help communities organize ceremonies that include truth-telling bonfires and traditional cleansing

ceremonies—practices that many communities hadn't employed since before the war.

John is pictured facilitating a dialogue between district stakeholders on peace and social cohesion in the diamond-rich Kono district of Sierra Leone, as part of a broader post-election peace-building initiative across the region.



Photo provided by Mary Akrami

2009

2009 Advocate **Mary Akrami** is the executive director of Afghan Women Network, an organization dedicated to the advancement of women's engagement in peacebuilding in Afghanistan. Mary initiated the use of community-based peace councils throughout Afghanistan to allow women to engage in conflict resolution at the local level. She is also the founder and former executive director of the Afghan Women Skills Development Center, an organization focused on the rights of women affected by violence. She established the first shelter for women at risk of violence in 2003. She also contributed to the establishment of Bost Family Restaurant, a restaurant in Afghanistan that provides jobs for female survivors of violence and contributes to their economic empowerment. Her activism contributed to the approval and implementation

of the Law on Elimination of Violence Against Women in Afghanistan in 2009. Mary is pictured participating in the conference "Ceasefire for Peace."



Photo provided by Evalyne Achan

2009

After HRAP, 2009 Advocate **Evalyne Achan** co-founded the Charity for Rural Development (CHAFORD), which facilitates various socio-economic interventions in communities impacted by the armed conflict, such as their village savings loans associations and land rights groups. Evalyne is also serving as the Community and Government Liaison Officer for Winrock International's Northern Uganda Development of Enhanced Local Governance, Infrastructures, and Livelihoods Program. Evalyne's work helps local communities and governments in northern Uganda to develop strong and transparent processes, build roads and schools, provide drinking water, and establish rural health and sanitation facilities. Evalyne leads a meeting between community members, other Winrock representatives, and U.S. Senator Christopher Andrew Coons and his team to discuss a USAID/NUDEIL program in Uganda.



Photo Credit: Alan Orling for HRAP

2010

2010 Advocate **Colette Lespinasse**'s work with Haiti's urban poor started in the 1980s, when she began meeting with civil society groups to talk about the country's conditions. She quickly found an opportunity at the Catholic radio station, Radio Soleil, which was broadcasting information and education awareness programs nationally. She later began to focus on migrant rights to address discrimination against Haitians in the Dominican Republic. Colette says, "When the Dominican Republic expelled over 80,000 Haitians during the Aristide administration, I created my organization GARR because I wanted to improve relations and offer humanitarian assistance." She has since opened up constructive dialogue between Haitians and Dominicans in the Dominican Republic.



Photo provided by Bakary Tandia

2010

2010 Advocate **Bakary Tandia** is a human rights activist in the movement against slavery and racial discrimination. Tandia works as both case manager and policy advocate at African Services Committee in NYC. As a case manager, he assists clients newly diagnosed with HIV in accessing health care, housing, and supportive services that enable them to regain their health and build productive lives. As policy advocate, Tandia works to raise awareness of public health and human rights issues in the African community and to empower newcomers to understand and protect their rights as immigrants. He has extensive experience in community organizing, coalition work, and building strategic partnerships across diverse communities. He is a co-founder of The Abolition Institute, which works to end slavery in Mauritania. In this photo, Bakary participates in a rally for comprehensive immigration reform in DC, standing alongside fellow African immigrants.



Photo provided by Elvis Mbembe Binda

2011

2011 Advocate **Elvis Mbembe Binda** is the president and a founding member of Initiatives for Peace and Human Rights, which helps communities and individuals in Africa's Great Lakes Region live in peaceful coexistence. Through Avocats Sans Frontieres-Belgium, Elvis has assisted many minors and vulnerable persons before the courts in Rwanda. He has also worked as deputy coordinator at Forum d'Echanges pour la Cohesion Sociale and as a human rights officer with Central Africa Youth Network, where he taught the youth of Rwanda, Burundi, and eastern DRC about human rights. Elvis has been a lecturer at the School of Law at the University of Rwanda since 2007. Elvis and his team are pictured providing free legal aid to Burundian refugees at the Mahama refugee camp in Rwanda.



Photo provided by Salima Namusobya

2011

2011 Advocate **Salima Namusobya** is the executive director of the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights and an expert member of the Working Group on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. She is a lawyer and human rights advocate who has specialized in international human rights law and forced migration. Previously, she worked in various capacities with the Refugee Law Project, School of Law, Makerere University, and also served as the Eastern Africa Coordinator for international law in domestic courts. She co-wrote the textbook *Civil Procedure and Practice in Uganda* and contributed a chapter to the book *Litigating Health Rights in Africa*. She also serves on the boards of several local and international NGOs and is a member of the Steering Committee of the Strategic Litigation Working Group of the Global Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Network. Salima is a laureate of the Vera Chirwa Human Rights Award. Salima is pictured with the justices of the High Court of Malawi in the launch of ISER's Report on Meaningful Access to Justice for Social and Economic Rights during the Sixth Annual National Conference on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.



Photo provided by Kemal Pervanic

2012

2012 Advocate **Kemal Pervanic** is a filmmaker, author, and founder of Most Mira (Bridge of Peace), an NGO dedicated to peacebuilding in northwestern Bosnia-Herzegovina. A survivor of the notoriously brutal Omarska concentration camp during the Bosnian War, Kemal witnessed horrific acts of genocide, some of which were perpetrated by individuals whom he knew personally—including one of his secondary school teachers. When the war ended, he was relocated to London, where he pursued studies in management and conflict resolution. Ten years later, Kemal returned to Bosnia-Herzegovina where he was alarmed to find misrepresentations of what had transpired in the former Yugoslavia. Determined to steer the youth away from a future of division and hate, Kemal founded Most Mira to bring children of different ethnic backgrounds together through the arts. He is currently working on his second documentary film. His first, *Pretty Village*, examines the effect of the Bosnian War on the residents of his village in northwestern Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kevljani. Kemal also chronicled his wartime experience in his book *The Killing Days: My Journey Through the Bosnian War*, published in 1999. Kemal is pictured leading a workshop for students in Kevljani, Bosnia-Herzegovina.



Photo provided by Geoffrey Mayamba

2013

2013 Advocate **Geoffrey Mayamba** is in a unique position to know the challenges faced by those who are or have been incarcerated in Zambia. At the age of 17, Geoffrey was arrested for his role as a lookout during a robbery. He served 10 years in prison. While serving his sentence, Geoffrey studied project planning and monitoring & evaluation. After an early release for good behavior, Geoffrey secured a position with a PEPFAR-funded project on HIV/AIDS. The project included research visits to prisons in Zambia—including the one where Geoffrey had served his sentence. In 2007, Geoffrey started the Prisoners Future Foundation, which provides legal aid services, human rights education, reintegration support, economic empowerment, and skill-development workshops to those who are or have been incarcerated in Zambia. Geoffrey says, "Prisoners are human beings and they need a true second chance. They need hope and they need to be encouraged. The fact that I had been down this path made me realize I needed to work for my colleagues so that they could enjoy their human rights."



Photo provided by María Eugenia Carrera Chavez

2013

2013 Advocate **María Eugenia Carrera Chavez** is currently a project officer in the Guatemalan office of the Justice Education Society (Canada). In her previous position as the coordinator of the Forensic Area Division at the Center for Forensic Analysis and Applied Sciences (CAFCA), she worked with Mayan indigenous communities in Guatemala to locate and identify the remains of those massacred during the 36-year-long civil war. María is pictured placing the remains of people massacred in Guatemala in 1982 into coffins.



Photo provided by Musola Cathrine Kaseketi

2013

2013 Advocate **Musola Cathrine Kaseketi** is Zambia's first professional film director. Her first film, *Suwi* ("Faith"), which she wrote, directed, and produced, was released in 2009 and screened all over Africa, as well as in several European countries. Shortly after the release of *Suwi*, Kaseketi set up Women and Girls with Disability Rights of Zambia, a project to empower and improve the lives of women and girls with disabilities. Many of her films and documentaries address social issues affecting women and girls with disabilities. She founded Vilole ("View") Images Productions, a nonprofit foundation that educates young Zambian filmmakers; started Zambia's first international film festival, *Shungu Namutitima* ("Smoke That Thunders"); and is an advisor to the Zambia National Association for Disabled Women. The cause is personal for Musola—when she was 18 months old, a medical mistake damaged her left leg, leaving her unable to walk without difficulty for the rest of her life. Enduring mistreatment by her stepmother in her early life and by her community overall, Musola developed an incredible determination to succeed in spite of hardship. Musola is pictured in this photo working on a documentary called *Long Wait for Justice*, a short film focused on gender-based violence and disability.



Photo credit: Silvano Ateka

2013

2013 Advocate **Absolom Shalakha's** peacebuilding work began in 2007 during Kenya's national elections. While conducting interviews throughout the country for a research position he held at the time, Absolom witnessed young people's overt discrimination against one of his coworkers due to her ethnicity. After the election, such discrimination became increasingly violent, and he decided to contribute to building a more peaceful society in his country. Absolom began traveling out of Nairobi to speak with youth groups around the country. This led him to volunteer with PeaceNet Kenya, which later hired him to work on HIV/AIDS awareness and outreach in remote communities. His next assignment with PeaceNet Kenya involved collaborating with other organizations on the Uwiano Platform for Peace, a UN-funded monitoring and response system that brought together peace actors to respond to reports of violence and hate speech during the 2013 elections. Absolom is currently the Early Response Coordinator at the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, a position through which he engages with inter-communal mediation processes throughout Nigeria. Absolom is pictured at an event organized by PeaceNet Kenya at a camp for IDPs.



Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik for American Jewish World Service

2014

2014 Advocate **Esther Adhiambo** has been active in the LBQ movement for nearly a decade. She previously worked at Persons Marginalized and Aggrieved Kenya. After attending HRAP, she founded the Initiative for Equality and Non-Discrimination where she serves as executive director. Esther is photographed speaking with the leaders of motorcycle operators in Mombasa on the importance of respecting human rights. Motorcycle operators are known perpetrators of violence toward the LGBT in Mombasa.



Photo provided by Carol Dyantyi

2014

2014 Advocate **Carol Dyantyi** is the Founder and Director of Ikageng Itireleng AIDS Ministry, a South African community-based organization

dedicated to children whose parents have been diagnosed with or died from AIDS. Known as Mum Carol, she has dedicated her life to advocating for the rights of all children in South Africa and providing them with the resources needed to live a fulfilling, healthy life. Carol is pictured opening Choma Dreams Café, an internet café that offers HIV-prevention and social asset building programs to girls and young women. Ikageng was one of 40 organizations in South Africa chosen for this initiative, which was funded by PEPFAR and the Charlize Theron Africa Outreach Project.



Photo provided by Samuel Matsikure

2016

2016 Advocate **Samuel Matsikure** is the program manager at Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ), an LGBTI organization. His current efforts focus on advocating for the decriminalization of homosexuality in Zimbabwe and educating parliamentarians, journalists, and communities on LGBTI rights and the importance of social inclusion. Samuel is a past chairman of African Men for Sexual Health and Rights, a regional coalition of 19 organizations working on health and HIV for men who have sex with men. He also served on the Global Forum

on MSM and HIV now called M-PACT Global Action for Gay Men's Health and Rights. The photo was taken at the National Peer Educators Training Program under the Global Fund HIV and AIDS Project for Men who have Sex with Men in May 2019.



Photo provided by Stephanie Kim

2016

2016 Advocate **Chhing Lamu Sherpa** works at the intersection of environmental conservation, gender, and indigenous rights. She is a founding member of the Just Nepal Foundation, an organization that promotes social justice among the Yolmo, Sherpa, and Tamang indigenous communities. She is also involved with Mountain Spirit, an NGO dedicated to improving livelihoods, protecting the environment, and conserving mountain culture through capacity building and education. Chhing was recently elected the chairperson of Tewa, the country's first and only women's fund, supporting and raising the visibility of grassroots women's groups across the country. In 2015, she served as advisor on the National Human Rights Council. Chhing is pictured with a Columbia University student from ISHR's Student Volunteer Program, an initiative that

has allowed students to volunteer with alumni of ISHR's fellowship programs. This volunteer spent the summer assisting Chhing and the Mountain Spirit team with advancing indigenous rights and opportunities in Nepal.



Photo credit: Inter Press Service

2016

2016 Advocate **Carlos Santos** is the founder and president of the Salvadorian Association of Survivors of Torture, which provides psychological care to survivors of torture and their families and investigates human rights abuses. When Carlos was 16 years old, he and four friends performed their political plays in public. One night, they were arrested by policemen who identified themselves as members of the death squad. They accused the teenagers of being rebels. Carlos and his friends were sent to an underground cell, where they were tortured for a month before being sent to a prison for political prisoners. When Carlos left prison, he sought exile in Mexico due to the threat of the death squads, who were known to murder political prisoners released from jail. Carlos returned to El Salvador in 2007, and began to work as a journalist. Realizing that his experience with torture was not unique, Carlos collaborated with other artists who had

suffered similar experiences and founded the Salvadorian Association of Survivors of Torture. The organization uses art as a means to educate the public about what had happened in the country, and helps survivors of torture and their families heal. Carlos is also the creator of the *Yellow Book*, which documents the names of victims of injustice and abuse perpetrated by the state. Carlos and a colleague are pictured with a paper mache, which they use in performances to help families understand what happened to their loved ones during their detention by the death squads.



Photo provided by Raoul Kitungano

2016

2016 Advocate **Raoul Kitungano** is Coordinator of Justice Pour Tous (Justice For All), a non-profit organization that advocates for the political, economic, cultural, and environmental rights of local communities impacted by mining corporations and other extractive enterprises in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Raoul has published several research papers on the relationship between mining, armed conflict, and human rights abuses in the DRC, as well as on electoral monitoring, mining code reform, and community land protection. He is dedicated to continuing to monitor the impact of rural

development and poverty reduction projects in the DRC, as well as advocating for the social, cultural, and economic rights of local communities.



Photo credit: Centro de Estudios sobre la Enseñanza y el Aprendizaje del Derecho, A.C.

2017

2017 Advocate **Carlos R. Asúnsolo Morales** most recently worked at the Research Center for the Teaching and Learning of the Law (CEEAD). The center's mission is to transform legal education in Mexico to train lawyers to be committed to the rule of law and human rights in Mexico. Carlos and his team created a working group whose members come from civil society organizations and public institutions like the Supreme Court, the National Commission on Human Rights, and universities to develop a human rights educational model for law schools. Inspired by his HRAP experience, Carlos organized trips for Mexican law school deans to visit NYU and Columbia law schools, creating new conversations around the rule of law and human rights protection in and beyond the Mexican context. For many years, Carlos has volunteered at a migrant shelter where he informs residents of their rights.



Photo credit: Disability Rights Fund

2017

2017 Advocate **Michael Miuro** is the technical advisor on HIV/AIDS, disability, and sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV) for the Masaka Association of Persons with Disabilities Living with HIV & AIDS (MADIPHA). He has trained village health teams, health workers, and police in sign language, and held workshops about persons with disabilities (PWDs) who are living with HIV & AIDS as well as SGBV against PWDs. He has worked with the local government on anti-poverty initiatives such as obtaining a grant for PWDs to start village and loan revolving groups, and giving PWDs goats, chickens, vegetables and coffee seedlings to generate income. At the regional level, he worked with other stakeholders to lobby for changing policies that maintain exclusion and segregation of PWDs from society. Michael (far left) sharing HRAP training materials with MADIPHA board members upon his return to Uganda.



Photo provided by Mambu Feika

2018

2018 Advocate **Mambu Feika** is the director of Prison Watch Sierra Leone (PWSL), which monitors prisons throughout the country and advocates for the humane treatment of detainees. Along with monitoring prison conditions, PWSL also provides human rights training for detention officers and civil society members. PWSL works to open up conversations on the rights of detainees, and advocates that all individuals must have their fundamental human rights respected, including the right to safe detainment conditions. Feika represents PWSL on the Sierra Leone Correctional Service Council, which advises the president of Sierra Leone on policy matters pertaining to correctional services and centers. Feika is pictured with children from northern Sierra Leone who lost their parents to Ebola. These children were quarantined for 21 days as a preventive measure to ensure that they weren't infected. PWSL worked with their organization's donors to provide the children with food during the quarantine.



Photo provided by Marijana Savic

2018

2018 Advocate **Marijana Savic** is the founder and executive director of the Citizens Association for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and All Forms of Gender-Based Violence (ATINA), an NGO in Serbia. ATINA promotes women's and children's rights throughout Serbia, specifically advocating for victims of trafficking, sexual abuse, labor exploitation, discrimination, and violence. With Marijana's leadership and creativity, ATINA founded The Bagel Bejgl, a social enterprise leveraging the market-based economy to create a safe space where women trafficking survivors can learn new skills and find employment opportunities alongside other survivors and at-risk women. Bagel Bejgl also generates funds for reintegration programs for victims of trafficking and other forms of exploitation. The organization pledges their profits to services for survivors and those at risk of trafficking with the overall goal of ending human trafficking in the community. In addition to her work with ATINA, Marijana also serves as an advisor to international NGOs and state governments advocating for the inclusion of marginalized trafficking victims in human rights policy. Marijana is photographed talking about key steps towards gender equality during a session sponsored by UN Women and ATINA.

