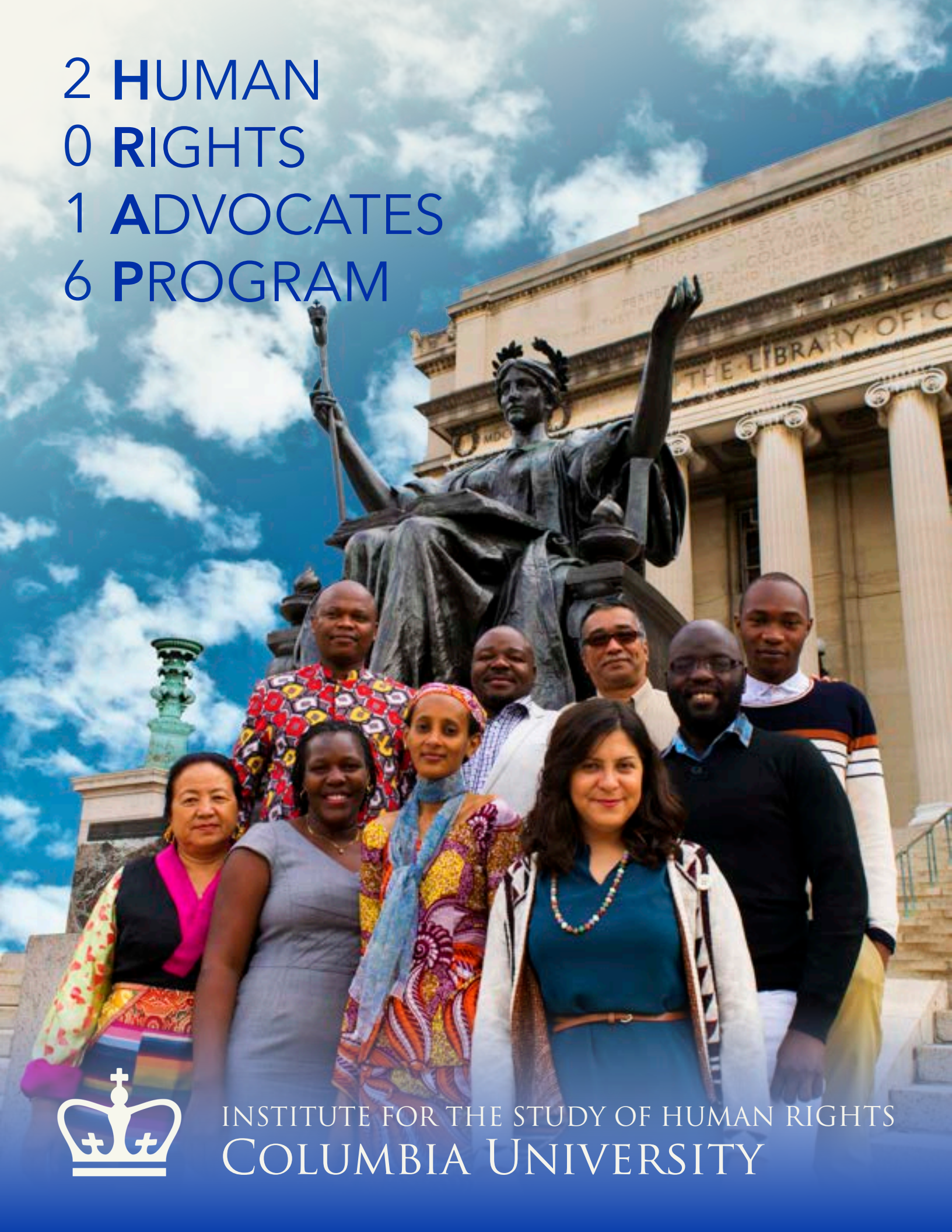


2 HUMAN
0 RIGHTS
1 ADVOCATES
6 PROGRAM



INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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Cover and profile photography by Andrew Rizzardi
Content by Stephanie Grepo and Elyse Greenblatt
Design by Jack Darcey
January 2017



Visit the HRAP channel on YouTube at:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/humanrightsadvocates>

1 INTRODUCTION

I often struggle with the questions, "Who am I to represent survivors of torture? Am I the right person? Am I doing everything I can? Then I think of all those who were tortured and didn't make it or are still missing. Even though working on their behalf causes me pain sometimes, I know I must do this work."

2016 Advocate Carlos Santos

The 28th Human Rights Advocates Program (HRAP) at Columbia University continued the Institute for the Study of Human Rights' commitment to strengthening the skills, knowledge and networks of grassroots human rights leaders like Carlos Santos of El Salvador.

The HRAP curriculum comprises academic coursework, skills-building workshops, mentoring and networking with the human rights, academic and donor communities, primarily in New York City and Washington, D.C. The 2016 Advocates came from Armenia, Cameroon, the

The 2016 HRAP at Human Rights Watch.



Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Nepal, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Due to safety concerns, one advocate asked to remain anonymous. Together the 2016 HRAP cohort of nine advocates shared and deepened their expertise on a number of issues including gender, LGBT rights, transitional justice, torture, corporate accountability, and Indigenous rights. They are now members of the HRAP alumni body, which has 308 advocates in 88 countries.

This year at Columbia, HRAP partnered with the Institute of African Studies, the Center for Gender and Sexuality/Columbia Law, the Human Rights Institute/Columbia Law, the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, the Mailman School of Public Health, Teachers College and the Harriman Institute to organize a number of speaking engagements by the 2016 Advocates and HRAP alumni. 1990 Advocate Felipe Michellini of Uruguay spoke about the International Criminal Court's Trust Fund for Victims. 1996 Advocate Twesigye Jackson Kaguri of Uganda talked about his trajectory from attending HRAP to founding the NYAKA AIDS Orphans Project.

HRAP is grateful to Dr. Rafael E. Perez-Figueroa, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Population and Family Health at Columbia University Medical Center and Assistant Director of the IFAP Global Health Program, and Prof.

Bruce Cronin. They joined the long list of Columbia faculty including Pratima Kale, Elsa Stamatopoulou, Kristy Kelly, Dr. Sayantani DasGupta and Graeme Simpson who welcome Advocates in their classes. Many of these faculty members also mentor the Advocates outside of class time. Many thanks to Dr. Theodorus Sandfort of the Mailman School of Public Health and Pratima Kale of the School of International and Public Affairs for mentoring several Advocates each this year.

HRAP continued its outreach in 2016. Through a Skype session organized at Columbia University, Brian Phillips, the Reviews Editor and a co-founder of the Journal of Human Rights Practice (Oxford University), spoke with HRAP alumni around the globe about publishing opportunities. In an effort to contribute to the expansion of the network of LGBT advocates in Africa, three of the LGBT Advocates in the 2016 HRAP engaged in a discussion about LGBT rights in Africa with advocates on the continent who had been shortlisted for the 2016 program. Through the Graduate Student Volunteer Program (GSVP), four Columbia University students volunteered at HRAP alumni-led organizations in Kenya, Mexico and Liberia. Since GSVP was founded in 2011, a total of 17 Columbia University students have volunteered with HRAP alumni around the globe.

Prof. Katherine Franke facilitated a conversation with the Advocates at Columbia Law School.



2 THE ADVOCATES: In Their Own Words

NVARD MARGARYAN

Chairperson
PINK Armenia
ARMENIA

For the first time in my life, I went out to the streets to protest in February 2008. Thousands of people took to the streets of Yerevan and other cities and towns in Armenia to protest the falsification of the presidential elections' outcome. On March 1, police clashed with protesters in downtown Yerevan. In several episodes throughout the city, police violently assaulted peaceful protesters without warning or provocation. As a result, at least 10 people were killed – eight protesters and two police officers – and scores were injured.

While the Armenian authorities have investigated, prosecuted, and convicted dozens of opposition members, sometimes in flawed and politically motivated trials for their alleged involvement in these events, they have not prosecuted a single member of law enforcement agencies for their excessive use of force.

Faced with this intolerable injustice, I felt compelled to work for human rights in Armenia, a country where many young, enthusiastic people are struggling to bring about positive change.



Homophobic rhetoric and policy serve not only to undermine the rights of the LGBT community, but also to turn public opinion away from concerns about economic inequality, electoral fraud and judicial misconduct.

While studying at Yerevan State University's Faculty of Social Work, I decided to get involved in different social movements and civil society initiatives working to challenge a corrupt political system, patriarchal domination and socio-economic inequality.

As a human rights activist, I worked as a practical social worker with different vulnerable groups, such as children in special institutions and juvenile prisons, national minorities, refugee women and people with disabilities. Starting in 2008, I got involved with PINK Armenia, one of the more prominent LGBT rights groups in Armenia. After two years of volunteering at PINK, I was hired as the editor of the organization's electronic magazine "As You," and later became Projects Coordinator. In February 2015, I was elected chairperson of PINK.

As the LGBT community is one of the most vulnerable in present day Armenia, often the State

deflects political pressure against its corrupt conduct by inciting violence against our community members. At times, state officials even condoned crimes committed against us as legitimate from the standpoint of Armenian "national morals." Homophobic rhetoric and policy serve not only to undermine the rights of the LGBT community, but also to turn public opinion away from concerns about economic inequality, electoral fraud and judicial misconduct. In this way, the repression of sexual minorities, nationalist chauvinism and antidemocratic attitudes and practices are tightly bound together.

At HRAP I learned about similar struggles around the world from my peers, explored different ways to better advocate for our communities, and enhanced my capacity as an engaged activist in order to shed light on human rights abuses in Armenia and to foster alternatives to patriarchy, corruption and state violence.

The Harriman Institute at Columbia invited Nvard to speak about the challenges facing the LGBT community in Armenia.



FACULTY MENTOR

ALEX COOLEY
 Director, Harriman Institute
 Claire Tow Professor of Political Science
 Barnard College
 Columbia University

NETWORKING MEETINGS

NEW YORK CITY

Arcus
 Ford Foundation
 Global Justice Center
 International Center for Transitional Justice
 OutRight International
 SAGE (Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders)
 UN Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner
 UN Women

CLASSES

Current Issues in Sexual Health
 Human Rights and Development Policy
 Narrative, Health, and Social Justice

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Advocates for Youth
 Amnesty International USA
 Catholic Charities of Washington
 Center for American Progress
 Civitas Public Affairs Group
 DC Center Global Volunteer
 Freedom House
 Human Rights Campaign
 Human Rights First
 Human Rights Watch
 International Center for Research on Women
 National Endowment for Democracy
 National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
 Randall Mason Consulting
 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
 World Bank Inspection Panel

PRESENTATIONS

Global LGBT Rights Advocacy
 sponsored by Columbia Law School
 with Samuel Matsikure, Mulshid Muwonge, and
 Anonymous Advocate

HRAP Panel Presentation
 in the course Introduction to Human Rights
 Prof. Andrew Nathan, ISHR
 Columbia University with Betty Odur Lee,
 Aehshatou Manu, Samuel Matsikure, and
 Chhing Lamu Sherpa

*Human Rights Situation of LGBT People
 in Armenia*
 sponsored by Armenian General Benevolent
 Union General Assembly

LGBT Rights in Armenia
 sponsored by The Harriman Institute
 Columbia University

LGBT Rights in Armenia
 sponsored by Human Rights Education
 Teachers College
 Columbia University

AEHSHATOU MANU

Advocacy Officer, Lelewal Foundation
Women's Coordinator & Women's Wing President, MBOSCUDA
CAMEROON



At MBOSCUDA (Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association), I serve as the women's-wing president.

My own experience of the systematic discrimination against and marginalization of Indigenous groups in Cameroon led me to human rights work, in order to defend and promote the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Far from being a mere ethnographic or cultural category, the term Indigenous Peoples refers to more than 370 million people living in some 90 countries around the world. They are entitled to individual as well as collective rights according to international law and conventions. Rights such as the right to land, the right to linguistic autonomy and the right to self-government on matters of concern to them are enshrined in the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was adopted in 2007.

Although there is a growing recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights as an integral part of human rights and as a crucial component in promoting democracy, good governance, sustainable development and environmental protection, many great challenges and obstacles still face our communities.

Although there is a growing recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights as an integral part of human rights and as a crucial component in promoting democracy, good governance, sustainable development and environmental protection, many great challenges and obstacles still face our communities.

The Mbororo are a community of pastoralist Indigenous Peoples in West Africa. Being cattle herders, we traditionally call home wherever our cattle were located. As colonial and post-colonial states devolved and demarcated their geographical boundaries, the Mbororo increasingly found themselves deemed as unwanted aliens in the lands they freely roamed but never settled in.

Growing up, I observed how my community suffered numerous injustices. Often, members of dominant communities would refer to us in derogatory terms. From land grabs, lack of access to justice, inequality in the provisioning of resources, soaring unemployment and poverty rates, to forced marriages of young girls and high rates of illiteracy among women, our people face political oppression, economic discrimination and social marginalization.

Enraged by this reality, I decided to study law so as to fight for the rights of my People, and especially for the rights of women and girls, who are at a double disadvantage. Since becoming a

human rights activist in 2010, I have been working to raise awareness of our plight as well as our rights to build our people's organizational capacities and leadership skills, in order to promote sustainable development in our communities, and to fight for legal, political, social and economic equality.

At MBOSCUDA, we provide vocational training for women and youth, facilitate forums for alternative communal dispute resolution, work collaboratively with the government to provide youth with employment opportunities (as these unemployed youth often are involved in border-area conflict and instability), and support the efforts of communal farming projects.

At HRAP, I connected with other advocates working on similar issues, enhanced my knowledge of relevant academic fields and topics, became better familiarized with the international and U.S. discourses on human rights and specifically Indigenous Peoples' rights, and learned from my peers and professors how to become a better advocate.

Several advocates attended Kristy Kelly's class on Mainstreaming Gender in Global Affairs.



FACULTY MENTOR

ELSA STAMATOPOULOU

Director, Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program
Institute for the Study of Human Rights,
Adjunct Professor, Center for the Study of
Ethnicity and Race
Department of Anthropology
Columbia University

NETWORKING MEETINGS

NEW YORK CITY

Ford Foundation
Global Justice Center
Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
MADRE
The Milano School at The New School
Tribal Link
UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
UN Women

PRESENTATIONS

*From the Frontlines of Human Rights Advocacy
in Africa*
sponsored by Teachers College
Columbia University
with Raoul Kitungano, Betty Odur Lee, Samuel
Matsikure, Mulshid Muwonge,
and Anonymous Advocate

*Gender and the Environment:
African Perspectives*
sponsored by Institute of African Studies
Columbia University
with Raoul Kitungano

CLASSES

Cultural Rights as Human Rights
Issues in Rural Development
Mainstreaming Gender in Global Affairs

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Amnesty International USA
Indian Law Resource Center
International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
World Bank Inspection Panel

HRAP Panel Presentation
in the course Introduction to Human Rights
Prof. Andrew Nathan, ISHR
Columbia University
with Betty Odur Lee, Nvard Margaryan, Samuel
Matsikure, and Chhing Lamu Sherpa

Indigenous Rights in Cameroon and Nepal
sponsored by Center for the Study
of Ethnicity and Race
Columbia University
with Chhing Lamu Sherpa.

RAOUL KITUNGANO

Coordinator
Justice Pour Tous
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC of the CONGO

The extractive industry in the DRC delivers tremendous profits to foreign investors at the expense of local communities who suffer from land expropriation, population relocation, pollution and environmental degradation. At Justice Pour Tous (Justice for All), a civil society organization based in Bukavu, our mission is to protect and promote the rights of communities that are negatively affected by activities of mining companies and other corporations.

I grew up in Kalima, a mining town in Maniema Province. For 25 years, my father worked with the mining company SOMINKI. He was laid off in 1996 along with thousands of other employees without any compensation.

This dramatic event left me with a profound sense of injustice. SOMINKI was acquired by an international consortium of investors, who refused to address the fate of former employees.

I began my human rights advocacy work in 2007. I am interested in the socio-economic impact of mining companies on the rights of local communities. I work for the restoration of the rights of employees who lost their jobs when SOMINKI went bankrupt without paying the severance



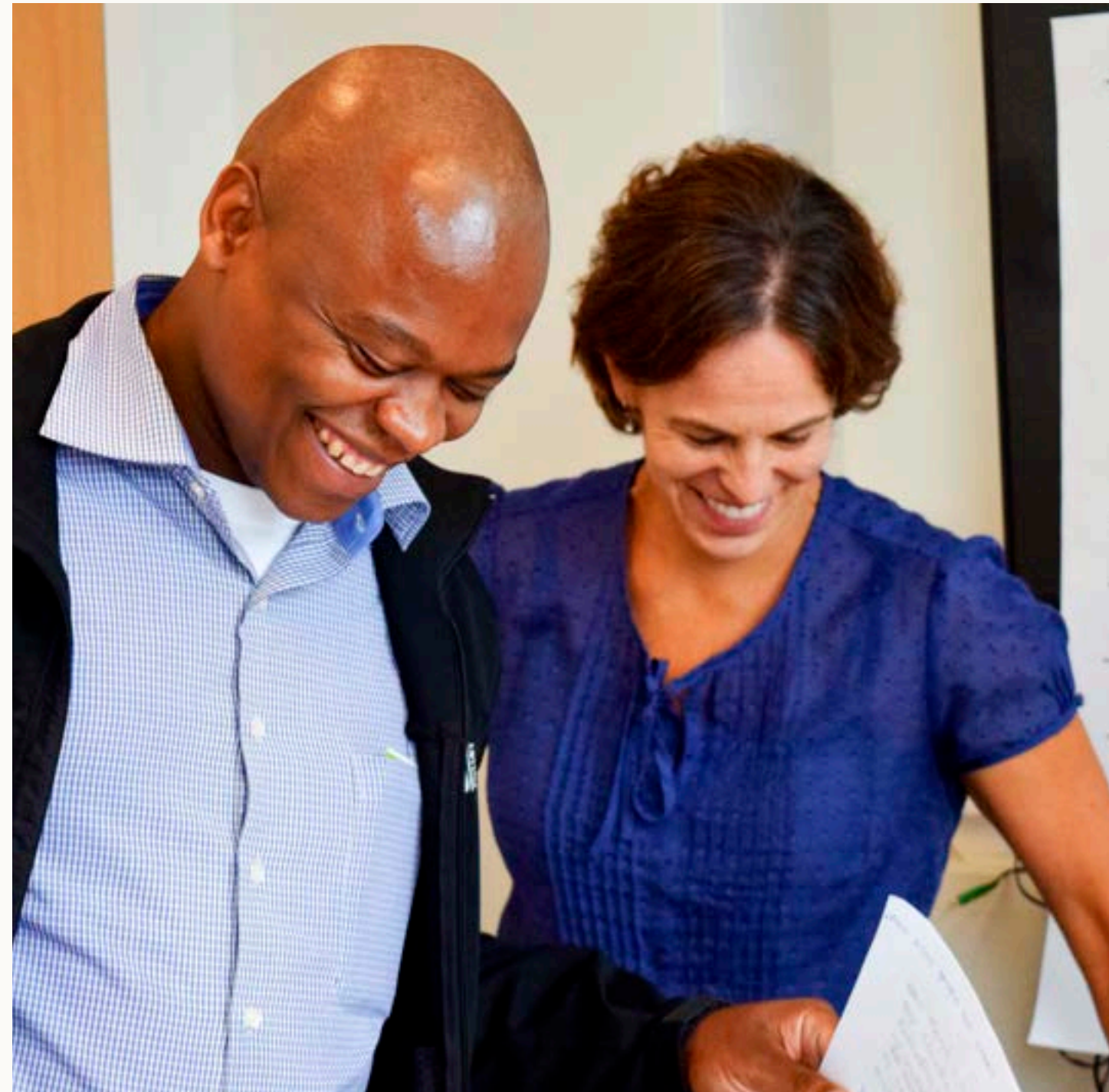
The extractive industry in the DRC delivers tremendous profits to foreign investors at the expense of local communities who suffer from land expropriation, population relocation, pollution and environmental degradation.

pay that they were owed.

At Justice Pour Tous, we work with local groups and legal observers to document abuses committed by extractive corporations, raise awareness in local communities and fight for their rights.

The skills and knowledge I gained here at the

The Advocates participated in a workshop series co-led by Jane Buchanan of Human Rights Watch.



Human Rights Advocates Program at Columbia University will greatly contribute to my work promoting and protecting human rights. I wish to thank the Human Rights Advocates Program for supporting the development of human rights in my country and for giving me such a wonderful opportunity.

This is why I'm a Human Rights Advocate!

FACULTY MENTOR

PRATIMA KALE
Adjunct Professor
School of International and Public Affairs
Columbia University

NETWORKING MEETINGS

NEW YORK CITY

American Jewish World Service
Auschwitz Center for Peace and Reconciliation
Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment
Compliance & Capacity Skills International
Crisis Action
Ford Foundation
Friedrich Ebert Foundation/New York Office
Namati
Stand With Congo
Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict

PRESENTATIONS

*From the Frontlines
of Human Rights Advocacy in Africa*
sponsored by Teachers College
Columbia University
with Betty Odur Lee, Aehshatou Manu, Samuel
Matsikure, Mulshid Muwonge,
and Anonymous Advocate

CLASSES

Issues in Rural Development
Mainstreaming Gender in Global Affairs

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Amnesty International USA
Enough Project
Free The Slaves
Friends of the Congo
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
World Bank Inspection Panel

CARLOS SANTOS

President
Salvadorian Association for Survivors of Torture
EL SALVADOR



One day I decided to go back to my country—to try to find the real root of my illness and start my life without the demons and voices from the past. Instead, I found that most of the people who had survived torture were homeless and using drugs or alcohol as a way to deal with PTSD. I decided to start the Salvadorian Association for Survivors of Tortures.

they were going to kill me. They also used sleep deprivation tactics. I still have the scars on my hands from the time I was hung from the roof for a full night and day. I was not accused formally by the police, but they sent me to jail with other political prisoners.

During the torture and interrogations, I witnessed and experienced the cruelty that many people suffered. Some were disappeared during this time. I was lucky to survive.

After one year in prison, I was liberated and went into exile in Mexico. I eventually went to Canada. While in exile, I had a normal life. I wrote fiction and worked as a freelancer for newspapers. One day my life suddenly changed – I got PTSD. I became depressed and had panic attacks. My life was upside down. Fortunately, I received counseling and medication.

When I was 16 years old, I was kidnapped by the National Police's death squads. They tortured me for approximately 22 days. I knew the death squads killed a lot of people. I was very scared – I didn't think I would survive. The death squads used various torture tactics on me. They drove me around the city in a pickup truck and told me

One day I decided to go back to my country—to try to find the real root of my illness and start my life without the demons and voices from the past. Instead, I found that most of the people who had survived torture were homeless and using drugs or alcohol as a way to deal with PTSD. I decided to start the Salvadorian Association for Survivors of Tortures.

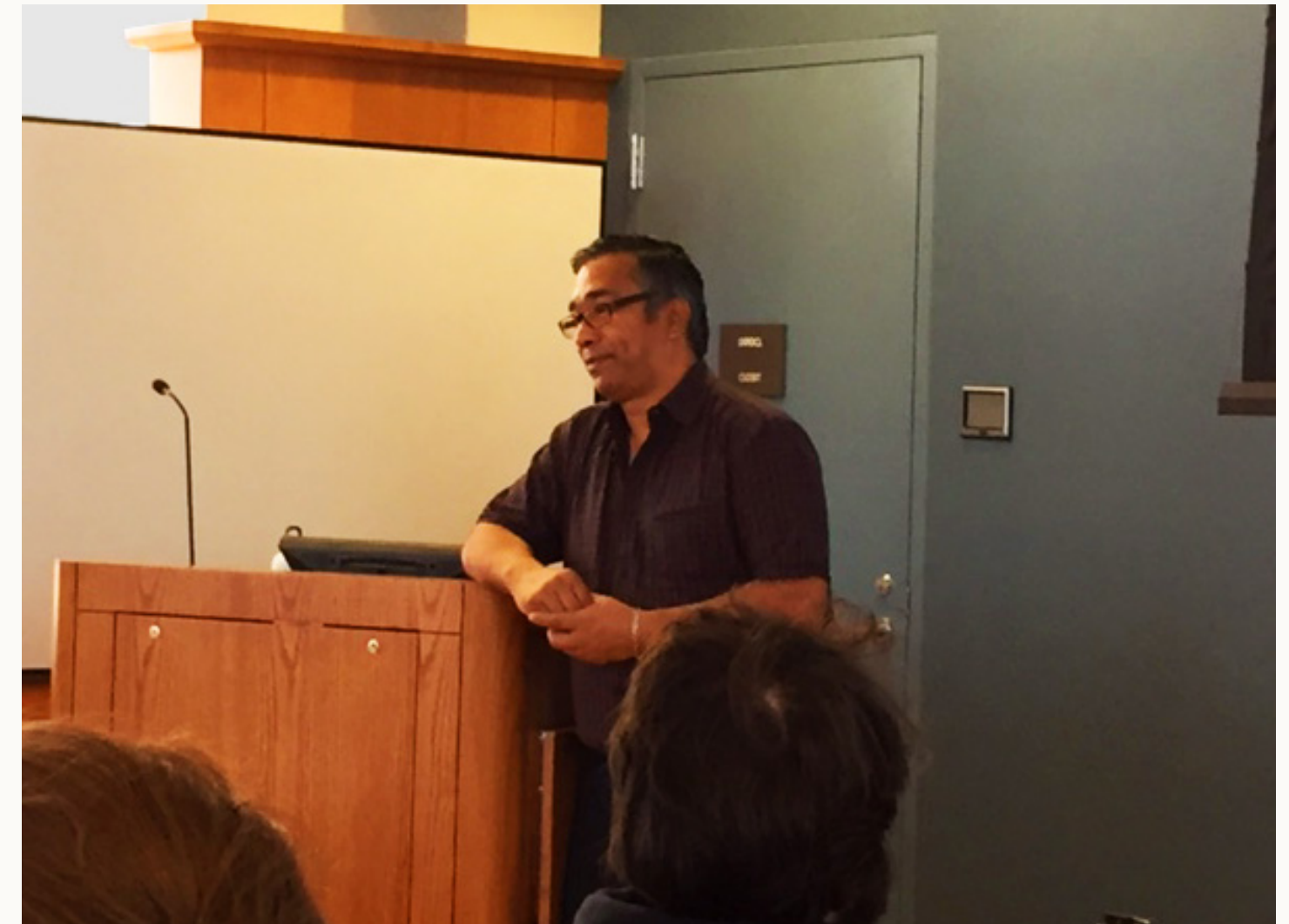
We focus on three areas:

- We provide counseling and psychological therapy to people who were tortured during the civil war. We have been doing workshops, roundtables, and seminars with victims and their families.
- We investigate those responsible for committing crimes against humanity during the

civil war and hold them accountable. Since the records of the security forces disappeared, we created the Yellow Book to track what the army and the security forces did during the civil war. We also collect testimonies from victims. With other human rights organizations, we have filed lawsuits at the international and national levels.

- We use theater, sculpture, exhibitions, public talks and seminars, to educate university and high school students about the use of torture and its negative effects. In El Salvador, impunity is the norm for perpetrators of massacres, disappearances, rape and other torture. Seeking the truth about crimes against humanity in El Salvador is dangerous work but it is part of our commitment to prevent torture in the future.

The Mailman School of Public Health invited Carlos to speak with students.



FACULTY MENTOR

DR. JACK M. SAUL
Assistant Professor, Clinical Population and
Family Health
Mailman School of Public Health
Columbia University

CLASSES

Narrative, Health, and Social Justice
Transitional Justice

NETWORKING MEETINGS

NEW YORK CITY

Amnesty International USA
Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture
Drama Therapy Program
Steinhardt School, New York University
Ford Foundation
The Libertas Center for Human Rights
in NYC, Health and Hospitals/Elmhurst

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Amnesty International USA
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
Torture Abolition
and Survivors Support Coalition
World Bank Inspection Panel

PRESENTATIONS

Survivors of Torture
sponsored by the Mailman School
of Public Health
Columbia University

Carlos Santos was the Whitney M. Young, Jr.
Memorial Fund Advocate in the 2016 HRAP.

Advocates report that the friendships they form in the program last a lifetime.



ANONYMOUS ADVOCATE

LGBT Activist
AFRICA

We pushed for policies and programs with interventions targeting MSM. I knew this had serious repercussions for my community and me because homosexuality is still considered a crime punishable by law in the country—but we were not going to let our community die.

[For safety, this Advocate asked to remain anonymous.]

My life as an advocate began as a personal journey, coming from a community that is highly stigmatized and discriminated against. Many of us feared to come out, to access health services, to gather information and to congregate in safe spaces. On my part I had no clue about basic HIV information. I remember as if it was yesterday the look of the healthcare provider when I disclosed my sexual orientation and why I need to get tested coming from a group considered to be at high risk of HIV. I felt the pain of the needle pricking me when I got tested, the worried moments of the outcome and the mixed feelings I would have had if I had tested positive. I feared for myself and imagined how no one should experience what I did with the healthcare provider.

I said to myself something has to change—and that I had to do something about it. One day on the streets of the capital, I bumped into a friend. He was a trained peer educator and talked to me about services offered to gay men. The HIV

prevalence rate among men who have sex with men (MSM) had increased in the capital and was at 18.2 percent. I had lost some friends to AIDS and felt the urge to engage and push for access to services. I participated in a HIV research vaccine program and became a community peer leader.

Together we created an organization to advocate for access to health and the social well-being of MSM in the capital. Our organization was among the organizational partners who worked with the university to carry out research on understanding MSM in the capital. We pushed for policies and programs with interventions targeting MSM. I knew this had serious repercussions for my community and me because homosexuality is still considered a crime punishable by law in the country—but we were not going to let our community die.

As a result of these efforts, our organization became the first MSM-led organization in the country to begin HIV intervention for gay, bisexual men and MSM, including male sex workers [MSW]. Our organization has become one of the renowned wellness centers, a model site



Several Advocates traveled regularly to the Medical Center campus for meetings and classes.

that is offering education to different partners in the region.

Using health as an entry point, our organization has been able to dialogue and address harassment of MSM. I am now one of the members of the technical working groups at the national level to lobby for better policies and laws that will enable LGBTI persons' access to services.

The Human Rights Advocates Program is a great opportunity for me. It helped me think outside the box and become more confident in expressing myself and the work I do. I have always been shy and introverted but Stephanie's workshop

series on making effective presentations gave me a chance to open up and speak in front for people. The classes I took were in line with my work. Through the coursework and classes, I gained insightful knowledge and understanding of issues. From the professors to the students, I felt welcomed and they supported me though the course period. I plan to incorporate the teaching styles and hands-on techniques I experienced in HRAP to my work and organization. I walk out of HRAP 2016 confident, knowledgeable and strong.

I am inspired by the following quote: Everyone you meet knows something you don't know.

FACULTY MENTOR

DR. THEODORUS SANDFORT
 Professor, 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

NETWORKING MEETINGS

NEW YORK CITY

amfAR
 American Jewish World Service
 Arcus Foundation
 Ford Foundation
 Health Gap
 The Osborne Association
 Out In Tech
 OutRight International
 SAGE (Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian,
 Bisexual & Transgender Elders)
 UN Human Rights
 Office of the High Commissioner

CLASSES

Current Issues in Sexual Health
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 Amnesty International USA
 Catholic Charities of Washington
 Center for American Progress
 Civitas Public Affairs Group
 DC Center Global Volunteer
 Freedom House
 Human Rights Campaign
 Human Rights First
 Human Rights Watch
 National Endowment for Democracy
 National Gay and Lesbian
 Chamber of Commerce
 Randall Mason Consulting
 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
 World Bank Inspection Panel

PRESENTATIONS

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 of Human Rights Advocacy in Africa*
 sponsored by Teachers College
 Columbia University
 with Raoul Kitungano, Betty Odur Lee,
 Aehshatou Manu, Samuel Matsikure, and
 Mulshid Muwonge

Global LGBT Rights Advocacy
 sponsored by Columbia Law School
 with Nvard Margaryan, Samuel Matsikure, and
 Mulshid Muwonge

Living LGBT: A Human Rights Panel
 sponsored by Institute for African Studies
 Columbia University
 with Samuel Matsikure and Mulshid Muwonge

CHHING LAMU SHERPA

Chair
Mountain Spirit
NEPAL

I'm the chair of Mountain Spirit, an action-based human rights organization. We defend the rights of rural people in Nepal and focus on supporting Indigenous women from mountain communities who are often marginalized in civil society and political life.

I was first driven to human rights work when I recognized how my brothers and I were treated differently. While the boys attended school, the girls were expected to work in the house and to perform manual labor on the farm.

I convinced my parents that I should be afforded the same educational opportunities as my brothers. I began attending school, learning to read and write at 17.

My own family's story brought me to recognize gender inequality as a crucial societal problem that must be addressed.

When I finished school, I started attending college while working at a government-run women's training center. At the center, the women from rural backgrounds—including me—were mandated to wear a Sari, as our traditional dresses were deemed unacceptable. This was



but one example of the silencing of our Indigenous customs and ways of life.

These experiences of gender inequality and the marginalization of rural Indigenous Peoples in Nepal led me to work as a community organizer. Realizing that people from our communities are

not properly represented in political life, economic development projects and the ranks of the civil service—and that the problem is especially acute for Indigenous women—several organizers from mountain Indigenous groups and I founded Mountain Spirit.

At Mountain Spirit, we promote rural youth and women's participation in public life, support environmentally sustainable development attentive to the needs and aspirations of Indigenous women, advocate for a more equitable distribu-

tion of governmental services, build the autonomous capacities of rural communities, and work to preserve Indigenous cultural, linguistic and literary traditions.

At the Human Rights Advocates Program at Columbia, I connected with people and groups engaged in similar struggles around the world, raised awareness about the plight of rural communities and Indigenous women, and learned from others in the program how to become a stronger voice for our people.

Advocates find that peer-to-peer learning within the cohort is one of HRAP's greatest benefits.



My own family's story brought me to recognize gender inequality as a crucial societal problem that must be addressed.

FACULTY MENTOR

ELSA STAMATOPOULOU

Director, Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program
Institute for the Study of Human Rights
Adjunct Professor, Center for the Study of
Ethnicity and Race
Department of Anthropology,
Columbia University

NETWORKING MEETINGS

NEW YORK CITY

Adhikaar
Ford Foundation
Global Justice Center
Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
Huairou
India China Institute at The New School
MADRE
The Milano School at The New School
Tribal Link
UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous
Issues
UN Women

PRESENTATIONS

*Aging as a Demographic Challenge
for Asian Countries*
sponsored by Rainer Braun
Human Rights and Development Policy
School of International and Public Affairs
Columbia University

HRAP Panel Presentation
in the course Introduction to Human Rights
Prof. Andrew Nathan, ISHR
Columbia University
with Betty Odur Lee, Aehshatou Manu, Nvard
Margaryan, and Samuel Matiskure

CLASSES

Cultural Rights as Human Rights
Human Rights and Development Policy
Mainstreaming Gender in Global Affairs

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Amnesty International USA
Embassy of Nepal
Indian Law Resource Center
International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
World Bank Inspection Panel

Indigenous Rights in Cameroon and Nepal
sponsored by Center for the Study
of Ethnicity and Race
Columbia University
with Aehshatou Manu

BETTY ODUR LEE

Legal/Program Officer
Uganda Network on Law, Ethic and HIV/AIDS (UGANET)
UGANDA



I became passionate about human rights because I realized that I could do something to address these human rights challenges so that the people could lead dignified lives and have their human rights upheld and respected.

My turning point in becoming a human rights advocate was in 2007 when my aunt asked me to apply to work with the Norwegian Refugee Council as a legal intern during the summer. This was the time when the people of Northern Uganda were recovering from the trauma of the insurgency that had lasted for years. Not ignoring this opportunity, I applied and was given the opportunity to work for a period of one month.

I was sent to support the Information, Counseling and Legal Advice (ICLA) Project in Kitgum district and worked closely with the legal team addressing the justice concerns of the neediest communities in Kitgum district after the war. The communities experienced all sorts of human rights violations, including denial of access to land, which leads to endless land disputes, denying widows the right to own and inherit property, child-headed families were denied opportunities to access and own the property of their parents who died during the war, gender-based violence, domestic violence and sexual violence. I had never provided free legal aid service before. Even though I was still at the university, I had been given the task to support the people. I

Growing up knowing that my mother was unable to read and write bothered me. She did her best to ensure that I went to school. How did she know that this was vital for me? Spending holidays with my aunt, a lawyer who worked at the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in Uganda and later became a judge, really motivated me to become a lawyer. My mother and aunt showed me that the right to education was one of the essential rights. I thought I would finish my education and advocate for this right for everyone.



Prof. Pratima Kale has mentored several Advocates, including Betty, over the years.

was traumatized during the first week and could not even imagine how people can be so unfair to one another by violating rights with impunity. That is when I decided I need to have an impact on the lives of those whose rights were violated by ensuring that I provide services that protect and promote human rights. I became passionate about human rights because I realized that I could do something to address these human rights challenges so that the people could lead dignified lives and have their human rights upheld and respected.

In 2009 after finishing law school and passing the bar, I joined the Platform for Labour Action (PLA) as Legal Associate. I was ready to use my knowledge and skills to provide services to the community. At PLA I worked on human rights violations in the labor industry. I supported the communities at the grassroots level with free legal aid services. I addressed issues in employment such as work without pay, workplace accidents, unfair termination from work, and pension disputes. My clients were vulnerable people who did not know how to demand and defend their rights. I was grateful that I had the opportunity to serve and empower them to demand their rights. I did this work with enthusiasm and the thought of becoming a social justice lawyer struck me because I knew this is how I could help the voiceless, marginalized and vulnerable communities access justice.

My father often said, “Betty, my daughter, I want you to join government service—to be a State Attorney, a Magistrate and then a Judge!” He had big dreams and wishes for me. I knew if I continued with the social justice work, I would have the opportunity to change the lives of many based on the previously mentioned experiences. I refused to apply for the postings with the government that my father shared with me – I had already decided to change my own terms for others by being a human rights and social justice lawyer.

Today, I am pursuing my call to advocate for the rights of the most vulnerable and marginalized at UGANET and still providing free legal aid service to marginalized and vulnerable communities. While in HRAP, I have learned that human rights violations cut across geographic boundaries. While it is terrible to see vulnerable communities suffer all sorts of injustices, we have the power to address those injustices—and how we do it matters! Participating in the HRAP 2016 was a life-changing opportunity as I now see myself as a better human rights and social justice lawyer in that I now have a global perspective in terms of human rights.

The following quote inspires me: “The happiest people on this planet are not those who live on their own terms but are those who change their terms for others!”

FACULTY MENTOR

PRATIMA KALE
Adjunct Professor
School of International and Public Affairs
Columbia University

CLASSES

Issues in Rural Development
Mainstreaming Gender in Global Affairs

NETWORKING MEETINGS

NEW YORK CITY

Ford Foundation
Global Justice Center
The Osborne Association
UN Women

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Amnesty International USA
International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
World Bank Inspection Panel

PRESENTATIONS

From the Frontlines of Human Rights Advocacy in Africa
sponsored by Teachers College
Columbia University
with Raoul Kitungano, Aehshatou Manu,
Samuel Matsikure, Mulshid Muwonge,
and Anonymous Advocate

HRAP Panel Presentation
in the course Introduction to Human Rights
with Prof. Andrew Nathan, ISHR
Columbia University
with Aehshatou Manu, Nvard Margaryan,
Samuel Matsikure, and Chhing Lamu Sherpa

The Advocates traveled to DC where they met with organizations including Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights.



MULSHID MUWONGE

Communications Executive & Security Management Trainer
Defenders Protection Initiative
UGANDA

I am up close and personal with the challenges faced by human rights advocates while they advocate for the rights of their communities. These include torture, detention without trial, mob attacks, trauma, restrictive laws, hostile rhetoric from perpetrators among others – regardless of which, these defenders remain tenacious while being a voice for the people they represent.

I work as a Communications Executive and Security Management Facilitator at Defenders Protection Initiative (DPI), a non-profit organization in Kampala that provides capacity building to human rights defenders and distinct communities to mainstream security, safety, and protection in their day-to-day programming.

We facilitate security management workshops in risk assessment, context analysis, developing mitigation strategies, digital security – with an emphasis on open source information security tools. Other areas of intervention include research, advocacy for safety and safety of human rights defenders, rapid response and security advisory services.

At DPI, I facilitate workshops in security and safety management for human rights advocates



in central, northern, western and eastern Uganda. The target groups include HRDs working on women's rights, natural resources, accountability and governance, journalists and sexual minorities.

I am up close and personal with the challenges faced by human rights advocates while they advocate for the rights of their communities. These include torture, detention without trial, mob attacks, trauma, restrictive laws, hostile rhetoric



The Advocates lived at International House while in HRAP.

Three activists, three friends: Samuel, Betty, and Mulshid.



from perpetrators among others – regardless of which, these defenders remain tenacious while being a voice for the people they represent.

It is with this background that I am always motivated to enhance my understanding of how human rights education intersects with social issues in my country while advocating for the rights of others. HRAP was an opportunity for me to widen my outlook on some topics through graduate course works and context specific workshops, to learn from other advocates and to build connections with relevant organizations. The opportunity has also provided me with a platform to showcase the work of my team at DPI.

FACULTY MENTORS

KATHERINE FRANKE
Sulzbacher Professor of Law
Director, Center for Gender & Sexuality Law
Faculty Director
Public Rights/Private Conscience Project
Columbia Law School

DR. THEODORUS SANDFORT
Professor, 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

NETWORKING MEETINGS

NEW YORK CITY

American Jewish World Service
Arcus Foundation
Auschwitz Center for Peace and
Reconciliation
Center for Gender and Sexuality
Ford Foundation
Out in Tech
OutRight International
SAGE (Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian,
Bisexual & Transgender Elders)
UN Human Rights
Office of the High Commissioner

CLASSES

Human Rights and Human Wrongs
Mainstreaming Gender in Global Affairs
Transitional Justice

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Advocates for Youth
Amnesty International USA
Catholic Charities of Washington
Center for American Progress
Civitas Public Affairs Group
DC Center Global Volunteer
Freedom House
Human Rights Campaign
Human Rights First
Human Rights Watch
National Endowment for Democracy
National Gay and Lesbian
Chamber of Commerce
Randall Mason Consulting
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
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Aehshatou Manu, Samuel Matsikure, and
Anonymous Advocate

Global LGBT Rights Advocacy
sponsored by Columbia Law School
with Nvard Margaryan, Samuel Matsikure,
and Anonymous Advocate

Living LGBT: A Human Rights Panel
sponsored by Institute for African Studies
Columbia University
with Samuel Matsikure, and Anonymous
Advocate

Staff from more than 10 organizations attended a presentation by the LGBT advocates hosted by Human Rights First in DC.



SAMUEL MATSIKURE

Program Manager
Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)
ZIMBABWE



I reached puberty. This used to scare me, as I knew no one who was like me. I had heard stories in local media of homosexuals who were being arrested by local police. It worried me that there was a war out there against people like me, shunned by the society as reported in the media.

Life after high school was a nightmare. When I went to a teachers college, people got to know of my sexual orientation. I was isolated from and by friends except a few. I never understood why people were afraid of someone like me. I became the talk amongst students in the corridors and hostels. The years I was in college were the most miserable years of my life. I never knew that this was driven by stigma and that I was being discriminated against.

Reality hit me through cases of abuse and neglect of friends by families. Those who were discovered by their families that they were gay or lesbian were disowned, forced into marriages, flog marched to churches or forced to attend traditional healing ceremonies to cleanse them of bad spirits. Others were called demeaning names, beaten up by their family members or denied further opportunities such as education and shelter.

The pain others and I have endured due to harassment by the State and public has not deterred me. We deserve equal treatment as citizens of the country and the world. We deserve same human rights as everyone else. That is why today I am a Human Rights Defender.

My place of residence became a refuge for others I knew. They would escape their small cities or villages where they lived for fear of being discovered. I realized then that something was wrong with society. These young men and few women I knew were the nicest, most educated and humble people I knew, but had to bear so much hate, discrimination and violence. I knew then that I wanted to change societal perceptions about them through awareness raising and empowerment of LGBTI persons. A seed was planted in my head to go and fight for their rights as equal citizens of the world.

I first heard of a community for gays and lesbians through friends and the media around 1993. By 1995 GALZ was known by many. The State media was awash with homophobic statements and hate speeches against perceived homosex-

The LGBT advocates reported that their meetings with SAGE prompted them to consider programming for their aging constituencies back home.



uals. The pigs and dogs statement by the Head of State of Zimbabwe sent shock waves around the world. I was determined to challenge this ignorance. I became engrained in the realm of activism. I wanted to touch and change lives for the LGBTI community, their families and friends.

The reality of the lives of LGBTI persons in Zimbabwe was deplorable. It was full of fear, harassment, hate, arbitrary arrests, disownment, blackmail and extortion. When I look back at the thousands of lives I have touched, changed and made better, I have no regrets with my decision. The pain others and I have endured due to harassment by the State and public has not deterred me. We deserve equal treatment as citizens of the country and the world. We deserve same human rights as everyone else. That is why today I am a Human Rights Defender.

FACULTY MENTOR

DR. THEODORUS SANDFORT
 Professor, 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

NETWORKING MEETINGS

NEW YORK CITY

Arcus
 Ford Foundation
 Health Gap
 Human Rights Watch: LGBT Division
 NYC Trans Oral History
 The Osborne Association
 Out in Tech
 OutRight International
 SAGE (Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian,
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CLASSES

Current Issues in Sexual Health
 Transitional Justice

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Advocates for Youth
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 with Mulshid Muwonge and Anonymous
 Advocate

3 FALL 2016 HRAP EVENTS

	<p>Sep 23</p> <p>BUILDING A SCHOOL FOR MY VILLAGE <i>The Nyaka AIDS Orphan Project</i> 1996 Advocate Twesigye Jackson Kaguri (Uganda)</p>	
	<p>Oct 11</p> <p>INDIGENOUS RIGHTS IN CAMEROON & NEPAL 2016 Advocates Aehshatou Manu (Cameroon) and Chhing Lamu Sherpa (Nepal)</p>	
	<p>Oct 18</p> <p>GENDER AND THE ENVIRONMENT <i>African Perspectives</i> 2016 Advocates Aehshatou Manu (Cameroon) and Raoul Kitungano (DRC)</p>	
	<p>Nov 2</p> <p>GLOBAL LGBT RIGHTS ADVOCACY 2016 Advocates Mulshid Muwonge (Uganda), Nvard Margaryan (Armenia), Samuel Matsikure (Zimbabwe), and Anonymous</p>	
	<p>Nov 10</p> <p>SURVIVORS OF TORTURE 2016 Advocate Carlos Santos (El Salvador)</p>	
	<p>Nov 10</p> <p>FROM THE FRONTLINES OF HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY IN AFRICA 2016 Advocates Raoul Kitungano (DRC), Mulshid Muwonge (Uganda), Betty Lee Odur (Uganda), and Anonymous</p>	
	<p>Nov 16</p> <p>LIVING LGBT <i>A Human Rights Panel</i> 2016 Advocates Mulshid Muwonge (Uganda), Samuel Matsikure (Zimbabwe), and Anonymous</p>	
	<p>Nov 17</p> <p>LGBT RIGHTS IN ARMENIA 2016 Advocate Nvard Margaryan (Armenia)</p>	
	<p>Nov 22</p> <p>THE TRUST FUND FOR VICTIMS 1990 Advocate Felipe Michelini (Uruguay)</p>	

4 WORKSHOPS

The Advocates attend skill-building workshops aimed at enhancing their advocacy skills. HRAP deeply appreciates the time – which always goes beyond the scheduled class time – that workshop instructors devote to the Advocates.

DOCUMENTATION

Pamela Graham, Columbia University

The Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research at Columbia University holds an extensive collection of archives of human rights NGOs. Director Pamela Graham discussed the collecting program and the process of working with NGOs to preserve their records. She 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. Graham demonstrated the HRWA and

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



discussed the issues associated with preserving this information, and encouraged the 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.

ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE

Michael Silverman, 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.

FOUNDATION GIVING

John Hicks CFRE, J.C. Geever, Inc. and Columbia University

A fundraising consultant with extensive experience helping nonprofits build successful grant seeking programs, John Hicks offered two workshops to help participants better understand how to communicate effectively with U.S. foundation donors, build networks, and apply for grant support for projects.

FUNDRAISING

Erik Detiger, 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.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND YOGA

Janine White

Janine White led a workshop that encouraged the Advocates to think about the intersection of yoga and human rights. They practiced experiencing inner peace and building a sense of community, while learning techniques for self-



Michael Silverman offered an interactive workshop on ethics and compliance.

care to help sustain their human rights work. A graduate of the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University and a certified yoga instructor, Janine has promoted peace building through the arts in Bosnia and working with youth and internally displaced persons in Georgia. Most recently at Rutgers University, she supported the Newark City of Learning Collaborative, a collective impact initiative working to increase the population of Newark residents with postsecondary degrees, certificates, and high-quality credentials. Janine currently works with youth and staff of mission-driven organizations, using the tools of yoga and mindfulness to promote leadership development, team-building and wellness.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUNDATION CENTER

Susan Shiroma, Foundation Center

Susan Shiroma, a senior librarian at the Foundation Center, 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.



Jo Becker of Human Rights Watch worked with the Advocates on sharpening their advocacy skills.

MAXIMIZING YOUR TIME IN HRAP

Bakary Tandia, African Services Committee

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.

HUMAN RIGHTS SKILLS AND ADVOCACY

Jo Becker, Human Rights Watch

Jo Becker, Advocacy Director for the Children's Rights Division at Human Rights Watch, frequently represents Human Rights Watch before the media, government officials and the gen-

eral public on issues including child soldiers, abusive child labor and juvenile justice, her primary areas of expertise. In her workshop, Advocates explored broad-based human rights campaigns, the use of the media, and advocacy with UN bodies, the U.S. government and the private sector (corporations).

PLAYWRITING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

France-Luce Benson, Scripting Success

France-Luce Benson is an award-winning playwright, Dramatist Guild Fellow, and a Lifetime member of the Ensemble Studio Theatre whose plays have been produced in New York, Miami, Chicago, and Los Angeles. In this interactive workshop, Benson introduces participants to the basic elements of playwriting, leads a variety of writing exercises designed to cultivate inspiration and creative thinking, and guides participants in the process of writing short plays and scenes that may raise awareness and thoughtful

examination of the issues at the center their advocacy work. The goal is to encourage them to explore theatre as a means to inspire change.

IMPROVING TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY

Staff, Center for Teaching and Learning at Columbia University

The Center for Teaching and Learning at Columbia University led a workshop on how the Advocates can use new media and emerging technologies in their advocacy work.

ORAL HISTORY

Staff, StoryCorps

StoryCorps' mission is to preserve and share humanity's stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world. Staff from the OutLoud Initiative and the Justice Initiative introduced the Advocates to their work by sharing previously recorded stories. They then demonstrated how the Advocates could record stories on their own by using the organization app.

VIDEO ADVOCACY

Priscila Neri, WITNESS

Priscila Neri, Senior Program Manager at WITNESS, 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.

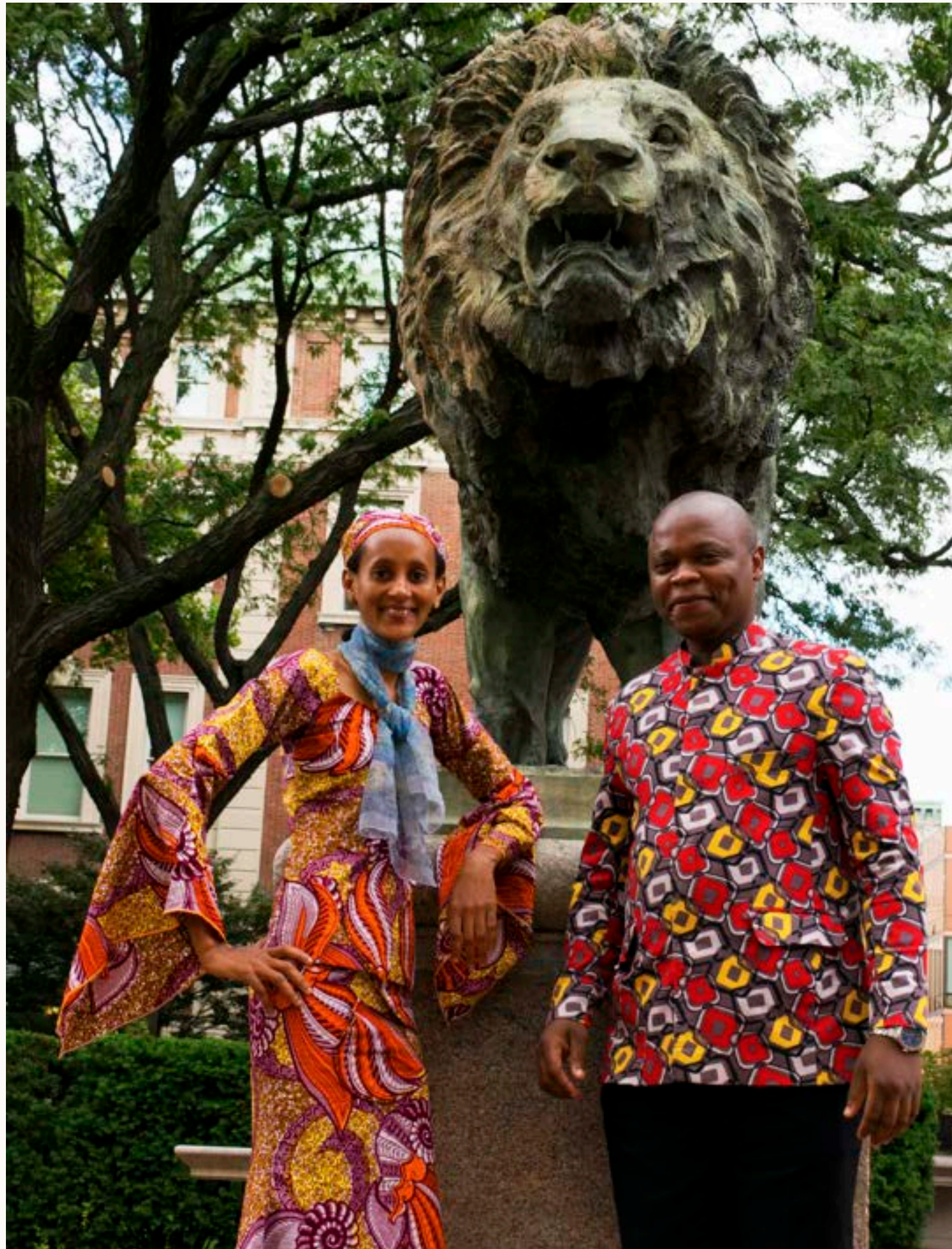
WORKSHOP FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Dr. Yaniv Phillips and Archan Jain, Psy.D., Columbia Health

Dr. Yaniv Phillips and Archan Jain, Psy.D. of Columbia Health led a workshop designed to address the Advocates' experience at Columbia. Topics included how to maximize your experience in class and with professors, how and when to get to know professors, expectations, participating in class, collaborating with other students, asking for help, getting comfortable, learning social norms and managing expectations.

1990 Advocate Felipe Michelini spoke to more than 40 students about the work of the ICC's Trust Fund for Victims.





On a tour of the Morningside campus, Aehshatou and Raoul visited the university mascot.

5 SUPPORT

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights is very grateful to the following for their financial support of the Advocates in the 2016 Program.

Amnesty International USA

Anonymous

Arcus Foundation

Foro Internacional de Mujeres Indígenas
(International Indigenous Women's Forum)

Harriman Institute, Columbia University

The Sperry Fund

Whitney M. Young, Jr. Memorial Fund

6 RECENT ALUMNI NEWS

2015 Advocate **Sandra Creamer** of Australia met Bernie Sanders while taking a break from the World Indigenous Law Conference in California in October. *(Below)*



2014 Advocate **Esther Adhiambo** met with the US Ambassador to Kenya to discuss ways the embassy can support her organization's work with the LGBT community in Mombasa. *(Below)*



2000 Advocate **Adrian Coman** and 2014 Advocate **Iuliana Marcinschi** met in Belgium. Adrian is the International Human Rights Program Director at the Arcus Foundation. *(Above.)*



2011 Advocates **Huda Shafiq** of Sudan and **Nadia Bazan** of Colombia reunited when Huda visited Nadia in Colombia. Huda returned to Sudan after finishing her master's at Brandeis. Nadia continues to work with the Urgent Action Fund-Latin America. *(Above.)*



2013 Advocates **Absolom Shalakha** and **Geoffrey Mayamba** reunited when Absolom served as an election monitor in Zambia. *(Above)*



2010 Advocate **Glenda Muzenda** and 2007 Advocate **Miriam Ruiz** met in the Women's Networking Zone at the International AIDS Conference in Durban. *(Above)*



2011 Advocate **Ifeanyi Orazulike** of the International Center for Advocacy on Rights to Health in Nigeria met Elton John at the International AIDS Conference when ICARH was named one of the recipients of the LGBT Fund, which is a partnership between the Elton John AIDS Foundation and PEPFAR.

Congratulations to 2009 Advocate **Mary Akrami** who was chosen as one of the BBC's inspirational and influential women for 2016. Mary is the founder and Executive Director of Afghan Women Skills Development Center (AWSDC) in Kabul, Afghanistan. In 2003 AWSDC established the first known shelter for women at risk in Afghanistan.



The documentary *Cornerstone* about 1996 Advocate **Twesigye Jackson Kaguri** and the NYAKA AIDS Orphans Project in Uganda premiered in Kampala and New York City in December. *(Above)*

2011 Advocate **Lana Ackar** spoke at the celebration of the International Women's Day at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in Warsaw, Poland.

2009 Advocate **Florencia Ruiz** of Mexico, 2015 Advocate **Sandra Creamer** of Australia and ISHR Director of Capacity Building **Stephanie V. Grepo** met up at 15th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. *(Below)*



7 GRADUATE STUDENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In 2011, the Graduate Student Volunteer Program was created to connect Columbia University students with volunteer opportunities at HRAP alumni-led organizations around the globe. Since then, 17 Columbia University students have volunteered with HRAP alumni in countries including Georgia, India, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Uganda. In 2016, Columbia University students were also invited to volunteer at the organizations led by graduates of ISHR's newest fellowship program, the Alliance on Historical Dialogue and Accountability. Following are excerpts from the blog posts written by two of the Columbia students who volunteered with HRAP alumni in the summer of 2016.

INITIATIVE FOR EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION KENYA

Founded by 2014 Advocate **Esther Adhiambo** after she completed HRAP, the Initiative for Equality and Non-Discrimination (INEND) strives to achieve a more inclusive society for sexual and gender minorities in the coastal region of Kenya by pursuing both bottom-up and top-down approaches.

In Kenya, homosexual conduct is considered illegal and the accused can face a maximum of 14 years in prison. Opinion leaders such as politicians and religious leaders have publicly condemned homosexuality and transgenderism. Public opinion towards sexual minorities is very hostile as well. The Pew Research Center reported 88 percent of people surveyed believed that homosexuality is "morally unacceptable."

As the first step of INEND's bottom-up approach, we targeted motorcycle taxi drivers who are known for their violence toward the LGBT community. Many young men who cannot find jobs in other industries work as motorcycle taxi drivers. INEND would like them to become allies of the LGBT community – they are on the ground 24/7 and know every little corner.

To understand how we can work with them, we conducted a survey to understand the motorcycle taxi drivers' perceptions towards sexual and gender minorities and their reasons for assaulting them. Approximately 160 motorcycle taxi drivers were reached through two focus group discussions and a questionnaire. Their beliefs on why people "become gay" was interesting. They included peer pressure, imprisonment, witchcraft, heartbreaks, rape, gender separation at school, parental upbringing, and media influence. We also asked why they target the

I witnessed the discrimination and stigma people live with, the difficulties of tackling the taboos, and the commitment of people to change their society.



Akiko Kobayashi (left) volunteered at the organization founded by 2014 Advocate Esther Adhiambo.

LGBT community and what kinds of programs might change their attitudes. Based on the findings from this survey, INEND is now developing plans how to engage the motorcycle taxi drivers to change their perceptions and to recruit them as human rights defenders.

Working with INEND for 10 weeks was a wonderful experience. I witnessed the discrimination and stigma people live with, the difficulties of tackling the taboos, and the commitment of people to change their society. I experienced

the real-life application of international human rights law, which I am studying at Columbia. Working at a small NGO with a tight-knit team was very rewarding as I could see the direct contributions of my work to the organization. I also gained confidence to work independently and proactively.

Akiko Kobayashi
School of International and Public Affairs
Columbia University

AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN MEXICO

Advocacy and work in the HIV/AIDS space means working with and on behalf of a vulnerable population. In many places, HIV is considered a concentrated epidemic, primarily impacting sex workers and their clients, men who have sex with men, and intravenous drug users. When I joined 2006 Advocate **Miriam Ruiz** at the AIDS Healthcare Foundation in Latin America and the Caribbean, I knew I would be interacting with these groups. This meant traveling to red light districts in Guatemala City.

The first was Zona Roja's La Liña, a red light district intersecting a poor neighborhood in Guatemala City. La Liña is an installment of small, wooden rooms lining either side of an out-of-commission railroad line. The rooms are sparse rectangles, each fitting little more than a twin bed and a side table. The AHF staff I was with informed me that female sex workers pay to rent out the stalls during the day, with a greater trans feminine and male population taking over the spaces in the evening. Sex acts in this area cost 20 Quetzales, or approximately \$2.50 each, with workers taking five to eight clients a day.

La Liña's functionality as a red light area is unmistakable. On our midday visit, men milled about up and down the street, peering into the occasional stall. One vendor, an older woman, pulled a rack full of lingerie down the street, calling out her wares and selling outfits to workers. Sex workers lounged around, most of them in various undergarments, standing or sitting outside their rooms to chat while they waited for their next clients. A few teenage boys were spotted passing through the zone on the way to their neighborhood, the entrance at one end of the low buildings, with two police officers positioned in front of it.

I walked around with AHF and spoke with the

sex workers, giving them strips of free condoms and either an AHF calendar or poster bearing the line "Condomes Son Cool" (Condoms are Cool) and information about the importance of regular testing. The women accepted these items graciously, some of them greeting the AHF staff with familiar smiles. I felt at ease in the atmosphere they created; it was clear that AHF had established a comfortable and trusting relationship with the workers in this area. The organization's presence certainly drew stares, but they were not threatening, just observational.

Sex work is not illegal in Guatemala. Though it is not regulated, some areas are distinct in the high presence of sex workers that occupy them. In Guatemala, thanks in part to organizations like AHF, sex workers have an extremely low rate of HIV, less than .05 percent. The women I spoke with were well educated on the health risks of not using a condom and said they insisted on using them, even when clients offered them five to twenty times their typical rate to go without. They also described getting tested for sexually transmitted infections every one to four months at free clinics run by the Ministry of Health.

The sex workers face other issues though. Some clients become violent, and the sex workers don't often have the support of local law enforcement when this happens. One woman described how the police refused to arrest a man after he broke her nose for refusing to have sex without a condom, simply because he was in the military. Her speech then lowered and she looked around hesitantly as she further described the daily extortion fees she paid to local gangs in order to stay in the area. We left shortly after, not wanting to make her feel endangered

In my eyes, the man I worked with was no longer just an activist. He was now a man in a two decades long battle fighting against HIV and AIDS, recruiting the world to his cause through education and policy, fighting for others like him who couldn't fight for themselves.



Ginger Whitesell (second from right) volunteered with 2007 Advocate Miriam Ruiz in Mexico.

for speaking to us for so long. When I got back in the car, I felt a strange sense of relief, grateful and privileged that this wasn't my reality.

When I later described some of my experiences to a new acquaintance, he commended my bravery and became inquisitive as to whether or not I had any fear about contracting HIV through the work I was doing. For him, an early image of Princess Diana came to mind, portrayed as a hero for having shook hands people with HIV. I said no, and he probed further, asking if I felt comfortable kissing the people I met on the cheek, as is custom throughout Latin America. His curiosity struck me, and it took me a moment to come out of my AHF bubble and remember that many people still do not understand how HIV is spread, this perceived contagion furthering negative stereotypes of people living with HIV and AIDS. I explained to the man how HIV is contracted and how to prevent the spread of the disease, and then I launched into the importance of the work of AHF.

Some of the activists I worked with told me they had HIV. One individual had been living with the disease for over 20 years. While I knew he had likely long dealt with the agony of having to tell others of his condition, I also felt highly aware of how my view of who this man was shifted with his small confession. We all have biases that are

triggered when we meet someone. Sometimes we assign blame or put a wall of difference up between one another. Tragedy is easier to bear if we feel that it is something that could never happen to ourselves. But tragedy happens to all of us. It is part of the human experience.

In my eyes, the man I worked with was no longer just an activist. He was now a man in a two decades long battle fighting against HIV and AIDS, recruiting the world to his cause through education and policy, fighting for others like him who couldn't fight for themselves.

The AIDS Healthcare Foundation and other public health organizations seek to break down barriers between people, to humanize stigmatized groups, and to show the good that can result through collective action. When we come together, we can influence positive change. And if we're lucky enough, we get to see the effects of that effort first hand.

It was an honor to work for this commendable group. I look forward to working alongside and on behalf of people like this in the future.

Ginger Whitesell
School of International and Public Affairs
Columbia University

8 HRAP ADMINISTRATION

STEPHANIE V. GREPO

Stephanie V. Grepo joined ISHR as the Director of Capacity Building 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 88 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 to capacity building for Indigenous Peoples to advocacy around prisoners' rights in Nigeria. 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.

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 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 and Transparency International. 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.

ELYSE GREENBLATT

Elyse Greenblatt was the 2016 HRAP Coordinator. She joined ISHR after earning her master's degree in International Affairs from The New School. She focused her studies on propaganda and development, program design, and monitoring and evaluation. Her master's practicum focused on researching and creating a needs assessment for New York City's homeless population and gender equity within the city's shelter system. Elyse has previously worked on access to education and women's empowerment projects in Ethiopia as well as serving with the U.S. Peace Corps in Ukraine as an education specialist.



In September, the Advocates attended a photo exhibition at Open Society Foundations.

Samuel and 2016 HRAP Coordinator Elyse Greenblatt attended a tour of the US Capitol as part of the DC trip.



9 ISHR STAFF

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GERGANA HALPERN
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AHDA and Education Programs Coordinator

ARIELLA LANG
Director
Alliance for Historical Dialogue
and Accountability

10 TESTIMONIALS

We have felt very fortunate to collaborate with the Human Rights Advocates Program this year. Here at the Institute of African Studies, we are proud to help students engage with the research and work of a wide range of scholars studying the African continent from different geographic, theoretical, and disciplinary perspectives. As an academic institute based in the United States, though, we are naturally constrained by distance. It is not every day that we are able to offer our students exposure to thinkers and activists directly involved with contemporary developments in the African political landscape. This is in part what makes working with HRAP so special: through the events we co-hosted with the Program, students were able to meet and learn from advocates on the front lines of some of the most

pressing social justice struggles unfolding in Africa today – everything from the battle for the rights of indigenous communities in Cameroon, to the protection of natural resource access in the DRC, to the fight for the safety and empowerment of LGBT communities in countries including Uganda and Zimbabwe. Students embraced the opportunity this semester to connect with activists engaged in such critical work throughout the continent, and are already looking forward to the sorts of remarkable people they will meet through HRAP next year.

Jinny Prais
Associate Director, Institute of African Studies
Adjunct Assistant Professor, International and
Public Affairs

University Professor Michael Doyle engaged the Advocates in conversation about the status of refugees.





The Advocates regularly attended events and talks of interest to them at Columbia.

I have always believed that theatre is a powerful tool for social justice, and it has been an enormous pleasure for me to share my passion for both with the students in the HRAP program. Moreover, their courage and commitment has been truly inspiring. Due to the nature of this workshop, I not only get to learn about the work they are doing, but about the personal journeys that fuel their work. I am always struck with how eager and open they are to dive in to the process, regardless of their writing experience and language barriers. In the short time we have, many of them create insightful, often humorous, and moving work.

France-Luce Benson
Scripting Success

TASSC International is always happy to welcome HRAP scholars every year. The scholars inspire us through their wisdom, courage, and commitment to the respect of human rights and dignity. These scholars have a lot to share and are eager to learn about our organization. This year we were honored to meet with Carlos Santos from El Salvador. We were able to learn about his incredible and courageous work in El Salvador to end the practice of torture and to hold accountable those who committed egregious crimes. His work and vision were truly inspirational to all of us.

Gizachew Emiru, Esq.
Executive Director
TASSC International

The Indian Law Resource Center was honored to meet with participants of Columbia University's Human Rights Advocates Program. The Program provides the Center and other human rights advocates the opportunity to exchange valuable experiences and discuss the common struggles and achievements of indigenous rights advocates around the world, as well as the vital role that female leaders play in these efforts. The Center is a non-profit law and advocacy organization that provides legal assistance to Indian nations and indigenous communities throughout the Americas regarding environmental protection, land recovery, cultural preservation, and human rights protection. And though our work focuses on the Americas, introducing HRAP advocates from all over the world to our work allows them to make connections between the human rights efforts they lead in their home countries, and the work that organizations such as the Center do in other parts of the world using regional human rights mechanisms. HRAP does a great job in bringing human rights advocates together and strengthening international collaboration.

Monica A. Miranda
Assistant for Program and Administration
Indian Law Resource Center

We hosted a lively discussion in our office with four HRAP participants. Our work on LGBT human rights issues is guided by the voices of those on the ground, and this was an important moment to learn more about the situation in each of the countries of origin of the four participants and to engage in honest and productive dialogue about the best ways U.S.-based organizations can support the crucial work of local activists. We look forward to meeting other HRAP participants in the future and to using these learning opportunities to better our work on behalf of LGBT communities around the world.

Shawn Gaylord
Advocacy Counsel
Human Rights First



I liken my time in HRAP to that of a plane on a runway. When I got here, I was moving slowly on the runway. Over the past four months, HRAP has given me momentum. I am now ready to fly.

2016 Anonymous Advocate

mobilize **confidence** strategize **CONNECT** **impact**
policy makers advocate PARTNER cooperate *exchange* share
RECORD interview research lobby organize theoretical
DEEPEN linkages analyze broaden *global* learn writing **unique** media
campaign collaborate **solidarity** aware *witness* strengthen

HRAP



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