

2017

HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES PROGRAM



INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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INTRODUCTION

“I have decided that I cannot do things based on the quality of my life – I must follow what my heart and moral compass say.”

2017 ADVOCATE INNA HUDAYA

The 29th 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 advocates like Inna Hudaya of Indonesia.

The HRAP curriculum comprises academic coursework, skill-building workshops, mentoring and networking with the human rights, academic and donor communities primarily in New York City and Washington, D.C. The 2017 advocates came from Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Ukraine, Uganda and Uruguay. Due to safety concerns, one advocate asked to remain anonymous.

This year at Columbia, HRAP partnered with the Center for Gender and Sexuality and Human Rights Institute

at Columbia Law, the Mailman School of Public Health, Teachers College, the Institute of Latin American Studies, the Harriman Institute and the School of International and Public Affairs to organize a number of speaking engagements by the 2017 advocates.

HRAP is grateful to Dr. David Rosenthal of the Mailman School of Public Health and Anya Schriffin and Minky Worden of the School of International and Public Affairs for joining the long list of Columbia faculty who welcome advocates in their classes. HRAP is also grateful to the Columbia faculty who mentor the advocates including long-time HRAP mentors Pratima Kale of SIPA and Dr. Theodorus Sandfort of the Mailman School of Public Affairs.



Visiting the Inspection Panel at the World Bank.



Michael and Kennedy visited The Seeing Eye in New Jersey.

Inna Hudaya

Founder and Executive Director
SAMSARA

INDONESIA



Just seven short years ago, I was collecting empty bottles to feed myself. Today I am a human rights advocate leading a feminist organization in Indonesia and attending HRAP at Columbia University.

I grew up in a conservative environment in Tasikmalaya, Indonesia. While I still believe that religion should bring peace and love, that was not my reality during my childhood. I witnessed people around me mistreating women and girls and showing hatred toward others. During high school, I quietly saved money and prepared to run away. After my final exam, I jumped on a bus to Yogyakarta. I walked out of my hometown thinking, “What can I do to make a difference?”

I was 22 when I had an unplanned pregnancy. Given my religious upbringing, I knew that sharing my situation openly was not an option — that I would face stigma and discrimination from my family. I did not know where to go to find support and information. I got lost. My boyfriend and I finally decided to have an abortion. I couldn’t afford an abortion at a clinic. I had to give up my motorbike and borrow money for a clandestine abortion in a hotel room. I thought I was going to die from the pain — there were no painkillers. My boyfriend took off after the procedure and I was left alone with my trauma. Overcome with depression, I gave up my university studies. I chose to hide in a dark room.

Several years later, I found a way to tell my mother who surprisingly supported me. I slowly got my strength back. Around that time, I read an article that there are 2 million abortions a year in Indonesia. I was wondering what if half of those women had been traumatized too. I began to blog my story. Unexpectedly, women replied and shared their

“I have decided that I cannot do things based on the quality of my life — I must follow what my heart and moral compass say.”

abortion stories. I turned the blog into a support group. The group evolved into a feminist organization called Samsara that aims to improve women’s sexual and reproductive health and promotes women’s bodily integrity and autonomy. While I love traveling and adventure, I mark my activism through Samsara as the most epic adventure. Today, Samsara offers pre- and post-abortion counseling and an educational and advocacy program on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

It’s hard to be an activist. I know that I could have a better and more comfortable life elsewhere. I have decided that I cannot do things based on the quality of my life — I must follow what my heart and moral compass say.



Inna and Kenedy at the White House.

CLASSES

Issues in Rural Development
Mainstreaming Gender in Global Affairs

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT

On the Frontlines of SRHR, Women’s Rights Program, Open Society Foundations

NETWORKING

NYC

African Services Committee
Amnesty International USA
Columbia Clinical Psychiatry
Columbia School of Social Work
Go Ask Alice!, Columbia Health Services
Gynuity Health Projects
HealthRight International
Human Rights Watch
Open Society Foundations,
Women’s Rights Program
Planned Parenthood
Reproductive Health Access Project
StoryCorps
UN Women
WITNESS

DC

CHANGE
DKT International
Fund for Global Human Rights
International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
World Bank Inspection Panel

Kenedy Abor Owiti

Programme Manager
NYARWEK LGBTI Coalition

KENYA



Growing up, I saw the people around me — especially the women — suffer from violence and extreme abuse. Even in my own family, some voices were considered less valuable than others. Across the block from where I lived, I saw a family of doctors living in a totally different environment. I admired them and always wanted to live in such an oppression-free space.

When I was in primary school, the teachers used their ultimate authority to make the students do menial jobs for them. For me, school was not only a learning space — it was also an environment where the mighty had their way. Considered “naughty” by the teachers, I was transferred from an urban government school to a local up-country school. The menial work at my new school involved carrying three pieces of firewood to school each day as well as the preparation of ropes and goal posts during the school day. I often asked myself if the school did not have a budget for such tasks.

Given the rate of theft of school, I had to carry my big bag of books on my back to and from school every day. This was 4 km roundtrip. One day after walking home from school, I was too tired to look for firewood. The next day I was the only person who arrived at school without firewood. Since I had not brought any firewood, I as well as the others who had not brought enough wood or had brought wood that was considered “feeble” were assembled at the center of the parade grounds. We were going to serve as an example to others. There was a young girl, maybe 6 years old, who wet her pants because she was terrified to death. I thought, “Is she going to be beaten like the others? Is this fair to any of us?” I constantly prodded myself for answers to these questions, but I found none. The assembly lasted for close to one hour during which time we were forced to kneel on the roughly finished square. My knees were red and shaking — I was an urban kid who was used to the

“At that moment, I knew I had to speak out and defend everyone including myself. Even though I was only 7 or 8 years old at the time, I shouted, ‘This has to stop.’”

pleasantries of life. Finally, the head teacher said, “Come to my office.” At that moment, I knew I had to speak out and defend everyone including myself. Even though I was only 7 or 8 years old at the time, I shouted, “This has to stop.” While we were all spared that day, there was more in store for me. The school called me “rude” and destined to “drag all the others [down] in my unruliness.”

I was temporarily expelled — I call it ‘temporary’ since it took the intervention of the district education officer to get me back in school. The head teacher was transferred. This is how I became my school hero as well as a human rights defender. My nickname from then became ‘*jawar*’ which translates to savior. To this day, I am still known by my nickname.

CLASSES

Managing Public Health Nonprofits
Health and Human Rights Advocacy
Human Rights and Development Policy

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Current LGBT Discourse in Kenya and Ukraine, Center for Gender and Sexuality, Columbia Law School
Conversation with African Human Rights Advocates, Center for African Education, Teachers College
Human Rights in Global Contexts: A Discussion of LGBTQI Activism in Kenya, School of Public Health, University of Michigan
LGBTI Voices from the Frontlines, Columbia’s Humanitarian Organization for Migration and Emergencies
Lunchtime Conversations: Kenedy Abor Owiti and Anonymous, SPECTRUM and UN Working Group, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University
LGBTI Issues in Kenya, Reproductive Justice and Activism in Africa (class), New York University

NETWORKING

NYC

African Services Committee
American Jewish World Service
Amnesty International USA
Arcus Foundation
Columbia University African Students Association
Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention
Human Rights Watch
The New School
New York Public Library
Trans Oral History Project
Out In Tech
OutRight Action International
Parliamentarians for Global Action
SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders)
The Seeing Eye
StoryCorps
Treatment Action Group
UN Women
WITNESS

DC

Amnesty International USA
Center Global
FHI360
Fund for Global Human Rights
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
Heartland Alliance
Human Rights Campaign
Human Rights First
National Endowment for Democracy
Open Society Foundations
PFLAG
Randal Mason Consulting
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
Synergia
USAID
Victory Institute
World Bank Inspection Panel

Carlos R. Asúnolo Morales

Human Rights Project Leader
Research Center for the Teaching and Learning of the Law (CEEAD)

MEXICO



My story as a human rights advocate is one that combines frustration with the desire to make things different. As a young student, I decided to go to law school to change the world by pursuing justice and protection for the most needy. The reality was different: a lot of young students enter law school believing in justice and graduate believing in legality. This is not necessarily a bad thing. However, when you live in a country like Mexico—a country that has weak public institutions, a corrupt justice system and the worst human rights crisis of its history—it is a bad thing.

In traditional legal education, a human rights course represents a light in a dark place. It was in that class that I understood the law could also be used as a powerful tool for social transformation. From that moment, I decided to study human rights to obtain the necessary tools to build a more just and equal society. Human rights education became the engine that drives my career.

After studying human rights in Spain for two years, I returned to Mexico with the illusion of change. In 2014, I started working as a researcher at CEEAD, a research center founded in 2008 in Monterrey by Luis Fernando Pérez Hurtado. CEEAD was created with the mission to transform legal education to educate lawyers to be more committed to the rule of law and the protection of human rights. In CEEAD, I found an opportunity to convert my frustration into action.

In response to the human rights crisis the country was (and still is) going through, the Mexican Congress reformed the Constitution in 2011 to include international treaties and human rights as parameters to validate the entire legal system. This is the paradox of the human rights crisis in Mexico: on paper we have a very progressive human rights

“In traditional legal education, a human rights course represents a light in a dark place.”

legal framework that differs from the reality of millions of Mexicans. A general atmosphere of violence, torture, disappearances, discrimination and corruption are some of the main issues Mexicans face on a daily basis. One of the reasons for this paradox is that the international human rights standards are not being applied by the legal profession. This practice is related to cultural resistance and low-quality legal education. Law schools, which are the entrance door to public institutions, can reduce the gap between the legal framework and the reality.

In its early days, CEEAD created a working group with human rights experts from public institutions, private and public universities, and civil society organizations, to discuss ways to improve human rights education in law schools. As a result of this, CEEAD elaborated a plan that includes the incorporation of human rights courses in the curricula, training professors in the teaching of human rights and guidelines for universities to include human rights standards in their legal education. The plan is now being implemented at the national level.

In my experience with the HRAP and my fellows, I confirm that every human rights advocate is, can and should be a human rights educator. For me, being a teacher is being an activist every single day.



Carlos promotes the study of human rights in legal education in Mexico.

CLASSES

International Perspectives on Peace and Human Rights Education
Gender and Justice

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Human Rights Crisis in Mexico: The Role of Mexican Law Schools, Institute of Latin American Studies, Columbia University
Human Rights Crisis in Mexico: The Role of Mexican Law Schools, Human Rights Institute, Columbia Law School

NETWORKING

NYC

African Services Committee
Amnesty International USA
Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University
Columbia Law School
Human Rights Watch
Leitner Center for International Law and Justice, Fordham University
The Sperry Fund
StoryCorps
Teachers College
UN Women
WITNESS

DC

American Bar Association Center for Human Rights
Fund for Global Human Rights
International Association of Women Judges
Latin America Working Group
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
Washington Office on Latin America
World Bank Inspection Panel

Michael Miiro

Technical Advisor

Masaka Association of Persons with Disabilities Living with HIV & AIDS

UGANDA



Although I completed the seventh grade of primary school with high grades, my mum and I didn't have money for me to continue with my high school education. Shortly after thinking I would not continue with my education, I visited Kampala where I found the majority of people with disabilities (PWDs) begging on the streets while the others mended shoes and watches. I returned home and told my mum, "I don't want to be like them. I have to study to be a role model."

Thanks be to God, I made it to Makerere University in Kampala after much struggle and with the support of various people. I earned a bachelor's degree in Adult and Community Education. At Makerere, I became the first student with a disability to run for president of the student body. When most people first meet me, they ask if my disability is the reason why I advocate for the rights of PWDs. My reply is always, "No!" Having a disability does not necessarily mean that you know the issues and challenges faced by people with the full spectrum of disabilities. I have studied those issues. I advocate for PWDs because they are human beings who are differently able. I have the means, voice, ability and passion to advocate for those who cannot do it for themselves.

Through structured negotiations, advocacy, community education, and the media, I work to reform systems and practices that discriminate against PWDs. Sometimes I truly feel like I'm not getting anywhere. But I never stay down for long. I am motivated by PWDs.

In 2009, I started the Masaka Association of People with Disabilities Living with HIV/AIDS (MADIPHA) with the mission to ensure the full integration of our target group as well as access to comprehensive

"I advocate for PWDs because they are human beings who are differently able."

HIV/AIDS services. Currently, we have more than 386 members who are disabled and HIV positive.

Through our peer-to-peer model at MADIPHA, fellow PWDs identify PWDs in communities, refer them to health centers and counsel them. At MADIPHA, we do a number of things: we advocate for better health services, train health workers and other community members in disability and sign language, support our members with income-generating activities, engage political and religious leaders in disability debates so that our issues are planned and budgeted for, and document and share our best practices.

The year 2017 has been great and another landmark in my work. Through HRAP I met wonderful and knowledgeable people from whom I have learned new approaches and strategies. Many have given me their time and ears. I will always remember what my mentor, Pratima Kale (SIPA), told me: "No matter how poor and vulnerable a person is, she knows what she wants and you should always listen to her while designing any intervention."



While in DC, Michael met Judy Heumann, a senior fellow at the Ford Foundation and Special Advisor on Disability Rights for the US State Department under President Barack Obama.

CLASSES

Issues in Rural Development
Media Campaigning and Social Change

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Conversation with African Human Rights Advocates, Center for African Education, Teachers College
Advocating for Disability Rights in Uganda, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

NETWORKING

NYC

African Services Committee
Amnesty International USA
Center for the Independence of the Disabled, NY
Human Rights Watch
International Disability Alliance
NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities
The Seeing Eye
The Sperry Fund
StoryCorps
UN Women
WITNESS

DC

DKT International
Ford Foundation
Fund for Global Human Rights
National Disability Rights Network
National Endowment for Democracy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
World Bank Disabilities
World Bank Inspection Panel
World Vision

Olena Semenova

Co-chair
Ukrainian LGBT Association LIGA

UKRAINE



Back in the '90s when I a young girl, I was dating a fellow student from a neighboring university. One day as she was seeing me back to the student house, our route passed the local police station. When we stopped on the empty street in front of the building, she took my hand and gave me a light kiss.

I need to make a remark here and draw a small picture of Ukraine in the '90s. It was a young country that had become independent a few years earlier. Inhabitants were living in a constant economic crisis and unable to wake up from their Soviet past. The LGBT movement wasn't even born. Members of the community were hiding in the closet. We met once a month in secret and never risked behaving openly in public spaces.

So, this light kiss — an invisible and hasty lip touch — was a very brave step. Stunned by the boldness of our act, we froze. We believed we were safe.

The danger came from where we did not expect. A policeman approached us and rudely asked, "What are you doing here?" "Nothing," we replied. "Do you know it is inappropriate, what you were doing? Why do you hold her hand? Do you want to spend the night in a jail?" I remember the anger growing inside me. I remember trying to prove to him that it was he who was behaving inappropriately and that kissing on the street was not a crime. Other police officers came out of the building and approached us. My girlfriend pulled me aside and said, "Run! Let's run! We are not safe here."

I had met homophobia before, but at that moment I understood how unprotected we were—helpless and totally alone in front of the huge gray wall of hatred and injustice. Paradoxically, the realization of the scary mightiness of this homophobia empowered me.

"I had met homophobia before, but at that moment I understood how unprotected we were—helpless and totally alone in front of the huge gray wall of hatred and injustice."

I started looking for opportunities to somehow fight the oppression. I soon found people as crazy as I was. We were few, but we had ideas. We launched the very first gay magazine in Ukraine and registered one of the first LGBT organizations in the country. We held press conferences teasing the media and public with the fact of being openly gay. We organized and attended public actions. We encouraged other LGBT people to stand up.

And one day, long after that kiss in front of the police station, I realized that we were not crazy, despite everyone—friends and enemies—telling us that we were. Being against the oppressive system doesn't make you crazy. It makes you strong, smart, and unstoppable. It makes you an activist—that person who changes the world for the better.



Theodore Kerr welcomed advocates for a discussion at The New School.

CLASSES

- Gender and Justice
- Health and Human Rights Advocacy
- Managing Public Health Nonprofits
- Mainstreaming Gender in Global Affairs

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Current LGBT Discourse in Kenya and Ukraine*, Center for Gender and Sexuality, Columbia Law School
- LGBTI Voices from the Frontlines*, Columbia's Humanitarian Organization for Migration and Emergencies

NETWORKING

NYC

- African Services Committee
- Amnesty International USA
- Arcus Foundation
- Human Rights Watch
- Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University
- The New School
- New York Public Library Trans Oral History Project
- Out in Tech
- OutRight Action International
- Parliamentarians for Global Action
- SAGE (Advocacy and Services for LGBT Elders)
- StoryCorps
- Treatment Action Group
- UN Women
- WITNESS

DC

- Amnesty International USA
- Center Global
- FHI360
- Fund for Global Human Rights
- GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
- Heartland Alliance
- Human Rights Campaign
- Human Rights First
- International Center for Research on Women
- National Endowment for Democracy
- Open Society Foundations
- PFLAG
- Randal Mason Consulting
- Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
- Synergia
- Victory Institute
- World Bank Inspection Panel

Johanna Asaravicius

URUGUAY



I grew up listening to stories of activism and courage by those who were fighting against the military regime in Uruguay during the late 70's and early 80's. I was always reminded that democracy and freedom are not a given and that we need to be actively invested in the process of defending our rights as humans and speaking for those whose voices are being silenced.

I decided to become a political scientist because I always thought that it was through policy making that we can create a more respectful, equal world. I have since realized that most times this is not enough. I understood early on that it is crucial to also modify the mindset of the majority in order to move towards a better tomorrow.

In my early 20's, I had an opportunity to direct the international and social justice department of a local Jewish youth organization. We ran a program through which students from the USA and Uruguay worked together in helping the local community with specific projects, such as restoring local health clinics, building organic gardens at schools, creating green places and community plazas, etc. We all had the chance to see the change happening. The local communities got to see the projects up and running, the students got to see the impact that their work on the local communities, and I was encouraged by the transformation that most students experienced during the two-week program. It was there that I began to see and understand the importance of human rights education; it was then when I saw that it is through education on a system based on the respect and promotion of human dignity that we can create an improved environment for future generations.

“Joining HRAP was the opportunity for a new beginning.”

Joining HRAP was the opportunity for a new beginning. I knew that the program was going to provide me a great “bag of tools” to bring back home and work hard on the promotion on human rights and, indeed, it did so. The classes at Columbia University propelled me to become a better academic learner. The diverse workshops offered through HRAP covered so many different areas. Together, they turned us into much better and effective advocates.

And the greatest value of this experience has been to learn from my fellow advocates, now friends, from different parts of the world – this is the hidden treasure of HRAP. Through this process of getting to know their personal journeys, I grew as a person. I became inspired and proactive. I have reaffirmed that this is the path I want to take.

HRAP has made me realize how much more I could do and how important it is to work together so we can work better and seek a better tomorrow.

CLASSES

International Perspectives on Peace and Human Rights Education
Human Rights and Development Policy

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT

Opportunities and Challenges in Human Rights Education in Uruguay, Institute of Latin American Studies, Columbia University

NETWORKING:

NYC

African Services Committee
Amnesty International USA
Human Rights Watch
StoryCorps
UN Women
WITNESS

DC

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



University Professor Michael Doyle met with the advocates to discuss the Global Compact on Migration.

LGBTQ Activist

AFRICA

“That moment changed my life as it came clear that demanding rights that were taken away and consolidating protection mechanisms needed a community that was aware of its rights and able to connect its existence to that of other marginalized communities.”

Growing up in a modest and quiet neighborhood in the capital city, I was always perceived as different. That difference would take the form of religious beliefs (as we were living in a Catholic area), ethnicity and/or the fact that I was not conforming to the expected manifestation of masculinity. My parents always encouraged me to strive to provide the best of myself, being rigorous with all that I engage in, and to find my salvation in reading.

At puberty, I realized that contrary to my other classmates, I was not attracted to girls and started an internal journey of questioning and self-acceptance, a journey I couldn't share with anyone for fear of judgement and rejection from society. During my denial moments, suicide thoughts and self-shaming became routine – they were my companion for almost three years.

In 2008, I met for the first time a group of gay activists who were starting to organize at regular meetings in a café. They had peened a safe space for identifying and questioning gay men. I was so happy I had found a place where I could meet people who were like me. In the same space, they had started some programming around HIV/AIDS for men who have sex with men that were not speaking necessarily to my needs. I successfully lobbied the board chair to start a support group for young and teenage gays and lesbians identifying and questioning that would then meet twice a month to share stories of resilience, tears and joy as well as tips on how to navigate the school environment. It was beautiful!

A few months later, while we were excited and busy enjoying the existence of our space, the government introduced a law criminalizing homosexuality. This sparked fear and sent into hiding hundreds of people. Various ways of activism started taking form, strategizing on the best way to construct a path to decriminalization and initiate programs to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans persons.

Sometime later, I got a call from a friend who wanted to share ideas on how to build a resilient community engagement on advocacy, looking beyond the public health perspective. That moment changed my life as it came clear that demanding rights that were taken away and consolidating protection mechanisms needed a community that was aware of its rights and able to connect its existence to that of other marginalized communities. I also realized that what had happened in my country was similar to what was happening around the world. Action was needed! People ready to dedicate themselves to that cause were needed. I was available. I embarked on this journey a few months later. I am now in a leadership position.

As I reflect on my journey of becoming an advocate, I couldn't be more thankful for a platform for strengthening human rights advocates as they foster the understanding and operationalizing of interconnection between sexual orientation and gender identity with civil and political rights but most importantly also with economic, social and cultural rights.



Olena (2nd row, 10th from right) attended the OutSummit organized by OutRight Action International.

CLASSES

Human Rights and Human Wrongs
Health and Human Rights
Advocacy

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Current LGBT Discourse in Kenya and Ukraine, Center for Gender and Sexuality, Columbia Law School

Conversation with African Human Rights Advocates, Center for African Education, Teachers College

LGBTI Voices from the Frontlines, Columbia's Humanitarian Organization for Migration and Emergencies

Lunchtime Conversations: Kenedy Abor Owiti and Anonymous Advocate, Spectrum and UN Working Group, School of International and Public Affairs

NETWORKING

NYC

African Services Committee
Amnesty International USA
Arcus Foundation
Human Rights Watch
The New School
New York Public Library Trans Oral History Project
Out in Tech
OutRight Action International
Parliamentarians for Global Action
SAGE (Advocacy and Services for LGBT Elders)
StoryCorps
Treatment Action Group
UN Women
WITNESS

DC

Amnesty International USA
Center Global
FHI360
Fund for Global Human Rights
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
Heartland Alliance
Human Rights Campaign
Human Rights First
National Endowment for Democracy
Open Society Foundations
PFLAG
Randal Mason Consulting
Robert F. Kennedy
Human Rights
Synergia
USAID
Victory Institute
World Bank Inspection Panel

3

WORKSHOPS



Human Rights Watch offers a six-part workshop on research, writing and documentation.

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 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.

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 two-part workshop series focused on fundraising from institutional donors and individuals.

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.

HUMAN RIGHTS SKILLS AND ADVOCACY

Dragica Mikavica, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict

Dragica Mikavica, Watchlist's Advocacy Officer, spoke about the design and implementation of Watchlist's advocacy strategies in New York to advance its priorities with the UN Security Council, permanent missions, agencies, and other relevant bodies.



Watchlist on Children in Armed Conflict offered a workshop.

INTERVIEWING

Thomas R. Lansner

Thomas R. Lansner provided basic skills and tips for preparing and presenting positive and proactive media and public appearances that promote the advocates' messages.



The advocates learned about the art of interviewing.

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 and a co-founder of The Abolition Institute which is working to end slavery in Mauritania.



2010 Advocate Bakary Tandia advised on how to maximize the HRAP experience.



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.

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

Nicole Pombier Berger

An oral historian / educator / artist, Nicole Pombier Berger spoke about her work at the intersection of disability and social change, which she has explored through projects such as the TILL Living Legacy Project, Here: Stories from Selinsgrove and KenCrest, and Nothing About Us Without Us.

AN INTRODUCTION TO STORYCORPS

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 introduced the advocates to their work by sharing previously recorded stories.



Dr. Rosenthal of the Mailman School of Public Health discussed grantwriting.

RAISING FUNDS FROM US FOUNDATIONS

Dr. David Rosenthal, *Mailman School of Public Health*

Dr. David Rosenthal of the Mailman School of Public Health shared tips and resources on grant writing. Dr. Rosenthal is the faculty director of the Executive and Full Time Management programs in Health Policy Management and the Director of Behavior Science for the Center for Family and Community Medicine.

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, *Columbia Health*

Dr. Yaniv Phillips 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.

FALL 2017 EVENTS

Date	Event Title	Speaker	Location
Wednesday, October 11 th (8:00 - 8:00 pm)	LGBT Discourse in Ukraine	2017 Advocate Olena Semerenko, Ukraine	International Affairs Building, Room 1219
Monday, October 16 th (12:00 - 1:00 pm)	Current LGBT Discourse in Burundi, Kenya, & Ukraine	2017 Advocates Kennedy Owiti, Kenya; Olena Semerenko, Ukraine; Anonymous, Africa	Jessie Green Hall, Room 100, Columbia Law School
Wednesday, October 18 th (12:15 - 1:10 pm)	Courage in the Face of Conflict: Social Justice Advocacy in Burundi	Discussion with Pierre Claver Mbitanga, Burundian Human Rights Activist	Columbia Law School, William and Jane Warren Hall, Room 411
Sunday, October 24 th (12:00 - 1:30 pm)	Human Rights Education in México: The Role of Law Schools	2017 Advocate Carlos Anastrolo, Mexico	International Affairs Building, Room 902
Tuesday, October 31 st (12:00 - 1:30 pm)	Opportunities & Challenges in Human Rights Education in Uruguay	2017 Advocate Silvana Anastrolo, Uruguay	International Affairs Building, Room 902
Wednesday, November 1 st (11:20 - 12:45 pm)	LGBT Rights in Ukraine	2017 Advocate Olena Semerenko, Ukraine	Rud Hanes Tower 1, Room 32-217
Tuesday, November 14 th (12:15 - 1:45 pm)	Conversation with African Human Rights Advocates	2017 Advocates Michael Miro, Uganda; Kennedy Owiti, Kenya; Anonymous, Africa	Center for African Education - Teachers College
Tuesday, November 21 st (12:10 - 1:00 pm)	Human Rights Crisis in México: The Role of Mexican Law Schools	2017 Advocate Carlos Anastrolo, Mexico	Jessie Green Hall, Room 146
Wednesday, November 29 th (11:30 - 12:45 pm)	Advocating for Disability Rights in Uganda	2017 Advocate Michael Miro, Uganda	Alan Knorrfield Building, 721 W. 114th Street



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SUPPORT

ISHR is very grateful to the following for their financial support of the advocates in the 2017 Program.

- Anonymous
- Arcus Foundation
- Research Center for the Teaching and Learning of the Law (CEEAD)
- Harriman Institute, Columbia University
- NYARWEK LGBTI Coalition
- Open Society Institute-East Africa
- The Sperry Fund

ISHR wishes to thank the following HRAP alumni for interviewing applicants for the 2017 HRAP:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Lana Ackar, Bosnia-Herzegovina | John Mwebe, Uganda |
| Esther Adhiambo, Kenya | Betty Lee Odur, Uganda |
| Nadia Bazan, Colombia | Absolom Shalakha, Kenya |
| Maria Eugenia Carrera Chavez, Guatemala | Jeffrey Wambaya, Kenya |
| Mulsid Eleas Jr., Uganda | Abubakar Sadiq Yussif, Ghana* |
| Colins Imoh, Nigeria | |
| Iuliana Marcinschi, Moldova | |
| Samuel Matsikure, Zimbabwe | |

*accepted into 2013 HRAP but unable to attend

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HRAP ALUMNI NEWS



▲ **1996 Advocate Twesigye Jackson Kaguri**, the founder of Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project in Uganda, reflected on the meaning of World AIDS Day during an interview with National Public Radio in the USA. Nyaka was featured on page 43 of the 2017 UNAIDS report Right to Health.



▲ In November, **2010 Agnes Apea** participated in the Global Social Business Summit in Paris.



▲ **2014 Advocate Benson Khemis Soro Lako** recently represented his organization CEFoRD at the second NGO Expo at Nyakoron Cultural Center in South Sudan.



▲ Congratulations to **2016 Advocate Nvard Margaryan** and her colleagues at PINK Armenia on the organization's 10th anniversary!



▲ **2008 Advocate Dr. Alejandro Rivera** recently participated in a conference on access to healthcare for the LGBT community in Chiapas, Mexico.



▲ **2010 Advocates Agnes Apea** of Uganda and **Tambu Glenda Muzenda** of South Africa shared a photo from a recent get together.



▲ In September, **2017 Advocate Bakary Tandia** helped lead a fact-finding mission to Mauritania under the auspices of the Rainbow Push Coalition, which was founded by the Rev. Jesse Jackson, and The Abolition Institute, an organization Tandia co-founded to end slavery in that country.



▲ As a facilitator for organizational learning and development, **2016 Advocate Mulshid Eleas Jr.** has successfully worked on consultancies geared towards the development of individuals, organizations and communities. He has worked on projects throughout Uganda and Southeast Asia. In October, he facilitated a training for journalists in Mbale and Tororo (Uganda).



▲ **2016 Advocates Aehshatou Manu** of Cameroon and **Chhing Lamu Sherpa** of Nepal met up at a meeting of the Asian Indigenous Women's Network.



▲ In 2017, Stephanie Kim, Columbia College student, volunteered in Nepal with Mountain Spirit which is chaired by **2016 Advocate Chhing Lamu Sherpa** through ISHR's Student Volunteer Program (SVP). Stephanie Kim shared the following with readers: "I gave presentations on social media and human rights to the National Indigenous Women's Forum and at a talk program organized by Mountain Spirit. On a field visit to Udayapur, I visited several different remote villages and gave presentations on social media, human rights, health, and sanitation to community leaders, families, and children. I also created an infographic on social media as well as a new brochure for Mountain Spirit. I worked as the chief editor of their annual publication called Mountain Trail. I made the theme of the 2017 publication human rights with a special focus on indigenous rights and women's rights." When asked for her feedback on Stephanie's

volunteer work, 2016 Advocate Chhing Lamu Sherpa reported: "I am grateful to Columbia University for sending the most positive, optimistic and dynamic intern to Mountain Spirit. Stephanie Kim has energized our members and helped Mountain Spirit to raise awareness on Indigenous issues while also assisting with social media, documentation and publications. She exceeded our expectations."

In 2011, SVP was created to connect Columbia students with volunteer opportunities at HRAP alumni-led organizations around the globe. Since then, 20 Columbia students have volunteered with HRAP alumni in countries including Georgia, India, Kenya, Liberia, Mexico, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Uganda. In 2016, Columbia students were invited to volunteer at the organizations of ISHR's newest fellowship program, the Alliance on Historical Dialogue and Accountability.



◀ In 2017, Stephanie V. Grepo, Director, Capacity Building, initiated a side event on advocacy tools at the 16th session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The lineup of speakers included Jeremiah Kyle Drake of the Theater of the Oppressed at The Riverside Church and Jackie Zammuto of WITNESS, both of whom were invited to speak by **2015 Advocate Sandra Creamer**. Stephanie also initiated and led a survey of the training needs of 300 indigenous rights advocates and oversaw the development of a training curriculum based on the survey results. Both items were delivered to Sandra Creamer for her organization which works on indigenous rights.

HRAP ADMINISTRATION

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 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 during the Committee on the Status of Women and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

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.

SUMMER LIGHTFOOT was the 2017 HRAP Coordinator. A graduate student in the Julien J. Studley Graduate Program in International Affairs at The New School, Summer is interested in digital security. While working toward a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies with minors in Chinese and East Asian Studies at the City University of New York-College of Staten Island, Summer spearheaded an initiative to fund a scholarship for single mothers attending the college. She is fluent in Mandarin Chinese.

DAKOTA PORTER was the 2017 HRAP Program Assistant. A student in ISHR's Human Rights Studies Master's program, Dakota is interested in the intersection of human rights and the arts. With the School for International Training, she traveled to Morocco where she conducted an independent research project titled, "Peace Corps Morocco: International Aid or Grassroots Colonialism?" by interviewing Peace Corps volunteers and Moroccan Peace Corps staff and analyzing the history of Peace Corps Morocco through primary documents. She presented this research at the Human Development Conference at the University of Notre Dame.



Many thanks to Inna for the unique view of the 2017 HRAP!

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ISHR STAFF

Irene Atamian, *Business Manager*

Elazar Barkan, *Director*

Joanne Bauer, *Senior Researcher, Business and Human Rights*

Kristina Eberbach, *Director, Education*

Yasmine Ergas, *Senior Advisor*

Elyse Greenblatt, *Programs Coordinator*

Stephanie V. Grepo, *Director, Capacity Building*

Gergana Halpern, *Program Manager, Education*

Ariella Lang, *Director, Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability*

J. Paul Martin, *Senior Scholar*

Lara Nettlefield, *Director of Graduate Studies*

Sandra Paunksniene, *Interim Director, Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability*

David L. Phillips, *Director, Peace-building and Rights and Human Rights*

Amal Qadeer, *Program Coordinator*

Andrew Rizzardi, *Communications Coordinator*

Elsa Stamatopoulou, *Director, Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program*

John Washburn, *Adjunct Research Scholar, American NGO Coalition for the ICC*

Inga Winkler, *Director of Undergraduate Studies*



Human Rights Watch kindly provided the advocates with a visit to the top of the Empire State Building.

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TESTIMONIALS



The advocates met with Justin Mazzola at AI-USA.

We at Amnesty International USA always enjoy hosting and meeting with the HRAP participants. While my work is exclusively focused on domestic issues, our international presence working on many issues that the Advocates are focused on usually results in an engaging conversation about their work and advocacy back home, and this year was no exception to that experience. I always stress that our work as an organization is not possible without the work that they do on the ground in their own countries and try to relate that the US is no different in terms of addressing similar issues that they are working on back home. I look forward to meeting the next HRAP class and experiencing the same engaging discussions.

JUSTIN MAZZOLA
Researcher
Amnesty International USA

I was contacted by longtime advocate Judy Heumann to connect with Michael Miro from Uganda. When I met Michael I was intrigued that he was getting around NYC in a folding heavy wheelchair. After talking to him I quickly realized nothing would hold him back. He navigated the subways, buses, streets and taxis in NYC and said that it was easy to get around. The work that he is doing in Uganda is impressive but comes with many obstacles. Transportation is not accessible, the infrastructure does not accommodate for him and attitudes toward disability are complicated. Michael has embraced all of these issues and is determined to make change. He gathered lots of facts and was relentless in asking questions on how we get things done. I believe that change will certainly start with Michael and hope the lessons he learned in NYC can carry over to Uganda. In order to get Michael going MOPD supplied him with a Titanium Rigid Wheelchair that we were able to get from a local non-profit, Wheelchair Sports Federation, so he can make change in style.

VICTOR CALISE
Commissioner
NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

For many years now, the Inspection Panel has had the pleasure of hosting those taking part in Columbia University's Human Rights Advocates Program in our offices at the World Bank's headquarters in Washington. The meeting provides us a chance to introduce the Panel, its mandate and its operations to the group. But we also see it as a chance to learn from the HRAP participants who willingly share their knowledge and on-the-ground experience and come ready with questions about the Panel's work in responding to complaints from people who are, or might be, affected, by a World Bank-financed project. For example, at our most recent meeting questions were posed about how the Panel deals with retaliation concerns from complainants and how it makes potentially affected communities aware that it exists as an avenue of redress if needed.

ROB DOHERTY
*Acting Executive Secretary
 Senior Communications Officer
 The Inspection Panel
 The World Bank*

OutRight Action International's focus is human rights for LGBTIQ people everywhere. We truly appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss with activists who are advocating for LGBTIQ rights in their home countries, to talk about what is happening there and to discuss the work of OutRight around the world and at the United Nations. The advocates left our office with a series of our research publications - there is a lot our movement can learn across regions and we are happy whenever we can facilitate that learning for others as well as learn more about what is happening in different countries ourselves. Thank you for the opportunity to meet the advocates and we are looking forward to meeting new advocates next year!

MARIA SJÖDIN
*Deputy Executive Director
 OutRight Action International*



Dr. Gonzalo Castro de la Mata, chair of the Inspection Panel at the World Bank, met with the advocates.

As an educator, writer and organizer I had the honor of meeting with participants from the Columbia University's Human Rights Advocates Program. It was an invaluable exchange of ideas, strategies and life stories that provided an opportunity for me to share the HIV/AIDS related work I do in the US and Canada, and to hear the vital, complicated and meaningful HIV/AIDS related work that is being done elsewhere by these advocates. So taken by the encounter, I organized a community conversation with Columbia University's Human Rights Advocates Program to help share the work of the program and the advocates I had the good fortune of meeting. In a city like New York with 8 million people, and at a networked time like no other, one would think that meeting new and interesting people from around the world and learning about their work would be a daily occurrence. But sadly, it is not. We need programs that uplift, support and bring together scholars, activists and others doing good work from around the world. Columbia University's Human Rights Advocates Program is a much needed gem.

THEODORE (TED) KERR
The New School + What Would an HIV Doula Do?

mobilize **confidence** strategies **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

