1 Introduction

Before I came to HRAP, I knew that people were suffering in Bosnia and that people were dying in Sudan. But when I came to HRAP, I met advocates from Bosnia, Sudan and other countries—people who are living and making a difference in their countries.

Colette Lespinasse, 2010 Advocate

Photo below and on the cover—The Advocates visited the Statue of Liberty at the end of orientation week.
The 22nd year of the Human Rights Advocates Program (HRAP) at Columbia University continued the Institute for the Study of Human Right’s commitment to strengthening the skills, knowledge and networks of proven grassroots human rights leaders who are “making a difference in their countries,” as observed by the 2010 Advocate from Haiti, Colette Lespinasse.

Academic coursework, skills-building workshops and networking opportunities with the human rights, academic and donor communities, primarily in New York City and Washington, D.C., comprise the HRAP curriculum. Through a very competitive selection process, 10 human rights leaders were selected from 170 applicants. The 2010 Advocates came from Belarus, Bosnia/USA, Ghana, Haiti, Honduras, Mauritania/USA, South Africa, Sudan and Uganda (2) to share and deepen their expertise on a number of issues including HIV/AIDS, gender justice, disability rights, LGBT rights, genocide, war crimes, trade unions, the rule of law, migration, sexual and reproductive rights and immigrants’ rights.

The 2010 HRAP welcomed the involvement of HRAP alumni. Several HRAP alumni agreed to interview applicants to the 2010 Program. In addition to interviewing a number of strong applicants, 2009 Advocate Elsadig Elsheikh returned to Columbia University to lead a very well-received workshop on Negotiation and Communication. 1996 Advocate Twesigye Jackson Kaguri shared with the Advocates and members of the Columbia University community his experience building schools for AIDS orphans in his home country, Uganda.

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NAJLAA AHMED
Human Rights Monitoring Officer
ACIPS
Sudan

For Najlaa Ahmed, the calling to human rights came as a result of the world that surrounded her in her home country of Sudan. Growing up, Najlaa witnessed firsthand the fear of her people not to talk or walk freely under the Sudanese restrictive laws. “I heard stories of people who disappeared or were tortured. Some survived with their physical and mental pain, but others died. Seeing the impact of war on my people’s faces, I felt it was my duty to my people and to my profession as a lawyer to take a stand against human rights violations, discrimination, injustice and inequality—to help my people have a better future and to live with dignity to honor my profession.” Najlaa has faced every situation of injustice with the mindset, “What can I do? I am morally and legally obliged to provide those vulnerable with what I can.”
Najlaa's involvement in human rights work thus began including performing charity work collecting clothes and food to give to people in need. During this time, she says, “I gained enormous knowledge and recognized the other side of life—the life of street children, women in IDP camps, women in prisons, and the challenges of women tea and food sellers who each has her own story of struggle.”

Through pursuing advocacy of human rights, Najlaa explains that she discovered how there are no limits to her involvement and what she is able to achieve. “This is a continuing battle without rest,” she says of her work in human rights. “My only instrument is my profession [as an advocate], which I’m relying on to achieve justice for all.” In the face of the struggle and battle she faces to help improve the human rights of her people, Najlaa looks to the achievements of great leaders who have come before her. She reflects, “Like Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama, others I have met, and others I dream to meet, who dedicated their lives to the cause of a better future for their people and set principles and values to follow, I continually find motivation to work for human rights. Above all, the prolonged suffering of my people motivates me not to surrender.”

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Faculty Mentor

Mahmood Mamdani
Herbert Lehman Professor of Government and
Professor of Anthropology
Department of Anthropology

Classes

Transitional Justice, Columbia Law School
Major Debates in African Studies, Department of Anthropology

Networking

New York City
Arcus Foundation
Center for Constitutional Rights
Columbia University, New Media Taskforce
Crisis Action
Development Group for Alternative Policies
Friends of Africa International, Democracy and
Human Rights Project Sudan
Hollaback!
Human Rights Watch, Africa Division
International Center for Transitional Justice
International Refugee Rights Initiative
Open Society Foundations, Africa Regional
Program
United Nations Development Fund for Women
Wellspring Advisors, LLC

Washington, D.C.

Fund for Global Human Rights
Inspection Panel, The World Bank Group
Institute for Policy Studies
International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
Refugees International
Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human
Rights
United States Institute for Peace
Vital Voices Global Partnership

Greater Boston Area

Harvard University, Harvard Humanitarian
Initiative
My Sister’s Keeper

Speaking Engagements

Building Peace: Exploring the Intersections of Militarism and Violence Against Women, Interactive Workshop Presentation. Sponsored by the United Methodist Women, the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University and the World Council of Churches UN Office.


Najlaa with Ky-Mani Marley at the “Get Up, Stand Up, Speak Up—Stop Discrimination” UN event in honor of Human Rights Day. Photo courtesy of Najlaa Ahmed.
JAMES RWAMPIGI ANIYAMUZAALA
Human Rights Program Coordinator
Youth with Physical Disability Development Forum
Uganda

When James Aniyamuzaala became hard of hearing after an accident at the age of eight, it was not his first encounter facing the situation of persons with disabilities. His mother, Mary Aniyamuzaala, was a polio survivor and one of the founders of the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda.

As an orphan at the age of 12, he recognized that education was the only way for him to survive. However, James became frustrated with the stereotypes placed on him as a person with a disability. James made it his mission to prevent other persons with disabilities, particularly children and youth, from having the same challenges he had encountered. He says, “I seek to remove the institutional barriers that limit participation of persons with disabilities in development and community programs. I believe that the quality of life of a society can also be measured by how it treats its most vulnerable citizens.” James also credits his mother as a strong source of inspiration to him: “I felt my mother had left behind a mission to help women and children with disabilities through her organization and that I was responsible to realize her dream of a good and improved standard of living for persons with disabilities.”

He says, “Positive and progressive action both locally and globally motivates me to keep advocating for human rights for persons with disabilities.”

Faculty Mentor
Michelle Sondra Ballan
Assistant Professor of Social Work
School of Social Work

Classes
Issues in Rural Development, School of International and Public Affairs
Law, Policy, Rights: Exploring Rights-Based Approaches to Health, Mailman School of Public Health

I felt my mother had left behind a mission to help women and children with disabilities through her organization and that I was responsible to realize her dream of a good and improved standard of living for persons with disabilities.
Development Group for Alternative Policies
Disability Action
Global Information Network
Hearing Loss Association of America
Human Rights Watch, Africa Division
Human Rights Watch, Disability Rights Division
Interactive Drama for Education and Awareness in Schools (Youth Program)
International Disability Alliance
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
Open Society Foundations, Africa Regional Program
Riverside Church of New York City
StoryCorps
United Nations Children’s Fund
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
United Nations Programme on Youth
Wellspring Advisors, LLC

Washington, D.C.
Advocates for Youth
Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
American Association of Persons with Disabilities
Burton Blatt Institute/Global Partnership for Disability Development
Fund for Global Human Rights
Inspection Panel, The World Bank Group
Institute for Policy Studies
National Endowment for Democracy

Open Society Foundations, Disability Rights Initiative
Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights
U.S. Department of State Bureau of African Affairs
United States Institute for Peace
United States International Council on Disability
U.S. Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
World Bank Group, Disability Division

Speaking Engagements

AIDS and Disability: An Emerging Concern.
Panel Presentation on Work in Human Rights featuring Agnes Atim, James Antyamuzaala, Glenda Muzenda, Andrea Nula and Bakary Tandia. Sponsored by the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University.
Presentation on Human Rights Work: Sponsored by Open Society Foundations, Africa Regional Program.
Presentation on Human Rights Work featuring Colette Lepinausse, Glenda Muzenda, Susan Aryeetey, Andrea Nula and James Antyamuzaala. Sponsored by the Undergraduate Human Rights Program, Columbia University.

2008 Advocate Dr. Roger Luhiriri (DRC) welcomed James to NYC.
SIARHEI ANTUSEVICH
Secretary-Treasurer
Belarusian Independent Trade Union
Belarus

Siarhei Antusevich began his fight to promote human rights in Belarus by distributing leaflets to educate people about their rights at public demonstrations. He explains, “I do human rights work because I want to change the lives of Belarusian citizens—so they can have better working conditions.”

Siarhei has helped workers with issues including vacation time, work hours and plant conditions. Thanks to the successes he was able to achieve, Siarhei eventually joined the Belarus Independent Trade Union. He said, “I saw that I could solve the problems of workers. The independent union had grassroots activities, provided labor and legal aid, and organized meetings to create local enterprise unions.” Siarhei has since taken advantage of all of these mechanisms to improve labor rights in Belarus. Even though the Belarusian government has continued to suppress trade unions, Siarhei remains compelled to continue his work. “There are many violations in different human rights spheres in Belarus,” he states, “so I think it’s very important for me to change this situation. When my union members say to me, ‘Thank you,’ I am motivated to keep advocating for human rights.” Siarhei concludes, “Humans are born free, but some people have advantages over others. I want to make our world just.”

Faculty Mentors

Alexander A. Cooley
Associate Professor
International Relations and Foreign Policy, School of International and Public Affairs
Political Science Department, Barnard College

Jack Lewis Snyder
Director of The Harriman Institute, School of International and Public Affairs
Robert and Renee Belfer Professor of International Relations, Political Science Department

Class
Social Movements and Social Change, School of International and Public Affairs

“Humans are born free, but some people have advantages over others. I want to make our world just.”

Networking

New York City
Arcus Foundation
American Jewish Committee
Association for Union Democracy
Belarusian-American Association
Business & Human Rights Resource Centre
Columbia Law School, Center for Gender and Sexuality Law
Columbia University, New Media Taskforce
Columbia University, Harriman Institute
Development Group for Alternative Policies
East-West Management Institute, Inc.
Open Society Foundations, Russia/CEE Division
Wellspring Advisors, LLC

Washington, D.C.
American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations/Solidarity Center
Fund for Global Human Rights Inspection Panel, The World Bank Group
Institute for Policy Studies
International Labor Rights Forum
National Democratic Institute
National Endowment for Democracy
Susan was directly exposed to the intensity of male dominance in society such as learning that by 2006, only 10 percent of the participation in the district assemblies of Ghana was female. She also met with abused women and helped them to receive legal reparation. After successfully acquiring childcare for a woman, Susan says, “I knew this was a good cause, and I was motivated to follow human rights.” Since then, Susan has shaped her career around human rights. She explains, “I’ve learned never to accept no as an answer, never to see a closed door as a lost opportunity. I look only at the possibilities. I now apply the lessons from my work to my personal life.”

Working in human rights has also taught her that men are a necessary part of the empowerment of women. “The organization I work for started implementing a program to improve women’s access to justice in the northern region, where it established a Sister Watch group, a type of community watch program to assist domestic violence victims. At first, the organization assumed that it will involve only women, but it was realized that without engaging men and bringing human rights to them as well, the established customary laws

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can’t change. The involvement of men may lead them to change their own mindset and to help their wives and the community.”

Susan now looks ahead to expand her work with some of the tools she learned about in HRAP. “I have a passion to see new media technology being used to have an impact on women professionally. The internet and digital technology are here with us. Mobile phone technology helped Ghana and Africa at large not only cross the barrier but leapfrog technological challenges to join the rest of the world. Embracing digital technology will be a great way to provide opportunities for both young women and men.” Susan wants to provide opportunities for young boys and girls to learn about new media and technology and utilize the opportunities of new media to find solutions to human rights issues in her country. She adds, “This will also serve as a way empower the youth and cultivate their interest in human rights issues.”

Faculty Mentor

Katherine M. Franke
Professor of Law
Director, Center for Gender and Sexuality Law
Columbia Law School

Classes

Human Rights in Sub-Saharan Africa, Barnard College

Networking

New Media, School of International and Public Affairs
Columbia Law School, Center for Gender and Sexuality Law
Columbia University, Institute of African Studies
Columbia University, New Media Taskforce
Connect to Learn Development Group for Alternative Policies
Equal Rights Now Foundation Center
Global Fund for Women
Global Information Network

New York City

Arcus Foundation
Barnard College
Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs
Center for Reproductive Rights

Washington, D.C.

Global Justice Center
Hollaback!
Human Rights Watch, Africa Division
Legal Momentum
Open Society Foundations, Africa Regional Program
StoryCorps
United Nations Development Fund for Women
Wellspring Advisors, LLC

Speaking Engagements


Interview on The African Show, WKCR-FM (89.9 FM), Columbia University.
Her work in human rights has included positions in well-known international organizations such as the International Rescue Committee, War Child Holland, and Childfund. According to her, “I knew that to make the most difference—to really work to protect girls’ rights—I had to work with the most vulnerable.” She cites this as the reason for becoming Executive Director of the National Community of Women Living with HIV and AIDS in Uganda (NACWOLA). At NACWOLA, Agnes empowers women living with HIV/AIDS to live a dignified and productive life without prejudice.

Agnes also explains that working in human rights has greatly changed her own understanding of human rights. “Before, I thought human rights were just for victims, but I’ve realized human rights are also...”

My work made me realize that human rights do not exist in isolation. Human rights are a cross-cutting issue—they are a part of everything.
for non-victims. Boys and girls must be treated the same, and human rights creates the balance. Having been a victim, I don’t point fingers anymore. As my mother said, “When you point your finger, all the others are pointing back at you.” Agnes affirms the universality of human rights she has learned from her work and continues to live by them. “My work made me realize that human rights do not exist in isolation. Human rights are a cross-cutting issue—they are a part of everything.” She remains unsettled, however, by the disconnect between victims of human rights abuses and the mechanisms available to them to access justice. She says, “The world is now aware of human rights and violations, but what do mechanisms like CEDAW mean if not translated into action and able to reach ordinary women whose rights are being violated, women who don’t even know about their rights? That’s why I’m in HRAP—to get better skills on how to engage and hold all those accountable for the implementation of UN conventions and international human rights treaties. I want to ensure that these mechanisms have meaning in the lives of people and ensure accessible justice for all.”

Faculty Mentor

Dr. David Hoos
Director of Mailman School of Public Health – International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs
Assistant Professor of Clinical Epidemiology
Mailman School of Public Health

Class
Law, Policy, Rights: Exploring Rights-Based Approaches to Health, Mailman School of Public Health

Networking

New York City
Barnard College
Center for Reproductive Health
Columbia Law School, Center for Gender and Sexuality Law
Columbia University, Institute of African Studies
Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health
Columbia University, New Media Taskforce
Development Group for Alternative Policies
Global Information Network
Hollaback!
Huairou Commission Grassroots Women
International Academy
Human Rights Watch, Africa Division
New York City AIDS Housing Network
Open Society Foundations, Africa Regional Program
Open Society Foundations, Public Health
United Nations, Baha’I International Community Office
United Nations Children’s Fund
United Nations Development Fund for Women

United Nations Development Program
Wellspring Advisors, LLC

Washington, D.C.
Centre for Development and Population Activities
Center for Health and Gender Equity

Fund for Global Human Rights
Global AIDS Alliance
Inspection Panel, The World Bank Group
Institute for Policy Studies
International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
She quickly found an opportunity at the Catholic radio station, Radio Soleil. “I was inspired by the role of Radio Soleil to make changes. The information and education awareness programs it broadcast nationally made it the only radio [station in Haiti] to do this.” She later began to focus on migrant rights after discovering the discrimination against Haitians in the Dominican Republic. She says, “When the Dominican Republic expelled over 80,000 Haitians during the Aristide administration, I created my organization GARR because I wanted to improve relations and offer humanitarian assistance.” She has since opened up constructive dialogue between Haitians and Dominicans in the Dominican Republic.

She said, “I discovered I need to keep working not just with Haitians but with Dominicans as well. That’s why I decided to create GARR.” She has since worked to improve relations and offer humanitarian assistance between Haitians and Dominicans in the Dominican Republic.

GLANZA MUSENDA

COLETTE LESPINASSE
Executive Director
Groupe d’Appui aux Rapatries et aux Refugies
Haiti

During the 1980s, Colette Lespinasse became an advocate as she learned about the plight of peasants and the urban poor in Haiti. She started attending meetings and activities to improve Haitian society. She quickly found an opportunity at the Catholic radio station, Radio Soleil. “I was inspired by the role of Radio Soleil to make changes. The information and education awareness programs it broadcast nationally made it the only radio [station in Haiti] to do this.” She later began to focus on migrant rights after discovering the discrimination against Haitians in the Dominican Republic. She says, “When the Dominican Republic expelled over 80,000 Haitians during the Aristide administration, I created my organization GARR because I wanted to improve relations and offer humanitarian assistance.” She has since opened up constructive dialogue between Haitians and Dominicans in the Dominican Republic.

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as well, to advocate not only within Haiti but within the Dominican Republic too."

She concludes, “Human rights has given me a passion. Now, I can’t work somewhere without passion.”

Faculty Mentor
Peter Rosenblum
Lieff, Cabraser, Heimann & Bernstein Clinical Professor in Human Rights
Columbia Law School

Classes
International Migration, Department of Sociology
Oral History, Oral History MA Program

Networking
New York City
Arcus Foundation
Barnard College
Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs
Columbia Law School, Center for Gender and Sexuality Law
Columbia University, Institute of African Studies
Columbia University, New Media Taskforce
Columbia University, WKCR-FM
Development Group for Alternative Policies Foundation Center
Hollaback!

Human Rights Watch, Americas Division
Legal Momentum
New School, Latin America Forum
New York University, School of Law, Center for Human Rights and Global Justice
Open Society Foundations, International Women’s Program
Saint Mary’s Church
StoryCorps
Wellsping Advisors, LLC

Washington, D.C.
American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations/Solidarity Center
Center for Justice and International Law
Fund for Global Human Rights
Inspection Panel, The World Bank Group
Institute for Policy Studies
International Center for Journalists
International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
Refugees International
Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights
Solidarity Center/AFIL-CIO
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
United States Institute for Peace
Vital Voices Global Partnership
Voice of America

Greater Boston Area
Harvard Humanitarian Initiative
International Network of Crisis Mappers

Speaking Engagements
Interview with the Global Ethics Forum, Carnegie Ethics Studio, Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs.
Interview with Public Affairs Student Group at Princeton University traveling to Haiti on a contract with the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund.
Interview with students from the Oral History Master of Arts Program at Columbia University.
Interview with Voice of America.
Interview with WKCR-FM (89.9 FM), Columbia University.
How the Intersections of Geography and Immigration Affect Issues of Identity and Diversity of Four Border Regions: Bangladesh-India, Bangladesh-Burma, Haiti-Dominican Republic and USA-Mexico. Sponsored by Club Bangla, SOL, Club Zamana and HAS Columbia University, Co-Cosponsored by the Office of the University Chaplain and The Kraft Family Fund for Intercultural and Interfaith Awareness.
Presentation on Groupe d’Appui aux Rapatries et aux Refugies (GARR). Sponsored by Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University.
Presentation on Human Rights Work featuring Colette Lespinasse, Glenda Muzenda, Susan Aryeetey, Andrea Nuila and James Anyimamuzala. Sponsored by the Undergraduate Human Rights Program, Columbia University.

Colette and the other Advocates learned about campaigns at AIUSA.
GLENDA MUZENDA

South Africa

“`To work in human rights, you need to be passionate. One person can make a difference,” says Glenda Muzenda. Her advocacy career stems from a more personal turn in life, the suicide of a friend who had HIV/AIDS. Glenda said, “I felt the communities and families didn’t understand what Sally had gone through, as many women who have had to go through this unnecessary pain of being stigmatized and isolated because of a disease that has unfortunately yet to be embraced in our society still today. My friend seemed so alone, and I thought no one should ever be alone. Sally committed suicide in 2001 not because she was too ill. She was tired of being the laughing stock.”

Emboldened by her experiences, Glenda volunteered for British Columbia People with AIDS in Vancouver, Canada. She quickly decided to return to South Africa where she thought her skills were needed.

Her goal is to change social attitudes concerning stigmas by raising awareness of the rights available to people living with HIV/AIDS. She said, “We need a rights-based approach to all efforts to holistically care for our people.” The need for human rights, she affirms, is so strong because even after having the right information, resources to implement changes are still lacking. That need is what continues to lead her work today. “I want to wake up and not worry about care giving, yet there is still a need for trained people to take care of people, and also women in communities are still being neglected and not looking inwards to get help, too. This is a gender and economical justice issue that is turning into another crisis of health for women in this sector.”

Faculty Mentor
Theodorus Sandfort
Research Scientist, HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies
Associate Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences
Mailman School of Public Health

Classes
Law, Policy, Rights: Exploring Rights-Based Approaches to Health, Mailman School of Public Health
Sexuality, Gender and Human Rights, Mailman School of Public Health

Networking
New York City
Arcus Foundation
Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice
Barnard College

Center for Gay, Lesbian, and Trans People
Columbia Law School, Center for Gender and Sexuality Law
Columbia University, Institute of African Studies
Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health
Columbia University, New Media Taskforce
Columbia University, Queer Health Task Force
Columbia University, WKCR-FM Development Group for Alternative Policies
Global Information Network
Health Global Access Project
Hollaback!
Huairou Commission Grassroots Women International Academy
Human Rights Watch, Africa Division
Human Rights Watch Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights Program
M·A·C AIDS Fund
New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti Violence Project
Open Society Foundations, Africa Regional Program
Open Society Foundations, Public Health Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders

“To work in human rights, you need to be passionate. One person can make a difference.”
Andrea Nuila grew up with a perspective of the reality of Honduras that her peers did not share. “I was sitting in my car one day,” she recalls, “and suddenly there was a gun pointed at my head because they wanted my cell phone. While this was not unusual for Honduras, I knew it shouldn’t be this way.” Andrea’s parents are political activists and have been instrumental in teaching her that human rights are a way to measure society. “My mother taught me about feminism. Both of my parents were exiled from Honduras to Mexico, so they raised me to believe in social justice,” she explains. As a teenager, Andrea spent her summer vacations helping with different tasks at women’s organizations where she had firsthand contact with gender and women’s issues in Honduras. Having since volunteered at a sexual reproductive rights program, worked with women’s organizations with which her mother and aunts have from Honduras to Mexico, so they raised me to believe in social justice,” she explains. As a teenager, Andrea spent her summer vacations helping with different tasks at women’s organizations where she had firsthand contact with gender and women’s issues in Honduras. Having since volunteered at a sexual reproductive rights program, worked with women’s organizations with which her mother and aunts have

**ANDREA NUILA**

Program Assistant, Sexual and Reproductive Rights Center for Women’s Rights Honduras

Human rights is not a profession. Human rights is a way of being.
been affiliated, and studied human rights law, Andrea states, “Human rights is not a profession. Human rights is a way of being.” She is frustrated by the ignorance and apathy of others. “For me,” she says, “the 2009 coup in Honduras was a real eye-opener. Some of my friends seemed to be living in a bubble—partying, shopping, and going out while the country was in chaos. I can’t accept that. You need to try to do something in those situations, and human rights is an instrument for policy changing.”

Since the coup in Honduras, Andrea has been providing legal assistance to victims of political persecution, documenting the aftermath of civil protests, and assessing the legality of police activities such as tear-gas bombings and arrests—all activities that she performs on top of her regular work with women’s organizations. “I see that Honduras needs people who are educated in human rights,” she says. “I dream that someday the world will be better, but I can’t criticize if I don’t participate.”

Faculty Mentor

Carol Vance
Associate Clinical Professor of Sociomedical Sciences, Mailman School of Public Health

Classes

History & Reconciliation, School of International and Public Affairs

Social Movements and Social Change, School of International and Public Affairs

Networking

New York City
Arcus Foundation
Barnard College
Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs
Center for Reproductive Rights
Columbia University, Columbia Law School, Center for Gender and Sexuality Law
Columbia University, Institute of African Studies
Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health
Columbia University, New Media Taskforce
Columbia University, Rape Crisis/Anti-Violence Support Center
Development Group for Alternative Policies
Facing History and Ourselves
Hollaback!
International Women’s Health Coalition
Open Society Foundations, International Women’s Program
StoryCorps
United Nations Development Fund for Women
Wellspring Advisors, LLC

Washington, D.C.

Center for Health and Gender Equity
Center for Justice and International Law

Centro Mexicano de Derecho Ambiental (CEMDA)
Fund for Global Human Rights
Inspection Panel, The World Bank Group
Just Associates
Latin America Working Group
National Endowment for Democracy
Open Society Foundations, Latin America Program
Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights
United States Institute for Peace
Washington Office on Latin America

Greater Boston Area

International Network of Crisis Mappers

Speaking Engagements


Panel Presentation on Work in Human Rights featuring Agnes Atim, James Anyiamuzoala, Glenda Muzenda, Andrea Nuila

AZRA SMMAILKADIC-BRKIC
Carl Wilkens Fellows
Genocide Intervention Network
Washington, D.C.

“I cannot bring the victims of war back to life, but I can at least work towards ‘Never Again,’” says Azra Smailkadic-Brkic.

As a graduate student in the master’s program Democracy and Human Rights at the University of Sarajevo in cooperation with the University of Bologna, she decided to commit herself to raising awareness about genocide. “One day, I went with my fellow students on a field trip to visit a mass grave near the town of Kljuc in Bosnia. I clearly remember that day—even though it was more than five years ago. A genocide survivor was there. He was an old man—probably more than 80 years old. He shared his story with us. He had lost almost all his family members in the genocide. When he finished talking, we walked through the mass grave field to pay our respects. In front of the site there was a bus and a bus driver waiting for us. All of us boarded the bus. I looked through the window and I saw the old man standing there with his cane at this mass grave site—completely alone with his pain. My heart was broken at this point and that was exactly the moment when I understood what my life’s mission must be.”

In the USA for nearly three years, Azra was named a Carl Wilkens Fellow with the D.C.-based Genocide Intervention Network in 2010. She has been raising awareness of genocide through book groups,

Classes
- Globalization of Motherhood, Mailman School of Public Health
- History & Reconciliation, School of International and Public Affairs
- Transitional Justice, Columbia Law School

Networking
- New York
  - Arcus Foundation
  - Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation
  - Barnard College
  - Cardozo School of Law Program in Holocaust and Human Rights Studies
  - Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs

Columbia Law School, Center for Gender and Sexuality Law
Columbia University, Harriman Institute
Columbia University, Institute of African Studies
Columbia University, New Media Taskforce
Development Group for Alternative Policies
Facing History and Ourselves
International Coalition of Sites of Conscience
Lehman College Library
Reconciliation and Culture Cooperative Network
Safe Horizon
StoryCorps
United Nations Development Fund for Women
Wellspring Advisors, LLC

Washington, D.C.
- American Association of University Women
- Bosniak American Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Enough Project
- Fund for Global Human Rights
BAKARY TANDIA  
Case Manager and Policy Advocate  
African Services Committee  
USA

“In my opinion, it is a moral imperative to be involved in human rights work, a cornerstone of peace and justice in the world,” says Bakary Tandia. He adds, “Promoting human rights is the precondition to assure a viable environment for the human race to thrive in harmony. It is a collective endeavor requiring the participation of each and every person.”

Tandia’s path to becoming a human rights advocate stemmed first from a piqued curiosity in the impact of criminal justice systems on people’s rights and social justice. His education since high school has paralleled this interest and evolved from criminology to international crime and justice. “I first came in contact with human rights,” he explains, “in 1989 when the crackdown on Black Mauritanians by the dictatorial regime resulted in mass killings and mass deportations of black people.” Appalled by the inhuman treatment he witnessed, Tandia began working to document and report human rights violations, educate the public about human rights, and raise awareness of the violations he witnessed with the clandestine movement, Rally for Equality and Justice, which helped to pressure the dictatorship into a multi-party system. “I grew with the idea,” Tandia states, “that you truly own what you share, and you are what you do for your community and the world. I deeply believe that every human being deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Standing for what is right, against what is wrong, is one of my key guiding principles.”

Tandia’s human rights career has thus seen many achievements, particularly in advocating for health and human rights issues of African immigrants to the United States as well as members and communities of the African Diaspora. He currently works as both Case Manager and Policy Advocate at African Services Committee, an NGO dedicated to improving the health and self-sufficiency of the African community in New York City and beyond. In this role, he has been participating in advocacy and lobbying trips at the city, state and federal levels. He has been recognized for his significant contributions to human rights by the New York Daily News, the New York Amsterdam News, and The AfrFRican: Our Voices, Our Vision, Our Culture. Yet, while Tandia has won numerous awards and widespread recognition for his contributions to human rights, he affirms, “What really keeps me energized is that I don’t look at human rights advocacy as a job. Rather, I see it as a mission that enables me to support justice, equality, and freedom—the fundamental values to accomplish that.”
ensure human dignity for all.” Tandia was a Whitney M. Young, Jr. Advocate in the 2010 Human Rights Advocates Program at Columbia University.

Faculty Mentor
Jack M. Saul
Assistant Professor of Clinical Population and Family Health
Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

Classes
Public Health and Humanitarian Action, Mailman School of Public Health
Human Rights and International Organizations, School of International and Public Affairs

Networking
New York City
Arcus Foundation
African Refuge
Barnard College
Center for Reproductive Rights
Columbia Law School, Center for Gender and Sexuality Law

Columbia University, Department of Political Science
Columbia University, Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health
Columbia University, Institute of African Studies
Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health
Columbia University, New Media Taskforce

Detention Watch Network
Global Information Network
Global Justice Center
Human Rights First, Refugee Protection Program
International Rescue Committee
Radio France Internationale
The Development Group for Alternative Policies
Wellspring Advisors, LLC

Washington, D.C.
DC Language Access Coalition
Fund for Global Human Rights
Inspection Panel, The World Bank Group
Institute for Policy Studies
National Endowment for Democracy
National Immigration Forum
Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights
Society for International Development
United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
United States Institute for Peace
Voice of America

Speaking Engagements
Challenges of Migration. Sponsored by the Department of Political Science, Columbia University.


Faces of Change: Film Screening and Q & A with Film Maker Michele Stephenson, featuring Bakary Tandia. Sponsored by the Whitney M. Young Jr. Program on Race Relations at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights and the Undergraduate Human Rights Program, Columbia University.


“What really keeps me energized is that I don’t look at human rights advocacy as a job. Rather, I see it as a mission that enables me to support justice, equality, and freedom—the fundamental values to ensure human dignity for all.”

What really keeps me energized is that I don’t look at human rights advocacy as a job. Rather, I see it as a mission that enables me to support justice, equality, and freedom—the fundamental values to ensure human dignity for all.”
Building Strategic Campaigns, Winning Human Rights Victories

Through this interactive workshop, Ana M. Polanco, the Director of Organizing at Amnesty International USA, worked with Advocates to experiment and explore how to build a successful campaign. The Advocates explored how to develop strategic goals and interconnect them to message development and strategy, audience analysis, decision makers identification and campaign planning. Ana encouraged the Advocates to see themselves as teachers and learners working together in a collaborative space to advance the idea of organizing, building workshops to help the Advocates succeed in their advocacy efforts. The Program deeply appreciates the time that the workshop instructors devote to the Advocates, which always extends beyond class time.

3 Workshops

HRAP organizes a number of skills-building workshops to help the Advocates succeed in their advocacy efforts. The Program deeply appreciates the time that the workshop instructors devote to the Advocates, which always extends beyond class time.

Ana Polanco, the Director of Organizing at AIUSA, worked with the Advocates on campaign advocacy.
Ethics and Compliance

Michael Silverman, Adjunct Associate Professor at School of International and Public Affairs, spoke with the Advocates on the broader issues of managing organizations to meet their respective compliance and ethical challenges. Michael 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.

Crisis Mapping

Advocates attended a two-part workshop on crisis mapping led by Dean Zambrano, Sawako Sonoyama and Jaclyn Carlsen, graduate students and board members of the New Media Task Force at SIPA. The first crisis mapping session provided Advocates with a background on crowdsourcing and the use of technology to respond to humanitarian disasters. During the second session, Advocates engaged in a simulation exercise where they learned to "map" crisis events and compile information retrieved through media monitoring. In real time, participating Advocates contributed to the ongoing effort to map events for the recent flood relief effort in Pakistan.

Communication Skills

2009 Advocate Elsadig Elsheikh, Senior Research Associate at the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University, presented an interactive workshop on negotiation and communication skills geared toward human rights work. The Advocates worked on critical aspects of effective communication skills that will help them to acquire better tools to engage their advocacy within and beyond their communities. Through mapping conflict theories, role plays and discussion, the Advocates used real-life scenarios drawn from their own experiences.

leadership and ultimately using campaigns as an effective tool for winning human rights victories.

The Advocates attended a multi-part workshop at AIUSA on how to build a successful campaign.

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Leadership

William B. Eimicke, the Founding Director of the Picker Center for Executive Education at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs, discussed the study of leadership with the Advocates. He looked at leadership as it affects individual and organizational performance and as a set of skills that can be learned. Bill offered the Advocates examples from his experiences as the Deputy Director of Strategic Planning for the Fire Department of New York, Director of Fiscal Studies for the New York State Senate, Assistant Budget Director of the City of New York, and Deputy Commissioner of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

Oral History

The Advocates received training in oral history research and methodology from the Columbia University Oral History Research Office.

Research, Documentation and Writing

At Human Rights Watch, Diederik Lohman, Senior Researcher with the Health and Human Rights Division, and Fred Abrahams, Special Advisor with the Program Office, offered a six-part workshop on Research, Documentation and Writing. The workshop covered the conceptualization of a research project, interviewing victims and witnesses, interviewing perpetrators and accomplices, and writing.

Fundraising

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 workshop focused on fundraising from institutional donors and individuals.

Stress Management for Human Rights Professionals

A psychiatric social worker and consultant on the support of emergency relief workers, Sheila Platt offered a two-day workshop on understanding stress, trauma and renewal from the perspective of human rights workers. Advocates reflected upon their own experiences and learned how to care for themselves while they care for others.

Since HRW began working with the Advocates years ago, their workshop has been consistently rated by the Advocates as one of the most enriching parts of HRAP.
Video Advocacy

The Advocates travelled to WITNESS in Brooklyn, where Rose Anderson offered a workshop on the effective use of video advocacy as a compliment to traditional approaches to human rights advocacy. 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. Rose discussed the vital role that video can play in advocacy campaigns without great expense or the involvement of video professionals.

Theatre of the Oppressed

Over a two-day period, Jeremiah Kyle Drake of the Education Ministry of The Riverside Church in The City of New York introduced the Advocates to Theatre of the Oppressed, a forum of participatory theatre. Advocates were introduced to the three main aspects of Theatre of the Oppressed: Forum Theatre, Image Theatre and Invisible Theatre in addition to a newly emerging branch, Aesthetics of the Oppressed.

Support

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights is very grateful to the following for their financial support of the 2010 Program:

Arcus Foundation
Columbia University, The Harriman Institute
Open Society Foundations, International Women’s Program
Sperry Fund
Stephen Lewis Foundation
Whitney M. Young, Jr. Memorial Foundation Endowment
Anonymous Donor

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights is very grateful to the following HRAP alumni who kindly interviewed candidates for the 2010 HRAP:

Evalyne Achan
2009 Advocate
Adrian Coman
2000 Advocate
Elsadig Elsheikh
2009 Advocate
Nazibrola Janezashvili
2009 Advocate
Akinyi Ocholla
2009 Advocate
Florencia Ruiz
2009 Advocate
Stephanie V. Grepo
Director, Capacity Building

Stephanie joined ISHR in August 2008. From 2000 to 2007, she was seconded by the U.S. Department of State to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest regional security organization. Stephanie organized elections and developed multi-ethnic experiential education programs in Kosovo, implemented confidence-building projects in the former crisis region of Macedonia, worked on return and integration issues and led a field office of 10 staff in central Croatia, and served as the youth and education advisor in Serbia. As an international observer for the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, she observed the election in Bosnia in October 2010. Stephanie earned a master's degree in human rights from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in 2000. Previously, she worked as an editor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her volunteer experience with resettling Bosnian refugees in Boston in the early 1990s led her to work in human rights.
Tiffany Wheatland
Coordinator, Human Rights Advocates Program

Tiffany joined ISHR in 2009 as an intern. At that time, she was responsible for conducting due diligence on more than 30 finalists for the 2009 HRAP. Based upon her strong work ethic and collegiality, she was asked to return to ISHR on a part-time salaried basis as Program Assistant. In this role, Tiffany was responsible for organizing more than 100 individual and group meetings in NYC for the nine participants in the 2009 HRAP.

In 2010, Tiffany rejoined HRAP on a part-time, salaried basis as HRAP Program Coordinator. In addition to organizing networking opportunities in NYC, Tiffany also organized the five-day networking trip to Washington, D.C., which included a total of five group meetings with organizations including the US Institute of Peace, the National Endowment for Democracy and the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights and more than 50 individual meetings for the Advocates.

Tiffany thanks Dr. Zelma Henriques of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice for her long-time support of HRAP. Photo courtesy of Tiffany Wheatland.

Tiffany’s contribution to HRAP has been noted by all involved with the Program, especially the 2009 and 2010 Advocates who express their deep appreciation to her for her professionalism, warmth and good will.

Prior to her work at ISHR, Tiffany was a graduate student consultant for UNFPA through a practicum offered by The New School. She and her fellow students developed a review of the outcomes of the UNFPA-led Joint Programming Initiative on Violence Against Women and issued guidelines on how to coordinate joint programming on violence against women.

Her interest in socio-economic development and issues pertaining to refugees and displaced people led her to volunteer in West Africa at the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp in Gomoa District, Ghana. She taught English and math to refugee women and children. Tiffany earned a B.A. in International Affairs and Political Science from the University of Iowa. In 2009, she earned a master’s degree in International Affairs from The New School. She is currently working for the Arcus Foundation.

Andrew Richardson
Assistant, Human Rights Advocates Program

Andrew first joined ISHR as an intern to assist with research projects, archival management, and database administration. Asked to come on board as part-time, salaried staff for HRAP in January 2010, he contributed to the Program’s recent expansion by building the HRAP Alumni Network, publicizing HRAP around the globe, and preparing special projects for the upcoming 25th Anniversary of HRAP. He also contributed to the coordination of the 2010 HRAP including the Washington, D.C. networking trip. Many of the 2010 Advocates expressed their deep appreciation to Andrew for the thoughtful attention he gave to them throughout the course of the Program.

Andrew received his B.A. in French and International Studies from Manhattan College and is currently completing his M.A. in Diplomacy and International Relations from the John C. Whitehead School of Diplomacy and International Relations at Seton Hall University. He speaks English, French, and Italian and understands a little bit of Russian.
Institute for the Study of Human Rights

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights was established in 1978 at Columbia University as the Center for the Study of Human Rights. In Spring 2010, Columbia University elevated CSHR to the level of an institute. ISHR is committed to its three core goals of providing excellent human rights education to Columbia students, fostering innovative interdisciplinary academic research, and offering its expertise in capacity building to human rights leaders, organizations, and universities around the world.

ISHR (then CSHR) was the first academic center in the world to be founded on an interdisciplinary commitment to the study of human rights. This remains one of our most distinctive features. We recognize that human rights research must transcend traditional academic boundaries, departments, and disciplines, reaching out to practitioners so as to address the ever-increasing complexities of human rights in a globalized world. ISHR’s emphases on interdisciplinarity, engagement, and globalism draw from and complement the strengths that have long characterized intellectual life at Columbia.

ISHR Staff

Irene Atamian, Business Manager
Elazar Barkan, Executive Director
Kristina Eberbach, Director, Education
Yasmine Ergas, Associate Director
Danielle Goldberg, Coordinator, Peace-building and Rights
Stephanie V. Grepo, Director, Capacity Building
Joe Kirchhoff, Assistant Program Officer
David L. Phillips, Director, Peace-building and Rights

Comments from HRAP’s Partners

We had a rich and dynamic conversation with the Human Rights Advocates at StoryCorps, exploring how to put the human voice in human rights. Our discussion about the challenges and opportunities of recording stories to advance human rights brought out the incredible passion, expertise and experiences of the Advocates, whose commitment and integrity were so inspiring. The Advocates themselves are a testament to the power of the human voice, and we are excited to hear the stories that may come of their interest in recording, preserving and sharing the voices and experiences of people in their home communities.

Nicki Pombier Berger, Coordinator
StoryCorps’ Every Voice

Each year International House is a “home away from home” in New York for hundreds of graduate students, interns and scholars from around the world, including the participants in HRAP. The Advocates’ participation in daily life, educational programs and cultural events at I-House enriches our global community and the I-House experience for all our members. We look forward each year to the opportunity to engage this inspiring group to share their experiences and diverse perspectives and expand their own understanding of the world and the important work they do in their home countries.

Donald L. Cuneo
President
International House New York

It is important that the Advocates’ work be done. They address human wrongs. I applaud their efforts.

Zelma Henriques
Professor of Law, Police Science, and Criminal Justice Administration
John Jay College of Criminal Justice,
The City University of New York
Each year, teaching the Advocates is a valuable learning experience for us. The Advocates always bring rich background, creative insights and lots of energy to our classes.

Diederik Lohman
Senior Researcher
Health and Human Rights Division, Human Rights Watch

I’m pleased to say that the visit by the Advocates has become a welcome annual event here at NED. Often, some Advocates are already NED partners, and others have become partners after becoming familiar with us. The intellectual quality of the Advocates is always high, their work impressive, and the discussions we have had about democracy, human rights, and civil society are consistently stimulating. I hope the Advocates enjoy the visit here as much as I do. We look forward to seeing them again next year.

Dave Peterson
Senior Director
Africa Program, National Endowment for Democracy

The Advocates fully engaged with this year’s workshop Exploring Stress, Trauma and Resilience in Human Rights Work. They discussed the ins and outs of stress: how to recognize it in themselves, their colleagues and partners, its many sources in their work, and what methods of stress management they might use to sustain themselves and their organizations for the rigorous work involved. At one point a group in their 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s, four generations of advocacy, held a sensitive conversation on the difficult topic of leadership transition. It was a privilege to hear the Advocates of HRAP 2010 express their compassion and support for each other as they worked on plans to manage this problematic issue.

Sheila Platt
MSW
Director for External Relations, Community and Family Services International and Consultant on Humanitarian Staff Support

Meeting Columbia’s Advocates has been an invaluable experience. Their stories of courage, ingenuity and tenacity in the effort to win a more just society and a better world are compelling and unforgettable. It has been a privilege to know them.

Lisa Vives
Executive Director
Global Information Network

It has been an honor to mentor two amazing Advocates. I hope they have learned as much from me as I’ve learned from them. Their excitement at this opportunity is infectious. It is so important that women working to end violence against women have the opportunity to share insights, struggles and successes.

Susan Lob
Lecturer
Columbia University School of Social Work

It is a constant pleasure to meet with and discuss the issues of compliance and ethics with the Human Rights Advocates. They are an extraordinary group of individuals whose passion, intelligence, and dedication to their pursuits are a reminder that in a world all too often dedicated to material gain there are individuals seeking a better benefit.

Michael G. Silverman
Adjunct Associate Professor
Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs

HRAP is an opportunity to exchange ideas among human rights leaders, reflect on our collective organizing experiences and explore new methods and technologies that can broaden our ability to engage new audiences and improve our human rights impact. Together, Amnesty International staff and the Advocates explore these possibilities. Columbia’s HRAP gives leaders an opportunity to step back, learn new techniques or receive training that will empower them to do the analysis with their members and leaders to find solutions in their own country context. It’s an amazing learning opportunity for everyone involved.

Ana M. Polanco
Director of Organizing
Amnesty International USA

In their final evaluations, Advocates always report that learning from one another is one of the greatest benefits of HRAP.
HRAP is a great program. It provides grass-roots human rights activists with a unique opportunity to deepen their theoretical understanding of human rights and to expand their practical experience, while gaining visibility and exposure internationally. HRAP is also an inspiring space where activists empower one another by sharing their experiences and expertise and by building unbreakable bonds.

Bakary Tandia
2010 Advocate