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HUMAN RIGHTS



FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

OBSERVER

2004 Human Rights Awards

Walter F. Mondale: “We must act with justice”

Minnesota Advocates’ 2004 Human Rights Awards Dinner on June 16 honored Walter F. Mondale and his legacy of leadership in human rights. The event also highlighted the tradition of social justice and international activism in Minnesota that guided his career and inspired the founding of our organization.

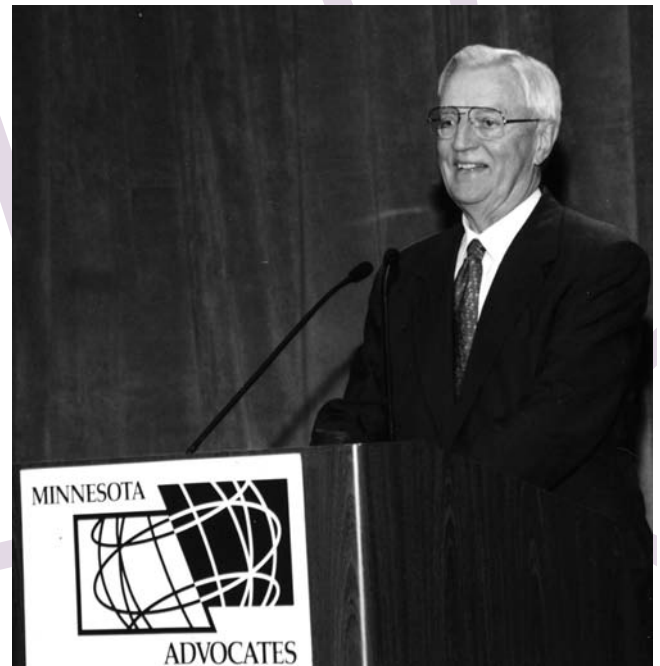
As always, the awards dinner recognized the volunteers who make so much of Minnesota Advocates’ work possible, and the generosity of so many friends and supporters who packed The Depot in downtown Minneapolis to create Minnesota Advocates’ most successful fundraiser.

The 650 people who attended this year’s event watched the Palestinian American Cultural Dance Group, bid on our first-ever silent auction, and enjoyed a new Awards Dinner venue, The Depot’s glass-enclosed atrium in the restored Milwaukee Railroad station on Washington Avenue. They also heard former President Jimmy Carter use his prerecorded video introduction of Walter Mondale to highlight the importance of the work of human rights organizations.

“It is organizations like Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights,” President Carter said, “that turn the world’s good intentions into the noble work of protecting fundamental human rights here at home and overseas.”

This year’s Volunteer Award winners were lawyer Sandra Babcock for her work in opposition to the death penalty; teacher Stephanie Davies for her work on behalf of human rights education; retired judge Mary Louise Klas for her work on legal reforms that ensure the justice system’s fair treatment of women and victims of violence; Dr. Irfan Sandozi for his work on South Asian human rights issues; and the Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi Asylum Appeals Team for its members’ efforts on behalf of asylum seekers. [See profiles on page 6]

It was an evening of perspective from some of America’s icons of human rights. Don Fraser – former Minneapolis mayor, founding Minnesota Advocates board member, and a leader in introducing human rights in the national agenda in the 1970s –



Walter F. Mondale

noted that his friend, the former Vice President, will be remembered as an historic leader in the nation’s and world’s commitment to human rights.

“When the Carter-Mondale team took over the White House in January 1977,” Fraser said in his introduction of Mr. Mondale, “we witnessed the strongest affirmation – the strongest commitment – of the United States to human rights in our history. One result was that the subject of human rights was elevated on the agenda of every other nation in the world.”

President Jimmy Carter also spoke of Walter Mondale’s enduring contribution to human rights.

“I made sure that people around the world knew that Walter Mondale had the confidence of the President of the United States,” Carter said. “But it was just as important that people

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Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights

The mission of Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights is to implement international human rights standards to promote civil society and reinforce the rule of law. Minnesota Advocates was founded in 1983 by a group of Minnesota lawyers who recognized the community's unique spirit of social justice as an opportunity to promote and protect human rights here at home and worldwide. We are a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that investigates and exposes human rights violations; represents immigrants and refugees in our community who are human rights victims; trains and assists groups that protect human rights; and works through education and advocacy in Minnesota to engage the public, policy makers and children about human rights and cultural understanding. Minnesota Advocates holds Special Consultative Status with the United Nations.

From the Director's Desk

We see the consequences of torture on a daily basis here at Minnesota Advocates. More than half of our hundreds of asylum clients are victims of torture seeking refuge in the United States. Like many torture survivors, our clients often continue to suffer physical and psychological effects of their treatment. Although the US government has historically provided asylum and supported treatment for torture survivors, it is now creating more victims.

The prohibition against torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment in both international and domestic law is absolute. The basic human right to be free from torture cannot be derogated under any circumstance, including a national emergency. In spite of President Bush's June 2003 reaffirmation of the United States' commitment to prohibit torture, we have seen numerous reports of torture and other mistreatment of prisoners in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay. The pictures from Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq provide a vivid account of this misconduct.

The Convention Against Torture, to which the United States is a party, defines torture as "any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity."

The US government has acknowledged what it calls "stress and duress tactics" in Iraq. Newspapers detail reports by unnamed government officials of torture and other mistreatment of prisoners. A legal memo leaked from the Justice Department outlines arguments to allow the government to disregard its obligations under the Convention Against Torture.

The reputation of the United States as a world leader in promoting human rights and the rule of law has been severely damaged by these violations of international law. This damage diminishes the effectiveness of US foreign policy and the global campaign against terrorism, and it puts US citizens in other countries at risk.

Moreover, the practice of torture cannot be justified from a national security standpoint. Torture is not an effective means of interrogation. People suffering pain will often say whatever they think will stop the torture, making the information gained suspect and unreliable.

Minnesota Advocates joined with other human rights organizations in a letter to President Bush to demand accountability for this conduct. We asked the administration to take several actions, including: 1) establishing clear prohibitions backed by adequate penalties, including immediately banning "stress and duress" interrogation and any action that would constitute "cruel and unusual punishment" if conducted in the United States; 2) mandating strong enforcement, including permitting independent monitors immediate access to every prisoner; 3) providing public review and full disclosure of all investigations and manuals governing detention and interrogation; and 4) working with Congress to appoint a commission to investigate the allegations. (See www.mnadvocates.org for the complete text of the letter to President Bush.)

International and domestic security depend greatly on adherence to the rule of law. Any government denunciation of improper behavior must be followed by transparent investigations and punishment of perpetrators, at whatever level of government they are found. The United States has the opportunity to reinforce international legal principles by responding appropriately to this scandal. The human rights community has unequivocally condemned these actions and we must work collectively to demand accountability in our government's response.



Robin Phillips
 Executive Director

“The Bill of Rights Is Robust”

Joe Margulies and Guantanamo Bay at the National Security Speaker Series

Minnesota Advocates and Fredrikson & Byron’s Human Rights and National Security Speaker Series was designed last year to be a public discussion of the sometimes competing interests of human rights and civil liberties and the war on terrorism.

At our event in June, just three hours after the Supreme Court of the United States dramatically restored some due process rights to post-September 11 prisoners held in Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, one of the prisoners’ lawyers – Joe Margulies, a Minneapolis attorney and steering committee member for Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights’ Death Penalty Project – stepped before the lunchtime series audience of more than 100 people to discuss the case and its ramifications.

Margulies and the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York brought *Rasul v. Bush* on behalf of four prisoners at Guantanamo Bay. Margulies argued that the United States could not hold people without some process to determine the lawfulness of their detention. On June 28, the Supreme Court agreed, holding in a 6-3 decision that the prisoners at Guantanamo could seek review of their detention in federal district court.

“The decision is a breathtaking reaffirmation that no prison is beyond the law,” Margulies said. “The Bill of Rights is robust and resilient, and even the commander in chief’s power under the war power does not displace the rule of law.”

Margulies also discussed two other cases decided that day – *Rumsfeld v. Padilla* and *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, involving U.S. citizens detained as “enemy combatants.” In *Hamdi*, the Supreme Court found that a U.S. citizen held in the U.S. as an enemy combatant enjoys a “meaningful opportunity” to challenge the reasons for his detention. Hamdi had a right to both a lawyer and a hearing to contest the lawfulness of the detention. In *Padilla*, the Supreme Court returned the case to a lower court with instructions to refile the case in South Carolina, instead of New York. But the Court left no doubt that Padilla was entitled to at least the same relief as Hamdi.



Joe Margulies

In April’s series event, Elizabeth Heger Boyle, a professor of sociology and law at the University of Minnesota, discussed the findings of 93 in-depth interviews she conducted with East African immigrants living in the Twin Cities. She made the case that public policy must reflect the fact that the terrorist attacks of September 11 dramatically changed the lives of immigrants.

The next Human Rights and National Security Speaker Series is scheduled for Thursday, August 19, and will address the torture of U.S. prisoners in Iraq. Transcripts or reports on most of the series dating back a year are posted on the Minnesota Advocates website, www.mnadvocates.org.

Minnesota Advocates Joins Legal Clinic

Hundreds of Hennepin County Immigrants Visit Every Year

Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights is pleased to announce its new partnership with the Park Avenue Foundation and the Volunteer Lawyers Network to help provide brief advice in immigration matters to refugees and immigrants in Hennepin County. In 1997 a group of local attorneys founded the Park Avenue Foundation/Volunteer Lawyers Network Walk-in Legal Clinic. Since then an average of 20 volunteer lawyers have rotated two hours every week to provide free brief advice and service in civil law matters to low-income residents of Hennepin County. The clinic helps over 350 persons per year. About 95% of the requests for assistance relate to immigration matters. The clinic’s director, Colleen Beebe, Minnesota Advocates’ new B.I.A.S. Project coordinator, will continue to direct the clinic as Minnesota Advocates’ staff.

Over the years, volunteers at the clinic have seen the demand for immigration legal services soar, with at least 10 people coming each week to receive advice. Much of the increase in the refugee and immigrant population can be attributed to Minnesota’s proud tradition of resettling persons escaping persecution. Over 40% of Minnesota’s foreign-born population is made up of refugees, while the national average is just 8%. Hennepin

County’s refugee and immigrant population is one of the fastest growing in Minnesota, having increased by 150% between 1990 and 2000. The largest Somali and Hmong populations in the U.S. call Minnesota home.

The clinic is an excellent opportunity for volunteers to make a difference in people’s lives. Two Liberian sisters who suffered severe persecution won asylum with the assistance of a volunteer attorney who helped them complete asylum applications and prepare for asylum interviews. The sisters may now safely heal from the abuse they suffered and become lawful permanent residents of the United States.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Colleen Beebe at (612) 341-3302, ext. 114.

Walk-in Legal Clinic

Thursdays, 3-5 p.m.

No appointments necessary. No phone calls please.

3400 Park Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN

Documenting Asylum

Health Professionals Play Vital Role in Asylum Claims

Imagine fleeing your home, for your life, under the cover of darkness, with only the clothes on your back and perhaps a passport and a few official documents. Imagine, once you are free, applying for asylum, with little more than your own personal testimony to convince the immigration courts that you are a worthy applicant for asylum.

This is a common problem for asylum seekers, who by definition leave their home countries under traumatic and chaotic circumstances. To address this problem, Minnesota Advocates has joined the Center for Victims of Torture and Physicians for Human Rights to create the Minnesota Asylum Network. This partnership helps find and train volunteer physicians and psychologists whose evaluations can corroborate the claims of people seeking asylum. The most recent training for these medical volunteers, presented with the help of the University of Minnesota Human Rights Center, was held in June for psychologists interested in performing evaluations for asylum seekers.

Health professionals can provide vital documentation of torture and ill treatment for asylum proceedings. In fact, many times a medical evaluation or psychological assessment is the crucial piece of information an asylum officer or judge needs to grant an asylum seeker's case.

For example, a recent Minnesota Advocates client from Ethiopia was persecuted because of her minority religion and ethnicity. She was so physically and emotionally traumatized at the hands of the government that, when she arrived in Minnesota, she couldn't speak of the events. But a volunteer psychologist, trained by the Asylum Network, became her voice, testifying that her symptoms were legitimate and consistent with the tra-

ma. She was granted asylum. Many other cases are simpler – a doctor examining an asylum seeker to confirm the physical damage of torture for the courts.

This client's story is not unique. Approximately 60 percent of Minnesota Advocates' clients are survivors of torture or have had family members who have been tortured. The Center for Victims of Torture estimates that 20,000 Minnesotans are torture survivors. The Bellevue Hospital/New York University Program for Survivors of Torture estimates there are as many as 400,000 people now living in the United States who are survivors of torture.

The network needs more trained volunteer medical professionals to help evaluate these survivors. The training in June was led by Refugee and Immigrant Program Staff Attorney Manpreet Dhanjal, volunteer psychologist Dr. Wayne Siegel and Dr. Patricia Shannon of the Center for Victims of Torture. Minnesota Advocates board member Dr. David Parker provided insights from his experience conducting medical evaluations for asylum seekers.

The Minnesota Asylum Network is planning to host a larger training in the fall for health professionals to conduct medical evaluations in asylum applications. If you are interested in learning more about the Minnesota Asylum Network, please contact Manpreet Dhanjal at (612) 341-3302 x 103 or via e-mail at mdhanjal@mnadvocates.org.

**...20,000
Minnesotans
are torture
survivors.**

Minnesota Advocates thanks the generous sponsors of its 2004 Human Rights Awards Dinner:

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Human Rights Awards 2004

Continued from page 1

also knew – or they soon came to know – of Walter Mondale’s reputation as a man of inspired political leadership and deep personal decency. That reputation multiplied his impact as Vice President many times over, and it helped make a more peaceful world that – despite the events that trouble us every day – is more truly humane.”

Mr. Mondale’s own remarks, which were frequently interrupted by applause and a standing ovation, also touched on human rights in current events.

“If we are opposed by a military power, we have the means to destroy it,” he said. “But if we are threatened, as we are, by dangerous so-called stateless extremists, we must deal with them

through strength, but we must also win the international war for public respect and stature. Indeed, this war against extremism cannot be won without adhering to principles of American justice.”

Mr. Mondale added, “We hear much talk about American exceptionalism; about what a special nation we are; and I believe that is true. But what makes us truly special is not just the American character, but the fundamental idea that every American—even the most powerful—is accountable to the law. ... Ours is a special period in American history. As Zbigniew Brzezinski recently said here in Minnesota, the United States is currently the ‘ultimate guarantor of global stability’ and the ‘principal promoter of the common good.’ If we are to fulfill those roles, we must act with justice.”



Anne Heegaard, Walter Mondale, Sylvia Kaplan, Peter Heegaard and Sam Kaplan.



Minnesota Advocates Board President Aviva Breen and Executive Director Robin Phillips present Walter F. Mondale with the 2004 Human Rights Award.



Minnesota Advocates staff Christine Tefft, Amy Beier, and Manpreet Dhanjal with Walter Mondale at the Human Rights Awards Dinner.



The Palestinian American Cultural Dance Group brought festive energy to the Awards Dinner.



Irfan Sandozi, Afshan Anjum, Nazneen Khatoun, and Minnesota Advocates board member Hyder Khan.

2004 Human Rights Awards Volunteer Award Recipients

SANDRA BABCOCK

Over the last decade, Sandra Babcock has been a leading advocate for the application of international human rights standards to criminal proceedings in U.S. courts, particularly in death penalty cases. She has argued before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Inter-American Court on Human Rights, and the International Court of Justice. Currently, she directs the Mexican Capital Legal Assistance Program, on whose case the International Court of Justice recently held that the United States government had violated the rights of more than 50 Mexican nationals on death row. Sandra has been a guiding force on Minnesota Advocates' Death Penalty Project, playing a central role in planning for the future of the project, including fundraising. She has raised awareness about the problems with capital representation, and is helping Minnesota Advocates to develop innovative *pro bono* models to involve Minnesotans in assisting indigent death row inmates in other states.



ates in Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans. She has traveled with Minnesota Advocates to Bulgaria to train judges, police and legal professionals from 12 Balkan countries. She has analyzed and consulted on new laws developing in the region. Judge Klas has served on the Womens Program's Advisory Committee for eight years.

STEPHANIE DAVIES

Stephanie Davies' enduring interest in human rights issues shines through in her career as an educator. She has found creative opportunities to incorporate human rights topics into the curriculum – mathematics. Her classroom at Interdistrict Downtown School in Minneapolis inspires attitudes of fairness and respect among her middle and high school students. She has also taught peace education courses, exploring topics such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the history of the United Nations. Currently, Stephanie is Minnesota Advocates' Rights Site Project coordinator for her school, sharing the practice of human rights education with a network of other dedicated teachers. Stephanie has made valuable contributions to Minnesota Advocates' education resources, developing post-September 11 coursework for Minnesota Advocates' website and serving on our Education Program Advisory Committee since 2002. This summer, she is assisting the program in developing lesson plans that address international justice mechanisms.



MARY LOUISE KLAS

Mary Louise Klas has been a passionate advocate for the human rights of women throughout her legal career. In July 2000, Judge Klas retired from fourteen years on Minnesota's Second District trial court bench. In her service on the Minnesota Supreme Court's Committee on Gender Fairness in the Courts and the Committee's Family Law and Domestic Violence Curriculum, she worked to ensure the justice system's fair treatment of women and victims of violence. Judge Klas has used her years of experience and expertise in legal reform work and judicial training to assist women's human rights advo-



ROBINS, KAPLAN, MILLER & CIRESI ASYLUM



APPEALS TEAM

In September 2002 the U.S. Attorney General radically overhauled the procedures of the Board of Immigration Appeals. The results included the summary dismissal of thousands of immigration appeals, leaving many asylum seekers facing either federal court review or deportation to a country where they feared persecution, violence or death. Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi partner Bob Gilbertson stepped forward to help. A long-time Minnesota Advocates volunteer attorney and a member of our Refugee & Immigrant Program's steering committee, Bob recruited a dedicated team of people to work on behalf of asylum seekers. The Robins Kaplan Asylum Appeals Team (including Bob Gilbertson, Sally Silk, and Steve Simon, pictured above) provides *pro bono* legal services to Minnesota Advocates' clients on petitions for review before the United States Circuit Courts of Appeals. Team members, led by Sally Silk, screen cases on a moment's notice and provide help to other attorneys representing Minnesota Advocates' clients. The Robins Kaplan team has become an extraordinary resource for other volunteer lawyers, sponsoring the training of more than two hundred attorneys to represent asylum seekers on appeal in the federal courts. This group of volunteers has provided critical support to the work of the Refugee & Immigrant Program, enabling Minnesota Advocates to better respond to the needs of asylum seekers.

IRFAN SANDOZI

Irfan Sandozi is a Minnesota physician, a member of Supporters of Human Rights in India, an advocacy group dedicated to human rights in India, and a volunteer with Minnesota Advocates since April 2002. He was instrumental in organizing Minnesota Advocates' community forum on human rights in the Indian state of Gujarat. The result was a forum of hundreds of people from Minnesota's growing South Asian community and experts from across the country that inspired an ongoing community dialogue on human rights. He also helped form a committee at Minnesota Advocates to focus on human rights in India. Irfan volunteers on the Refugee and Immigrant Program's physician panel, and last August he was a member of Minnesota Advocates' delegation to the 55th session of the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland.



2004 Human Rights Awards

Thanks to Contributors to Our Silent Auction

The following people and businesses made contributions to the silent auction at Minnesota Advocates' Human Rights Awards Dinner. We are grateful for their support.

- Azia Restaurant** One gift certificate
Bacio One gift certificate
Bombay Bistro Two gift certificates
Aviva Breen Handmade purse from Nepal, two coffee mugs, a large Italian platter, and a Nepali alphabet rug
Byerly's Wine and Spirits A three liter bottle of Stonehaven Shiraz
Cafe Latté Gift certificate for one dessert
Todd Cameron An original hand-blown glass vase
William Cameron A professional photography session with one original print
Circle of Health and Beauty \$70.00 European Facial Gift Certificate
Stefani Conyers A one-hour therapeutic massage session
Dunn Bros. Coffee One pound per month of Dunn Brothers coffee for one year
Hennepin Lake Liquor 1999 Napa Valley Silver Oak Cabernet Sauvignon and a 1999 Alexander Valley Silver Oak Cabernet Sauvignon
Indian Music Society of Minnesota Two season tickets
Inside & Out Design A design consultation by Inside & Out Design
Marlene Kayser A Hungarian linen tablecloth and a framed Wellstone political button collection
June LaValleur One-week stay at a Mediterranean vacation home in Greece
Mark of Excellence Gift certificate for haircut, color & hair products by Mark of Excellence
E. Anne McKinsey Two nights in a cabin on Lake Superior

- The Minnesota Orchestral Association** Four tickets to the Minnesota Orchestra's "Summers with O'Riley" program on July 16, 2004
Mizna Six passes to the Arab-American film festival
Morning Star Coffee One pound per month of Morningstar organic coffee for one year
Dipankar Mukherjee and Meena Natarajan A gourmet Indian dinner for six, a set of lapis lazuli earrings and pendant, and four season tickets to Pangea World Theater
Nielson Framing \$200 framing gift certificate
Marc Norberg An original photograph and a photography book
Vance and Darin Opperman 10 box seats to a regular season Minnesota Twins game
David Parker An original photograph taken in Nepal in 1993
Rhonda Phillips Two tickets to the Vikings v. Green Bay game at the Metrodome
Rick Phillips An original portrait
Robin Phillips Four-piece Hungarian pottery serving set and a portrait of Gandhi by Minnesota artist Rick Phillips
Jesús Purisaca Two-hour acoustical guitar performance
Chelli Phillips Ray "Game Night" gift basket, "Friday Night In" game basket, and an original hand-painted handbag and cake plate by Minnesota artist Cindy Jackson
Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra Two tickets to an upcoming Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra concert
Shiraz One 2'x4' and one 4'x6' hand-made Indian Agra rug
Target One gift certificate

Special thanks to Amber Peterson for all her hard work designing our Human Rights Awards Dinner invitations and program this year.



The Program Directors of Minnesota Advocates presented the 2004 Volunteer Awards. From left to right: Deputy Director Jennifer Prestholdt; Women's Program Director Cheryl Thomas and Judge Mary Louise Klas; Education Program Director Megan Powers; and Sally Silk, Steve Simon, and Bob Gilbertson with Refugee and Immigrant Program Director Michele Garnett McKenzie.

Understanding Through Art

A Minnesota Advocates Class Explores “Co-existence”

Co-existence. In a diverse city like Minneapolis, it is an idea that touches people’s lives every day. It is important enough that the students and teachers at the Work Opportunity Center (WOC) alternative school in Minneapolis this year decided to find ways to explore co-existence seriously and in creative ways.

On June 4, the WOC, one of Minnesota Advocates’ partner schools, held an exhibition of student artwork with the theme “co-existence.” The exhibit was the result of a year-long collaboration with local artists and Intermedia Arts. Students in Lori Dupont’s and Kathie Huettl’s art course chose to paint, photograph, or write on their reflections. Students’ artwork interpreted co-existence to mean more than simply neutral, side-by-side existence; it is love, acceptance, and the link between the uniqueness and the universality of each individual’s experience. Several pieces reflected the artists’ opinions on topics such as inequality, intolerance, and injustice. One poem entitled “Imagine That” addressed social problems such as violence and racism in ways that suggested that the writers are intimately familiar with their subject.

Student murals were created to be representative of the diversity of students at WOC, with the goal of being displayed as part of the school’s permanent artwork. One mural-sized painting entitled “Minneapolis,” by students A.J. and Edgar, features familiar sights of busy city life. A.J. said he and Edgar were trying to bring together many different experiences from different directions into one greater whole of life in the city. The painting is literally marked with “North” and “South” at each end to draw attention to this process.

In mid-May, one of the teachers from WOC heard about the outdoor show of international murals to be exhibited in the Twin Cities – called “Co-Existence.” Several murals submitted by the school will be included in the international exhibit.

Classes such as this one are part of Minnesota Advocates’ Human Rights Education Program, which works with thousands of students every year to introduce young people to the principles of human rights and cultural understanding. Teachers and community leaders say it is important that students wrestle with such ideas as co-existence as they try to understand and ultimately shape the wider world around them.

As an alternative school, WOC’s student population comes from all over Minneapolis. Although there may be personal barriers between different social groups, the students generally see school as neutral ground. The volunteer artists brainstormed with the class on how to ensure everyone was represented in the mural, how to illustrate the unique social dynamic of the school as well as their lives outside of school, and how to show bridges built as a result of students gaining broader understanding of their differences as well as their similarities.



Murals like this one were part of an art class that studied the idea of co-existence with Minnesota Advocates.

Playwrights for Human Rights

**September 18, 2004 at 7:00 p.m.
The Playwrights' Center
2301 Franklin Avenue East
Minneapolis, MN 55406-1099**

Join The Playwrights' Center in an evening of music, food, and theater. The event is inspired by Playwrights' Center Board of Directors President Jeffrey Keyes' pending case before the U.S. Supreme Court in defense of a Minnesota Advocates client. The Playwrights' Center has commissioned three Twin Cities' playwrights to creatively dramatize this and other human rights cases. This one-time-only performance will scrutinize post-9/11 immigration policy in a unique intersection of arts and human rights.

Admission is by reservation only. Contact Todd Boss at The Playwrights' Center: (612) 332-7481, ext. 13.

Minnesota Advocates ... Briefs

U.S. Supreme Court to Hear Jama Case

The Supreme Court of the United States this fall is scheduled to consider an important immigration question raised in the case of a Minnesota Advocates client: Can federal authorities deport Somali immigrants back to their chaotic, war-torn country without a functioning Somali government to receive them?



This question is at the heart of *Jama v. I.N.S.*, to be heard by the Supreme Court in oral argument expected this fall. Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights and *pro bono* attorneys Jeffrey Keyes and Kevin Magnuson of the law firm Briggs and

Morgan P.A. represent Keyse Jama, who fled Somalia with his family in 1991 and later was ordered deported when he was convicted of assault. Jeff Keyes will argue the case before the Supreme Court on October 12, 2004.

Torn by civil war since 1991, Somalia remains in a state of anarchy, according to the U.S. State Department. In spite of that, Somali immigrants have been deported by the United States, often simply by being dropped off at an airport or border without any official acceptance or internationally recognized travel documents. Since the filing of *Jama v. I.N.S.* in 2001, courts throughout the U.S. have considered challenges to deportations to Somalia. Most notably, the Ninth Circuit, in *Ali v. Ashcroft*, upheld a nation-wide class action stopping the removal of individuals to Somalia on the same grounds as those raised in *Jama*. The case is anticipated to affect an estimated 3,400 Somali individuals throughout the country.

Pro Bono Award for Dorsey & Whitney

Dorsey & Whitney LLP received the 2004 Pro Bono Award from the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) for their outstanding *pro bono* contributions in the field of immigration law. The award, presented at the June AILA Convention in Philadelphia, highlighted the work of Steve Carlson on Minnesota Advocates' board of directors and of Refugee & Immigrant Program steering committee member and volunteer attorney Kathy Moccio. Steve, Kathy, and dozens of others at Dorsey served as *pro bono* counsel in the American Immigration Law Foundation's national class action, *Ngwanyia v. I.N.S.*, filed on behalf of more than 150,000 asylees; authored a report on the effects of new procedures at the Board of Immigration Appeals in *Board of Immigration Appeals: Procedural Reforms to Improve Case Management* for the ABA's Commission on Immigration Policy, Practice and Pro Bono; and have continued to represent numerous asylum applicants through Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights.

Read All About It: Death Penalty Newsletter

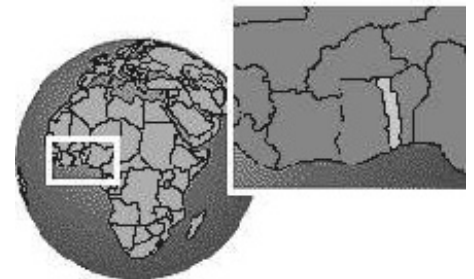
Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights' Death Penalty Project is launching a quarterly email newsletter to provide news on capital punishment issues. Topics include updates on the Death Penalty Project's work, as well as developments on the local, national and international level. To subscribe to this newsletter, please email Rose Park at rpark@mnadvocates.org.

Domestic Violence Report Due in the Fall

Following some 18 months of research and interviews, this fall Minnesota Advocates' Women's Program will release its report analyzing violence against refugee and immigrant women in the Twin Cities. The report, entitled *The Government Response to Violence Against Refugee and Immigrant Women in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan Area: A Human Rights Report*, discusses the obstacles refugee and immigrant women face when they seek safety for themselves and their children and accountability for violent offenders. The project has been supported by the Saint Paul Foundation, the Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation, the Women's Foundation of Minnesota and the Minnesota State Bar Foundation.

Togo Award Says "Thanks"

The North America Convention for Togo – a non-profit organization created to promote the welfare of Togolese immigrants and their descendants living in the U.S. and Canada – in July honored Minnesota



The West African nation of Togo.

Advocates for Human Rights with its Recognition Award as a leading social and community service agency in Minnesota.

The award was presented at the Togolese group's 6th Annual Convention in Bloomington, Minnesota. Minnesota Advocates' award is a reflection of a recent increase in migration to Minnesota by Togolese citizens, many of whom are seeking asylum. Since 1994, the Refugee and Immigrant Program has represented, or is currently providing *pro bono* legal representation to, nearly 50 indigent asylum seekers from the West African country of Togo. So far in 2004, Togolese citizens constitute 22% of the program's total asylum grants. To date, 100 percent of Minnesota Advocates' Togolese clients have received asylum. Thanks to the hundreds of volunteer hours donated, these Togolese clients are now able to start a new life in the United States without living in fear of persecution.

Minnesota Lawyers and the Death Penalty Successes to Celebrate

Minnesota has no death penalty, but the large and active community of lawyers from Minnesota who work on death penalty cases has recently found success in federal and international courts. These are three examples:

❖ In the landmark case of *Avena and other Mexican Nationals (Mexico v. United States)*, Minnesota attorney Sandra Babcock, a member of Minnesota Advocates’ Death Penalty Project Advisory Committee, won a victory in the International Court of Justice for many foreign nationals awaiting execution in the United States. Representing the government of Mexico, Babcock successfully argued that the United States had violated the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations by failing to inform fifty-four Mexican death row inmates of their right to consular assistance prior to trial. The I.C.J. held that the Convention mandated specific relief for these inmates, ultimately calling into question the death sentences of more than one hundred foreign nationals whose Convention rights were violated by the United States. Babcock’s success in the I.C.J. recently made a strong impact in Oklahoma, where Governor Brad Henry honored the *Avena* decision by commuting Mexican national Osbaldo Torres’ death sentence on May 14.

❖ In another remarkable Minnesota success story, attorneys from Dorsey & Whitney LLP convinced a federal judge in Lubbock, Texas, to grant relief in a death penalty case for the first time in that judge’s career on the bench. On June 25, Judge Sam Cummings overturned the death sentence of Joe Lee Guy, who was sent to death row for his role as lookout in a 1993 robbery and murder. Guy’s capital trial was fraught with misconduct, and his sentence was grossly disproportionate; the actual killers received only life imprisonment. Due to the *pro bono* efforts of Dorsey’s attorneys, who include Steve Wells, Pat McLaughlin, Bob Bundy, Andre Hanson, Todd Trumpold, Marissa Hesse and Charles Moore, Guy will likely receive a life sentence.

❖ Faegre & Benson LLP has also found recent success as lead counsel for its *pro bono* capital client, Ronald Lee Sanders, who has been on California’s death row since 1982. On July 8, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed Sanders’ death sentence and imposed a life sentence without parole. The Ninth Circuit found that California’s Supreme Court did not adequately review Sanders’ sentence, which was based on erroneous jury instruction. The attorneys at Faegre, led by Eric Jorstad, assisted by Anne Mahle and Mary Cullen Yeager, have been representing Sanders for more than eleven years.

The Refugee and Immigrant Program’s “Brown Bags” “What’s New...What Tactics Are Working...What Experts are Available”

Minnesota Advocates’ Refugee and Immigrant Program has begun hosting a series of informal brown bag lunches as forums for practitioners and volunteer attorneys to share insights and experiences on significant immigration issues, and provide practical information about specialized topics within the asylum practice.

Michele Garnett McKenzie, director of the Refugee and Immigrant Program, said these lunches will provide immigration lawyers with a necessary resource – each other.

“These can be complicated cases to prepare for and plead,” Garnett McKenzie said. “We hope these lunches are occasions when people can talk about what’s new, what tactics are working, and what experts are available. For people in a solo or small practice, we hope the information is valuable.”

The first gathering, in April, centered on changing country conditions in Liberia. A group of ten immigration practitioners shared experiences with the federal government’s prosecution of Liberian cases and brainstormed ways to effectively advocate for clients whose cases may be reopened as a result of the changed country conditions.

In July, the topic was asylum cases with HIV+ and AIDS clients. Led by Lynn Mickelson of the Minnesota AIDS Project, the discussion included strategies for presenting HIV+/AIDS claims as a particular social group, developments in case law on this topic, and information about the services available to HIV+/AIDS clients in Minnesota. If you would like more information about the issue, please contact Manpreet Dhanjal at (612) 341-3302 ext. 103 or mdhanjal@mnadvocates.org.

“These can be complicated cases to prepare for and plead.”
- Michele Garnett McKenzie

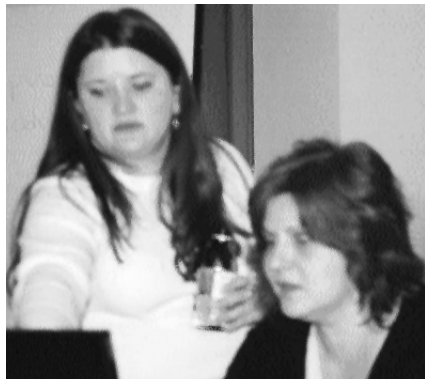
On September 22, the brown bag topic will be detention issues. The discussion will focus on current hot topics in detention, including the electronic monitoring pilot program (ISAP) and the effect of Operation Predator. Information will also be available for attorneys who want to volunteer with the Minnesota Detention Project’s detained master calendar project. If you are interested in attending the September 22 brown bag, please RSVP to Emily Good at (612) 341-3302 ext. 122 or egood@mnadvocates.org.

Training in Budapest and Tbilisi

Expanding the Reach of the “Stop Violence” Website

In May and July, Minnesota Advocates conducted Orientation Programs in Budapest, Hungary, and Tbilisi, Georgia, for the newly appointed National Violence Against Women Monitors for Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

The program, conducted in partnership with the Open Society



Minnesota Advocates Staff Attorney Christine Tefft conducted trainings in Budapest and Tbilisi.

Institute’s Network Women’s Program, attracted participants from more than two dozen countries. In Budapest, for example, people came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia.

These representatives were appointed to monitor their government’s compliance with human rights standards relating to violence against women, and to develop new content for the Country Pages of the Stop Violence Against Women Website (www.stopvaw.org) that Minnesota Advocates launched in November 2003.

Minnesota Advocates developed the website with the Open Society Institute’s Network Women’s Program and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). In addition to providing a forum for monitoring violence against women issues in each country and the region, the website provides advocates in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union with comprehensive information as they develop strategies to address violence against women.

The website is already having an impact. After participating in the Budapest Orientation Program, an advocate from Serbia approached a Minnesota Advocates team member to say: “I am so glad that you exist. This project (the website) has been my dream. Within our region it is so important to connect. We need a regional network to work against violence against women. Everything we need now is in the same place – United Nations documents, European Union documents – everything we need to pressure our governments to change. Now we can show our governments what other countries are doing.”

An enthusiastic advocate from Albania recently said of StopVAW: “It is not only the best website on violence against women, it is the best website I have ever seen.”

The Budapest Orientation Program – led by Minnesota Advocates volunteer Marlene Kayser, Executive Director Robin Phillips, Staff Attorney Christine Tefft and Women’s Program Director Cheryl Thomas – was a short course on the website’s mission and maintenance for the people who will be updating its information on their home countries. The training will allow the participants to monitor their governments’ compliance with international, regional and national human rights obligations on violence against women, more effectively oppose violence against women in the region, and use the website’s Country Pages and message forums as a communication and advocacy tool.

The training in Tbilisi attracted human rights monitors from eight countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Walk for Justice!

Sunday, September 19, 2004

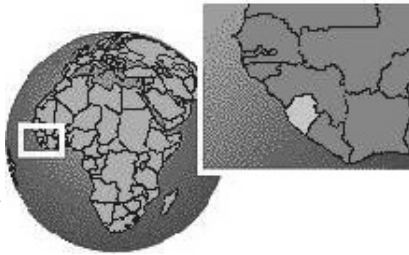
Support Minnesota Advocates at the eighth annual Walk for Justice on Sunday, September 19 at 11:30 A.M. The Walk, organized by the Headwaters Foundation, is a community event for grassroots non-profit organizations to raise money and awareness about social justice issues in the Twin Cities. Come to the walk, meet like-minded people, and support Minnesota Advocates! To register, visit www.walkforjustice.org.

In Sierra Leone

Minnesota Advocates Helps Monitor the Transition to Justice

A Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights delegation recently returned from the West African nation of Sierra Leone, where the group monitored progress of the country's truth and reconciliation process, and in August will present a statement on circumstances in the country to the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights.

Sierra Leone is emerging from more than ten years of a brutal civil war that received international attention for atrocities such as amputations, forced recruitment of child soldiers, and widespread sexual violence. An estimated 75,000 persons were killed, and as many as 2 million were displaced. Combatants on all sides, governmental and otherwise, committed human rights abuses. The conflict in Sierra Leone was also characterized by cross-border involvement from Liberia, as well as the struggle for control of diamonds and other economic resources.



The West African country of Sierra Leone. The nation shares its southeastern border with Liberia.

The Minnesota Advocates team in May examined Sierra Leone's two primary transitional justice mechanisms – the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the U.N.'s Special Court for Sierra Leone. Over two weeks, the Minnesota Advocates team conducted on-site investigations and more than forty fact-finding interviews in the capital city of Freetown and in the Bo, Kenema, and Kono districts. The team interviewed representatives of the U.N., the commission and its staff, government officials, victims, witnesses, media, police, lawyers, civil society organizations, a Member of Parliament, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone.



The Minnesota Advocates team interviewing victims of human rights abuses in Sierra Leone.

Experience around the world suggests that the presence of international observers, such as the Minnesota Advocates delegation, contributes significantly to the success of the overall truth and reconciliation process. International observers help uphold the integrity of the process; provide moral and emotional support to the victims who have made the difficult decision to come forward with their testimonies; bring international attention to the cause; and put pressure on governments to comply with commissions' recommendations.

The Sierra Leone commission's mandate is to develop an impartial historical record of the conflict, address impunity, respond to the needs of the victims, promote healing and reconciliation, and prevent the reoccurrence of violence. The commission finished its work last spring and is expected to release its report and recommendations this summer. The Special Court for Sierra Leone is prosecuting "those persons who bear the greatest responsibility for the commission of violations of international humanitarian law" between November 30, 1996 and 1999. Currently, eleven individuals stand indicted; nine are detained in the court's detention facility. Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia, has been indicted but has yet to be extradited from Nigeria.

Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights' 2004 Monitoring Team included Deputy Director Jennifer Prestholdt and Staff Attorney Rose Park, as well as volunteers Dianne Heins, Muria Kruger, and Jeremy Prestholdt. Another Minnesota Advocates delegation contributed to, and continues to monitor, a similar transitional justice process in Peru.

For more information about Sierra Leone, the transitional justice process, and Minnesota Advocates' fact-finding mission, see www.mnadvocates.org/Sierra_Leone.html. The website also includes a photo gallery and Minnesota Advocates' statement to the U.N. subcommission.

Take Action!

The Sierra Leone section of Minnesota Advocates' website includes a sample advocacy letter requesting the extradition of Charles Taylor from Nigeria to appear before the Special Court in Sierra Leone. Mr. Taylor was indicted by the Special Court on 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity – the most serious crimes under international law. You can send your letter to President Bush, the President of Nigeria, and your Senators and Representatives.

Students Making a Difference

A Young Voice for Immigration

“Look at My Life!”

Note: Saxon Dorshow, 11, attended the fifth grade last school year at Tanglen Elementary in Hopkins. His essay won first prize in the Celebrate America essay competition, open to elementary students in Minnesota and the Dakotas, and sponsored by the American Immigration Lawyers Association and the law firm of Gray, Plant & Mooty. In May he read his essay in front of 1,000 people at a naturalization ceremony at Bethel College.

By Saxon Dorshow

“Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free!”

I'm very glad the U.S. is a country that welcomes immigration. For you see, I am a Jew of eastern European descent. Had my great-grandparents not been allowed to immigrate, they would have surely been killed by religious persecutors in the region during the early 1900's. If my great-grandparents had not braved the long and hard journey of immigration, I would be probably starving in Russia right now.

When my great-grandparents came to America, they spoke no English and had to work extremely hard just to earn a few dollars. They had to leave everything behind and start anew, but they knew it was worth it to live in the land of the free and the home of the brave. They wanted to give their children and their children's children a better life, free from religious persecution.

Here I am, three generations later, and look at my life! We are free to practice the rich traditions of Judaism. Both of my parents finished graduate school and went on to be professionals, one is a lawyer and one is a doctor. When I grow up I will also have great opportunities because of my great-grandparents' decision to come to America.

When I look around, I am astonished at how many people I see with ancestors who immigrated and braved the same perilous venture as my great-grandparents. There are so many cultures and religions that were brought from all different countries. It was very important for all of them to come to America, as I believe an integrated society makes our country stronger. Not to mention I have many friends who have ancestors that immigrated and my life would not be the same without them.

I know some people want to stop immigration, but I wonder if they have thought things over. After all, America is a nation of immigrants and if it weren't for immigration, the only people living here would be the Native Americans. If we stop immigration, we have failed the dreams and ambitions of our founding fathers and all that our soldiers have fought for.

Immigration is a crucial part of what makes this nation great. The plaque near The Statue of Liberty reflects this, “Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore; Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

Sankhu School Supporters

Students Raise Money for Nepal

Minnesota Advocates' Nepal School Project is creating a brighter future for some of the poorest children in Nepal. The project has found many friends among school children in the United States over the past five years. Here are three examples of the ways that students, individually and in groups, have supported the school this past year:

❖ The Amnesty International student club of Champlin Park High School invited Minnesota Advocates to share photos and stories about the Nepal School at an Amnesty chapter meeting. After the presentation, students organized a concert at their school. Proceeds from the concert went to support the Nepal School Project.



❖ Thirteen-year-old Isaiah Breen first heard about the Nepal school when he received a postcard from his grandmother, Minnesota Advocates Board President Aviva Breen, who visited the Nepal school in February. When Isaiah heard that many of the students lacked shoes and warm caps, he organized a special Nepal school fund collection at his bar mitzvah. Friends and family members raised enough money to purchase shoes and caps for all 174 Nepali students of the Sankhu Community School.

❖ The Laurel Hill School of East Setauket, New York, learned of the Nepal Project through Minnesota Advocates board member David Parker. The school contacted Minnesota Advocates for background education materials, which were presented during a school-wide assembly on the topic of child labor. Classes participated in a follow-up fundraising campaign and donated more than \$2,500 to the project.

You, too, can contribute to the education of Nepali students at the Sankhu Community School! Minnesota Advocates welcomes the support of your school, group, or business. To find out more, contact Megan Powers at mpowers@mnadvocates.org.

Our 19th Annual Asylum Conference More Help for People Fleeing Persecution

Minnesota Advocates' annual Asylum Conference again this June was vital to our ability to help clients who have fled persecution, torture and death in their home countries.

The conference – our 19th annual – is our primary opportunity to train *pro bono* attorneys and legal assistants to take asylum cases. Our Refugee & Immigrant Program currently has about 350 volunteers providing free legal representation to more than 800 indigent individuals, and we interview more potential clients every week.

Our latest full-day seminar June 4 trained lawyers, legal assistants and students in the evolving area of gender-based asylum law and the fundamentals of asylum practice. Stephen Knight, coordinating attorney at the University of California's Hastings College of the Law's Center for Gender and Refugee Studies, and local immigration attorney Audrey Carr (Michael H. Davis Law Office) presented a detailed discussion of the current jurisprudence and strategies in gender-based asylum law.

Loan Huynh (Fredrikson & Byron), Karen Ellingson (Adjunct Professor of Law, University of Minnesota Law School

Immigration Clinic), Elizabeth Streefland (Streefland Law Firm), and Supervisory Asylum Officer Gregory Guckenberger trained volunteers on the nuts and bolts of asylum practice before the Department of Homeland Security, providing updates on current practices and pitfalls when appearing before the agency. Attorneys Riddhi Jani (Blackwell Igbanugo, PA) and Mark Frey (Frey Law Office) reviewed the many recent Board of Immigration Appeals and federal circuit court decisions affecting asylum claims.

Steve Thal (Law Office of Steven Thal) led a lively panel discussion on immigration court practice with Immigration Judge Kristin Olmanson, Assistant Chief Counsel Terry Louie, and volunteer asylum attorney Mark Lee (Maslon, Edelman, Borman & Brand). Many thanks to all the presenters for their generous participation in the Asylum Conference.

Thanks to **Fredrikson & Byron, Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi, and the Leonard, Street & Deinard Foundation** for underwriting the costs of the conference. Special thanks to the **Marketing Department of Fredrikson & Byron** for designing and printing the Asylum Conference brochure and to **Dorsey & Whitney** for the generous use of their conference facilities.

Staff and Intern Update

❖ **Min Chong** has joined our staff as Administrative Assistant/Assistant to the Executive Director. Min graduated in June from Carleton College with a BA in chemistry. Welcome, Min!

❖ **Colleen Beebe** has joined the Minnesota Advocates staff as B.I.A.S. Project Coordinator (Building Immigrant Awareness and Support). Formerly the Deputy Director of the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, Ms.

Beebe is an attorney with expertise in immigration matters. Every year, the B.I.A.S. Project of Minnesota Advocates reaches thousands of people in a variety of communities in the region to share information about immigrants' cultural and economic impact. A graduate of the University of Minnesota and Hamline University School of Law, Colleen is also an Adjunct Professor at Hamline University School of Law and the University of Minnesota, where she has taught about the inter-American human rights system. Fluent in Spanish, Ms. Beebe has lived and traveled extensively in Latin America.



Colleen Beebe and Min Chong

❖ Volunteers are a vital part of the work of Minnesota Advocates. This summer, we are pleased to have a large group of interns assisting us with various programs and projects. Our interns this summer are: **Marilyn Clark** and **Susan Lee** in the Death Penalty Project; **Margaret Carlson, Jessie Duncan, Tovah Flygare, Rob Nelson, and Lauren Wendt** in the Education Program; **Laura Mapp, Liz Pappas, Stephen Smith, and Sara Wilkinson** in the Human Rights Monitoring Project; **Alex Rubenstein, Elyse Schneiderman, and Karla Vehrs** in the Refugee and Immigrant Program; and **Robyn Linde, Julia Kashaeva, Elena Karadjova Ateva, Annalise Nelson, Jennifer Nou, and Lindsay Smith** in the Women's Program. Thanks to all our interns for their hard work!



The staff and summer interns of Minnesota Advocates at the 2004 Human Rights Awards Dinner.

Events Update

Human Rights and National Security Speaker Series

U.S. Torture: The International Legal Dimensions and Obligations

Presented by Doug Johnson and Robin Phillips
Thursday, August 19, 2004, 12:00-1:00 P.M.
Fredrikson & Byron, PA, 4000 Pillsbury Center
Doug Johnson, Executive Director of the Center for Victims of Torture, and Robin Phillips, Executive Director of Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, will discuss the torture of prisoners in U.S. custody in the context of human rights and international law. The lecture is free and open to the public; lunch is provided for those who pre-register. RSVP by Tuesday, August 17 to Rose Park at (612) 341-3302 ext. 106, or email rspark@mnadvocates.org.

Refugee and Immigrant Program Brown Bag Lunch

Current Topics in Detention

Wednesday, September 22, 2004, 12:00-1:00 P.M.
Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 650 3rd Avenue S,
Suite 550, Minneapolis

This brown bag lunch will address current detention topics, including the electronic monitoring pilot program and the effect of Operation Predator. Information will also be available for attorneys interested in volunteering with the Minnesota Detention Project's detained master calendar project. The brown bag is free and open to the public. Please RSVP to Emily Good at (612) 341-3302 ext. 122 or egood@mnadvocates.org.

Speakers Bureau Trainings

September 28, 2004 6:00-8:00 P.M.
October 25, 2004 6:00-8:00 P.M.

Locations TBA

Minnesota Advocates will offer two free trainings for past and potential volunteer speakers. Both training sessions will provide information and guidelines for volunteers to speak on human rights topics on behalf of Minnesota Advocates. The September 28 will focus more on public speaking techniques; the October 25 training will focus more on substantive human rights concepts. For more information and to RSVP, please visit our website at www.mnadvocates.org, or contact Colleen Beebe at 612-341 3302 ext. 114 or cbeebe@mnadvocates.org.

Refugee and Immigrant Program House Party

Wednesday, October 13, 2004
5:30-7:30 P.M.

Hosted by Barb Frey and Howard Orenstein
1724 Hampshire Avenue, St. Paul
Join the volunteers, clients and supporters of the Refugee and Immigrant Program in celebrating the program's work with asylum seekers in Minnesota. Proceeds from this event go to support the Refugee and Immigrant Program. For more information, please see our website at www.mnadvocates.org, or contact Amy Beier at (612) 341-3302 ext. 118 or ebeier@mnadvocates.org.

Volunteer Corner Saluting the Silent Auction Team

When Minnesota Advocates decided to experiment with a silent auction at the annual Human Rights Awards Dinner in June, we were fortunate that Loan Huynh, Rachel Johnson, and Chelli Phillips Ray volunteered to organize and run it.

Silent auctions can be complicated commitments. Our auction team, starting from scratch late in the winter, designed and oversaw the entire process – from contacting potential donors and collecting the donations to running the auction the night of the dinner. In the end, the majority of the 51 items in the auction made their way to new owners at the end of the dinner – a huge feat.



Rachel Johnson and
Chelli Phillips Ray



Loan Huynh

Silent auctions might be new for us, but our volunteer team is no stranger to responsibility or volunteering for Minnesota Advocates. Loan is a former Minnesota Advocates staff attorney with the Refugee and Immigrant Program and is currently a member of both the Refugee and Immigrant Program steering committee and the Women's Program advisory committee. Rachel is also on the Women's Program advisory committee and has participated in many Women's Program projects, including traveling to Bulgaria to participate in a training on women's human rights issues. Chelli has volunteered at many past Minnesota Advocates events and personally donated many items to this year's silent auction to help ensure its success.

Loan, Rachel, and Chelli were among the dozens who volunteered to help with the dinner. Volunteers served in all capacities for the event, directing guests, helping with registration, setting-up and cleaning-up, photographing the event, putting together display boards, picking up and transporting everything from flowers to staff, designing the program and invitation, and assisting with the silent auction. The event would simply not have been possible without the dedication and generosity of Loan, Rachel, Chelli, and many other volunteers.

The silent auction alone brought in almost \$8,000, helping to make the 2004 Human Rights Awards Dinner the most successful to date.

Staff

Robin Phillips
Brenda Anfinson
Ronald L. Barnes
Colleen R. Beebe
Amy Beier
Tony Brown
Min Y. Chong
Manpreet S. Dhanjal
Michele Garnett McKenzie
Emily Good
Mary Hunt
Rosalyn Park
Megan Powers
Jennifer Prestholdt
Kathy Seipp
Christine Tefft
Cheryl Thomas
Beth Varro

Executive Director
Refugee & Immigrant Program
Assistant
Administrative Director
B.I.A.S. Project Coordinator
Refugee & Immigrant Program
Assistant
Development/Communications
Director
Administrative Assistant/
Assistant to the Executive
Director
Refugee & Immigrant Program
Staff Attorney
Refugee & Immigrant Program
Director
Refugee & Immigrant Program
Staff Attorney
Women's Program Associate
Special Projects and Women's
Program Staff Attorney
Education Program Director
Deputy Director
Education Program Associate
Women's Program Staff
Attorney
Women's Program Director
Receptionist/Administrative
Assistant

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Walter F. Mondale with Minnesota Advocates board member and Dorsey & Whitney partner Steve Carlson.



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