

HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVER



2008 Year in Review

In 2008, The Advocates for Human Rights celebrated its 25th anniversary with a series of historic events, including the Sankhu-Palubari School's first eighth-grade graduation, the historic U.S. Public Hearings for the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the release of significant publications, such as a needs assessment on human sex trafficking for the State of Minnesota and a new curriculum on transitional justice, *The Road to Peace*. With the help of our volunteers, The Advocates continues to improve human rights conditions in Minnesota and across the world.

In February, the organization changed its name to The Advocates for Human Rights. This name change was a timely commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the organization. The change did not alter the mission or vision of The Advocates; rather, it gives the organization a name that better reflects the spirit and scope of its work that transcends geographical and topical boundaries.

Also in February, The Advocates co-hosted a conference with the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation on domestic



Jean Thomson, Women's Program Director
Cheryl Thomas, Liz Cutter, and Marlene Kayser
at the fall Women's Program house party

violence legal reform. More than 100 advocates from almost 30 countries came together to share strategies and best practices, as well as challenges to legal reform to address the devastating global issue of violence against women. Later in the year, The Advocates led a roundtable discussion in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on a draft law on domestic violence being considered by the Parliament there. The roundtable coincided with the formal launch of The Advocates' report on domestic violence in Tajikistan.

Cheryl Thomas, the Director of the Women's Human Rights Program, was invited to participate in a United

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The opening ceremony of the historic U.S. Public Hearings in St. Paul, Minnesota. All eight commissioners of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Liberia came to preside over the hearings, where witnesses gave testimony as part of Liberia's truth telling and national reconciliation process.



Daniel Pennie placing cap on graduates at the Sankhu-Palubari Community School's first 8th grade graduation

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The Advocates for Human Rights

The mission of The Advocates for Human Rights is to implement international human rights standards to promote civil society and reinforce the rule of law. The 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 victims of human rights abuses; trains and assists groups that protect human rights; and works through education and advocacy in Minnesota to engage the public, policymakers and children about human rights and cultural understanding. The Advocates holds Special Consultative Status with the United Nations

From the Director's Desk

... [R]ecognition of the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) – the document that first gave the world an internationally agreed upon set of rights for all human beings. The simple, yet profound, principles in the UDHR are as relevant and significant today as ever before. As we anticipate dramatic political changes in the United States in 2009, the UDHR provides a comprehensive roadmap to both restoring the rights restricted by the policies and laws implemented in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks and to improving conditions for all people living within our borders.

The UDHR outlines a broad spectrum of civil and political rights, including a prohibition against torture, discrimination, and arbitrary detention. The UDHR also includes the rights to a fair trial, privacy, and life, liberty, and security of person.

There are fundamental changes that we need to make immediately to meet UDHR standards, such as closing Guantanamo and providing due process to those who are incarcerated there and prohibiting torture and extraordinary rendition. Such policies and practices, along with other restrictions on due process, civil liberties, and privacy found in the Military Commissions Act and the Patriot Act have diminished respect for human rights within the United States and our reputation around the world. The ripple effects from these laws have damaged human rights internationally, as well, with many countries passing “copy cat” laws just months after our passage of the Patriot Act.

In addition to civil and political rights – long recognized in U.S. law – the

UDHR also provides a bold agenda for improving economic, social, and cultural rights. For example, the UDHR recognizes access to health care and education as basic human rights. While recognition of these fundamental rights has historically been controversial in the United States, they are essential; if someone dies from a preventable disease, a right to a fair trial means little.

The United States has a new administration taking office in January, but it will take each one of us to improve our world. Over the past seven years, the policies so detrimental to human rights came not only from the Executive branch, but also from acts of Congress – our elected officials. Moving forward, we must create a political climate in which our representatives know that Americans care as much about their strength on human rights as we do about their strength on security.

Let us seize this historic moment and work to restore the core rights embodied in the UDHR. Be responsible for your corner of the world and hold others accountable for theirs. What injustices exist in your city? What do you know about the situation in Darfur? How will you turn human rights ideals into policy and practice?

We at The Advocates will continue to work with you to promote and protect human rights around the world and here at home.

All of us at The Advocates wish you and yours a Happy New Year!



Robin Phillips
Executive Director

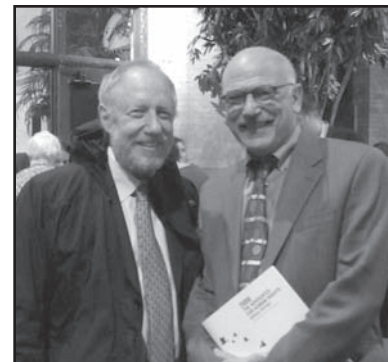
2008 Year in Review



Don Fraser, Barbara Frey, Arvonne Fraser, and Sam Heins at the 2008 Human Rights Awards Dinner, where Barb Frey and Sam Heins received the 2008 Don and Arvonne Fraser Human Rights Award



Refugee and Immigrant Program volunteers Paschal Nwokocha, Kwao Amegashie, and Christine Nsajja



David Weissbrodt and Eric Janus at the 2008 Human Rights Awards Dinner



Actor-Educator from Climb Theater with second grade students at Lake Harriet Community School



Gabrielle Mead, Emily Willits, Laura Young, Prof. Henrietta Mensah-Bonsu, Massa Washington, Jennifer Prestholdt, and Mark Kalla in Monrovia, Liberia



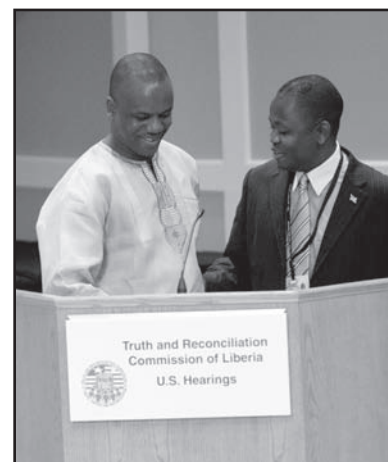
Award recipient Anne Lockner at the fall Refugee and Immigrant Program house party



Mary Ellison, Cheryl Thomas, and Aviva Breen travelled to Yerevan, Armenia to facilitate a meeting on their proposed new domestic violence law



Jim Dorsey, John Koneck, Pamela Wandzel, and Jim O'Neal at the opening ceremony of the historic U.S. Public Hearings in St. Paul, Minnesota



TRC Chairman Jerome Verdier, Sr. and Ahmed Sirleaf at the U.S. Public Hearings

Continued from page 1

Nations expert meeting on violence against women in Vienna, Austria. The meeting and the work that followed resulted in the publication of a report on good practices in legislation on violence against women.

The Advocates also promotes the right to education across the world in a small village in Nepal. This year, the Sankhu-Palubari Community School, which educates children at risk of child labor, celebrated its first eighth-grade graduation.

This milestone was observed in a graduation ceremony attended by the entire school and village. Your support for the students, parents, and teachers of the school has transformed the future of these children and the Sankhu community.

In June, The Advocates hosted the historic Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) public hearings at Hamline University in Saint Paul. The event marked the first-ever official public hearings for a Diaspora community in the United States. All eight members of Liberia's TRC presided over the hearings, which were centered on the theme, "Confronting Our Difficult Past for a Better Future: The Diaspora Experience." More than 30 witnesses from 10 states traveled to Minnesota to testify about the human rights abuses that forced them to flee Liberia. They also testified about their experiences in flight and in refugee camps, and their experiences of resettlement in the United States. Witnesses included former Liberian Vice President Bennie Warner and former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Hank Cohen.

The Advocates is an international leader in developing quality curricula on international human rights issues. This year, The



Manpreet Dhanjal, Meredith Kruger, Ishmael Beah, and Kathy Seipp at the 2008 Human Rights Awards Dinner

Advocates published *The Road to Peace: A Teaching Guide on Local and Global Transitional Justice*, a curriculum on conflict resolution and restorative justice in the aftermath of war. The teaching guide brings the concept of transitional justice to the classroom and allows students to draw broader connections between instances of justice on both local and international scales. *The Road to Peace* and The Advocates' immigration-related curriculum, *Energy of a Nation*, were selected by the Human Rights Education Associates to be included in a compendium of best practices on human rights education, which will be published by a consortium of United Nations agencies. In addition to publishing curricula, the organization provides education in the form of lectures and trainings on domestic violence, sex trafficking, immigration law, post-9/11 backlash, and other human rights topics. This year, staff and volunteer speakers gave over 100 presentations to approximately 5,000 people throughout the state and country.

In Minnesota, The Advocates released its *Sex Trafficking*

Upcoming Events:

The Advocates and the Human Rights Program and the University of Minnesota present

The 14th Annual International Women's Day Celebration

at Coffman Memorial Union,
University of Minnesota
Saturday, March 14, 2009

The Advocates and AILA MN/Dakotas Chapter present the

Upper Midwest Immigration Conference
at the Hilton in Bloomington
Thursday, April 30th – Friday, May 1, 2009

The Advocates for Human Rights Mourns the Loss of Volunteer Carol Merlin

A pioneering immigration attorney, Carol Merlin, passed away in September 2008. One of the few immigration lawyers in the region at the time, Carol helped to establish The Advocates for Human Rights' Asylum Project in 1983. Carol represented asylum clients and trained and mentored volunteer lawyers. She was known for her selflessness and empathy for clients. She always made herself available to help those in need, setting an example for other attorneys. The Advocates appreciates all that Carol did to advocate for the human rights of asylum seekers in the United States. She made a difference in our organization and in the lives of the clients she served. She will be missed.

Needs Assessment for the State of Minnesota, an evaluation conducted at the request of the State of Minnesota’s Human Trafficking Task Force. The Advocates seeks to improve the discourse on sex trafficking in Minnesota in order to prevent and combat sex trafficking in the state.

To celebrate a quarter century of work, 800 supporters came together in June for the 2008 Human Rights Awards Dinner. The Advocates presented the first Don and Arvonne Fraser Human Rights Awards to Barbara Frey and Samuel Heins for their role in starting the organization and their subsequent work in the field of human rights. Keynote speaker Ishmael Beah, a former child soldier and author of the international bestseller, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*, gave a moving account of the violations of basic human rights of child soldiers from his experiences in Sierra Leone’s brutal civil war. He challenged the audience to strengthen the human rights organizations that play an important role in protecting these rights around the world.

The Advocates’ extraordinary volunteer model is core to its mission and continues to drive the organization’s program work. The Advocates leverages every dollar of support nearly six times over through the work of volunteers. This past year, more than 1,000 volunteers contributed \$10 million

in pro bono services! With the support of attorneys and paraprofessionals, The Advocates provided free legal services in over 1,000 immigration cases and legal advice clinics and provided pro bono legal representation, medical, and psychological evaluations, and interpretation and translation services to people who would otherwise face persecution in their home country.

The Advocates’ groundbreaking work this year was often featured the media. Staff were interviewed for print and electronic media, as well as for radio and television. Several international agencies, such as the BBC and CNN’s *Inside Africa*, covered the Liberian TRC Diaspora Project and the U.S. Public Hearings. KARE 11 in Minnesota did a feature piece on the Nepal School. The Advocates’ work was also covered by the Star Tribune, Minnesota Public Radio, and the Minnesota Women’s Press. To see The Advocates in the news, please visit www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org.

The Advocates continues to develop creative projects to reach new audiences and to address new challenges in the protection of human rights while remaining true to its mission. The organization begins its next 25 years stronger than ever and determined to expand its efforts to reach its vision of a world in which the human rights of all people are respected.

2008 Year in Review



Emily Farell presenting at the Education Minnesota Conference



The Advocates' volunteer attorney Mark Frey with Judge Nickerson



Rose Park, Mary Ellingen, and Genoveva Tisheva at the Regional Conference on Domestic Violence and Legal Reform in Sofia, Bulgaria



Board Members Mark Lindberg and Wood Foster at the 2008 Human Rights Awards Dinner



Carole Martin and Lois Libby Juster with the eight graduates at the Sankhu-Palubari Community School graduation ceremony



Board Chair Aviva Breen at the 2008 Human Rights Awards Dinner

Sandburg Middle School Adds Human Rights to All School Curriculum



Students giving a presentation on human rights issues

Advocates' very first "Rights Sites" because of its dedication to weaving human rights education into its existing curricula.

An accredited International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP) since 2004, Sandburg sets an exemplary standard in human rights education. The shift to add human rights perspectives to all curriculum was promoted by Lauren Hildebrand, The Advocates' Education Program Advisory Committee member and IBMYP Coordinator at Sandburg Middle School. Ms. Hildebrand was recently named to the Education Committee of the Board of Governors of International Baccalaureate, the parent organization for such programs worldwide. Principal Tom Henderlite of Sandburg has also provided critical creative freedom to teachers to use curricula that take on human rights issues.

One of the five areas of interaction in the IBMYP is community service. With community service as a new direction for the entire school, Sandburg easily ties in human rights. Community service projects are being created by students and staff that address basic human rights and responsibilities. Another one of the five areas of interaction is the environment. Sandburg staff and students are already working on this human rights issue and plan to culminate the

Sandburg Middle School in Golden Valley, MN will infuse human rights into all students' curriculum this year, reaching up to three times the number of students as in years past. Sandburg was selected in 2001 as one of The

year with a school-wide project that will beautify the school as they plant, clean up, and re-landscape their school yard.

Using community service and the environment as a vehicle for teaching about and for human rights, the school has already viewed the film *If Everyone Cared* in Humanities classes; discussed human rights activists, such as Nelson Mandela; and piloted a new novel-based reading curriculum that includes *Thura's Diary: My Life in Wartime Iraq* (a 19-year-old Iraqi civilian's perspective on the war).

Plans for the rest of the year include: an interdisciplinary community service project involving a food drive competition where teams or classes build sculptures out of the food products before they are donated; lessons about the history of human rights and why they are important to us locally, nationally, and globally; and a focus on human rights and the environment through lessons on consumerism and recycling.

Lauren Hildebrand thanks the Sandburg staff, "for helping students understand that what we may have in America is not a given anywhere else in the world. We need a bigger perspective, and we need our students to contribute to it."



A student meeting a judge at the school-wide poster contest competition

The Advocates thanks Ms. Hildebrand for her amazing commitment to teaching future generations about the importance of respecting human rights.

Bills Worth Watching

Senators Menendez (D-IL) and Kennedy (D-MA) introduced **S. 3594, the Protect Citizens and Residents from Unlawful Raids and Detention Act**. The bill would preserve basic due process rights for U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, and workers involved in labor disputes who are swept up in immigration raids.

Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) introduced **H.R. 5950, the Detainee Basic Medical Care Act of 2008**, to ensure immigration detainees receive access to basic medical care while in the custody of the Department of Homeland Security.

Sponsored by Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), **H.R. 7255, the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act of 2008**, would implement important reforms to the immigration detention system. In recent years, immigration detention and deportation rates have risen dramatically, with more than 30,000 people in detention on any given day and more than 300,000 deported in 2007 alone. This bill would improve detainee access to telephones and medical care, promote alternatives to detention, and protect unaccompanied children apprehended by the Department of Homeland Security.

Critically Acclaimed Film *The Visitor* Raises Issue of Immigration Detention



The *Visitor* movie marquee outside the Oak Street Cinema

The Advocates for Human Rights, together with partners from around the Twin Cities, hosted a free community screening of *The Visitor* to raise awareness about the detention of immigrants in the Upper Midwest and around the United States. In *The Visitor*, Tom McCarthy's follow-up to his award-winning directorial debut *The Station*

Agent, an American college professor and a young immigrant couple grapple with the treatment of immigrants and the legal process after September 11. Considered one of the best reviewed films of the year, it puts a remarkably human face on the issue of immigrant detention and speaks to a wide and diverse range of audiences.

The screening was part of a national social action campaign spearheaded by Active Voice, a nonprofit media strategy company, along with Participant Media, Detention Watch Network, and National Immigrant Justice Center. The film was shown on October 2nd at the Oak Street Cinema and attracted a diverse audience from around the Metro area.

Macalester College immigration and labor historian Peter Rachleff moderated the post-film discussion with respondents Sheila Stuhlman, Vic Rosenthal, and Michele Garnett McKenzie. Calling for immigration policies that meet human rights standards, the audience was urged to send a message to policymakers to hold the Department of Homeland Security accountable for its treatment of people in its custody or swept up in raids. The audience was also urged to call upon lawmakers to ensure that U.S. immigration laws respect due process, prohibit arbitrary detention, respect the unity of the family, and provide protection for refugees and workers in the United States. The Advocates for Human Rights is committed to humane reform of the U.S. immigration detention and enforcement system and to the creation of just immigration policies that respect the inherent dignity of every person. To learn more about immigration policy and how to take action, visit www.energyofanation.org.

The Advocates for Human Rights thanks its partner organizations, The Center for Victims of Torture, Groveland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, Jewish Community Action, Macalester College, Midwest Coalition for Human Rights, Minneapolis Urban League, Minnesota Immigrant Freedom Network, the Social Justice Office of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, the University of Minnesota Human Rights Center, and the University of Minnesota Human Rights Program. Thanks also to VISTA member Rebecca Riedell, who coordinated the event.

The Advocates Submits Amicus Brief to U.S. Supreme Court

The Advocates for Human Rights filed as amicus curiae with the U.S. Supreme Court in *Negusie v. Mukasey*, No. 07-499. The case, argued November 5th, presents the question of whether the law barring persecutors from obtaining asylum in the United States applies to a person who engaged in those acts only under credible threat of death or serious bodily harm. The Advocates for Human Rights filed the friend-of-the-court brief to urge the Court to construe legal protections for refugees in a way that is consistent with international human rights standards and that does not leave victims of persecution outside its reach.

Daniel Girmai Negusie, petitioner in the case, was forced to serve as a guard in the prison camp in which he himself had been imprisoned and tortured for his refusal to serve in the Eritrean military. He later sought asylum in the United States.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit upheld the denial of asylum, holding that because the "objective effect" of Mr. Negusie's conduct – even though involuntary – assisted in the persecution of others in the camp, he was barred from protection. The unpublished opinion of the Fifth Circuit is reprinted in 231 Fed. App'x 325.

"Refusing to consider evidence of individual culpability," the amicus brief argues, "permits unjust, inequitable results in hard cases and exhibits a disturbing indifference toward the victims of persecution our asylum laws were meant to protect."

The brief was authored by pro bono counsel **Benjamin Casper**, a private immigration attorney in West St. Paul, Minnesota, and by **Heather McElroy** of the Minneapolis law firm Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi LLP.

The Advocates Releases New Report on Combating Domestic Violence in Tajikistan



Participants at the report launch in the UNIFEM office of the UN compound in Dushanbe, Tajikistan

On October 23, 2008, Robin Phillips, Executive Director, and Mary Ellingen, Staff Attorney in the Women's Program, led a roundtable on The Advocates' Commentary to the Draft Tajik law "On Protection from Family Violence," at the invitation of Nargis Azizova, Gender and Governance Advisor, UNIFEM, at the United Nations compound in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

Other participants in the roundtable included the Deputy Chair of the Tajikistan government's Committee on Women and the Family, members of the working group who are drafting the law, representatives from women's NGOs, Parliamentarians, and other key stakeholders.

The Advocates welcomed the opportunity to speak about the provisions of the law during the drafting process. The draft contained many positive protective measures, but also included some provisions that could produce unintended harmful consequences to domestic violence victims. Robin and Mary discussed the proposed law provision by provision, addressing the most current developments in best practices for domestic violence legislation, with examples from the USA

and from the CEE/FSU region. The participants discussed several important topics, including the necessity to remove the violent offender from the home, protection for victims and their children, and the importance of monitoring the implementation of the law after it is passed. Robin described the atmosphere as one of "respectful cooperation." The discussion was dynamic and the Parliamentarians and the working group appeared willing to challenge their pre-existing ideas and the generally accepted myths regarding domestic violence.

The Advocates also launched the report *Domestic Violence in Tajikistan*, written in 2006 and updated in 2008. The report was sponsored by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and was translated into Tajik and Russian by The Advocates' partner in Tajikistan, PROVAW NGO. The report provided 19 specific recommendations on aspects of the Tajik government's response to violence against women, including collecting statistics and training police and medical providers. The report will provide guidance for legislators and practitioners as they work out the details of the draft law.



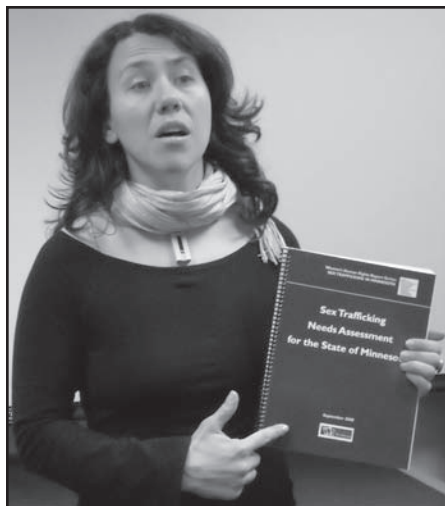
Robin Phillips and Mary Ellingen presenting the report's findings to conference participants

United Nations Releases *Good Practices in Legislation on Violence against Women*

The United Nations recently released a report developed by an expert group that included Cheryl Thomas, Director of the Advocates' Women's Human Rights Program. The groundbreaking compilation, entitled *Good Practices in Legislation on Violence Against Women*, establishes a valuable framework on addressing violence against women. The expert group was convened in response to the Secretary-General's 2006 in-depth study on all forms of violence against women and General Assembly resolution 61/143. The group studied different legislative approaches to violence against women and

developed this model framework for legislation based upon best practices and lessons learned. The report also includes commentary on legislation on violence against women in a number of countries. Under current international law, States must address violence against women, including through the enactment of legislation. At present, however, only one-half of member states of the United Nations have specific legal provisions on domestic violence. The framework has the potential to impact legislation worldwide, and is a significant step for the protection of women.

Report Addresses Sex Trafficking in Minnesota



Angela Bortel presenting on the trafficking report

On September 22, 2008, The Advocates for Human Rights published its latest report, entitled *Sex Trafficking Needs Assessment for the State of Minnesota*. This report examines the government response to sex trafficking at the local, state, tribal and federal levels; identifies facilities and services currently available to trafficking victims in Minnesota;

assesses their effectiveness; and makes recommendations for coordinating services to better meet the needs of sex trafficking victims statewide.

The State of Minnesota's Human Trafficking Task Force selected The Advocates to complete this report, which fulfills the Task Force's mandate to collect data on sex trafficking in Minnesota and develop a plan to address and prevent sex trafficking. The findings of the report also complement the statistical findings in the annual *Human Trafficking in Minnesota* report, published by the Minnesota Office of Justice Programs. The Advocates employed the human rights fact-finding methodology that it has used around the world and in Minnesota to gather information for this report. Its findings are based on interviews with 175 participants throughout the State of Minnesota. Interviewees included judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, immigration attorneys, family law attorneys, probation officers, law enforcement officers, immigration officials, healthcare providers, service providers, social service providers, survivors, and other stakeholders with knowledge of and experience with trafficked persons.

The report found that sex trafficking occurs throughout Minnesota, although its dynamics vary between rural and urban areas, and even within a city. Interviews and research revealed that sex trafficking primarily affects women and girls. Traffickers may exploit women and girls' vulnerabilities – such as poverty, youth, race, history of abuse, lack of resources, chemical dependency, lack of support systems, or lack of immigration status – to entice or retain them in a trafficking situation.

The report found that many problems in law enforcement and victim assistance stem from the legal definitions of

sex trafficking. While federal and state laws both prohibit sex trafficking, their definitions vary. Federal law prohibits recruiting, enticing, harboring, transporting, providing or obtaining a person "knowing that force, fraud or coercion...will be used to cause the person to engage in a commercial sex act." This definition focuses on the conduct and consent of adult sex trafficking victims to determine whether they were trafficked. Federal law does not require a similar showing of "force, fraud or coercion" to prosecute for juvenile victims of trafficking.

The report found that federal prosecutors have a difficult time obtaining evidence to prove that force, fraud, or coercion were used. Consequently, many sex traffickers are prosecuted for other crimes, which often yield low sentences. Moreover, victims must demonstrate that they experienced force, fraud, or coercion in order to receive access to significant public assistance or federally funded services available to trafficking victims. Interviews demonstrated that few victims in Minnesota had satisfied this high standard and most lacked those benefits.

In contrast, Minnesota law recognizes the central principle of international human rights law that an individual can never consent to being exploited. State law defines sex trafficking as a type of promotion of prostitution that involves "receiving, recruiting, enticing, harboring, providing, or obtaining by any means an individual to aid in the prostitution of the individual." However, some local law enforcement officers were unfamiliar with the state definition of sex trafficking and instead employed the federal standard requiring force, fraud, or coercion when assessing whether an individual was a sex trafficking victim. The Advocates also identified other problems that affect stakeholders from all disciplines. For example, virtually every interviewee mentioned the lack of funding and resources as an obstacle in combating sex trafficking. Similarly, many interviewees noted that the lack of established screening and response protocols hinders their ability to identify and respond to sex trafficking victims they may encounter.

Sex trafficking violates women's and children's basic human rights, including the right to be free from slavery and slavery-like practices; the right to equal protection under the law; the right to be free from discrimination based on race, nationality, and gender; and the rights to life, security of person, and freedom from torture. Governments also violate trafficked persons' rights when they fail to prevent sex trafficking; prosecute perpetrators; or provide trafficked persons with effective remedies for these violations, such as access to courts and legal immigration status.

The full text of *Sex Trafficking Needs Assessment for the State of Minnesota* is available on our website. For more information, contact Cheryl Thomas at (612) 341-3302 ext. 102 or at cthomas@advrights.org.

Buduburam Refugee Settlement – Ghana

The Buduburam Refugee Settlement outside of Accra, Ghana has been home to more than 30,000 Liberian refugees since 1990. The Advocates took three volunteer missions to Buduburam as part of our work with the Liberia Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The situation in Buduburam highlights the plight of refugees in protracted conflict situations. As the security situation inside Liberia improves, governments that had offered asylum and resettlement alter their policies toward refugees.

After conflict erupted between the Ghanaian authorities and refugee protestors in the camp over the summer, UNHCR instituted a push for “accelerated” voluntary repatriation. Given the reality that almost no Liberians are being resettled to third countries from Ghana and that the country will no longer recognize Liberians as refugees, Buduburam is slowly emptying out.

Despite improving conditions, many in Buduburam do not have anyone or anywhere to return to in Liberia, and Liberia is already struggling to meet the needs of those currently in the country. The Liberian Refugee Resettlement and Reintegration Commission (LRRRC) reports that as of September 2008, more than 7,000 refugees from Ghana had returned. The LRRRC has put out a call for assistance to support refugees



Ahmed Sirleaf leading a discussion at the Buduburam Refugee Camp in Ghana

who are returning; specifically, the organization is asking for funding to buy mattresses, build shelters, supply refugees with seeds and tools for agriculture, and provide businesses with start-up grants. The LRRRC is also seeking assistance to develop an employment referral program. You can find out more online at www.lrrrc.org.

Locally Based Organizations Collect Law Books for Liberia

The Advocates for Human Rights, Books for Africa (BFA), and Faegre & Benson, LLP have collaborated on a project to send law books to the University of Liberia’s Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law.

The project was initiated by The Advocates’ Ahmed Sirleaf and volunteer Theresa Dykoschak of Faegre & Benson after Law School Dean David Jallah expressed the need for legal educational materials, especially in the critical area of human rights education, during fact-finding interviews in Liberia.

Liberia is now recovering from more than 14 years of violent conflict that destroyed the country’s infrastructure. This donation is especially valuable as Liberian courts frequently rely on U.S. legal precedents because of the unique U.S. influence on the development of the Liberian legal system.

Lane Ayres of Books For Africa facilitated the project by

obtaining donations of 50 copies of 30 different law books used at the Law School. “I am incredibly excited to say that it’s happening!” Lane said. The container that left for Monrovia in September contained 20 pallets of books for the University of Liberia, out of which four pallets are for the Grimes Law School.

Also included is a resource library of just over 200 separate titles, spanning the breadth of U.S. law and including nine human rights law books, several boxes of books donated by Faegre & Benson, and a set of American Jurisprudence and American Law Reports from West Publishing. Similar efforts will be repeated to benefit other countries through BFA’s new Mason Law and Democracy Initiative.

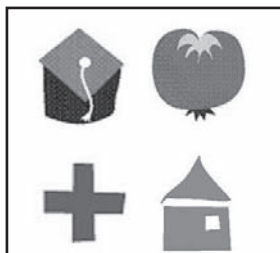
The Advocates would like to thank Lane Ayres and Books for Africa, Theresa Dykoschak, Christine Page and Faegre & Benson, and West Publishing for their contributions.

Human Rights Education Resources: Empowerment through Learning

For over 15 years, The Advocates has been a local and national leader in bringing the principles of international human rights to the classroom and the community. Through the Discover Human Rights Institute, we provide educational resources and tools to help people learn about and apply human rights standards in their daily lives, their families, their workplaces, and their communities. All of these resources can be accessed through www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org.

Discover Human Rights Toolkits:

In an effort to increase awareness of human rights in the U.S., The Advocates created toolkits that examine important human rights issues and that offer tools to help Americans advocate for positive social change. The collection currently includes the rights of migrants, the right to health, the right to education, the right to housing, and the right to food. Each kit includes fact sheets, quizzes, lesson plans, and more. See www.discoverhumanrights.org for more information.



to seek resolution, address past human rights abuses, reform their societies, and heal from violence. Students are challenged to apply these methodologies to transform conflict in their own lives and stop cycles of violence.

Human Rights Education Newsletter:

The Advocates also publishes a quarterly newsletter designed to encourage and support human rights educators. Each edition of *Rights Sites News* highlights a different human rights issue and is packed full of lesson plans, resources, and suggestions for teachers who want to incorporate human rights education in their classrooms.



Human Rights Presentations:

The Advocates' innovative lectures, workshops, and presentations are another great way to learn about human rights. Staff and volunteers offer lectures and CLE presentations for groups on several human rights-related subjects. For a more artistic point of view, The Advocates has partnered with Intermedia Arts to establish the Moving Lives Speakers Bureau. Through their presentations, artists tell their stories, share their artwork, and facilitate dialogue on human rights issues for schools, businesses, and other groups throughout the Twin Cities.

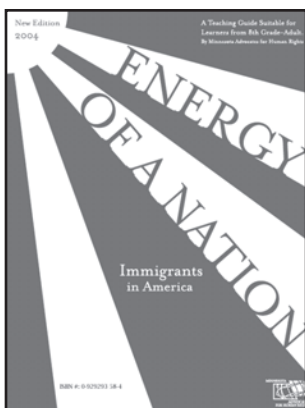
Professional Development:

The Advocates also provides professional development courses for K-12 teachers. Our in-depth human rights trainings provide educators with tools and techniques on how to integrate human rights education into the classroom, and our CEUs cover a full spectrum of topics related to human rights, including service learning, diversity, peace education, global perspectives, and more.



The Advocates hopes that our materials will inspire and empower educators and advocates to “get informed, get involved, and get others interested” in human rights.

We believe that educating about human rights and responsibilities is the most important way to ensure long-term improvements in respect for human rights in the U.S. and around the world.



Energy of a Nation:

Created as part of an educational campaign to address anti-immigrant sentiment, Energy of a Nation is a free interactive online curriculum and immigration resource center dedicated to providing accurate information about immigration through a human rights lens. The curriculum highlights the personal testimony of immigrants and explores immigration from an historical, policy, economic,

and demographic perspective. Numerous up-to-date fact sheets outline the impact of immigrants on the labor market, economy, public assistance programs, and urban and rural communities. See www.energyofanation.org for more information.

The Road to Peace:

Using the expertise of our human rights monitoring teams who carried out work in Peru and Sierra Leone, The Advocates created our most recent curriculum, *The Road to Peace: A Teaching Guide on Local and Global Transitional Justice*. The curriculum includes ten lesson plans on conflict resolution and the restoration of justice in the aftermath of war, emphasizing the processes that countries coming out of conflict undertake

Fall House Parties

Women's Program House Party



Board member and host,
Marlene Kayser

The Women's Program's annual fall house party, hosted by Marlene and Tom Kayser on October 12, 2008, was the most successful fundraiser in the program's history, thanks to the generosity of over 130 supporters and a special matching gift from Tom Kayser honoring Marlene's 70th birthday. Marlene has been a long-time supporter and volunteer for the Women's Program, as well as a Board member of The Advocates and a member of the Women's Program Advisory Committee. The event also honored the team of Robins, Kaplan, Miller and Ciresi attorneys who volunteered for our trafficking project, as well as numerous other attorneys from Minnesota Women Lawyers who have contributed writing and research projects for the Stop Violence Against Women website.



Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi attorneys honored for their volunteer work on the trafficking project: Julia Dayton Klein, Amy Slusser, Stacey Slaughter, Jennifer Ciresi, Laura Nelson and Maggie Lockner (not pictured: Heather McElroy)



Rachel Johnson Hamlin, Executive Director Robin Phillips,
Brigid McDonough, and Nancy Kleeman

Refugee and Immigrant Program House Party

On November 13th, supporters gathered at the home of Andrea and Jim Rubenstein for the Refugee and Immigrant Program's fall house party. At the event, The Advocates presented Jeff Larson, Anne Lockner, and Patrick Finnegan with Volunteer Awards for their exceptional work advocating on behalf of asylum seekers through legal representation and interpretation services. The fundraiser was very successful, thanks in part to a spontaneous matching gift made by Jeff Larson. The Advocates thanks the Rubensteins, the volunteers, and all of the supporters who make this critical work possible.



(far left) Award recipient Jeff Larson with guests (left) Board Member Roberta Walburn with host Jim Rubenstein (above) Host Andrea Rubenstein

Immigration Fuels Our Nation: The Advocates at the Minnesota State Fair



Advocacy Director Michele Garnett McKenzie (center) with volunteers at The Advocates' booth at the 2008 Minnesota State Fair

The Advocates for Human Rights brought the Immigration Fuels Our Nation campaign to the Minnesota State Fair during 2008's critical fall election season, making the case for just and humane immigration reform that respects the dignity of all persons. With interactive activities for kids and adults designed to convey the facts about immigration in the United States, The Advocates' volunteers, board members, and staff spoke with thousands of people over the twelve days of the Great Minnesota Get-Together. Fairgoers carried the Immigration Fuels Our Nation message on nearly 5,000 buttons and fans given out by The Advocates. Hundreds of people also sent a message to elected officials, signing postcards calling for immigration policies that meet international human rights standards of due process, refugee protection, freedom from arbitrary detention and removal, and respect for the unity of the family.

One Voice Minnesota



The One Voice Minnesota project is part of The Advocates' Anti-Bias Initiative. Its overarching goal is to use technology and capacity building to connect groups across the state who work on immigration issues. The project has successfully brought together a network of 122 individuals representing 70 organizations, groups,

and institutions across the State of Minnesota. Their common thread is an interest in helping local communities thrive as they diversify. Recently, as a part of One Voice Minnesota,

The Advocates hosted a meeting in Slayton, Minnesota, that included representatives from six different community organizations from the cities of Tracy, Worthington, Walnut Grove, Windom, and St. James. The group discussed the concerns that both their foreign-born and U.S.-born community members have around the issue of immigration, identified potential areas of collaboration, and had a "sneak peek" at the One Voice Minnesota website, which will debut in the upcoming weeks. The site is intended to provide an online space for groups across the state to access, utilize, and share information with one another in an effort to reduce discrimination and misinformation about immigration.

Changes in Immigration Court

The Advocates would like to welcome Judge William Nickerson, Jr. to Minnesota. Judge Nickerson replaces Judge Dierkes, who retired from the Immigration Court in June.

In addition, The Advocates reminds all volunteer attorneys to refer to the national **Immigration Court Practice Manual** to comply with judges' requests for filings and to view new practice procedures.

Please check the Manual before filing any documents with the Immigration Court at http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/v11/OCIJPracManual/ocij_page1.htm.

Research Opportunities

There are several opportunities to volunteer with The Advocates, and people have volunteered their research and writing skills to assist programs in various ways. Volunteers are vital to carrying out the mission and work of The Advocates for Human Rights.

If you would like to donate your time and research skills, please visit our website at www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Get_Involved.html for a detailed list of volunteer research opportunities or contact Rosalyn Park at rpark@advrights.org.

Victories in Asylum Cases

The Advocates continues to celebrate the many volunteer attorneys who dedicate hours to preparing and defending asylum applications for our clients. Despite an increasingly challenging environment for asylum seekers, these volunteers continue to prevail and gain protection for individuals who have suffered abuses in their own countries. The Advocates wishes to recognize the following recent victories. Please be sure to let a staff member know when you win your case so we can properly recognize your hard work!

Eighth Circuit Victories

Sally Silk of Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi won remand to the Board of Immigration Appeals for a woman from Ethiopia who sought asylum based on her ethnicity and her imputed political opinion, which resulted in her being jailed and tortured in Ethiopia. The client, who was detained by ICE after her Immigration Court hearing, has had her case heard by the Judge twice, the Board twice, and has been deported to Ethiopia.

Immigration Court Victories

Apurba Chakraborty, Steve Benolkin, and Mary Jansen of Dorsey & Whitney won asylum for a family from Colombia who sought asylum based on their political activities. **Kate Flom** of Meshbesh & Spence won asylum for a man from Zimbabwe who had been targeted by the government because of his political beliefs. **Andrea Specht, Megan Dempsey, and Chris Bercaw** of Dorsey & Whitney won asylum for a man from Burkina Faso who had been forced to flee after being

targeted by the government due to his participation with an opposition political group. **Seth Northrup, Cam Winton, Anne Huang, and Bob Gilbertson** of Robins, Kaplan, Miller and Ciresi won withholding of removal and cancellation of removal for a wife and husband from Mali. **DeAnne Hilgers** of Lindquist and Vennum won asylum for a woman from Kenya based on fear of being circumcised. **Patrick Arenz** of Robins, Kaplan, Miller and Ciresi won an asylum case based on political opinion.

Asylum Office Victories

Greg Fishbein, David Asp, and Greg Myers of Lockridge Grindal Nauen won asylum for a man from Rwanda based on his political opinion. **Kerry Cork** of the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium won asylum for a man from Cameroon, also based on his political opinion and activities. **David Woodward** of Heins, Mills, Olson won asylum for his client from Ethiopia who had been tortured due to her ethnic group and political opinion. **Malinda Schmiechen** of The Advocates won asylum for a woman from Somalia who sought asylum due to her clan membership and her experience being subjected to female genital mutilation. **Laura Myers** of Fredrikson and Byron won asylum for a woman from Laos based on domestic violence.

Thank you to consulting attorneys **Jeff Larson, Phil Fishman, Sheila Stuhlman, Loan Huynh, and Michael Boston** who worked on these recently approved cases.

Thank You to Recent Refugee and Immigrant Program Volunteers

Thank you to the following volunteer attorneys, consulting attorneys, and interpreters who have recently taken new cases or completed interpreting assignments:

Busola Akinwale	Jill Dabrowski	Lousene Hoppe	Sarah Meyer	University of
Mourad Ammi	Kevin Decker	Kim Hunter	Greg Myers	Minnesota
Mimi Anzel	Elizabeth Dillon	Amy Schroeder	Casey Nolan	Law School
Emanuel Ardeleanu	Paula Duthoy	Ireland	Paschal Nwokocha	Immigration Clinic
David Asp	Kathleen Lohmar	Amelia Jadoo	Naomi Perman	Rebecka VanderWerf
Greg Bachmeier	Exel	Roger Junnila	Nancy Peterson	Fordam Wara
Karly Baraga	Patrick Finnegan	Amanda Keillor	Nadia Polukhin	Katherine Wiik
Anne Barthel	Phillip Fishman	Susan Koberstein	Wayne Popham	William Mitchell
H. Allen Blair	Collins Foulds	Jeff Larson	Michelle Rivero	College of Law
Prairie Bly	Kenn Fukuda	Maggie Lockner	Jenny Robbins	Immigration Clinic
Roger Branigan	Alan Goldfarb	Kerri McWilliams	Lori Roemer	Lao Yang
Sara Brown	Sarah Goldwait	Bruce Mackenzie	Jeff Saunders	Julie Zimmer
Jana Bruder	Francisco Gonzalez	Katherine Malaga	Jon Schmidt	Dick Zonneveld
Kahla Bunde	Lesley Guyton	Sarah MapelLentz	Akeem Soboyede	David Zucco
Ben Casper	Lauren Hanson	Andrew Mason	Dr. Allison Stolz	
Joe Christopherson	Sarah Hauble	Laura Maupin	Jason Stove	
Obi Chukwu	DeAnne Hilgers	Greg Merz	Steve Thal	

Staff and Intern Update

Ramla Bile, Assistant to the Executive Director, left The Advocates to pursue opportunities working on issues impacting the Somali community. Thank you for all of your dedication and hard work, Ramla!

Min Chong has rejoined The Advocates as Executive Assistant and Development and Communications Associate. Welcome back, Min!

Julia Kashaeva Schlack, Education Program/Development Program Assistant, left The Advocates to pursue studies and work at the University of Minnesota. Thank you and good luck to you, Julia!

David Takassi, Refugee and Immigrant Program Associate, left The Advocates to pursue a career in international development. We are very grateful for his excellent work

conducting intake interviews and coordinating volunteer interpreters over the past two years.

Thank you to each of our talented interns!

Ira Liston (Macalester College), **Livia Martini** (Macalester College), **Lee Her** (Metropolitan State University), **Courtney Gallo** (University of Minnesota), and **Vanessa Gutierrez** (St. Thomas Law School) with the Refugee and Immigrant Program; **Katrina Viegas** (University of St. Thomas Law School), **Zoe Whaley** (Macalester College), and **Sara Wilkinson** (University of Minnesota Law School) with the Women's Program; **George Norris** (University of Minnesota Law School), **Alisha Hilde** (University of Minnesota Law School), **Leah Indrelie** (William Mitchell College of Law), and **Heather Kunin** (Macalester College) with Special Projects; and **Cassandra Berg** with the Education Program and Communications and Development.

We are seeking donations for the silent auction at the Human Rights Awards Dinner.

We welcome donations to be bid on, such as gift certificates, tickets to events, services, airfare, and other items.

Your contribution will go toward supporting The Advocates' programs and projects.

Please contact Min Chong at (612) 341-3302 ext. 127, or mchong@advrights.org for more information.

Funding Facts

Did you know that as part of the Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, donors can transfer IRA assets to the charity of their choice? This money becomes exclusively a gift. It is not included in the donor's income, and it is not taxed.

For more information on Charitable IRA gifts or other funding opportunities, please contact Sarah Herder at (612) 341-3302 ext. 126 or at sherder@advrights.org.

Many Ways to Give

Monthly Giving

For your convenience, The Advocates for Human Rights now has a monthly giving option.

Gifts of any amount can be automatically processed each month. This method of giving creates steady and sustainable support for our programming.

Go to www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org and click on "Support Us." You may change your monthly giving option at any time by contacting The Advocates. To speak to a staff member about this option, please call Sarah Herder at (612) 341-3302 ext. 126.

Planned Giving

The Advocates for Human Rights operates on the generosity of its supporters.

To receive information about including The Advocates in your estate, please contact Sarah Herder at (612) 341-3302 ext. 126 or at sherder@advrights.org.

Combined Federal Campaign

Employees of the federal government may choose to select The Advocates for Human Rights through the Combined Federal Campaign. Please go to <http://www.opm.gov/cfc/donors/> to learn more.

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