



Weill Cornell Medical College

# The Weill Cornell Center for Human Rights

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## Evaluations

**December:** 4 evaluations

**Total Evaluations to Date:** 254 evaluations for 217 unique clients

## Upcoming Events

**Fall Debrief with Dr. Susan Ball**  
January 19, 2016, 6:30 PM

**Spring Student Training**  
February 6, 2016, 8 AM - 1 PM

**Sex Trafficking With a Clinical Focus**  
hosted by Sanctuary for Families  
February 23, 2016, 6 PM - 8 PM

**Spring Faculty Training**  
March 10, 2016, 6 PM - 10 PM



Students at the WCCHR Fall Training in September. Spring Student Training will be held on February 6, 2016.

## Expanding Continuing Care Opportunities

WCCHR's Continuing Care program connects asylum seekers with free and low cost medical, psychological, social and educational services including ESL classes, housing assistance, and Medicaid enrollment assistance. Recently, WCCHR established a new partnership with the Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research (IPTAR). IPTAR's extensive network of therapists and mental health providers offers WCCHR clients the opportunity to receive psychological care in a wide variety of languages and at locations across the New York City metropolitan area. This new partnership has greatly expanded WCCHR's capacity to connect asylees from across the globe with much needed psychological services provided in their native language.

Since starting referrals to IPTAR in December, WCCHR's Continuing Care team has successfully connected several clients with IPTAR therapists. WCCHR is thrilled to have established this partnership and would like to thank Dr. Brett Gorkin at IPTAR, who has been fundamental in launching this partnership and helping asylees access high quality mental health services.

## AOA Grant Update

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In 2014, Alpha Omega Alpha honored WCCHR with the Medical Student Service Leadership Project Award along with a three-year, \$9,000 grant to support the expansion of student leadership in the areas of health and human rights. This national distinction is awarded to support leadership development for medical students through mentoring, observation, and service learning. Dean Glimcher generously matched this grant, and as we enter the final year of the award, we would like to thank Alpha Omega Alpha and the Dean for supporting the expansion of WCCHR's work in the following areas: education, advocacy, self-care, continuing care, and research.



Over the past two years, we have grown many of our core initiatives, including student and faculty forensic evaluation trainings, educational lecture series, and our Continuing Care program. We now have a team of student case managers working to connect asylum seekers with much needed medical, social, and educational resources. We have partnered with other student organizations including Q!, the Ob-Gyn Interest Group, and ASCENSUS to bring educational and humanities events to the Weill Cornell campus. We have invested in our student leaders, sending them to forensic medical trainings with Physicians for Human Rights, and engaged faculty volunteers in mentoring opportunities through our independent elective and monthly faculty-student lunches. We have also completed the development of a research database of over 200 asylum seekers for whom we have conducted evaluations in the past five years. We are very grateful for the generous support of Alpha Omega Alpha and Dean Glimcher, which has helped to make these achievements possible!

## In the News

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### **Saudi Executions Seen as Sending Message to all Dissenters — NYTimes, Jan 5th, 2015**



The aftermath of a raid by Saudi security forces on accused Qaeda militants in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2004. (AP)

On January 2nd, 2016, Saudi Arabia executed 47 people in a single day, according to the New York Times. Those executed include the Shiite Muslim cleric Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimar, a critic of the Saudi Arabian government who was convicted in what Amnesty International calls a “grossly unfair trial”. Such trials do not allow defendants access to a lawyer and convictions are sometimes based on confessions obtained under torture. Al-Nimar’s execution and those of other Shiite dissidents cast doubt on Saudi Arabia’s claim to have executed only terrorists and have escalated tensions within Saudi Arabia and across the region.

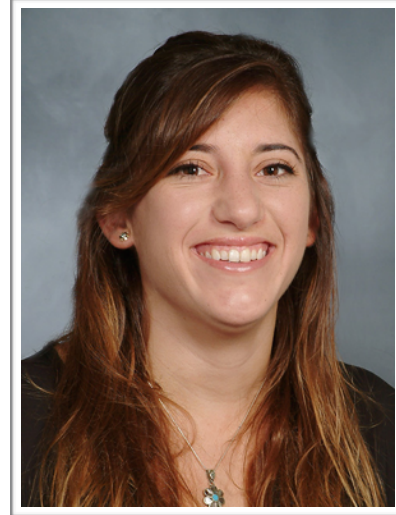
***Link to article:*** <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/06/world/middleeast/saudi-executions-seen-as-sending-message-to-all-dissenters.html>

## Spotlight on...

### Nicole Aguirre, MS2

**Nicole Aguirre** was born in Argentina and raised in Orange County, California. She graduated from Stanford University in 2012, where she majored in Chemical Engineering. While studying, Nikki worked at a health clinic for underserved populations, taught classes at a charter school, and gave ESL lessons to the janitorial staff. Her work with underserved communities sparked her interest in global inequalities and health disparities.

Following graduation, she worked abroad in Peru, Argentina, and Laos for two years. This experience further piqued her interest in global health. Currently a second-year MD student, Nicole works with WCCHR and other community initiatives that serve underrepresented minorities. Her interest in human rights includes a particular passion for women's equality. She has participated in seven WCCHR evaluations and served as both a case manager and a case scheduler.



### Debora Munczek, Ph.D.

Debora Munczek, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist in private practice with expertise in the psychosocial and mental health aspects of human rights violations. She has worked at the International Trauma Studies Program at New York University, the Bellevue Hospital–NYU Program for Survivors of Torture, Doctors of the World's Human Rights Clinic, the Assistance to Torture Survivors Project of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, and other institutions and organizations in the United States and in Latin America. She has been a volunteer evaluator for Physicians for Human Rights' Asylum Network since 1997. She has also served as an expert witness before the

Inter-American Human Rights Court of the Organization of American States and was a Fulbright Scholar in Honduras where she worked with several human rights organizations while teaching and conducting research. She holds a PhD in Clinical Psychology from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and an MSW from New York University.