



# The Weill Cornell Center for Human Rights

Issue No. 19 | March 2017

## In this Issue

- Upcoming Events
- Advanced Training on Adolescent Evaluations and Child Abuse
- WCCHR Presentation at Brooklyn Law School
- In the News
- Faculty Spotlight
- Student Spotlight

## Statistics

We have conducted **350** evaluations for **299** clients from **59** countries.

We have trained **550** medical students to evaluate clients for signs of physical and psychological trauma.

## Upcoming Events

### Networking Luncheon

Saturday, May 20, 11:30AM - 2PM

Lunch will be served  
Griffis Faculty Club  
1300 York Ave.

## Advanced Training Focuses on Adolescent Evaluations and Child Abuse



*Photo credit: Molly Chodakewitz*

On Tuesday, March 21, the WCCHR hosted an advanced training for students and clinicians. This session, offered as a supplement to our semiannual asylum evaluation trainings, focused specifically on evaluating adolescents. The WCCHR has provided forensic evaluations for children who have survived domestic violence, escaped sex trafficking, and evaded forced participation in dangerous gangs. We look forward to helping more adolescent asylum seekers as we continue to welcome clinicians into our growing community of volunteer evaluators.

Dr. Katherine Grimm, who has served as the Medical Director of The New York Center for Children since January 1997, opened the training with an insightful lecture that detailed tools for recognizing child abuse and explored how trauma and neglect can profoundly affect childhood development. Special considerations for evaluating children were also discussed in a small group led by experienced WCCHR evaluators. Latha Panchap, who serves as Education Coordinator for the WCCHR, considered the advanced training to be “a great opportunity for students and clinicians to get a better understanding of the signs of adolescent abuse. We were very grateful to benefit from Dr. Grimm's significant clinical experience in the field.”

## WCCHR Presents at Brooklyn Law School

Members of the WCCHR Executive Board were invited to speak to students of Brooklyn Law School's Safe Harbor Clinic this month. The clinic comprises an elective course at Brooklyn Law School in which teams of law students work to secure asylum and other forms of humanitarian relief for their clients. The WCCHR-led session included an introduction to WCCHR's clinic, an overview of the mental health evaluation of torture survivors, a discussion of common psychological disorders found in this population, and ended with a conversation about vicarious trauma.

Lynne Rosenberg, who serves as the WCCHR's Director of Organizational Operations, was one of the student leaders who participated in this presentation. Reflecting upon her experience working with the law students, she commented that "it was amazing to be in a room full of people so passionate about our common cause and so driven to learn about how they can help."



Photo credit: Andrew Milewski

## In the News

### A Surprising Salve for New York's Beleaguered Cities: Refugees

—NYTimes, February 20, 2017

*"As Um Alnoor emerged into bright fluorescence, she saw a woman in a white head scarf straight ahead, beaming at her and holding her arms open. Then Um Alnoor was enveloped in her embrace, both of them crying, swaying back and forth. The woman who held her — resettlement caseworker Nermin Helaly — murmured in Arabic: "You're OK now. This is the end of your journey."*

*They stood that way for nearly a minute, the other passengers streaming around them...She stepped back and wiped the tears from her cheeks. She felt overpowering gratitude and relief—and she felt another, less familiar feeling.*

*For the first time since the war started, she felt safe.*

**Link to interactive article:** <http://apps.bostonglobe.com/metro/graphics/2017/03/the-last-refugee/series/through-the-closing-door/>



Photo credit: Suzanne Kreiter, Boston Globe

## Spotlight on...

### Eric Zhang, MEd

**Eric Zhang** holds a BS in Biopsychology from Tufts University where he spent three years studying stress and substance abuse in the Tufts Psychopharmacology lab at Tufts Medical School. This line of investigation sparked his interest in working with patients who develop vulnerabilities following stressful and traumatic experiences. Eric examined healthcare policy through a foreigner lens while studying abroad in Germany. He also holds a BM from the New England Conservatory of Music and believes in the ability of music to heal and improve one's quality of life, regardless of cultural or linguistic barriers; he is very interested in overcoming these barriers to satisfactory healthcare. Eric is a member of the Class of 2020 at Weill Cornell Medicine and serves as one of the WCCHR's Case Schedulers.



### Patricia Tidwell, PhD, LCSW

**Patricia Tidwell**, PhD, LCSW has been in private practice for over 20 years. She works primarily with individuals and is an EMDR practitioner. She is faculty and clinical supervisor at Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Study Center and Institute for Expressive Analysis, both in Manhattan. Having lived and worked in different cultures, Dr. Tidwell has a particular interest in how culture influences the ways that women experience themselves in the world. Her dissertation explored the relationship between women's sense of self, agency, and ambition. Dr. Tidwell is one of the WCCHR's newest volunteer evaluators.

