



The Weill Cornell Center for Human Rights

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Statistics

As of October 8, **105 of our clients have been granted asylum or another form of protection**, constituting 94% of clients whose cases have been adjudicated.

We have conducted **380** evaluations for **322** clients from **63** countries.

We have trained **638** medical students to evaluate clients for signs of physical and psychological trauma.

Upcoming Events

Stay tuned for more WCCHR events coming soon!

We are pleased to introduce our 2017-2018 WCCHR Student Board!

Executive Team

Executive Directors: Lynne Rosenberg and Kelsey Young

Director of Clinical Operations: Kevin Ackerman

Director of Organizational Operations: Karina Ruiz-Esteves

Director of Continuing Care: Anna Cai

Clinical Operations Team

Faculty Coordinator: Maria Minor

Evaluation Schedulers: Tara Pilato, Pooja Shah, Debby Abramov

Research Coordinator: Clare Burchenal

Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator: Jason Lambden

Continuing Care Team Manager: Molly Chodakewitz

Organizational Operations Team

Education Coordinator: Andrew Eidelberg

Events Coordinators: Jung "Anthony" Mok, Iryna Ivasyk

Branding/Advocacy Coordinators: Rohini Koppam, Asal Hejazi

Curriculum Coordinator: Rachel Orleans

Treasurer/Grants Coordinator: Rahmi Elahjji

Good luck to all in their new roles!

Fall Asylum Evaluation Training Introduces Students and Clinicians to Asylum Work

On Saturday, September 16, the WCCHR held its annual Fall Asylum Evaluation Training. This training prepared clinicians and students to write medical affidavits and to conduct psychological, physical, and gynecological evaluations of asylum seekers. Dr. Thomas Kalman and Dr. Joseph Shin, Co-Medical Directors of the WCCHR, gave presentations on performing psychological and physical evaluations, respectively. Dr. Deborah Ottenheimer, a gynecologist and long-time WCCHR evaluator, provided the women's health portion of the training, and Dr. Joanne Ahola, WCCHR Medical Director Emeritus, spoke about evaluating LGBTQ asylum seekers. In addition, we were honored to have Dan Smulian from the Brooklyn Law School join us again to share his expertise on the affidavit-writing process.

The training also included afternoon break-out groups in which trainees worked directly with experienced WCCHR volunteer evaluators. Participants discussed affidavits drawn from the small-group leaders' experience and also had the opportunity to ask questions about performing forensic evaluations.

We were pleased to welcome participants from all over the country who joined the training remotely via live stream — including students and clinicians from California and Iowa. Overall, we are proud to have trained 97 students and clinicians.

In the News

112 Degrees With No Water: Puerto Rican Hospitals Battle Life And Death Daily

—John Burnett, NPR, October 5, 2017

This article is an important reminder of the critical condition that Puerto Rico finds itself in following Hurricane Maria. If you're interested in how you can help, feel free to reach out to WCCHR Director of Organizational Operations and Puerto Rico native Karina Ruiz-Esteves knr2001@med.cornell.edu!

“Every day across Puerto Rico, with its shattered power grid, hospitals are waging a life-and-death battle to keep their patients from getting sicker in the tropical heat. Now two weeks after the storm, about three-quarters of Puerto Rico's hospitals remain on emergency power. This creates dangerous conditions for critically ill patients.”



Photo credit: Carol Guzy, NPR

Link to article: <http://www.npr.org/2017/10/05/555796327/following-disaster-teams-in-puerto-rico>

Spotlight on...

Latha Panchap, M2

Latha Panchap graduated from Cornell University in 2015 with a degree in Biological Engineering and a minor in Applied Economics and Management. Throughout her undergraduate career, she attempted to understand health inequalities in populations within the United States and abroad in countries like India and Peru. Her interests are focused on improving infant morbidity and mortality in rural populations worldwide and on optimizing patient-centered healthcare experiences in hospitals. She is currently an MD candidate at Weill Cornell Medical College and serves as Education Coordinator of the WCCHR.



Dr. Deborah Ottenheimer, MD

Dr. Ottenheimer is a graduate of The University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and was awarded the Paul Stolley Award in Clinical Epidemiology for her work on family planning practices in Cameroon, West Africa. Dr. Ottenheimer completed her residency training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at St.Lukes/Roosevelt Hospital in Manhattan. Dr. Ottenheimer went on to be an attending physician at Bronx Lebanon Hospital; later becoming Director of adolescent OB/GYN services and co-Director of the Adolescent and Young Adult Health Program. Dr. Ottenheimer is now in private practice, where she continues to focus on gynecologic care for adolescents and young adults. She currently serves as a medical advisor for the Hope for Haiti Foundation. In addition, she has served as a consulting physician for Midwives for Haiti, and for Physicians for Human Rights Interdisciplinary Training Program on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones in Eastern Congo.



For the past decade, Dr. Ottenheimer has been an active member of Physicians for Human Rights for which she conducts pro bono medical exams for female asylum seekers. Dr. Ottenheimer is the associate director of the Human Rights Program at the Ichan School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and volunteers as a forensic examiner at the Weill Cornell Center for Human Rights aiding victims of female genital mutilation, domestic violence, and sex trafficking in their applications for asylum. Dr. Ottenheimer has been faculty in multiple asylum evaluation trainings for medical professionals and has lectured extensively on human rights violations against women, with a focus on female genital mutilation.

