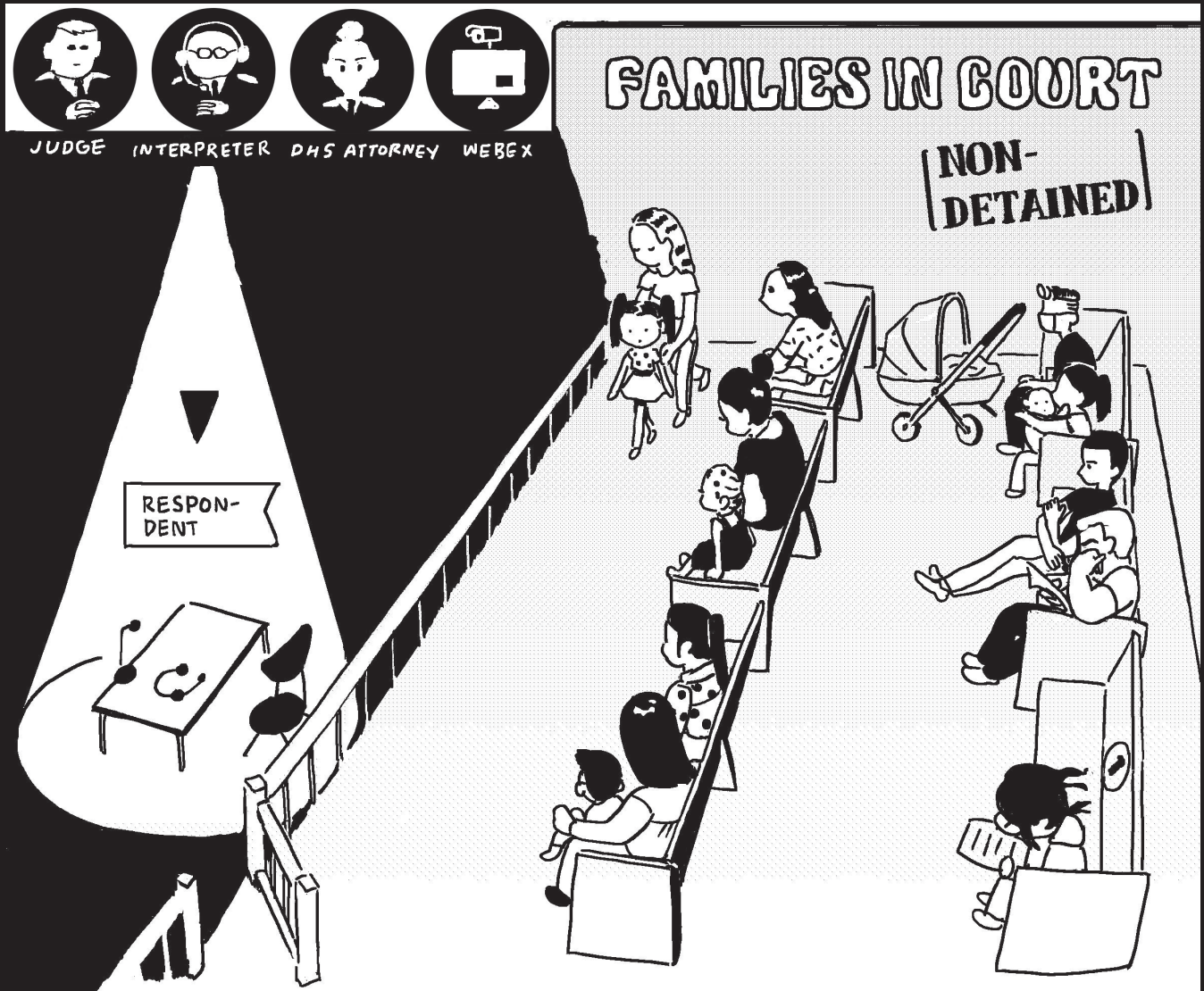


# HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVER



The Power of Witnessing:  
celebrating 35 years of court monitoring

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## Director's Desk

The Advocates for Human Rights was founded in 1983 on the principle that we all have a part to play in making human rights a reality. As 2022 draws to a close, this principle remains the driving force of our work.

We have built a community committed to making human rights a reality. You will see in the pages of this newsletter some of the people and organizations that sustain our work. Interns, volunteers, donors, foundations, human rights organizations, social service organizations, agencies at different levels of government and many others bring essential skills and resources to the human rights movement.

We celebrated our community at our Human Rights Awards Dinner in June. Some were recognized for a banner year of volunteer contributions and others for many years of sustained commitment to our human rights work. We presented our 2022 Don & Arvonne Fraser Human Rights Award to Neil Datta, a leader in the global movement to counter the conservative backlash to human rights.

We also celebrated the completion of our first capacity building campaign a year and a half ahead of schedule. Our donors stepped up to strengthen our capacity to leverage extraordinary volunteers to address critical needs. We believed that with additional capacity to recruit, train, and support our volunteers, we could dramatically increase the scope and impact of our work. We are seeing immediate results.

Thank you for being part of our growing network of individuals and law firms. You continue to give incredible amounts of time, talent, and treasure. You represent victims of human rights violations in asylum and trafficking cases. You document conditions to expose the systemic problems that allow human rights abuses to occur. You provide essential data to solve these problems and better protect human rights. You provide essential financial resources to support our broad network of volunteers. We know we all have a part to play in making human rights a reality.

We see the same principle playing out around the country. November's election demonstrated that for democracy to work for all of us, our voices and our votes must count. Bodily autonomy, voting rights, diversity in representation and public policy grounded in respect for human dignity drove record numbers of voters to the polls.

In 2023, The Advocates for Human Rights will celebrate its 40th anniversary. We enter the year stronger than ever, reinforced by the commitment and generosity of our community of human rights advocates. We are encouraged by the collective voices of the majority demanding respect for human rights in our country.

Thank you for being part of the human rights movement. Together, we can do anything.



Robin Phillips  
Executive Director



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Cover Image: Wenjin Yao

# Amplifying Voices of Ukrainian Human Rights Defenders

When Russia invaded Ukraine in February, the entire world took a collective gasp. We all asked, "What can we do?" Some of us donated, others of us marched. The Advocates did what we do: we began documenting human rights violations to hold perpetrators accountable.

When the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court announced an investigation into Ukraine and asked for information on war crimes and crimes against humanity, we immediately sprang into action. We reached out to our women's human rights defender partners in Ukraine and asked if they would share their stories. Since then, we have

conducted almost 30 interviews with Ukrainians about the horrors they have witnessed and experienced.

The war continues to rage in Ukraine. It will be a long time before people see formal justice carried out by a tribunal, and The Advocates is helping build the case for future accountability. Meanwhile, The Advocates is helping deliver a form of justice to the people of Ukraine now, giving voice to the victims and survivors of the conflict to make sure they know their stories are heard and not forgotten.

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Photo: Activist Diana Berg stands for Ukraine in 2022.

# Empowering LGBTQI+ Clients: Harry Fights for Human Rights

“Kidnapping of LGBTQI+ people is a regular phenomenon in Nigeria,” says Harry, a client of The Advocates who faced persecution on account of his sexual orientation. Harry is seeking asylum in the U.S. with the help of our volunteer attorneys. Harry had been an activist in Nigeria and wanted to continue fighting for human rights there. We invited him to be part of our international advocacy to hold the government of Nigeria accountable to change the conditions that forced him to flee.

Harry documented the experiences of LGBTQI+ Nigerians who had been abducted, beaten, and held for ransom because of their sexual orientation. He said, “This was my first way to do any form of advocacy work or be a part of something in the United States. It helps.”

The Advocates holds Special Consultative Status at the United Nations, allowing direct access to international human rights mechanisms. Our clients’ and partners’ lived experiences are compelling examples of the human rights violations occurring in their home countries. Their stories bring our reports to life by putting a human face on otherwise impersonal data.



2 • 0 • 2 • 2  
VOLUNTEER AWARDS

# Client Activists Recognized for Courageous Advocacy

The Advocates recognized several activists at the United Nations who volunteered to directly advocate to change conditions in their countries of origin. These activists conducted human rights fact-finding and research, drafted written reports documenting human rights problems, participated in briefings with UN human rights experts, and spoke at events targeting Human Rights Council delegates. They have brought their most powerful weapon—the truth of their experiences—to hold their governments accountable for their human rights violations.

These activists have had the courage to speak truth to power, sharing their stories with the international community. Their voices are particularly important when human rights defenders in their countries of origin are not able to safely speak out.

The Advocates creates opportunities for survivors of human rights violations to participate in global advocacy efforts to hold governments accountable. Our clients are making a difference in their countries of origin by providing first-hand information to the United Nations. In the past four years, more than 70 clients have shared their personal experiences of human rights abuses.





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# Inaugural Barbara Frey Fellow Verónica Cadavid González Joins The Advocates

When Verónica Cadavid González interned with The Advocates for Human Rights as an undergraduate exchange student at the University of Minnesota, she knew she was headed for a career in human rights. But the Colombian attorney never imagined that a decade later she would be back in the office as a fellow.

Supported by the newly established Barbara Frey Fellowship, Verónica Cadavid González joined The Advocates in June. Working across program areas, Verónica is helping drive transformational work to center client engagement throughout the organization.

Veronica explained, “We work with clients from around the world who were forced to flee because of their activism. It’s exciting to foster new opportunities for our human rights defender clients to continue their work.”

**Their identity as human rights defenders and their agency does not disappear when they cross borders.**

Verónica graduated from the University of Minnesota in May with a master’s degree in Human Rights. Since receiving her Bachelor of Laws degree from the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (Medellin, Colombia) in 2018, Verónica has built an impressive record. As a human rights lawyer, researcher, and advocate, she served as a researcher at the House of Memory Museum (Casa de la Memoria), a professional intern with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, and a Research Consultant on economic and social rights with the Human Rights Center in the University of Minnesota’s Law School.

The fellowship was established in 2022 to mark Frey’s retirement from the University of Minnesota, where she led the Human Rights Program. Frey previously served as The Advocates’ executive director for more than a decade. The fellowship supports a year of full-time employment at a nongovernmental or intergovernmental organization dedicated to the advancement of human rights for an exceptional graduating student from the University of Minnesota’s Human Rights Master’s Degree Program.



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Verónica Cadavid González (MHR '22) (left)  
and Barbara Frey (right)

Photo Credit: Sara Maddy Olson

# Countering the Backlash: The Advocates Convenes Women’s Human Rights Defenders in Prague



The pandemic prevented us from honoring WAVE in person in 2021, but The Advocates was able to present the award to the WAVE team at their annual conference in October.



Linda Foreman and Rosalyn Park

Women’s Human Rights Director Rosalyn Park and volunteer Linda Foreman traveled to Prague, Czech Republic to take part in the annual WAVE Conference. Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) is a network of over 160 European women’s NGOs working towards prevention and protection of women and children from violence. In 2021, The Advocates awarded WAVE our Don & Arvonne Fraser Human Rights Award for their commitment to ending violence against women.

**The space for civil society is shrinking and laws protecting women at risk of violence are regressing.**

While there, The Advocates facilitated a separate in-person meeting of women’s human rights defenders.

Forty members of The Advocates’ new Global Women’s Watch coalition attended the convening from 20 countries, eager to share developments and news from their countries about these attacks. Many voiced their concerns that not only is the space for civil society shrinking and laws protecting women at risk of violence regressing, but that extreme, far-right politicians are gaining power and office in many countries, such as the recent elections in Italy. The convening provided the opportunity for activists to share effective strategies to counter the far-right movement and continue defending women’s rights. Many of these activists work for frontline NGOs serving victims of violence—running shelters, going to court, and providing counseling and other direct services—leaving little room

in the day to tackle the rising threats of the anti-gender movement. And, increasingly, activists in some countries risk retaliation, threats, or violence. The participants expressed gratitude for the global solidarity the network represents.



Marcella Pirrone, 2022 WAVE Board President and founder of D.i.Re speaks with Linda Foreman





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DON & ARVONNE FRASER HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

# Neil Datta's Work Lights Path Forward

The Advocates presented Neil Datta with the 2022 Don & Arvonne Fraser Human Rights Award for his fearless commitment to investigating and exposing the far-right movement to roll back advancements in human rights. A founder of the European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Datta has persevered to protect fundamental rights in the face of baseless lawsuits and personal threats. By revealing and explaining the strategies of the far-right anti-gender movement, Datta provides hope to women, LGBTQI+ people, and human rights defenders worldwide.

Thriving in secrecy, little was known about the far-right movement or how it works until a few years ago.

As a result, it has operated with little scrutiny or challenge, gaining inroads in crushing the very human rights The Advocates has long defended. Datta's research to understand this movement and its tactics was both groundbreaking and illuminating, peeling back the layers and exposing it for what it truly is.

Women's Human Rights Director Rosalyn Park, who presented the award to Datta in June, says, "Today our human rights are under serious attack. We have heard from our NGO partners about the perils they face—threats of death, rape, and frivolous lawsuits, as well as the increasingly difficult conditions they work under when governments restrict their activities. In the face of such danger, Neil has persevered with bravery and tenacity to unmask the far right."



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VOLUNTEER AWARD

# Akin Gump Team Honored

The Advocates presented a 2022 Volunteer Award to Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP for their work to investigate and expose the backlash to human rights.

Theresa Perkins, Nicholas Antonas, Anna Anisimova, and Sahar Abas led a multi-office global team to

conduct fact-finding on the anti-gender movement and its tactics in 14 countries in Europe and the Former Soviet Union.

The firm supported an in-person mission to Croatia to pilot fact-finding on the anti-gender movement.

Thanks to the team, we completed 100 interviews for our report. Akin Gump lawyers contributed numerous hours and their talent to the report. One attorney, alone, contributed more than 200 pro bono hours to this project. Their work led to the 2021 report, *A Rollback for Human Rights: The Istanbul Convention under Attack*.

The Advocates is grateful for Akin Gump's tireless commitment to human rights.



Rosalyn Park with Akin Gump's Sahar Abas (Dubai) and Lauren Connell (NY)



2 • 0 • 2 • 2  
VOLUNTEER AWARD

## Ava Kelley Makes an Impact

Volunteer and intern Ava Kelley is multi-talented. She started by helping our clients apply for their work permits. But when she realized the team needed help optimizing a new case management system, she used her software development background to save us hours of work every week by organizing and automating tasks. Ava was accepted into law school while she was volunteering and soon returned as a legal intern. In April 2022, she gave her first closing argument in immigration court.

Ava said of her experience working on cases, “I feel like I am much more aware of what’s going on with immigration and with how much we really are denying people’s asylum applications and just not being friendly to immigrants.

**It’s really helped me to grow as a law student and eventually as a lawyer.”**

The Advocates recognized Ava with a 2022 Volunteer Award for her remarkable legal advocacy and for helping our team assist asylum seekers more efficiently than ever.



2 • 0 • 2 • 2  
VOLUNTEER AWARD

## Mary & David Parker Support Human Rights for the Long Haul



David and Mary Parker have supported The Advocates for more than 20 years. Both have served on the Board of The Advocates and have been deeply involved with the Sankhu-Palubari Community School (SPCS) since its inception.

Mary and David have worked to raise awareness and funds for The Advocates’ work. During the pandemic, Mary participated in dozens of virtual galas, auctions, and fundraisers to find out what works. Her professional research skills were instrumental in the success of The Advocates’ virtual events. A skilled photographer, David has shown thousands of people what child labor looks like—and what free education at SPCS looks like as an alternative. David and Mary have hosted countless house parties to support the school, inviting friends new and old to learn about the right to education in Nepal. The Parkers’ investments in the school have changed the lives of students. We are grateful to David and Mary for their generous and creative support through the years.



# Partnerships Expand Access to Immigration Justice

Last year The Advocates provided legal help to 3,000 people throughout the Upper Midwest—more than twice the number in any previous year. Partnerships with the Immigrant Justice Corps (IJC) and Vera Institute of Justice are helping build critical capacity.

“The Advocates works closely with our legal services colleagues here in Minnesota, and we know that partnerships are essential to ensuring that no one faces the immigration system alone,” said Hanne Sandison, interim director of The Advocates’ Refugee and Immigrant Program and IJC alum. “We are thrilled to be part of innovative nationwide efforts to expand immigrant justice.”



Laura Cholula (pictured left) and Pamela Guerrero joined The Advocates’ team this fall, kickstarting their legal careers through a two-year Immigrant Justice Corps fellowship. IJC’s fellowship identifies promising lawyers who are passionate about immigrants’ rights, places them with organizations where they can make the greatest difference, and supports them as they directly assist immigrants in need.

At the same time, The Advocates has partnered with the Vera Institute of Justice to expand representation to unaccompanied children in North Dakota who are facing deportation. Staff Attorney Kim Boche, who works closely with The Advocates’ unaccompanied child clients, says, “Expecting children to navigate the immigration system alone not only goes against our most fundamental notions of justice, it’s ludicrous.” With no dedicated immigration legal services in the state, most kids would be left to speak for themselves. Using Vera’s universal representation model, The Advocates is working to bridge that gap.



## Fe y Justicia

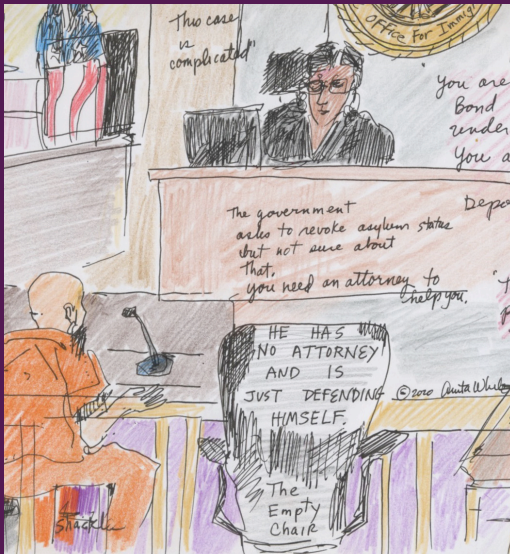
The Advocates presented a Special Recognition Award to Fe y Justicia. Fe y Justicia is an immigrant-led organization that brings justice and provides kindness to their Central Minnesota community. They have been an important partner in The Advocates’ efforts to provide legal services to rural asylum seekers.

Ma Elena Gutierrez, director of Fe y Justicia, explained why promoting human rights principles in immigration policy is important: “For us, as immigrants, it hurts, and it is our calling to be able to assist our community.”

Last year, The Advocates worked with Fe y Justicia to hold legal clinics for asylum seekers in Central Minnesota. We look forward to deeper collaboration to expand access to immigration justice and thank Fe y Justicia for their work advocating for human rights.



# Immigration Court Observation Project Turns Five



Sketch: Anita White

The Immigration Court Observation Project draws on the international human rights practice of trial monitoring to identify, bring visibility to, and end systemic human rights violations arising in the context of civil immigration enforcement.

The project brings observers from the public into the Fort Snelling Immigration Court in Minnesota to observe and document immigration hearings. The project launched in 2017 to monitor hearings of people facing deportation while held in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention. Today, volunteers observe hearings on the detained, non-detained, and dedicated families and children dockets.

The Immigration Court Observation Project is a collaboration among The Advocates for Human Rights, the James H. Binger Center for New Americans at the University of Minnesota School Law School, and Robins Kaplan LLP.

# New Report Illuminates Human Rights Failures in Immigration Bond Hearings

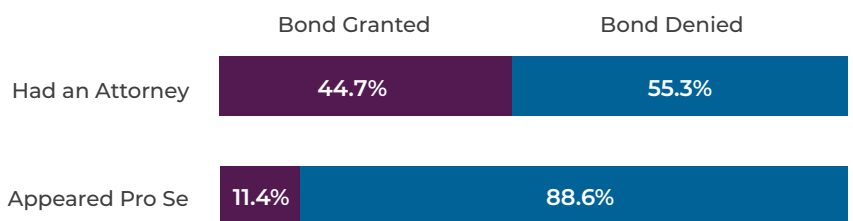
The Advocates recently released a report that examines multiple issues pertaining to bond hearings, including the impact of legal representation and criminal history on bond outcomes, rates of appeal, variations among judges, and the increase of bond amounts over time.

*Seeking Release from Immigration Custody: Bond Hearings at the Fort Snelling Immigration Court* examines data from observed bond hearings at the Fort Snelling Immigration Court between March 1, 2020, and September 30, 2021.

## KEY FINDINGS

Bond decisions have real impact on people's ability to defend against deportation. Observers documented cases like one pro se respondent who specifically requested the statutory minimum of \$1,500 but was granted a \$5,000 bond, which he could not afford. Despite having lived in the United States for 15 years he requested deportation, because he could not afford the bond or tolerate prolonged detention. This is the human cost of a system that does not require consideration of ability to pay.

Legal representation matters. Observers documented significantly better outcomes for people seeking bond when they were represented by an attorney than when they appeared without representation. People with representation were four times more likely to have their bond request granted by a judge than people who spoke for themselves.



SCAN THE QR CODE TO READ THE FULL REPORT



# Celebrating 30 Years of WATCHing Minnesota Courts

*Kris Arneson, retired Minneapolis Assistant Chief of Police and recipient of the 2010 Gold WATCH Award, delivered remarks at the October 2022 fundraiser for The Advocates' work to protect women's human rights.*



**H**uman Rights. Isn't that something we have all taken for granted? Dignity. Freedom. Equality. Justice. Peace. Something that each of us has, or I hope we have. Something that we strive for in how we envision our world to be. How would it feel to know that these five pillars exist, but for other people, not you?

These are the pillars that The

Advocates stands on every day. These are the pillars that guide their work, their passion for humankind. These are also the pillars that WATCH volunteers stand on when they walk into the courtroom.

Can you imagine what it's like to be beaten down, ignored by the system, feeling shame that you have a partner that abuses you, beats you and finally you have the strength to call 911 for help, only to feel more alone than ever? I'm not saying the system isn't helpful, because it's doing the best it can for victims, but it's a daunting task. Sometimes victims' cases don't turn out the way they hoped. The very real possibility is that they don't call 911 the next time they are abused. This is where the power of WATCH comes in.

Can you imagine how powerful it is to see a volunteer sitting in the courtroom with their red clipboard? A person who is taking notes on the proceedings, including judge and the prosecutor. A person who is standing in the victim's corner.

The system wants to do well, the system desires to do better, but the system needs help. It needs us to pay attention. It needs us to guide them.

It needs us to help victims also.

WATCH helps victims by continuing to ensure that there is fair treatment across the board. Many prosecutors and judges look forward to the WATCH reports. They are professionals who want the process and system to work fairly and effectively and give victims a chance for a better life. They also want to hold abusers accountable. An independent perspective helps the courts, prosecutors, and police understand how the system is working. What can be done better? This is the accountability we all want to ensure our systems continues to operate as best as possible.

This is WATCH. They are the watchdog of the courts for domestic violence and human trafficking.

Without monitoring and accountability, systems fail to protect women. By integrating new and existing volunteers, The Advocates will continue to use court monitoring and documentation to change and implement laws to end violence against women.

Now, more than ever, we need WATCH.



30 Years



15 Reports



Thousands of  
Volunteers



Countless  
Interventions



**WATCHing Minnesota**  
See full story on page 10

**Immigration Court Observation**  
See full story on page 9

**Death Penalty Abolition**  
See full story on page 15

# Act Now! The Campaign for Human Rights Makes Immediate, Lasting Impact

The Advocates for Human Rights launched a capacity building campaign in 2019 with the goal of building the infrastructure needed to support growing programming. Our highly efficient model, which leverages a talented staff with extraordinary volunteers to address critical needs, was being outstripped by the demand for services. The need was there, the volunteers were there, and we knew that with the right-sized organization we could do so much more to protect human rights.

We exceeded our goal of \$3.5 million this fall, a year and a half earlier than anticipated, thanks to the extraordinary support of our community of human rights advocates. Strategic hires have nearly tripled our impact over just three and a half years. We are confident that as we move out of the pandemic, we will continue to expand our impact.

We saw immediate results from our expanded capacity. For example last year, in the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, thousands of Afghans





### Client Engagement in UN Advocacy

See full story on page 4

### Documenting War Crimes in Ukraine

See full story on page 2

### Afghan Legal Clinic

See full story on page 16

### Global Women's Watch Coalition

See full story on page 6

arrived in the United States in need of legal services to protect their long-term safety and security. The need was immediate, but funding was not. Campaign funds allowed us to launch legal clinics within weeks of the evacuation to provide legal consultations to arriving Afghans.

Because of the campaign, we were able to respond immediately to the call by the special prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to document war crimes against Ukrainians. We reached out to our Ukrainian human rights defender partners and then recruited, coordinated, and supported amazing volunteer lawyers and interpreters to document their experiences. While criminal prosecutions may be a long way off, we have been able to preserve testimony and provide support to victims of these severe human rights violations.

The campaign has also allowed our court observation projects to flourish. This year we celebrated the 30th anniversary of WATCH, which joined The Advocates in 2019, and celebrated the 5th anniversary of our immigration court observation project. These projects bring the public eye into courtrooms and bring transparency and accountability to judicial proceedings. Hundreds of volunteers have observed and documented thousands of hearings.

Thanks to all who supported the campaign. Your investment has allowed us to act now for human rights and to build much needed capacity to meet the challenges ahead.

#### CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Kathy Lenzmeier, Chair | Karen Evans | Margaret Grieve Howard  
(Sam) Myers, III | James A. O'Neal | Gretchen Piper  
Nancy Speer | Ellen van Iwaarden

# Exciting Enrichments at the Sankhu-Palubari Community School in Nepal



The Sankhu-Palubari Community School (SPCS) is a pre-K through 10th grade school located in the rural Kathmandu Valley in Nepal. The Advocates partners with local nonprofit Educate the Children-Nepal and the community to run the school as a genuine alternative to child labor. By providing a completely free, high-quality education, as well as a daily meal, SPCS makes the right to education a reality for hundreds of Nepali children.

The 375 students at SPCS have returned to in-person learning after extended lockdowns. The return to the school building also brought back a variety of fun extra-curricular activities. Students competed in a spelling contest, singing competition,

and a sports meet featuring soccer, badminton, chess, and more.

Ashmita Shrestha (SPCS '11), remembers the extracurricular activities at SPCS. "I loved taking part in dancing and singing competitions," she recalls. Ashmita remains part of the SPCS family. After completing her master's degree in finance, she has returned to SPCS as a teacher. Ashmita is dedicated to ensuring that today's students receive the same great education and opportunities that she did.

SPCS students continue to excel academically, receiving high scores on national standardized tests. Today, girls make up 53% of the SPCS student body.





# The Advocates Helps Minnesota Combat Labor Trafficking

Minnesota passed a labor trafficking law in 2005. The number of successful state cases since then? One.

For the past two years, The Advocates has worked with the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to try to change that number, developing the Minnesota Labor Trafficking Protocol for Law Enforcement. The protocol focuses on investigative practices for law enforcement patrol and administrative actors.

Labor trafficking occurs when a person performs labor, work, or services for another, but because of control or coercion, believes they cannot leave or stop. Though identification has increased in recent years as a result of training for state agencies and service providers, labor trafficking continues to be under-reported by victims and under-recognized by law enforcement. The new protocol will help address that deficiency by providing law enforcement officers with the tools they need to recognize labor trafficking and provide appropriate assistance to victims.

“Collaboration is essential to fighting labor trafficking,” said Madeline Lohman, associate director of training and technical assistance at The Advocates for Human Rights, who served as The Advocates’ point person to develop the new protocol. “By working together across sectors—and, crucially, by ensuring labor trafficking survivors were at the table—we not only created a protocol, we built relationships that will ensure safety and justice for survivors.”

A large group of stakeholders—including law enforcement, state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and trafficking survivors—worked together to develop what is believed to be the first comprehensive labor trafficking protocol for law enforcement in the nation.



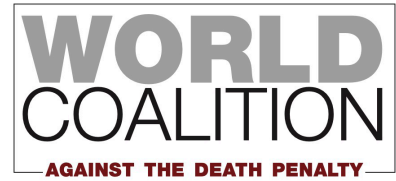
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<p>HOUSEKEEPING</p>	<p>CONSTRUCTION LANDSCAPING</p>
<p>RESTAURANTS HOTELS &amp; RESORTS</p>	<p>MASSAGE HAIR BRAIDING NAIL SALONS</p>
<p>HOME HEALTH CARE CHILDCARE</p>	<p>DOOR-TO-DOOR SALES PANHANDLING</p>
<p>WITHIN FAMILIES</p>	<p>AGRICULTURE FOOD PROCESSING</p>
<p>CARNIVALS AMUSEMENT PARKS</p>	<p>ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES</p>

# Momentum Builds for Abolition of the Death Penalty

Last year, The Advocates lobbied UN delegates with evidence of human rights violations inherent to capital punishment. So, when Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Zambia appeared at the United Nations for Universal Periodic Reviews of their human rights records, multiple countries called on them to abolish the death penalty. In October 2021, Sierra Leone did just that, and Papua

New Guinea followed suit in January. In May, the presidents of Zambia and Liberia (Sierra Leone's neighbor) launched initiatives to abolish the death penalty in those countries. In August, promising legislation was introduced, with Presidential support, to abolish the death penalty in Liberia and Zambia. These countries represent the growing momentum to a world without the death penalty.



## The Advocates Returns to Geneva

After more than two and a half years of remote UN advocacy, The Advocates returned to Geneva in September. International Justice Program staff members Jennifer Prestholdt, Amy Bergquist, Nathan Madson, and Elizabeth Lacy joined human rights defenders working to end the death penalty in Ghana, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Bahrain, as well as World Coalition Against the Death Penalty staff.

The trip was part of The Advocates' joint initiative with the World Coalition to increase capacity of death penalty abolitionists to advocate at the United Nations. The project is supported by the European Union's

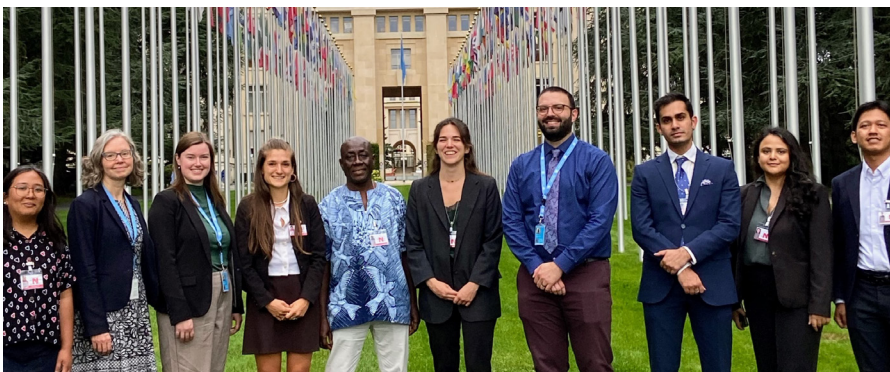
European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

"It was wonderful to be back at the UN, working side by side with these courageous human rights defenders," said Deputy Director Jennifer Prestholdt. "International advocacy can be a powerful tool for change, and we are hopeful that our partners will be able to use this tool to push for abolition of the death penalty in their home countries."

Partners arrived from Indonesia, Pakistan, Ghana, and the Philippines and participated in a half-day interactive training before heading to the Palais des Nations for a week of international advocacy. The team lobbied Human Rights Council

delegates from countries around the world and met with staff members of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In addition to delivering several oral statements during the Human Rights Council's 51st session, The Advocates also organized a joint side event to present information about death penalty issues in countries undergoing the Universal Periodic Review in November 2022 and January 2023.

Johanna from the Philippines said, "I had a beautiful experience here at the United Nations, learning and engaging with the United Nations system. It was also really good to connect with fellow human rights defenders from all over the world."





# Meeting the Legal Needs of Our Afghan Allies

As thousands of Afghan evacuees began arriving in the United States on humanitarian parole, a temporary immigration status with no path to permanent residence, The Advocates knew that immigration legal help would be essential to the welcome effort. Each case is unique and complex, and the clock is ticking for over 100,000 people who were paroled into the United States for two years ending in fall of 2023.

## For the majority, applying for asylum is the only path to permanent legal status.

In October 2021, The Advocates launched free legal access sites at reception hotels in partnership with the State of Minnesota and a host of nonprofit allies. The Advocates began with a commitment

to providing universal access to information about the legal options to stay permanently in the United States. Next, The Advocates began connecting hundreds of clients with volunteers to begin the asylum process.

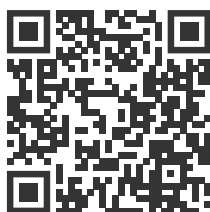
The Afghan Legal Clinic team works closely with clients, partners, and volunteers. "Afghans arrived with an expectation they could rebuild their lives in safety in the United States," says project coordinator Katherine Veldhuizen. "Learning that they face years of complex legal processes and uncertainty has compounded the trauma of evacuation." As one client explained, "Without permanent status, I can't be a normal person.

Yesterday, we were talking about housing and signing a lease. My father pulled me aside and said, 'What happens to the house if we don't have status?'"

After nearly a year of advocacy, in August the Afghan Adjustment Act was introduced in Congress. "There is no excuse to delay action on this bipartisan, bicameral bill which would alleviate uncertainty amongst Afghans and pressures on our asylum system," said Lindsey Greising. Greising, a staff attorney with The Advocates, has led dozens of congressional meetings pushing for a straightforward path to permanent residence for Afghans.

Meanwhile, pro bono attorneys are doing more than ever. "Because of you, we have been able to rise to the challenge of providing legal support to Afghan evacuees," said Staff Attorney Zack Albus. Albus is working to find representation for many of the 1,200 people who evacuated to Minnesota. "To those of you who are thinking about taking a case and wondering if it will make a difference, I can assure you it will."

**READY TO TAKE A CASE?  
SCAN THE QR CODE TO  
GET STARTED**



## AFGHAN ADJUSTMENT ACT

Afghans who have restarted their lives in the United States need to know this is home. The Afghan Adjustment Act (S. 4787 and H.R. 8685) will:

- Allow Afghans in the U.S. on temporary humanitarian or other status, future evacuees, and some family members in the U.S., and those who submit to additional security vetting to apply for permanent legal status.
- Expand eligibility for Afghans who worked and served alongside U.S. forces but are currently excluded from Special Immigrant visas.
- Establish an Interagency Task Force responsible for creating and implementing a strategy to continue relocation and resettlement from Afghanistan over the next ten years.



**SCAN THE QR CODE  
TO READ THE BILL  
AND TAKE ACTION**

# We Measure Victory One Life at a Time



Bridget Chivimbiso Chigunwe, a social worker and mother, fled Zimbabwe in 2016 because of persecution. Bridget was targeted by police, and she feared torture in prison. She escaped to Panama. There, she began walking north all the way to the United States. Each country she passed told her to move along. At the U.S. border, Bridget asked for asylum. She was detained, and she eventually came to Minnesota.

With volunteer lawyers from The Advocates for Human Rights at her side, Bridget pursued her asylum claim. Community members helped her find work, and throughout the pandemic, Bridget worked tirelessly to provide health care to individuals suffering from COVID. Meanwhile, she was forced to wait more than six years for her hearing, an outrageous and indefensible length of time to have her life on hold. And then, just days before her hearing, the government tried to dismiss her case outright. Her pro bono lawyer fought the motion and Bridget finally got her day in court.

This summer, Bridget was granted asylum. After thousands of miles on foot, mountains of paperwork, and years of waiting, she was safe.

Today Bridget serves on The Advocates' Board of Directors, studies to be a nurse, and looks forward to the day when she can embrace her children again.

## In Memoriam: David Weissbrodt

International human rights expert, advocate, law professor, mentor, and friend, David Weissbrodt died in November 2021. David had an extraordinary impact on the international human rights movement.

David was instrumental in the creation of The Advocates for Human Rights. He served as general counsel for more than twenty years, actively helping to lead the organization. David spurred us to develop the *Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death*. The groundbreaking international guidelines for investigations of suspected unlawful deaths were adopted by the UN in

1991 and are in use worldwide today. His work on the rights of non-citizens, monitoring of prison conditions, and trial monitoring continues to guide our work.

David made an indelible impact at the United Nations. The first U.S. citizen to chair a UN human rights body since Eleanor Roosevelt, he served on and chaired the UN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. He later served as UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of non-citizens and as a trustee for the UN Trust Fund against Contemporary Forms of Slavery. David had a huge impact on the development of international human rights law, from developing human

rights standards for businesses to training UN staff on best practices for human rights.

The Advocates for Human Rights honored David with our Human Rights Award in 2003 in recognition of his extraordinary leadership and borderless dedication to human rights.





# Back Together in Person: 2022 Human Rights Awards Dinner

For nearly 40 years, the Human Rights Awards Dinner has brought our community together to celebrate our shared commitment to justice and a world where all people live with dignity. This year, The Advocates' partners from around the world welcomed hundreds gathered in person at the Nicollet Island Pavilion on a beautiful June evening.

Each year we recognize some of the extraordinary volunteers who made an impact on human rights this year. Longtime volunteers, board members, and supporters, Mary and David Parker have been integral to our work with the Sankhu-Palubari Community School. Intern Ava Kelley improved processes in managing client cases. The global team at Akin Gump worked by our side to document threats to women's human rights. And a group of courageous clients continued their defense of human rights by joining our UN advocacy. The Advocates also recognized Fe y Justicia for their tireless advocacy for migrant rights and their generous partnership with The Advocates.

The Advocates presented the 2022 Don & Arvonne Fraser Human Rights Award to Neil Datta for his fearless work to expose the web of radical right actors who threaten the rights of women, LGBTQI+ people, migrants, and others. "The unique way The Advocates is able to bring in so many volunteers to channel their goodwill towards helping out is really very hopeful," said Datta. "When we're confronted with these seemingly impossible challenges, to be able to find each other, to have a sense of community, to know we're all trying to pitch in our own little bit to make a difference—I think that is very hopeful and is something we can build on."

Thank you to our sponsors!

## Human Rights Leaders



## Human Rights Partner



## Human Rights Defenders



## Human Rights Ambassadors



Sam & Char Myers

## Human Rights Allies

American National Bank  
Chris Bercaw & Mary McKelvey  
Best & Flanagan LLP  
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Sarah Stoesz

# Faces of The Advocates

## 2022 Human Rights Awards Dinner



Pat Schaffer, Bill Cameron, Connie Cameron, Jim Rubenstein, David Parker, Mary Parker & Andrea Rubenstein



Guests enjoy the silent auction inside the tent at the Nicollet Island Pavilion



Hyder Khan, Nazneen Khatoon, Kathy Drozd & Steve Woldum



Board member Loan Huynh



2 • 0 • 2 • 3  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
AWARDS DINNER

Please join us in June for the 2023 Human Rights Awards Dinner. For more information and sponsorship opportunities, contact Cianna Holthaus at [cholthaus@advrights.org](mailto:cholthaus@advrights.org)





Research, Education & Advocacy Assistant Ingrid Kubisa,  
Melysa Kubisa & Neema Mulashe



Aviva, Jenny & Solana Breen



Board member Tom Fraser and Pam Wandzel



Diane Carlson, Jerry Carlson &  
board member Peggy Grieve

THANK YOU TO BILL CAMERON & ANAID PLASCENCIA

for photographing these and countless other events in support of The Advocates' mission.



# Fall House Parties

Thanks to our extraordinary hosts and co-hosts who make our house parties so amazing. The warm hospitality, delightful refreshments, and engaging program bring long-time and new friends together for a great cause.



Laura Cooper and Jean Greenwood at the house party for migrant rights



Andi & Jim Rubenstein opened their home to support migrants' rights



Kris Arneson, Robin Phillips, Susan Lenfesty, Amy Fitterman, Jim O'Neal & Rosalyn Park at the fall women's rights house party



The first Sankhu-Palubari Community School graduate to attend medical school speaks at the virtual house party in support of the school

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO HOST A HOUSE PARTY?

Please contact Thekla Rura-Polley at [trurapolley@advrights.org](mailto:trurapolley@advrights.org).



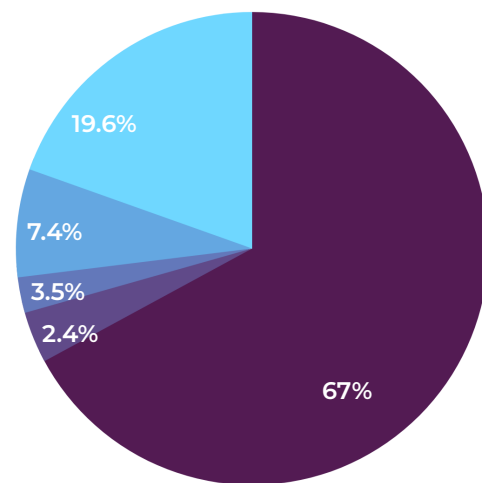
Guests enjoy reconnecting at the house party for women's rights

## Volunteers Are the Driving Force of Our Work

The Advocates mobilizes volunteers to address some of the most pressing issues of our time because we believe that everyone has the power to advance human rights. Volunteers engage in hands-on human rights work, helping The Advocates accomplish critical research and advocacy while transforming themselves into advocates for human rights.

In 2022, volunteers contributed **\$11.3M** in in-kind services.

### 1,395 Individual Volunteers



- Legal Professionals: 936
- Court Observers: 273
- Interns: 103
- Interpreters / Translators: 49
- Community Engagement: 34



Jeehan El Khoury, Laura Buchs-Hammonds, Katie Eayrs & Pam Omann





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Beginning January 2023!