



HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

Student Task Force Annual Report



Protecting Human Rights Since 1999



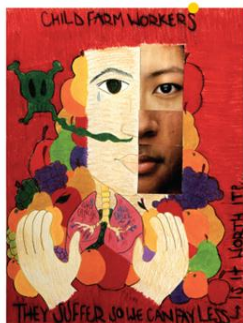
1999-2000

After meeting Dr. Boia Efraime Junior from Mozambique and Jo Becker from HRW Children's Rights Division, STF marched to stop the use of child soldiers worldwide. Photo by Pam Bruns



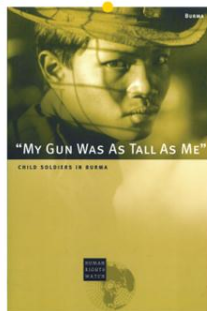
2003-04

Hosted screenings of the film "Juvies" at STF schools and completed a Christmas Drive for incarcerated youth at Men's Central Jail. Photo by Patricia Williams, primary photographer



2000-01

STF raised an alarm over treatment of child farmworkers. This campaign included a trip by STF representatives to Washington, D.C. to testify at U.S. Senator Harkin's Conference on Abusive Child Labor. Art by Alicia Ramirez, Manual Arts HS



2002-03

STF utilized the HRW Children's Rights Division report on the use of child soldiers in Burma to continue its work to stop the abuse of children.



2004-05

Organized a child labor art contest and wrote letters to their elected officials, the Salvadoran government, the Salvadoran sugar industry, and businesses like Coca-Cola that purchased sugarcane harvested by children. Art by Nava Suryawan, Palisades Charter HS

2001-02

Former child soldier Ishmael Beah met with STF and encouraged their campaign for U.S. adoption of the Optional Protocol to prohibit the forced recruitment and conscription of children under the age of 18. Photo by Pam Bruns



2005-06

Campaigned to raise awareness of the crimes against humanity in Darfur, Sudan, by launching the traveling Camp Darfur. Each tent in the camp contained information about genocides of the past century, and the current crisis in Darfur.



2010-11

Palisades Charter HS joined other STF chapters to host the Children's Rights Camp, promoting the U.S. adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

2007-08

STFers raised red hands to stop the use of child soldiers on Red Hand Day, the anniversary of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child regarding the involvement of children in armed conflict. Photo by Maya Myers

2008-09

Coming from Congo, one of the deadliest conflict areas in the world, former child soldier Madeleine Shukurani shared her experiences with every STF chapter. Photo by Maya Myers



2006-07

STF continued to work to protect human rights in Darfur, including awareness-raising events, petitions, call-ins and postcard campaigns and a USC Global Day to Protect Darfur.



2009-10

Students, teachers, parents and supporters gathered at Wildwood School in 2010 and 2011 for a night of Jazz for Justice to broaden their continued knowledge and advocacy for fair sentencing for youth.



2011-12: The Right to Education



SEPTEMBER

Student leaders and teachers meet with international Fulbright scholars at the annual STF Leadership Workshop held at UCLA. Guest speakers Gabriel Stauring and Katie-Jay Scott help launch STF's Right to Education campaign. Photo by Patricia Williams



NOVEMBER

Gabriel Stauring delivers STF mobile library supplies to Adam and 16 year-old Rahma, librarians for the First Human Rights Mobile Library in refugee camp Djabal.

Photo courtesy of i-ACT

OCTOBER

STF's Right to Education campaign includes creating Human Rights Mobile Libraries for Darfuri refugees living in Chad. The libraries were delivered to Chad by Gabriel Stauring and will include e-readers to provide human rights resources and curriculum at the refugees' request.

PASSPORT



First R2E Library Deployment
Be a part of the journey!

Education is a basic human right.
For more information on the R2E Teacher Book Series, go to www.stf.org



DECEMBER

Beginning in November, STF chapters hosted screenings of *The First Grader*, a feature film about an 84-year-old Kenyan man who fought for his country and now demands his right to education—even if it means sitting in a classroom with 6-year-olds. Screening events were held at Hart HS, Wildwood, Palisades HS, Sierra Canyon, Carson HS, New Roads and Golden Valley HS.

Photo by Pam Bruns



FEBRUARY

Alephonsion Deng, a Lost Boy of Sudan, speaks at Wildwood in February. "The power of education is like magic," Alepho told students. After fleeing his village in Sudan, Alepho survived years escaping from country to country and nine long years in a Kenyan refugee camp where he finally found the "magic." Alepho also spoke at Academy of the Canyons, Crossroads School, Palisades HS and Carson HS.

Photos by Patricia Williams



APRIL

During Gabriel Stauring's spring trip to Chad, Umda Tarbosh (right) travelled from Camp Goz Amer to Camp Djabal to be trained by Rahma (left) on the Human Rights Mobile Library materials and e-readers. Besides being a librarian for the mobile library, Umda teaches Arabic and mathematics at the elementary level. Photo courtesy of i-ACT

MAY

Still to come during this school year: Meetings with local school board members, attendance at candidate forums on education, annual end-of-the-year STF Leaders meeting.



JANUARY

Student leaders, teachers, guests and members of the STF Team convene for STF's Winter Leaders Workshop to kick off the spring 2012 semester.

Photo by Mason Butts



MARCH

STF members at Valencia, Santa Monica and New Roads High Schools engaged their fellow students with simulations of the Human Rights Mobile Libraries that STF launched in Darfuri refugee camps in Chad. Students learned about the history of Darfur and the logistics of operating the mobile libraries in refugee camps, and signed petitions to President Obama urging the U.S. to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Photo by Yassamin Azadani



Venturing Out of Our Safety Zone

(Editor's Note: For two years, STF worked for fair sentencing in the juvenile justice system, inspired and guided by Elizabeth Calvin, HRW Children's Rights Division and Javier Stauring, Co-Director of the Office of Restorative Justice at the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. As part of STF's education and activism, students visited the Southern Youth Correctional Reception Center and Clinic in Norwalk on February 7, 2011.)

Photographs by Patricia Williams

Student Reflections

As I walked into the multi-purpose room of the SYCRCC, I felt nothing but intimidation. While I was sure that the juvenile delinquents were not so different from me, I couldn't deny that I was scared. I knew that the people I was about to meet had been found guilty of crimes as serious as murder. How could I relate to them?

— MAX, SANTA MONICA HIGH SCHOOL

Visiting the correctional facility was like visiting a completely different world away from everything I have ever known or experienced. Upon first entering the facility, I have to admit, I did feel a bit nervous. The way the guards spoke about the facility and the comments I heard from others just made me tense and I did not know what to expect.

I did not expect to feel so touched, nor did I expect to be leaving this facility visit with teary eyes. I can honestly say that this has been both one of the best and one of the most influential experiences that will forever stay within my thoughts.

— JESSICA, CARSON HIGH SCHOOL

At the beginning of the day, a coordinator at the facility spoke to the group about life as a series of choices. If life is made of choices, then incarcerated individuals must be in that situation at

least in part because of a bad choice, or a whole series of poor choices. Here I have to ask myself, for probably the thousandth time, what exactly are human rights? Do people have the right to protection against their own choices? Hearing the stories of the young men inside answered that question. People do not have a right to protection from their own poor choices per se, but they do have the right to the bare possibility to make a good choice. Several of the incarcerated youth at some point mentioned how a lack of resources and activities to occupy time and expand learning in the community made young people much more susceptible to making a terrible mistake. They also talked

about the lack of resources available upon release, which makes finding employment much more difficult. One young man who I spoke with explained that in his case, long sentences had contributed to his repeated presence in correctional facilities. "I've been here so long," he said, "that I feel more comfortable inside than out." Long stretches of time on the inside affect growth and maturity, which ultimately affects the kind of choices people can make. So, do people have the right to be protected from legal consequences in general? No. However, juvenile justice should focus on rehabilitation rather than retribution. The system, therefore, has an obligation to protect youth's right to make good choices. . . . Actually talking with people affected by the juvenile justice system makes it much more concrete and immediate, and served as a poignant reminder of why STF exists. Some of the young men in the facility faced very long sentences, and many were not serving their first time. Although I'm sure some accounts were biased, basically each and every one of them felt

shafted by the system. I spoke with one young man serving an extremely long sentence for a crime he was present for, but did not commit himself. He talked about how he had finished his high school education on the inside, and begun college. As the conversation moved to reading, he said that he used to like to read and write songs, but as the magnitude of his sentence sunk in, he found the he didn't really do anything any more. He had no more faith, all he could do was sit and think and hope for the best. This young man seemed so despondent. I don't want to put words in his mouth, but he seemed crushed by the sense of futility

in his actions. Coming away from a conversation like that, there is no way that this issue can seem distant. I can debate the theoretical moral implications of human rights advocacy in juvenile justice all I want, but ultimately I certainly believe that no one deserves to feel that way. Ever.

Monday's event also made me realize just how much needs to change in order to make a meaningful difference in juvenile justice. The problems associated with the juvenile justice system go far beyond what any piece of legislation single-handedly addresses. The problems that lead to high numbers of incarcerated youth and unfair sentencing originate in communities lacking

resources, in families, in the fortress of government bureaucracy, and in unfair laws springing from a culture that does not always value healing over retributive justice. The change that has to happen must be broad and take place on many levels, including within correctional facilities. After this day, I truly believe that communication between people inside and outside will foster a bond of understanding that will help trigger change at every level.

— MIRIAM, CROSSROADS SCHOOL

At the end of the day, as we were getting ready to depart, Ronnie handed me his name tag and asked me to take it as a souvenir for the day. As I walked out of the building, I turned over the nametag. Written on the back was "Remember my story/don't lose hope . . . /cause I haven't." In reading this, I was brought to tears. I had entered the facility feeling awkward and out of place and by the end of the day, I was hugging the incarcerated youth, wishing that I could bring them home with me. A lot of times, I think that when we speak about juvenile justice, we think about incarcerated youth as individuals who are very different from us. We talk about people in terms of statistics and begin to forget that they are human. Ronnie gave me hope and determination to keep fighting for juvenile justice, even in the face of immense obstacles . . . This trip reminded me what we are really working towards in STF. Our mission isn't only about changing policy, or rewriting laws. It's about learning about humanity and making connections with others to work towards positive change.

— KALEY, WILDWOOD SCHOOL

It was pretty difficult hearing how these juveniles wished they could have dodged being part of gangs. They stated after-school programs would have helped them out a lot. Just being away from so much chaos could have prevented them to fall in the wrong path. Saying goodbye to these juveniles was the difficult part of the visit. We were let free to continue on with our lives, to pursue our dreams, while the juveniles were left trapped inside the facility, living the long life of a prisoner.

— ALAN, CARSON HIGH SCHOOL



As I spoke with the inmates, I realized how similar they were to me. I didn't meet with criminals who had malicious intent. I met with students who were trying to figure out their lives. I met with people who were going to school and trying to learn as much as they possibly can, who were trying to figure out why we are here, to find happiness. I understood that their stories needed to be shared and once the world understood their plight, change would happen.

I was struck by how similar we were. I was struck by the fact that there were youth who were sentenced to spend more of their life in jail than they had lived so far. I was struck by the fact that as I celebrated my 18th birthday with all of my family and friends, the incarcerated youth celebrating their birthday would be transferred to an adult prison shortly afterwards.

— ROBIN, NEW ROADS SCHOOL

As I left the facility today we were instructed to leave through the exit and the incarcerated were to remain in their seats. As I walked out of that door there was a pit in my stomach. I was leaving with the door wide open for me to pursue my dreams, to see my family, and to my whole future right in front of me. In contrast, the young men I left had the door locked and shut in their faces—with the devastating reality that they had made mistakes in their lives and may never have a chance to right their wrong. People change and society can change, but someone must be there to initiate this change.

— LINDSEY, VALENCIA HIGH SCHOOL



Letter to STF following the February 7th visit

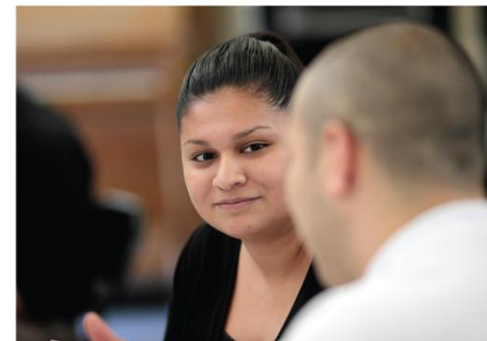
About a week and a half ago, my chaplain gathered a group of us to ask if we were willing to participate in a juvenile justice event. I don't think there was one individual in that room that did not want to be a part of this movement. Before this event, I always had this preconceived notion that the groups that believed in our cause were nothing more than a fairy tale. I tell you now that all of you who came to speak with us not only instilled within me a new found hope, but helped open my eyes to the fact that there are people who care about us.

Thank you for taking the chance of venturing out of your safety zone, and for taking the time to get to know us—not as prison numbers—but as individuals. I wish I had the chance to let every single kid who visited us know that they all individually made an impact on someone that day. You gave inspiration to many of us who have been so hurt and damaged by this life we have been taught to accept.

I believe that during this event, we all realized that we were not so different from each other. For so long, we have been separated by walls both visible and invisible. No longer will we see each other as different from each other. No longer will we let our voices go unheard. This movement is not one of force and violence but one of love and peace. We are here to save lives, not destroy them.

I ask you all now from the bottom of my heart to continue on this journey towards peace, justice, and truth. Never give up fighting for what you know to be right in your hearts. No matter what happens from this moment on, we will always be a part of each other. Stay safe and keep strong. God bless you all!

— JAMES, SOUTHERN YOUTH CORRECTIONAL RECEPTION CENTER



How We Advocate

Raising awareness, human rights education, and getting public leaders and other important figures to commit to action on human rights issues are key components of Student Task Force activities. Now approaching its thirteenth year of advocacy, the HRW Student Task Force has spread the word about causes affecting the local and global community through demonstrations and events at area schools, paper petition drives, call-ins, meetings with U.S. Representatives Henry Waxman and Jane Harman, numerous California Legislators, city councils, Consul Generals of the Netherlands, Mexico and Pakistan and even United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and most recently, with an online petition and social media campaign for the U.S. ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We involve twelve high schools throughout Los Angeles in all our campaigns, and at each of the individual schools, Student Task Force chapters host events where classes come to learn about human rights issues. In the past, these have included Camp Darfur; discussing the conflict and atrocities in Darfur and South Sudan; the Children's Rights' Camp, including information on juvenile justice, fair sentencing, farm labor, and other issues affecting children in California; and a simulation of our mobile human rights libraries, including reading materials which we are installing on Kindle devices for use in refugee camps in Chad.

This year advocacy for the Convention on the Rights of the Child began at our mobile library simulation—at one of the stations, students learned about how the international treaty protected the Right to Education and many more fundamental rights for children everywhere. Students were then able to add their email address to receive a link to the online component of the campaign, www.ratifycrc.com, or scan a barcode with their cell phones to load the website directly. From the Ratify CRC website, students could share the petition with friends by email or on Facebook with the click of a button.

Nearly a thousand people from schools across Los Angeles visited the website or signed the petition by other means, helping the national campaign for U.S. ratification of the CRC surpass its goal of 25,000 signatures. Many people also connected with the campaign on Facebook, posting messages about it or changing their status message in order to ask their friends to sign.

The petition will soon be delivered to the White House urging the President to submit the treaty for ratification in the U.S. Senate.

This campaign marked the Student Task Force's first foray into social media, and it has served as an important experiment in new tools of advocacy—one more way Human Rights Watch Student Task Force can educate people and inspire action.

By Matthew Ware—Santa Monica High School STF
Photographs by Patricia Williams unless indicated otherwise.

From top to bottom: Santa Monica HS STFs utilize cellphones and social media for CRC campaign, spring 2012; U.S. Representative Henry Waxman joins the Red Hand campaign in 2009 after meeting with STF (photo by Pam Bruns); Palisades HS students participate in 2011 STF's Children's Rights Camp; Wildwood STF leader Zola Glassman speaks to legislators during 2010 Sacramento Lobby Day for juvenile justice; STF chapters host Camp Darfur at USC in 2007 to raise awareness and gather petition signatures for U.S. Senators.



Clockwise from above left: Students sign petitions to public leaders; STF representatives travel to New York in 2009 to meet UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and present thousands of red hands gathered by STF in Southern California to stop the use of child soldiers (Photo by Sarah Shatz); High school students sign petitions in 2006 to protect the people of Darfur; Students learn about child farmworkers at the STF Children's Rights Camp in 2011; U.S. Representative Jane Harman meets with Venice STF leaders in 2007 to discuss keeping Darfur a priority on the Congressional agenda; STF leaders speak to the Los Angeles City Council in 2008 urging declaration of Red Hand Day in Los Angeles and receive the unanimously approved resolution from Councilmen Bill Rosendahl and Eric Garcetti (Photo courtesy of LA City Council).



Left: Palisades High STF "Die-In for Darfur" in 2006 to raise awareness about growing violence in Darfur and to gather petition signatures for Congressman Henry Waxman to continue to fight for protection of Darfurians. Right: Consul-General of the Netherlands, the Honorable Madeline de Planque meets with STF representatives in 2009 to discuss the urgency for the Netherlands to ratify the Optional Protocol to the CRC (photo by Pam Bruns).





Erick Josue Calderon speaks in Spanish to introduce HRW Researcher Nick Steinberg and human rights defender Sister Consuelo Morales at the STF reception preceding the Annual HRW Dinner November 15, 2011. Photo by Maya Myers

Punto de Encuentro / Point of Encounter

Como estudiante de Golden Valley High School en Santa Clarita, quiero compartir experiencias que no deseo que nadie pase por ellas. Tuve mucha suerte de tener una segunda oportunidad y venir a este país con la ayuda de mis padres. Ahora tengo todo lo que de niño deseaba: el amor, un lugar que puedo llamar mi casa, una familia a mi lado y sobre todo una educación.

Un día en la escuela me enteré de Human Rights Watch Student Task Force de inmediato me llamó la atención. Poco a poco, empecé a dedicar mi tiempo al club y empecé a trabajar en favor de los niños de todo el mundo. Durante una reunión STF, la Sra. Medina me sorprendió con una invitación a Human Rights Watch Annual Dinner en noviembre del año pasado. Me pidieron que presentara a las personas que iban a ser honradas durante la recepción STF: la Hermana Consuelo Morales, Directora de Ciudadanos en Apoyo de los Derechos Humanos en México, y el investigador para México y Cuba, Nick Steinberg de HRW La Sra. Consuelo trabaja para defender a las víctimas del abuso humano en la guerra de México contra las drogas.

Después de reunirme con ellos, me he convertido en una voz para las personas que necesitan una voz, especialmente los niños. El evento me abrió los ojos a los abusos en el mundo y la necesidad de llamar la atención sobre ellos como esas personas hacen todos los días. Estoy muy agradecido de que los partidarios de HRW ofrecieron a los estudiantes como yo, la oportunidad de ver con nuestros ojos como se trabaja en apoyo de los derechos humanos. Tenemos que ser capaces de crear un mundo donde los derechos humanos son para todos... sin ninguna excepción! —ERICK JOSUE CALDERON

As a student at Golden Valley High School in Santa Clarita, I want to share a bit about my experiences. When I was in Mexico, I had to live through horrifying experiences that I never wish on anyone else. I was very fortunate to get a second opportunity and come to this country with the help of my parents. Now I have everything that as a child I wished for: love, a place I can call home, a family at my side, and above all, an education.

One day at school I heard about the Human Rights Watch Student Task Force which immediately caught my attention. Little by little, I began to devote my time to the club and I became inspired to work on behalf of children around the world. During an STF meeting, Ms. Medina surprised me with an invitation to the Human Rights Watch Annual Dinner last November. I was asked to present two important people during the STF reception: Sister Consuelo Morales, director of Citizens in Support of Human Rights in Mexico, and Nick Steinberg, HRW's researcher for Mexico and Cuba. Sister Consuelo works to defend victims of human rights abuse in Mexico's war on drugs.

After meeting them, I've become inspired to become a voice for people who need a voice, especially children. The event opened my eyes to the abuses in the world and the need to call attention to them like these two courageous people do every day. I'm very thankful that HRW supporters provided students like me with the chance to see human rights work before our eyes. We must be able to create a world where human rights are for everyone... without EXCEPTION!

—ERICK JOSUE CALDERON

Russia: Human Rights Defender Attacked

When HRW honored Elena Milashina at the Annual HRW Dinner in 2009, STF representatives were inspired to meet her and learn about her work confronting Russia's deeply problematic human rights record. This April we were saddened and alarmed to learn from HRW that "Shortly after midnight on April 5, 2012, two men attacked Elena Milashina, a journalist with the leading Russian independent newspaper *Novaya Gazeta*. The attack took place near her home in the Moscow suburb of Balashikha. "When a courageous journalist who works in a hostile environment is attacked, the authorities need to examine whether what may look like common

mugging could be linked to her professional activity," said Hugh Williamson, Europe and Central Asia director at Human Rights Watch. Elena told Human Rights Watch that the attackers kicked and punched her, primarily on her head. After the brutal murder of Anna Politkovskaya, *Novaya Gazeta*'s star correspondent, in 2006, Elena picked up her mantle, reporting on human rights abuses in Russia's turbulent North Caucasus region, including Chechnya. When Natalia Estemirova, a leading



Chechen human rights defender and Milashina's close collaborator, was brutally murdered in July 2009, Elena started an independent investigation into the killing. Latest news is that Elena's attackers were arrested and according to the Moscow Region Police Department, the alleged assailants stated their motive was "purely mercenary." Some observers still do not exclude the possibility of the attack being related to Elena's professional activities. Best news, Elena is back at work.



Elena Milashina greets Pili STF Co-President Pilar Garcia-Brown at HRW Dinner 2009. Photo by Maya Myers

STF Alumni: Where Are They Now?



SARAH GUSTAFSON
Immaculate Heart HS '01
Yale University '05

I loved working with STF during my high school history and government classes. The dark moments and heroic movements of history became more than just stories on a page, showing me the struggle for human rights and the power of society. Together, we can prevent the saddest parts of history from repeating.

This belief led me to work with two nonprofits, serve as a Peace Corps Education Volunteer in Mongolia teaching life skills, reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS prevention, and it sparked my career providing accounting support for NGOs.



PILAR GARCIA-BROWN
Palisades Charter HS '10
Brown University '14

As an Anthropology student, I focus on how people cope with abuse and trauma, whether it be physical, environmental or political. In the summer of 2011, I interned with Esperanza International to live and work with the Secoya community in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I saw firsthand how environmental degradation from oil companies affected the community's health and lifestyle. My experience led me to receive the C.V. Starr Social Entrepreneurship Fellowship to establish "The Jewelry Project"—helping Secoya women maintain their traditions and achieve economic independence.



CHRIS PRICE
STF Intern '08
Cal State University Long Beach '09

My time with STF marked a profound change in my global outlook and it continues to inform my current position at the International Organization for Migration in Zambia. At IOM, I work on humanitarian assistance for imprisoned migrants. Whether working towards the release of a street-child arrested for not having papers, or a young woman who was trafficked to become a sex worker, my background in children's rights and advocacy continues to shape my career.



SARAH BESSELL
Mount Saint Mary's College '06
STF Intern '06
M.A. Georgetown University '08

STF laid the foundations for my work in conflict resolution and the prevention of armed conflict. It taught me that the best advocacy is being informed and this, in part, led me to pursue an M.A. in Conflict Resolution at Georgetown University. Currently, I work at the U.S. Institute of Peace on issues related to conflict prevention in Northeast Asia.



KATIA JOHNSTONE
Wildwood School '08
University of California Berkeley '12

Four years after STF, I have come full circle with HRW as a research and development intern in HRW's San Francisco office. I am graduating from UC Berkeley with a B.A. in Peace and Conflict Studies, where I wrote a thesis critiquing the discourse of cultural conformity in the American Welfare State. I hope to join AmeriCorps to collaboratively help develop more holistic and human rights-based curricula for schools across the United States.



JEANNIE D'AGOSTINO
Chapman University '11
STF Intern '11
M.A. American University Beirut '13

My time as an intern opened my eyes to local issues which I had not given much consideration. Oftentimes, the issues we need to tackle first are in our own backyard. Following STF, I went on to attend the American University of Beirut as a graduate Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar in Middle Eastern Studies. With the sweeping changes occurring in the Middle East, it is a dynamic time to be here, and STF prepared me to analyze and question these transitions through the prism of human rights.



STEVEN GORDON
Santa Monica HS '11
N.E. Conservatory of Music '15

Not only did STF build my ability to lead and communicate, but it inspired me to integrate my commitment to fight abuses with my belief that the arts have the potential to positively impact society. I hope to continue developing my skills as a musician with a broader historical, psychological, cultural and social context to continue the work I started in STF.



DEEPTI IMMARAJU
University of California LA '11
STF Intern '11

Three months after my time with STF, I moved to South Asia to intern for a year with International Justice Mission, working alongside public justice systems to counter sexual exploitation against women and girls. I research stories about survivors of sex trafficking in the local community and develop our office's long-term media relations strategy. My year with STF definitely motivated me to pursue a human rights career and prepared me for the administrative and writing demands of my job.



ALTHEA MILLER
Palisades Charter HS '07
University of Wisconsin '12

STF was the catalyst, the training ground, the awakening. I knew serving others was extremely important, but it wasn't until my teacher informed me of the atrocities in Darfur that I decided to extend my reach to others. Now I attend gatherings at the Chancellor's house, commune with victims of hate crimes, and lobby student representatives to ensure that the needs of my campus are met. I can't help but feel indebted to my 11th grade art teacher for encouraging me to look beyond myself and join STF.



AMY CALFAS
Marlborough HS '09
STF Intern '09-'11
Tufts University '13

My experience with STF was invaluable. What nineteen-year-old can say she discussed Taliban insurrections with Pakistani officials over tea, shared sandwiches with a former child soldier from the Congo, or met with political prisoners from Burma?

I am currently at Tufts University majoring in International Relations. I founded Task Force Somalia, raising awareness of famine relief, and I conduct research on peace negotiations in Sudan and South Sudan. I am a member of the EPIC Colloquium on "Conflict in the 21st Century," organizing workshops for aid workers with the Director of Physicians for Human Rights and the former UN Deputy Director of Political, Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs.



Palisades Charter High School teacher and STF teacher advisor Angelica Perera integrates human rights into her arts class curriculum. Photo by Rich Schmitt.

Searching for Human Rights Education

Editor's Note: A Human Rights Education Survey was conducted in 2011 by the HRW Student Task Force, led by STF interns Deepti Immaraju and James Kim. Completed by 2,900 students (grades 9-12) in ten public and private high schools in the Los Angeles area, the survey aimed to determine what education the students are receiving about human rights, in what classes, and if they want to learn more about the subject. STF Alumna Amy Calfas wrote the following survey introduction and joined STF Director Pam Bruns last fall at the Harvard Graduate School of Education conference "Building a Strategy for Human Rights Education in U.S. Schools." The STF survey was reviewed by conference attendees, and the complete survey can be found at: www.hrwstf.org/hresurvey.

By Amy Calfas, STF Alumna

Kofi Annan declared, "Human rights education is much more than a lesson in schools; it is a process to equip people with the tools they need to live lives of security and dignity." Indeed, human rights education plays an essential role in teaching the world's future leaders how to prevent and address the worst human rights violations of our time. By instilling youth with the analytical and moral frameworks necessary to affect change, it ultimately empowers them to improve the lives of others in our global community.

Our research reveals that human rights education programs in today's schools are not adequately equipped to produce such change. While a majority of students claim to have learned about human rights in their classes, they lack a basic awareness of how our modern international human rights system functions. The STF survey found that most high school students cannot define

basic terms such as "human right" or "human dignity" and few have ever heard of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the most comprehensive rights agreement in international law.

Students thought they had knowledge of human rights when they clearly lacked awareness of the basic principles of human rights. However, the survey demonstrated there is notable student interest in human rights and a solid foundation for curricular development, suggesting tremendous hope for human rights education.

Visit the HRE Online Portal at
www.hrwstf.org/hre

Launched online in fall 2011, the Human Rights Education (HRE) Portal provides teachers with an interactive opportunity to share HRE resources, curricula, and downloadable media. The portal is in its pilot stage and participants are primarily STF teacher advisors, plus Adam Moussa Ahmed, a teacher in Refugee Camp Djabal, Chad.

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ON THE COVER Top: Rahma, STF's friend and partner in Camp Djabal, Chad, travels with the Human Rights Mobile Library. Photo courtesy of i-Act.
Bottom: STF students gather to meet with Peter Bouckaert, HRW Emergencies Director. Photo by Patricia Williams.