



The  
CENTER for  
VICTIMS of  
TORTURE

THE  
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## CVT Opens Its Doors to Survivors in Atlanta

The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) has opened its doors in Atlanta and is rebuilding the lives and restoring the hope of refugee survivors of torture through a partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC). CVT's interdisciplinary model of care is now available in both Minnesota and Georgia in the United States, in addition to healing initiatives in Africa and the Middle East.

This partnership, known as *Thrive*, makes it possible for CVT

to offer care to survivors of torture among the refugee populations currently working with the IRC in its Atlanta location. Healing care is delivered utilizing a holistic model incorporating psychotherapy, mental health case management and interpretation to address the unique needs of each client in a safe therapeutic space.

Combining the services offered by the IRC—an international humanitarian and refugee resettlement services provider—with CVT's

interdisciplinary care allows newly-resettled refugees the opportunity to receive a full spectrum of assistance. This partnership was made possible through funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), and services are provided at no cost to the clients.

The hundreds of refugees resettled by IRC annually in the Atlanta area are primarily from Burma, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Bhutan and Iraq. Large numbers of these refugees are highly traumatized, and, until now, Atlanta has lacked the robust safety net for mental health that CVT has worked to develop in Minnesota for more than 30 years. CVT's healing center is the first torture rehabilitation facility to open in the state of Georgia.

CVT often sees torture survivors who come to the St. Paul Healing Center after they have already lived in the U.S. for as long as a decade. This will be different in Atlanta,

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CVT staff in Atlanta  
celebrating opening  
of first torture  
rehabilitation center  
in Georgia.

PHOTO © HARMONY BLACKWELL

Restoring  
the Dignity of  
the Human Spirit

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## Letter from the Executive Director

Imagine what it would be like to be told that in a few short months, your world would be turned upside down. You would be turned out of the only home you'd ever known and expected, without resources, to keep body and soul together not only for yourself, but also for your children and family. Now imagine that you're a torture survivor, in the middle of regaining control of your life, when this news comes. Residents of the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, where CVT has been helping torture survivors since 2011, are contending with this problem right now.



**Curt Goering**

With the Kenyan government declaring that Dadaab residents will be forced to relocate this year, a building feeling of suspense in the camp is palpable. Of the 611 survivors we saw in Dadaab in 2015, a full 562 of them reported they had endured torture. Therefore, the thought of "returning home" elicits feelings of hopelessness for some, because they fear that they have no home to return to, since the militia occupied their original homes.

Our field coordinator, Sarah Farah, says she has heard clients' burdens have increased and their healing process is affected. "Some clients fear that the government might use force to assure repatriation, or the process of returning a person to his or her place of origin, and so they are panicking," said Sarah. "Our clients are being asked by other refugees for information about repatriation, and many are purchasing radios so they can listen to the latest news reports and stay informed," she added.

We know from decades of working with torture survivors how resilient the human spirit can be. I've witnessed what healing can do, and seeing these transformations is a humbling experience. In the midst of trying times, we will continue to stand with our clients in Dadaab and help them on their healing journey. Our presence is more important now than ever before.

The situation in Kenya is complex and important. I urge all those involved in these decisions to remember the individuals whose lives are affected by the outcome, but also affected so deeply during this process.

Your support has helped make so much healing possible in Dadaab and I know you are providing light in a dark time. I am ever inspired by your compassion and grateful for what your generosity enables us to accomplish.

With my thanks,



Curt Goering  
Executive Director

# CVT Opens Its Doors to Survivors in Atlanta

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where the IRC works with refugees as they arrive. Identifying and treating emotional distress early in the resettlement process has the potential to save refugees years of suffering.

“It is exciting to begin seeing clients here in Atlanta after several months of preparation. More importantly, it is remarkable that torture treatment services are now available to survivors of torture in the Atlanta area, where these services have been incredibly limited,” said Dr. Adaobi Iheduru, psychotherapist/team lead in the *Thrive* office.

“Providing holistic care to survivors of torture will ensure healing of the mind and body so that these individuals have an increased ability to function effectively in their new society.”

“This is wonderful news for the survivors we serve,” said Pete Dross, CVT’s director of external relations. “With these funds, we will create new partnerships, strengthen existing alliances and build our capacity to reach more survivors. We value this recognition from ORR that CVT is providing excellent work, and these grants demonstrate their confidence in our ideas about new techniques and models.”

“By partnering with IRC, we look forward to rebuilding the lives and restoring the hope of torture survivors living in a previously underserved region of the United States,” said Dr. Andrea Northwood, CVT’s director of client services. “Partnering with an experienced resettlement agency offers us the chance to intervene earlier in the adjustment process for new Americans, which can save

unnecessary suffering that occurs when these needs go unmet and compound over time. Experience has taught us that, with coordinated care to address their social, physical, psychological and legal needs, torture survivors recover and eventually thrive, giving back to their communities.”

“We are excited to bring this new and culturally appropriate service to the refugee and immigrant population in Atlanta, and this partnership will provide critical services that will make lives better for survivors of torture,” said J.D. McCrary, executive director, IRC in Atlanta.

“CVT’s expansion into Georgia and our partnership with the IRC make it possible for us to reach individuals who need rehabilitative care in a part of the country which

has been underserved,” said Curt Goering, CVT’s executive director. “This extension of our services clearly aligns with our mission to heal the wounds of torture on individuals, their families and their communities. By partnering with

Experience has taught us that torture survivors recover and thrive, giving back to their communities.

an organization as well-respected and firmly established as the IRC, much-needed but previously unavailable services will now be offered to survivors arriving in Atlanta.”

## Atomic Data Sponsors *Restoring Hope* Breakfast

CVT is honored that Atomic Data is the Presenting Sponsor of our annual *Restoring Hope* breakfast on October 4, 2016. The company identifies, designs, implements and manages technology for businesses of all sizes, around the corner in Minneapolis, and around the globe.

After attending last year’s event, Atomic Data CEO Jim Wolford said, “The mission, the people and the victims spoke to my heart as well as my pocketbook. Along with many other Minnesota-based organizations, CVT makes me feel proud to be a Minnesotan, American and human. So many in

the world need our help, compassion and our financial assistance.”

CVT is grateful to our partners at Atomic Data for their sponsorship of this year’s *Restoring Hope* breakfast and for supporting our healing work and advocacy for an end to torture worldwide.

To learn more or RSVP for the *Restoring Hope* breakfast, visit [cvt.org/breakfast2016](http://cvt.org/breakfast2016) today!



**Jim Wolford,**  
Atomic Data CEO

*"Inside we're deeply wounded."*

## Friendship and Healing for Congolese and Burundian Girls

**A**t CVT's healing center in Nairobi, one of the group sessions is comprised of teenaged girls, all with heartbreaking stories of rape, hard labor, abandonment and childhood lost at a young age. Many are struggling with low self-worth. When a CVT counselor once remarked how nice they all looked, one of the girls quickly responded, "That's only on our faces. Inside we're deeply wounded."

One of the girls shared with the group how she was captured by

rebels and held at a camp with 15 men. "I was like their wife to them," she said of the hard labor and sexual violence she endured before managing to escape six months later. Over the course of ten weeks of group sessions, the girls embark on a healing journey discussing the atrocities they survived, applying the therapeutic tools that are part of CVT's group counseling model, building self-esteem and finding a brighter outlook in life. During a clinical

check-in, most of the girls reported that being in the group has given them the confidence to speak in front of other people, something that previously terrified them.

In sharing their stories, the girls are drawing strength from each other, gaining confidence and finding hope again. Since beginning their healing journey together, they've formed a bond of friendship that will endure even after their group sessions end.

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## Maximize Impact with Your Company

### Corporate Event Sponsorship

Interested in corporate event sponsorship? CVT offers robust sponsorship packages for both our annual *Restoring Hope* fundraising breakfast and networking event and quarterly *Healing Circle* receptions. This is a great opportunity for your company to engage with audiences that include key policy-makers, influencers and high profile figures in the fields of healthcare, law, banking, immigration, higher education and politics.

### Workplace Giving Program

Payroll deduction is an easy way to support CVT year-round. To participate, simply check with your personnel office to find out about your company's Workplace Giving

Program. If your company does not have a program or if CVT is not one of the listed charities, please let us know and we will gladly contact them on your behalf.

### Corporate Matching

You can double or triple your impact with a corporate match! Hundreds of companies, both big and small, will match charitable contributions made by their employees or even volunteer hours. Your company's personnel office can provide you with appropriate forms to help twice as many survivors.

Contact CVT at **1-877-265-8775** or **cvt@cvt.org** to learn more about any of these giving options!

## Make a Difference in the Life of a Survivor

Your generous support brings healing to torture survivors worldwide. CVT welcomes all types of donations.

- **Monthly Sustainers** allow for ongoing planning and delivery of healing services.
- **Planned Giving** continues your legacy of support.
- **Gifts of Stock** support survivors while offering tax benefits to donors.
- **In-Kind Donations** of specific items improve the lives of survivors.
- **Tribute Gifts** celebrate events or memorialize loved ones.

Donate online at [www.cvt.org](http://www.cvt.org), send a check to 649 Dayton Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104, or call 1-877-265-8775 for other ways to give. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to healing the wounds of torture.



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