

Global Institute for Health and Human Rights



Newsletter

September - October 2015

“Generating a deeper understanding of the intersection between health and human rights, and promoting innovative solutions to contemporary challenges.”

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UNIVERSITY
AT ALBANY

photo courtesy of NASA

ABOUT THE GIHHR



OUR WORK

The Global Institute for Health and Human Rights founded in 2012 by physicians and renowned human rights activists Kamair and Arash Alaei, aims to facilitate a deeper understanding of the intersection between health and human rights, with concentration on reproductive health, maternal and child care,

HIV/AIDS prevention and Harm Reduction. The approach of health as a human right is not widely accepted, even among many ministries, secretariats of health, civil society, and organizations representing the interests of the most vulnerable. There is inadequate collaboration among individuals working in the field of medicine and those working from a legal or policy perspective to protect human rights, and little understanding of how their work is connected. Here at GIHHR we believe that health, well-being and human rights are complex and multi-faceted concepts. We aim to promote an equally rich and multi-disciplinary approach to the understanding of and solutions to the health and human rights challenges of our contemporary world. Through research, education, policy, advocacy and development, the GIHHR seeks to develop innovative solutions to contemporary challenges in this arena.



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MEET OUR STAFF

DR. KAMIAR ALAEI

is a public service professor in the Department of Public Administration and Policy, and the founding Director of the Global Institute for Health and Human Rights. He is an expert on HIV/AIDS, drug policy and International Health and Human Rights. He and his brother Dr. Arash co-founded the first "Triangular Clinic" for three target groups in Iran (drug users, HIV patients, and STD cases), documented by the World Health Organization as a "Best Practice Model" for HIV/AIDS and injecting drug users prevention and care. Dr. Alaei's extensive experience in both global health policy and international human rights law allows him to focus on the intersections between international health and international law, while remaining sensitive to the needs and realities of vulnerable target groups including rights of prisoners. His area of expertise focuses on HIV/AIDS policy and drug policy through an academic perspective with a concentration on Central America, Middle East and Central Asia. In addition to WHO/CAIRO, he has served as a consultant or temporary advisor to the World Health Organization in Pan American Region (PAHO) to expand health and human rights training programs in prison system. Dr. Kamiar Alaei received his Medical Doctorate (MD) from Isfahan Medical University and his Master of Public Health (MPH) in epidemiology from Tehran Medical University – two of the top universities in Iran – his Master of Science in International Health from Harvard University, and his doctoral degree on Health Policy and Management from University at Albany, as well as recently finished his degree in International Human Rights Law at Oxford University. In 2015, Dr. Kamiar Alaei was awarded the Ellis Medal for his humanitarian work.



MD, DRPH, MPH, MS

DR. ALEXANDRA HARRINGTON

is assistant director and affiliated faculty at the Global Institute for Health and Human Rights. She is also adjunct faculty at Albany Law School, where her classes focus on international law topics. Dr. Harrington serves as Lead Counsel for Cross-Cutting Legal Issues with the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law. Her more than three dozen publications address a variety of fields relating to international law, including international human rights law, international child's rights, environmental law, legal issues relating to climate change, natural resources regulation, international organizations, international trade law, corporate social responsibility, and criminal law, as well as domestic fields such as constitutional law and military law. She routinely presents her works at domestic and international conferences, including a United Nations Academic Impact in Action panel. Dr. Harrington has served as a Visiting Professor at Albany Law School, a professor at the University of Montreal Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Internationales summer programs, as a Consultant to the Commission for Environmental Cooperation of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, and is an ICTSD Expert for the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development.



JD, LL.M, DCL

DR. ARASH ALAEI

is the Associate Director of the Institute. He is a physician who broke the existing national silence regarding HIV/AIDS in a very conservative Muslim country like Iran with the help of his brother Kamiar Alaei using the Triangular Clinic model. He and his brother extended their work on HIV/AIDS in other countries such as Afghanistan and Tajikistan by implementing regional training workshops. They have been successful in motivating other Muslim countries to break the existing silence regarding HIV/AIDS by inviting them to visit their Triangular Clinics in Iran. Dr. Alaei and his brother promoted their scientific collaborations with American experts through establishing regional workshops on HIV/AIDS and inviting well known international experts from Harvard, Yale and Maryland to be partners in these programs. He also continued his cooperation with U.S. scientists to foster medical diplomacy between Iran and the U.S. The brothers also organized summer exchange programs for American students to visit Iran and work with Iranian students on various health and human rights related projects. This international student network strongly influenced Americans and second generation Iranians living in the US by cultivating youth interest in Iran. In recognition of their work, Dr. Arash Alaei and his brother Kamiar were awarded the Jonathan Mann Award for Global Health and Human Rights by the Global Health Council in June 2011 and World Health Organization/PAHO gave its first Health and Human Rights awards to them in December 2012.



MD

LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITY

WORLD OF GLOBAL MEDICINE AND HUMAN RIGHTS



The University at Albany's Living-Learning Communities for incoming freshmen have proven to be a great way to create a small community of learners. Living-Learning Communities (L-LCs) offer incoming freshmen with similar interests, majors, or lifestyles, the opportunity to live together in the same residence hall, take one or two courses together, and meet regularly with faculty, advisors, and upper-class students who share their interests. Faculty have enjoyed personal interaction with new students and find the opportunity to really get to know freshmen to be fun and refreshing. The Living-Learning Communities have received special endorsement and encouragement from new University at Albany Provost James Stellar as part of the University's efforts to increase retention.

In March 2015, the GIHHR was asked by the University at Albany's Assistant Vice Provost for Student Engagement to direct and oversee a new Living-Learning Community for Freshmen at the University at Albany. In August of 2015 the new L-LC was created and started, named the "World of Global Medicine and Human Rights." The program itself accommodates approximately 27 current freshmen's primarily those who are intended pre-med and biology majors. Affiliated faculty and interns are engaged and involved in the Living Learning Community and students are exposed to GIHHR events as well. Members of the L-LC intend on participating in several events throughout year. So far members have participated in the AIDS and Breast Cancer Walk as well as engaging in several service learning projects such as volunteering at the local farm where all food were donated to the Regional Food Bank.

"Health is a Human Right"



CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS



In early March 2015, the Advanced Graduate Certificate in International Health and Human Rights was approved by the New York State Department of Education and can now officially be offered for the 2015 – 2016 academic year. To address the growing demand for interdisciplinary solutions to our contemporary world challenges, the GIHHR, in collaboration with the University at Albany School of Public Health and the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy Department of Political Science, proposed the introduction of the graduate-level Advanced Certificate to be offered to students and professionals (health care professionals, lawyers, policy makers etc.) in collaboration with 3 other institutions – Albany Law School, Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and Union Graduate College. Six applicants have been accepted for the first cohort of students.

PROPOSAL FOR “3 in 1”



ALBANY LAW SCHOOL

MIA
LL.M.
ADVANCED
CERTIFICATE

The proposed program of Masters of International Affairs (MIA), Masters of Law (LL.M.), and Advanced Certificate in Health and Human Rights is a two-year program established by University at Albany and Albany Law School. The dual degree is ideal for individuals who wish to combine a triple careers in international affairs, law and health and human rights. The MIA and LL.M. will include a concentration in Health and Human Rights.

TURKEY PROJECT



The Global Institute for Health and Human Rights is determined to make health a human right. Currently, the GIHHR is working on projects in several countries, particularly, in the Middle East. One of these projects presently involves Turkey. Over the past two years, the GIHHR has made several proposals for Turkey. Notably, one focuses on the country's structure and current approach to treating substance use at their national drug addiction centers, AMATEMS, which was submitted to Turkey's Ministry of Health.

The organization has continued the momentum of their mission with the current projects in Turkey. Additionally, the GIHHR has also proposed programs including: Training of the Trainer (ToT) Models; to educate health care providers on the most up-to-date methods in treating substance use in Turkey, studying the barriers to substance use treatment and HIV testing for Turkish women drug users, and most currently, the ethical, legal, and political issues of HIV Research in Turkey.

The GIHHR is continuing its endeavors within Turkey through further analysis of drug policies and development, as well as research on vulnerable populations, especially focusing on women, MSM, and sex workers. Likewise, the institute continues to research TB rates, HIV/AIDS, HCV and other blood borne infections, specifically, in terms of testing and prevention; all in the efforts to influence changes.

GRANTS

- 1) Kamiar Alaei (PI), Arash Alaei, Dina Refki, Kevin Williams. A Women-Centered Network to Organize, Advocate, Lead Change and Drive Democratic Transformations, USAID/ME projects to support Citizens Capacity and Legal Rights Programs, \$1,404,080.
- 2) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei. Funding to host research conference addressing HIV/AIDS, drug use, and stigma for 20 countries in the Middle East and Central Asia in Fall 2015, international AIDS Society & OPEC Fund for International Development, \$300,000.00 (approximately).
- 3) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei. Preliminary Data Analysis to Apply for Non-Traditional Funding for Drug Use and HIV/AIDS Research in Turkey, University at Albany Presidential Initiatives Funds for Research and Scholarship, \$49,950.00.
- 4) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei. Proposal to Develop a Community-Based Educational Curriculum and Training Program for Turkey's Research, Treatment, and Training Center for Alcohol and Substance Dependence "AMATEM." Ohrstrom Foundation, \$43,000.00.
- 5) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei. Refining Current Drug Policies in Turkey" that will assist the GIHHR in providing a comprehensive framework in which to shape its proposal for the Turkish three-year National Strategic Plan on Drug Policy in a way that meets the needs of drug users, drug addicts and society as a whole, Open Society Foundation, \$40,150.
- 6) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei. Health Diplomacy Exchange between Iranian and American Academic Institutes, US Embassy Grants Program, \$52,000.
- 7) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei, Alexandra Harrington. IREX – Capacity Building for Health in Iraq – Joint Project with Hawler University Medical Center, Kurdistan, International Research and Exchanges Board, \$50,000.00.
- 8) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei, Jim Acker. Bridging the Gaps in Human Rights Law in Iran Through Enhancing Health Law Capacity, USAID, \$1,576,261.00.

GRANTS SUBMITTED

- 1) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei. Funding for Community Based Approach in Substance Abuse Treatment and Co-Morbidities Conference, NIH/NIDA, \$25,000.00
- 2) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei. Funding for three four-days Training of Trainers (TOTs) workshops on HIV/AIDS and associated comorbidities in three major Turkish cities: Ankara, Istanbul and Antalya, World Health Organization.
- 3) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei. Migration, displacement, and risk of bloodborne infections among Afghan drug users, NIH R21 grant, \$235,000.
- 4) Kamiar Alaei, Arash Alaei."Identifying sociocultural and structural barriers for drug treatment, HIV and HCV voluntary testing services for Muslim women drug users in the three largest cities of Turkey" National Institute of Health, \$275,000.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

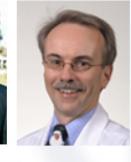
Victor Asal - PhD Chair of Department of Public Administration



Katherine Briar-Lawson - PhD Professor, Social Welfare



Ray Bromley - PhD Professor, Urban Planning



David O. Carpenter - MD Professor, Environmental Health Sciences

Harvey Charles - PhD New Vice Provost and Dean of International Education



Douglas Fish - MD Former Head of Division of HIV/AIDS at Albany Medical College



Samantha Friedman - PhD Associate Professor, Sociology

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Philip Nasca - Dean of School of Public Health



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Alicia Ouelette - JD - President and Dean, Albany Law School



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Fardin Sanai - Vice President for Development/Executive Director of The University at Albany Foundation, University at Albany



Lawrence Schell - PhD Director of Center for the Elimination of Minority Health Disparities/Professor, Department of Anthropology



Carol Whittaker - MA, MPA, MA – Associate Director of Center for Global Health/Assistant Dean, Global Public Health

Kevin J. Williams - PhD – Vice Provost for Graduate Studies/Dean of Graduate Studies/Professor, Psychology



Edelgard Wulfert - PhD – Dean, College of Arts and Sciences/Professor, Psychology

ADVISORY BOARD

A Note to Sophie Cook

The GIHHR staff and community would like to offer its deepest gratitude to Sophie Cook, our longtime friend and inaugural member of the GIHHR Advisory Board, as she steps down from this position. A tireless advocate for human rights causes, Sophie was instrumental in creating the GIHHR and has provided steady support and guidance. We will forever be indebted to her for her dedication and kindness and wish her the best as she moves into the next phase of her life. Thank you very much Sophie!



Ladan Alomar - Executive Director, Centro Civico of Amsterdam

Joseph Amon - Director of Health and Human Rights Division,
Human Rights Watch

Penelope Andrews - President and Dean, Albany Law School

Chris Beyrer - Director/Professor, JHU Center for Public Health
and Human Rights

Guthrie Birkhead - Professor, SUNY Professor of Epidemiology
School of Public Health, SUNY

David Bloom - Professor, Harvard Dept. of Global Health

Nazanin Boniadi - Actress, Spokesperson for Amnesty International
USA

Sophie Cook - Executive Director, Committee of Concerned Scien-
tists

Helen Figge - SVP, Global Strategic Development Lumira, USA,
Inc.

Henry Greenberg - Former Chair of Human Rights, NY Academy
of Sciences

Sofia Gruskin - Director/Professor USC Program on Global Health
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Robert Lawrence - Professor, Johns Hopkins University,
Bloomberg School of Public Health

Jamie Metzl - Former Vice President, Asia Society

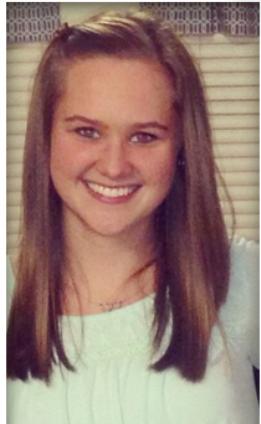
Suzanne Nossel - Executive Director, PEN American Center

Josiah D. Rich - Professor of Medicine Brown University

Susannah Sirkin - Director of International Policy and Partner-
ships, Physicians for Human Rights

INTERN STORIES

MORGAN DEVUYST



is a senior majoring in Human Biology and double majoring in Psychology with a minor in Medical Anthropology. Morgan is from Clifton Springs, N.Y., a small town in Upstate New York. She has taken an interest in human rights, particularly from the health perspective.

Her research at the GIHHR has included a variety of topics, with the main topic being "Health and Human Rights Indicators for HIV/AIDS with Regard to Injecting Drug Users". Morgan, along with her co-researcher and intern at the GIHHR, September Johnson, presented their research at the Undergraduate Research Conference at the University at Albany in April 2015. Being an intern at the GIHHR has opened many doors for Morgan. She was appointed as the Community Assistant for the Global Medicine and Human Rights Living Learning Community. She serves as a mentor, coordinator of events and teaching assistant for the freshmen living in this community.

Outside of her work at the GIHHR Morgan enjoys working and volunteering as an EMT in her hometown; helping people is one of her biggest passions. Aside from that, she also enjoys cooking, skiing and spending time with her friends and family.

"Interning at the GIHHR has most definitely directed me toward my future goals. After UAlbany, I plan on attending a physician assistant program. In this future career I hope to work with underserved and stigmatized populations. My internship at the GIHHR will always have an impact on how I will treat my patients and outlook on healthcare"

KATIE WAYE

is currently a senior majoring in public health and minoring in public policy. She began working at the GIHHR nearly two years ago and has been with the team ever since. She was immediately intrigued by the Institute's passion and desire to alleviate health burdens amongst some of

the most vulnerable populations—drug users, MSM, and women. Alongside this, “the office is a warm and collaborative environment that I thoroughly enjoy being a part of. It is amazing to see how much the office has grown during my time here. When I began, we had just four interns and now it is bustling with 30 plus advocates for health and human rights. It is incredible to see its growth and to know that I am part of a driven and motivated team that will undoubtedly leave a mark on this world, no matter how big or small.”

For most of her two years at the Institute, she has been working on projects within Turkey. Her work usually entails researching, writing, and finalizing grant proposals and journal articles. Katie’s involvement with Turkey all began when Arash assigned her with the task of compiling a proposal for Turkey’s Ministry of Health regarding Turkey’s structure and current approach to treating substance use at their national drug addiction centers, AMATEMS.

"The GIHHR has largely impacted my future. When I first began my internship, I distinctly remember Kamiar asking me, "What are you most interested in?". At that moment in time, I was not too sure what I was most passionate about—I just knew it was public health and that I wanted to help people. I can confidently say that as I am reaching the end of my final year as an undergraduate student, that I will continue my work with vulnerable populations at a global level. With this in mind, I intend to apply to graduate school and pursue a dual MPH/MBA with a global health concentration."



PUBLICATIONS

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND PRACTICES IN INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEWING AND INTERROGATION

Until recently there has been very little information about the interrogation practices in non-western countries, especially the Middle and Far East. This book aims to bridge the gap by bringing international experts from over 25 countries. Dr. Kamiar Alaei, Dr. Arash Alaei, and Dr. Alexandra Harrington, all contributors to Volume 1 and Volume 2, provided information to better understand the various interviewing and interrogation methods used across the globe.

Around the world, several techniques used in investigative interviewing of victims, witnesses, and suspects convicted of crimes, vary. A country's individual legal system, religion, and culture influences the techniques used. Some countries have developed interview protocols for witnesses which include ABE Guidelines and the NICHD protocol when interviewing children as well as the PEACE Model when interviewing suspects; while other countries continue to use physical constraints to extort information.



STRENGTHENING U.S. - IRANIAN RELATIONS THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH

Dr. Kamiar and Dr. Arash Alaei recently published a short article on health diplomacy in the prestigious health journal, *The Lancet Global Health*. The publication explores several strategies to increase and promote understanding and exchange between two adversarial nations. Where formal diplomacy is faltering strengthening U.S.- Iranian relations through public health may be a means of encouraging engagement and commonalities.



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HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

BY RAJANIE BHUDEO
AND JOSH CUCUECO