

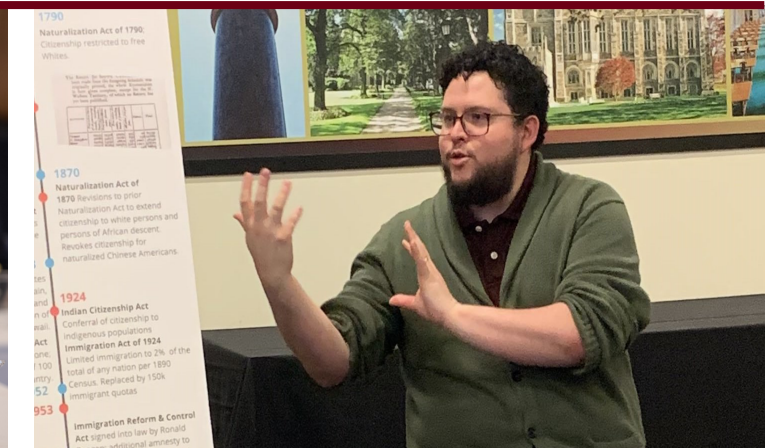
BOSTON COLLEGE



CHRIJ

Center for Human Rights and International Justice

2024 Summer Newsletter 2023-2024 Annual Report



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About Us

The Center for Human Rights and International Justice addresses the increasingly interdisciplinary needs of human rights work through academic programs, applied research, and the interaction of scholars with practitioners. In the 2023-2024 academic year, the Center's Co-Directors were Law School Professor Daniel Kanstroom and Lynch School of Education and Human Development Professor Emerita of Community-Cultural Psychology M. Brinton Lykes. Mr. Timothy Karcz served as Assistant Director.

People

CO-DIRECTORS

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Faculty Director, Rappaport Center for Law & Public Policy

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Boston College Lynch School of Education and Human Development

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Daniela Urosa

Adjunct Professor, Boston College Law School

We are also grateful to the staff of the BC Center for Centers for their vital support throughout the year, in particular to Kim Driscoll, Susan Dunn, Gaurie Pandey, and Grace Buchholz.

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Thank you!

Thank you to the following students who worked on Center projects this past year:

Heather Brennan, MA, English, MCAS '24

Catherine Brewer, BA, International Studies and German, MCAS '24

Saya Khandhar, BA, International Studies, MCAS '24

Sarai Mejía, BA, Applied Psychology, LSEHD '25, and Sociology, MCAS '25

Jonathan Mora, BA, Transformational Educational Studies, LSEHD '24

Ashley Shackelton, BA, International Studies, MCAS '24

Letter from the Co-directors

Dear Friends, Students, Former Students, and Colleagues,

A year ago we began our letter as co-directors of the CHRIJ with the old, apocryphal blessing, “*May you live in interesting times.*” Little did we realize how interesting, but also how terribly challenging, the subsequent 12 months would be. Beyond the two brutal confrontations in Gaza and Ukraine, over half of Sudan’s population or 25.6 million people are experiencing crisis levels of hunger and the situation in Haiti remains horribly unstable politically, socially, and economically, as Kenyan peacekeepers have finally arrived to try to maintain some semblance of order. The political situation in Venezuela is extremely volatile, contributing to a major migration crisis in the region and at the southern US border to which responses to date have been spectacularly inadequate.

Sadly, these horrific violations of human rights are only the most well-known among many others, as global climate change expands and authoritarian governments appear in many countries. All of this continues to challenge—but also to inspire—those of us whose lives are committed to the defense of rights and praxis grounded in human dignity, equality, and equity.

As part of our work this year, we offered diverse programming through which we have sought to educate and animate the Boston College community as well as those throughout greater Boston and indeed around the world about many such issues. Our programming this spring began with a presentation by Kimberly Theidon, Henry J. Leir Professor in International Humanitarian Studies, Tufts University Fletcher School of Global Affairs, entitled *Ecologies of Justice: The Rights of Nature in Colombia*. Her luncheon talk was co-sponsored by Environmental Studies and Global Engagement of the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences.

Guatemalan sociologist and educator Mario López then presented his fascinating and important work with Jesuit archives and interviews with Jesuits and others in Central America who worked with CIASCA in the 1970s and 1980s. He talked about the processes through which many Jesuits working in Guatemala at that time experienced a radicalization of their faith through their work with local communities including, in particular, the Indigenous Mayan communities.

Former BC PhD student and current Assistant Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at Seattle University, David Kwon, presented his fascinating and comprehensive new book, *Justice After War: Jus post bellum in the 21st Century*.

We pursued further discussions on transitional justice with Annah Moyokupeta, Executive Director of the South African Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, who spoke movingly about transitional justice (TJ) processes on the African continent and the gendered dimensions of violence that create nuanced experiences of harm. She elaborated on the benefits of integrating feminist approaches into TJ processes, while noting the progress made—and limitations upon—addressing such harms.

A series of major programs took place at the Law School with the former President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Ricardo C. Pérez Manrique. In public presentations and in classes joined by law faculty, Judge Manrique focused on the current challenges of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights through his lens as the Court’s President, together with Mexican human rights attorney, and Notre Dame J.S.D., Pablo González Domínguez.

On April 6, BC Professor of Music Ralf Yusuf Gawlick’s US première of *O Lungo Drom* (The Long Road), an oratorio on the Sinti and Roma People, was held on

campus and co-sponsored by the CHRIJ. The oratorio, composed by Professor Gawlick, was preceded by a pre-concert lecture and interview entitled “Past Silence: Understanding the Romani Holocaust Today” and then performed to a standing room only audience in Gasson 100.

Amidst this very busy winter and spring schedule, the CHRIJ also hosted a series of lectures related to events in Gaza-Israel following the Hamas attacks on October 6. We ended the fall semester with Linda Dittmar, Professor Emerita, University of Massachusetts-Boston, who discussed her recent book, *Tracing Homelands: Israel, Palestine, and the Claims of Belonging*, followed by a robust and respectful conversation with attendees.

We opened the spring semester by hosting Professor Gabor Rona, from the Cardozo School of Law, a specialist in the international law of armed conflict, who previously served as the International Legal Director of Human Rights First, and as a legal advisor to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva. Speaking at the Law School to a packed lecture hall, Professor Rona presented a detailed overview of the legal frameworks within international law and their implications for that ongoing conflict. He followed this with a more specific presentation and discussion with Dan and other faculty in Dan’s law class.

Later in the spring semester, Boston College Department of History Associate Professor, Dana Sajdi, traced the historical roots of Gaza and the multiple challenges that have faced the Palestinians as they have sought to ground themselves in their lands and territories. These events drew between 200 and 300 students and faculty and concluded on April 24 with the *Voices for Peace and Justice: Ceasefire Vigil for Gaza* program. The Vigil was co-sponsored by a variety of BC departments as well as by the Faculty for Justice. Speakers drew from

their respective disciplines to focus on the challenges facing all seeking peace and justice in the midst of the ongoing crises in Gaza and beyond.

Programming during the spring and summer also included multiple activities hosted and attended by Boston College undergraduates and our CHRIJ interns. Of special note—as described in a longer piece in this newsletter—is their Undocuweek 2024. Hosted in conjunction with BC’s International Week, these events included an extraordinary exhibit of *Mantas*. These crafted wall hangings were modeled after [Chilean arpilleras](#) but developed by women migrants living along the US-Mexico border. One of the BC CHRIJ interns visited the border with a class that she was taking in the spring semester and was so moved by the work that she brought back a collection for exhibiting on campus.

Brinton taught the spring semester’s CHRIJ Interdisciplinary Seminar, which included several students of theology and ordained priests from Burkina Faso and Nigeria as well as three law students, two of whom were in the CHRIJ Certificate program, and students in social work and counseling psychology. All reported a deep appreciation of the opportunity to focus on issues of human rights, social justice and equity as informed by a range of research methodologies and a deeply interesting interdisciplinary set of discussions. During the summer she facilitated and co-taught the summer school course, [Global Mental Health & Human Rights: Perspectives on Environmental, Gender and Economic Racism](#), at Venice International University. Dan taught his new first year law elective, *Introduction to Human Rights, Humanitarian and Refugee Law*, which included a field trip to the InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights and the OAS in Washington, DC, supported by the CHRIJ. Together with Adjunct Professor, Daniela Urosa, Dan was awarded BC Law School’s faculty teaching award this year for the development of this creative new course and associated human rights pedagogical initiatives at the law school.

Dan is completing final revisions of his book, *Deportation World, Dynamic Sovereignty and the Evolution of Migrants’ Rights*, to be published by Harvard University Press. Brinton published five articles in refereed journals and one book chapter focused on decolonizing psychology, transitional justice and liberation psychology as a resource in accompanying survivors of the human suffering attendant to armed conflict and genocide.

It is now our time to bid farewell and to reflect upon nearly two decades of work with the CHRIJ. The Center was founded in 2006 by David Hollenbach, SJ, together with Professor and former Vice Provost, Don Hafner, Dan, and Brinton. Following Don’s retirement and David’s departure from BC in 2016, Dan and Brinton continued as co-directors.

Much of the Center’s work will live on, although Dan and Brinton will no longer lead. The Center has published and supported a wide array of human rights scholarship in leading journals and academic presses. We have also released multiple reports in Spanish and in English based on activist scholarship undertaken in collaboration with colleagues in Guatemala, South Africa and beyond. Critical resources and training materials developed with NGOs in the greater Boston area in collaboration with migrants and those seeking asylum in the US are available, as are many legal resources and reports of pathbreaking, critical legal work that resulted in precedent-setting cases through which illegally deported migrants were able to return to home and family here in the United States. We heartily thank the many colleagues—too numerous to list here—who have worked so diligently and excellently with and for the Center over the many years of our leadership. We especially thank Tim Karcz for his years of dedicated service and for leading the wrap up period this summer following the conclusion of our leadership in May.


This report—as well as many others available through our website—contains

brief biographies of some of the many students with whom we have collaborated since our founding in 2006. Much of the work reported herein has seeded ongoing interventions in many universities and countries and we are grateful for the opportunity to have been supported by Boston College and many of you as donors in this unique Center for Human Rights and International Justice.

Brinton is now Professor Emerita of Community-Cultural Psychology at the Lynch School of Education and Human Development at BC and will serve as co-editor-in-chief of the *International Journal of Transitional Justice* through December of 2024. Dan continues as a full-time Professor of Law, Dean’s Distinguished Scholar, and Faculty Director of the Rappaport Center for Law and Public Policy.

ADELANTE!

M. Brinton Lykes



Certificate Alumni Profile: Liliana Mamani Condori

Liliana Mamani Condori graduated from BC Law School in 2019 with a focus in human rights law after having previously earned a Master's degree at the BC's Clough School of Theology and Ministry with a focus in ethics and human rights. She also earned the Certificate in Human Rights and International Justice in 2017. Currently Lili works as an immigration attorney at Rian Immigration Services, which provides legal consultations and case representation for migrants seeking legal status, work authorization, to be reunited with their families, or US citizenship. The services provided by Lili and others at Rian aid migrants in becoming empowered, finding stability, and moving out of poverty.

As an immigrant to the US herself, Lili was drawn to this field by her concern for the immigrant community and the many challenges they face. After migrating to the US, she recounted that she was lucky enough to have a network of family, friends, and a community that guided and supported her transition, and she recognizes that without this her experience would have been much more difficult and complex. Adjusting to a new country, culture, and oftentimes language, is challenging regardless of how robust one's support system is. Lili noted that many people are in the US without adequate networks of support and she strives to be a resource for such people as they adjust to the challenges posed by adapting to life in a new country and culture.

In addition to her personal history with migration, Lili's current choice of work was influenced by her studies as part of the CHRIJ's certificate program. While focusing on theology when she entered Boston College as a graduate student, the certificate program provided her with an opportunity for interdisciplinary learning. While she and her certificate classmates were all committed to human rights, their diverse studies and backgrounds provided Lili with new perspectives as well as reaffirmed her

intuition that human rights has to be approached collaboratively.

She also gained a better understanding of how human rights violations affect various dimensions of the person. This experience with the Center, her background in theology, and her legal training allow her to approach her current human rights work from various perspectives in order to better holistically assist her clients. She noted that knowledge she gained through the Center's public events is among her most fond memories of her time in the program as she was able to learn from people working in the human rights field from around the world. It gave her an opportunity to expand her perspective and connect with others at Boston College who were interested in similar issues.

She has continued to surround herself with those passionate about human rights through her work at Rian in which all those she works with are driven to make their communities better and deeply care about the clients they serve. Her position not only allows her to work with compassionate people, but also to work directly with a diverse range of clients. Lili serves people from all over the world who face myriad immigration hurdles. Her commitment to this work is sustained by her ability to connect with them and to serve as a helpful resource in their immigration journey.

She shared one of her greatest takeaways from her time in the CHRIJ program as well as her connections with migrants - issues of human rights are often thought of as being prominent far away from home, when in reality there are many in need of assistance in close proximity to people nearly everywhere, in her case in the Boston area. She reflected that many interested in the field are often envisioning opportunities to serve in faraway places and thus often miss the immediate needs of their communities.



Liliana Mamani Condori

Lili's work has taught her that each individual's context demands work and that it is vital to protect the fundamental rights of those around us. Each of us working in the field of human rights is called to actions that can create change. She urged those interested in human rights work to be mindful of their own realities and to not underestimate the value of actions they can take to foster the promotion and fulfillment of human rights.

Brinton Lykes recalls Lili's participation in the Migrants and Human Rights Collaborative Research Team over some of her many years at Boston College - and her collaboration as a research assistant for the PhotoPAR project Brinton coordinated with the Maya Ixil and K'iche' in Chajul, Guatemala. Lili's interdisciplinary and linguistic skills afforded her critical resources in these collaborative projects. She engaged with local transnational families in participatory workshops and transcribed many of the in-depth interviews with the Maya women of Chajul. Brinton also noted her deep appreciation of her ongoing connections to Lili and her growing family here in the greater Boston area.

Spring 2024 Events

International Law and the Israel-Hamas Conflict

On January 26, the Center hosted Gabor Rona, Professor of Practice at the Cardozo School of Law, a specialist in the international legal practices in armed conflict. Professor Rona previously worked as the International Legal Director of Human Rights First and as a legal advisor for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). His presentation focused on the application of international law to the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict and offered a detailed examination of the legal frameworks and their implications. Given the increased concerns around the war as the death toll in the region mounts, particularly for Palestinians facing military action by the Israeli Defense Forces, Rona's presentation offered the audience a tangible means to engage in highly charged, complex, and difficult conversations through the lenses of international law.

He highlighted five key areas: *Jus ad bellum* (the right to war); *Jus in bello* (conduct during war); international human rights law; international criminal law; and the law of state responsibility. These concepts are pivotal in assessing the actions of states and non-state actors in conflict scenarios. The right to self-defense and self-determination under international law was a central question throughout Rona's presentation, as he explored the legal justifications for the use of force. He noted that while Israel is entitled to defend itself against attacks by Hamas or by another state or non-state actors, the broader question of Palestinian self-determination remains contentious. Rona emphasized that any use of force must adhere strictly to international legal standards, prohibiting human rights abuses and violations of the laws of war.

Under the rubric of international humanitarian law (IHL), Rona elaborated on the principles of distinction, proportionality, precaution, and military necessity. He clarified misconceptions around the concept of proportionality, explaining that it involves balancing military advantage against potential civilian damage, and that disproportionate attacks could constitute war crimes.

The discussion also touched upon the sometimes inadequate application of these legal frameworks. Rona critiqued certain military tactics, such as the broad warnings issued by Israel to evacuate areas in Gaza, which he argued were inadequate



Gabor Rona

in preventing civilian casualties. Another concern was how parties in armed conflict had failed to provide proper protection and assistance to civilians, either through direct or neutral international intermediaries.

The role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) was central to the lecture, as it holds legal jurisdiction over potential war crimes. While acknowledging its legal jurisdiction, Gabor discussed ongoing concerns about whether the ICC wields an enforcement mechanism strong enough to penalize these violations. Rona asserted that "international law is a weak methodology for accountability," given the realities of state sovereignty. However, he also introduced the concept of universal jurisdiction, highlighting the crucial role of domestic courts in maintaining accountability, thereby complementing the efforts of international bodies such as the ICC.

While the law of armed conflict is relatively young and mechanisms for accountability ultimately fall short, in Rona's own words: "Law does less than you may like, but more than you may think." In other words, the importance of international law and judicial bodies come not merely from their existence, but from the prevention of what might occur in their absence. The Q&A session that followed was vibrant, with attendees probing the implications of US policies and their impact on the conflict. Questions from the audience expressed a concern for the accountability of actions taken by and on behalf of the US, as well as the overall effectiveness of international legal mechanisms in curbing violence and ensuring justice. The lecture inspired a thought-provoking examination on the role of international law in the Israel-Hamas conflict, offering valuable insights into the challenges and possibilities of legal frameworks in contemporary global conflicts.

Radicalizing faith and justice in Guatemala: Insights about the Jesuits' experiences at the Center for Research and Social Action of Central America (CIASCA) in the 1970s and 1980s

On March 13, Guatemalan educator and sociologist, Mario López, discussed his ongoing research to document the Guatemalan Jesuits' radicalization of faith and justice through their work in the Center for Research and Social Action of Central America (CIASCA, for its acronym in Spanish) during the 1970s and 1980s. López' work draws from archives and contemporary interviews with some of the Jesuits in Guatemala and Central America active during those years. He introduced his presentation describing it as "... the story of a group of Jesuits who decided to love with radicality in arguments and risk their lives with the poor in Guatemala..." His presentation recounted multiple aspects of this story while advancing a working hypothesis based on the newfound discovery of the CIASCA archives and a brief history of CIASCA.

His history began with an introduction to the Society of Jesus and its global involvement. López then established a timeline of historical events regarding CIASCA's activities, starting with planning meetings between 1965 and 1967 and then leading to the 1969 turning point of the future of the Central American Jesuit province. López detailed the provincial meeting held in El Salvador where Jesuits realized: "not only should we make friends with the poor, but we should also exert all our efforts and resources to change that structural situation of sin." This realization created significant changes in the province including focusing formation of students towards Central America, a shift in a mission orientation towards justice, and discussions of the option or possibility of starting over from scratch, as if they had had no previous works at all.

López recounted the significance of the 1973 establishment of the CIASCA community in Zone 5 of Guatemala City. The initial members of the group included Jesuits Ricardo Falla, Juan Hernández Pico, and César Jerez and later expanded to include many others. CIASCA had two wings: one for research and a second for social action (understood as education and *concientización*, or the process of becoming critically conscious). In 1976, the goal was to work toward research and action in the service of and to popular organizations. This approach differed from other Latin American Centers for



Mario López

Research and Social Action (CIAS, in its acronym in Spanish), which Falla saw as more intellectual, while the Guatemalan CIAS was focused more on organizational action, which, in turn, led to research. At this time, the political crisis in Guatemala intensified and brought about a modified focus on politics, as the Jesuits joined popular demonstrations against electoral fraud in 1974. At the end of 1977, the Ixtahuacan Miners March marked another turning point in the social moment in Guatemala, resulting in matured conditions contributing to the formation in April 1978 of the Peasant Unity Committee (CUC) and, later, the establishment of the Democratic Front Against Repression.

López discussed the acceleration of horrific events in the following three years. He quoted Caballero, "In two years, more than twenty priests and nuns were killed, some of them of nationalities other than Guatemalan. More than two hundred had to leave the country. Thirty training centers were closed, and about seventy parishes were left without priests." During this time, the Society of Jesus was accused of using theology and Marxism to transform the minds of peasants, support armed struggle, and introduce socialism. The atrocities continued from June of 1981 to December 1982, and included the carnage of the civilian population through genocide against the Indigenous populations. López' historical account of CIASCA ended with the publication of Ricardo Falla's Pastoral Accompaniment in War Zones in September 1983 in the Ixcán. This work included Falla's accompaniment of the Communities of Populations of Resistance (CPR) through which he recovered victims' and survivors' testimonies.

López followed this brief historical account with a presentation of the rediscovery of the CIASCA archive, that is, of many documents kept by the Jesuits during those years. He suggested that the archives challenged the working hypothesis he had presented as well as the need for further research on the deeper motivations behind the Guatemalan

genocide. He identified four challenges based on the material recovered to date from the CIASCA archives. The first is that the work done through CIASCA was not that of a subset of radical Jesuits but rather the work of the Society of Jesus as a whole. The second is the necessity of documenting the long period of maturation and radicalization that led to this work, rather than portraying it as a group of protagonists who had been carried away by emotions or by repression. The third challenge is to find a better balance between CIASCA's research and social action activities, in particular, of identifying the multiple forms of social action that arose from their work. Lastly, he highlighted the importance of CIASCA's contributions to revolutionary organizations and to critical social sciences, with a focus on how it mobilized Indigenous communities in Guatemala during those years, including their recent contributions to the historic 106 Days of Resistance in response to the political crisis embroiling the country in 2022. The latter contributed to ensuring that the democratically elected president, Bernardo Arévalo, would take office in January 2023. López invited questions from participants and facilitated a thought-provoking Q&A that included discussion of his anticipated next steps in his research, his thoughts about the legacy from CIASCA in Guatemala today, and his thoughts about the contributions of Indigenous people to the future development of Jesuit scholarship and thought within and beyond Guatemala.

Justice after War: Jus post bellum in the 21st Century

On April 4th, The Center hosted David Kwon, Assistant Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at Seattle University, to present his new book, *Justice After War: Jus post bellum in the 21st Century*. Kwon noted that he hoped the book would help students and the general public understand the necessity of postwar justice and peace considerations, thereby moving beyond traditional conceptions of the just war theory. It examines how theology, ethics, and social science inform one another in peacebuilding after conflict. Kwon's presentation was followed by a response from Professor Stephen Pope of Boston College's Theology Department, from which Kwon earned his PhD.

Kwon began with the pithy statement, "At the heart of *jus post bellum* is the establishment of a just peace." He defined just peace not merely as the absence of violence, but the establishment of justice for both the victorious and the vanquished. Kwon argued against the notion that reconciliation is the primary goal of *jus post bellum*, presenting



David Kwon

three alternative factors to building just peace: just policing, just punishment, and just political participation, each with an underlying focus on human security. His book argues that human security is often neglected in moral and theological intellectual traditions. In addition, he argued that a more balanced understanding of *jus post bellum* must pay direct attention to the elements comprising human security in a postwar context, including the quest for reconciliation.

During his presentation, Kwon further elaborated on the principles that make up the reconstruction of a *jus post bellum* society: just termination of the war (once most of its objectives have been met), right intention (no revenge), working with a legitimate domestic authority that respects human rights, discrimination (no collective punishment), and proportionality. These principles are intended to guide those transitioning from war to peace, yet they continue to be challenged and questioned as the theory develops further. Kwon then noted that cycles of violence are perpetuated by the lack of *jus post bellum*, thus inhibiting the creation of lasting justice and peace. An example of this cycle is the postwar rapes that followed the phenomenon of "comfort women" in World War II. Kwon also brought attention to the human

rights of soldiers and veterans as they face post-traumatic stress disorder and serious moral injury postwar.

Kwon then discussed the ethical dilemmas of *post bellum* including social prejudices, loss of life, political manipulation, and mental health issues, dilemmas presented by the limitations of the practice of just war theory alone in the *jus post bellum* context. He played a clip from a 2010 Georgetown University conference to illustrate this latter point. Afterward, Kwon drew from ideas presented by Mark Evans, Kenneth Himes, Brian Orend, Drew Christiansen, and Pope Paul VI to inform his main argument. He concluded the presentation with the idea that (1) the common good applies to everyone but is difficult to actualize and, (2) a just peacemaking framework should allow for individual development to include political participation as a postwar societal responsibility. He emphasized that this approach would streamline rebuilding the common good.

Professor Pope followed the presentation with an appraisal of Kwon and his book. He praised the book's clarity, use of various sources, fair-minded perspective, and ability to distinguish ideas of interlocutors to understand how they are related. The Q&A from Pope and the students in attendance asked questions including the difference between *jus post bellum* and transitional justice, the relationship between human security and other values such as civil liberties, and the utility of bellum in the post-industrial world.

Transitional Justice and Gendered Dimensions of Violence and Harm: African Perspectives on How Far We Have Come in Incorporating Feminist Approaches to Transitional Justice

On April 10, the Center welcomed Annah Moyo-Kupeta, Executive Director of the Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) in South Africa. Moyo-Kupeta discussed transitional justice (TJ) processes on the African continent and, more particularly, about the gendered dimensions of violence that create nuanced experiences of harm. She elaborated on the benefits of integrating feminist approaches into TJ processes, providing an historical overview from the African perspective. She spoke about the progress made towards addressing the gendered implications of violence and the ongoing limitations

of the implementation of some of these strategies.

Established at the height of South African apartheid, the CSVR has advocated for recognizing the distinct ways in which women experience violence, emphasizing the need for a nuanced approach to the redress of their suffering. To attempt to apply a standard solution to the diversities of experience—to “paint people with the same brush,” as Moyo-Kupeta said—would be a disservice to those who have suffered.

The creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa marked the beginning of transitional justice processes on the African continent, providing individuals the opportunity to testify to, and seek redress for, their experiences of gross violations of their human rights. Moyo-Kupeta described how the women who came forward primarily spoke about the violence experienced by the men in their lives rather than giving testimony of their own experiences of violence. The discussion that followed highlighted the patriarchal structures that render women unable to understand themselves as victims and the stigma they face in speaking about personal violence in public, especially when this violence is sexual in nature.

In response, Moyo-Kupeta described the CSVR's work in compelling the TRC to establish safe spaces for women to come forward which were non-televised and facilitated in the absence of men. As a result, 157 women gave testimony to the harms and violations which they suffered, significantly ensuring that their experiences were included in the country's collective memory and national narrative. Subsequent Truth and Reconciliation Commissions further demonstrate Africa's progressive trajectory towards addressing gendered dimensions of harm, reflecting a growing recognition that gendered experiences of violence require nuanced approaches to transitional justice.

As one among other efforts to consolidate the lessons learned from decades of TJ work and provide guiding principles for future implementation, Moyo-Kupeta and the CSVR championed the development of the African Union Transitional Justice Policy (AUTJP). Adopted in 2019, the AUTJP outlines the key principles for successful transitional justice processes, including the importance of local ownership, consultative mechanisms, and the ability to adapt to context specificity.

Despite the progress made in recognizing gendered perspectives within TJ processes, Moyo-Kupeta acknowledged that certain limitations remain. The experience of the LGBTQ+ community, for example, has yet to be included in TJ policy as cultural and social obstacles to the widespread recognition of their existence remain prevalent in some African countries. Additionally, she described the challenges faced in, for



Annah Moyo-Kupeta

example, Gambia when paying reparations to victims within society where women exist as dependents to the head of their clan rather than independent recipients of their aid.

Moyo-Kupeta concluded her lecture by emphasizing that feminist approaches to transitional justice have allowed us to interrogate its truly transformative potential, granting us the ability to reimagine the well-trodden pathways toward socio-political transformation and account for the diversity of our experiences in the process.

Following her presentation, Moyo-Kupeta answered questions regarding the challenges in quantifying the payment of reparations for lives lost, the implications of transgender identities in transitional justice processes, and the tension between varying cultural understandings of gender in the progress toward justice. Her responses further demonstrated the need for consultative, locally-owned, and contextually specific TJ processes in order to address gendered experiences of violence.

Assessing the Current Challenges of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights through the Lens of Former President Ricardo C. Pérez Manrique

On April 19, the Center hosted a presentation by Judge Ricardo C. Pérez Manrique, former president of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The event was moderated by Katie Young, Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Faculty and Global Programs at Boston College Law School. The discussion centered on the pivotal role and the enduring

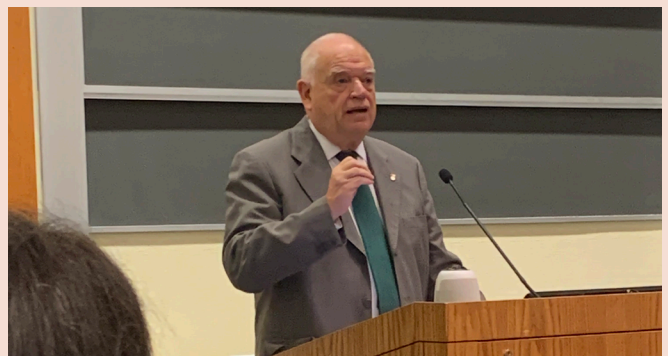
challenges confronting the Court in an evolving international landscape.

Pérez Manrique, who began his judicial career in his home country of Uruguay before stepping onto the regional stage, shared his unique insights into the operations and impact of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Founded in 1978 and based in San José, Costa Rica, the Court has been a cornerstone in upholding human rights across the Americas. Despite its influence, it grapples with a minimal budget, complex cases of structural discrimination, and increasing authoritarian trends within the hemisphere.

The talk began with a timeline of the Court's foundation, which was launched with the 1958 assembly that aimed to unify states under a common human rights agenda and led to the beginning of official operations in 1979. In 2001, the Inter-American Democratic Charter was approved by the Organization of American States (OAS), emphasizing the essential division of powers and respect for human rights as "pillars of democracy." Over the years, the Court has evolved to address not only more classically defined human rights violations but also emerging challenges such as the rights of Indigenous populations and the impact of environmental degradation.

Pérez Manrique outlined the Court's key function as the adjudicatory body addressing human rights grievances within the region. The Court, composed of seven judges, not only identifies victims and holds states accountable, but also issues sanctions and provisional measures for immediate protection against human rights violations.

Throughout the discussion, the judge highlighted several focal areas of the Court's work, including cases related to forced disappearances, authoritarian regimes, and vulnerable groups such as children, women, Indigenous communities, and LGBTQ+ individuals. The Court's mandate does not extend to Canada and the United States, however,



Judge Ricardo C. Pérez Manrique

although they participate in other international human rights frameworks.

Addressing the challenges, Pérez Manrique pointed out the difficulties in managing the influence of multinational corporations like Google and Apple, emphasizing the Court's role as a vital democratic mechanism that seeks to align corporate actions with human rights standards.

In the subsequent Q&A session, Young explored the Court's innovative approaches to new challenges like climate change. The judge confirmed that the Court is adapting its guidelines to accommodate recent scientific findings on environmental pollutants like carbon and methane. Questions also touched on the possibilities and challenges attendant to the US' and Canada's joining the Court, changes that would require significant adjustments in legal frameworks due to differing judicial standards from current member states.

Pérez Manrique highlighted the positive impact of the Court's judgments and its influence in shaping national legal standards across the region. The Court offers free and accessible educational programs designed for foreign officials and key figures in human rights, which shows its commitment to fostering common ground in the field of human rights, regardless of political differences. This approach is crucial as some countries have faced political tensions leading to the loss of their representatives. Despite these challenges, the Court remains dedicated to evolving its framework and strategies, effectively managing the tensions that arise as its membership changes over time.

BC Music Professor Gawlick debuts work on Roma and Sinti at BC and in Europe

On April 6, the Center alongside the BC Department of History co-sponsored the US première of *O Lungo Drom* (The Long Road), an oratorio on the Sinti and Roma People. The oratorio, composed by BC Professor of Music Ralf Yusuf Gawlick, was performed in Gasson 100 and was preceded by a pre-concert lecture and interview entitled *Past Silence: Understanding the Romani Holocaust Today*.

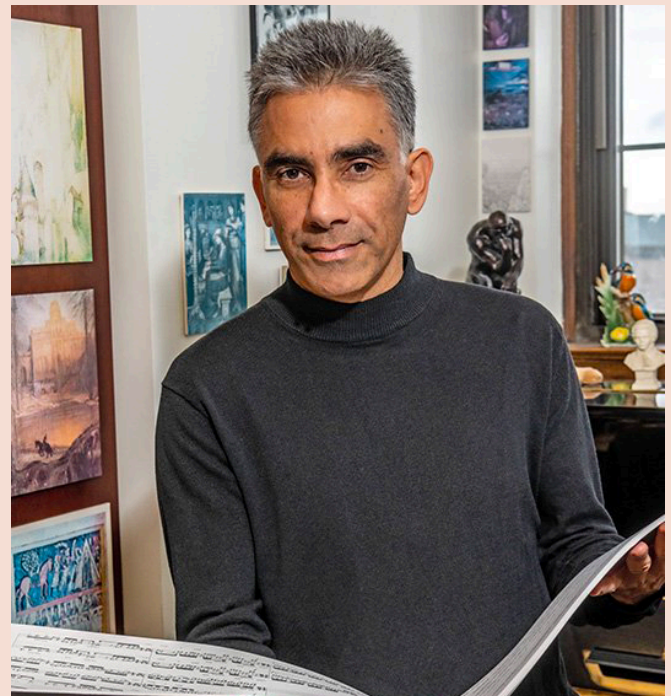
Gawlick, who was adopted as a child in Germany, was inspired to write the oratorio after he found out while in his mid-40s that his biological mother was a Romani originally from the Black Sea region.

The oratorio is large-scale work, scored for a chamber ensemble, and integrates texts from all around the world into an oratorio to create a *Lied* of the scattered Sinti and Roma. Living in Europe for over 700 years, the Roma and Sinti have been subjects of constant discrimination and persecution, which at times has led to enslavement and genocide, with the Holocaust as the most prominent example.

The oratorio is noted for being the first on a Romani topic, for setting multiple texts by Sinti and Romani authors, and the first to be set to music by a Rom, Gawlick. As described in an official program for the work, "The Long Road" is a "road of longing, of yearning, a path that leads to and from remembrance; each step and footprint on this road, imbued with a profound sense of *Fernweh*, embraces hope and beauty through resilience and consolation."

After the US performances, Gawlick led productions in Europe, and in time to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the last 4,300 Sinti and Roma people murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau on August 2, 1944. In 2015, the European Parliament declared the date the European Holocaust Memorial Day for Sinti and Roma.

The official webpage for European Holocaust Memorial Day for Roma and Sinti 2024 is <https://www.roma-sinti-holocaust-memorial-day.eu>, and recordings of the commemorations in Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II-Birkenau are accessible there.



Ralf Yusuf Gawlick

Other spring 2024 events co-sponsored by the Center

On February 22, a lecture by Kimberly Theidon, Henry J. Leir Professor in International Humanitarian Studies, Tufts University Fletcher School of Global Affairs, on *Ecologies of Justice: The Rights of Nature in Colombia*, co-sponsored by the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences' Environmental Studies and Global Engagement.

On April 3, a lecture by Dana Sajdi, BC Associate Professor of History, entitled "*Gaza: A History*," was co-sponsored by diverse departments of the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences and the Lynch School of Education and Human Development, and by the BC Faculty for Justice.

On April 24, diverse departments of the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences and the Lynch School of Education and Human Development and the BC Faculty for Justice joined the CHRIJ in co-sponsoring a diversity of BC faculty and students in *Voices for Peace and Justice: Ceasefire Vigil for Gaza*.

Center organizes Undocuweek at BC in April

The Center hosted Undocuweek at BC from April 8-12 in an effort to cultivate awareness, acceptance and celebration of undocumented people, as well as those affected by undocumentedness, in the United States and at Boston College. Throughout the week, the events focused on uplifting the voices of those navigating the immigration system in hopes of a better life, providing educational resources and engaging with community members.

The programming, with significant effort by the Center's undergraduate interns and other BC students, was designed to provide a space of connection and encourage open mindedness and a diversity of perspectives on campus. Attendees from the BC community and the general public learned about current migration issues, regardless of their prior levels of knowledge on the topic.

The first event, an "Immigration 101" workshop on April 8, featured Mary Holper, Associate Clinical Professor, Director of the Immigration Clinic, and Associate Dean for Experiential Learning at BC Law School; Andrés Castro-Samayoa, Higher Education Program Director, and Associate Professor, at the BC Lynch School of Education & Human Development; and

Michelle Desveaux and Bruce Alexander from the Immigrant Support Alliance, a local coalition of volunteers partnering with resettlement agencies to provide individuals with support as they adjust to a new living situation in the Boston area.

Workshop participants were introduced to the US immigration system, looking at historical and present realities facing immigrants in the country and in the Boston area.

Holper presented on the factors contributing to immigrants becoming undocumented, including the difficulties in obtaining asylum. The requirements to qualify for asylum embedded in US law include establishing a well-founded fear of persecution in one's home country due to race, religion, nationality, political ideology and/or membership in a particular social group. The asylum claim must be evidence-based and proven in immigration court. Currently, the immigration courts are overloaded with a large backlog of cases, and claims are now typically taking years to be adjudicated.

In the second half of the workshop, participants were split into two groups. Going beyond the current realities of US immigration policy today, one group proceeded to give attendees a look at the history of how it came to be, with policy changing throughout the years based on factors related to race, Indigenous dispossession and ethnocentrism. Castro-Samayoa highlighted significant laws and policies in US immigration history that were discriminatory and which led to the removal and restriction of certain groups over others on the basis of national origin and race. In the other group, the volunteers from the Immigrant Support Alliance shared insights about their recent experiences in providing food and other resources to recently arrived migrants and shared some of their stories, expressing frustration with the way newcomers are sometimes denigrated, and the way those perceptions are at odds with the people with whom they directly interact, and at times, temporarily host in their homes.

Tuesday of Undocuweek featured the panel, *Students Facing Mixed Status-ness*, which focused on the experiences of students from mixed status families and communities. Professor Alejandro Olayo-Méndez, SJ, from the BC School of Social Work began the event with an overview of the struggles that individuals and families can face in accessing temporary status or citizenship in the US, and the precarious nature of their lives when they do not have legal status. Following this introduction, a Boston College student who attended the 2024 Ignatian Solidarity Network's Undocu-Network Summit with support from the CHRIJ recounted their experiences with undocumentedness in their family and the stresses and difficulties it had caused them due to the uncertainty about the

future. Family members were at risk of being deported at any time, a possibility that constantly looms over undocumented people in the US.

On Wednesday evening, the *Immigration Advocacy Across Careers* panel featured speakers from diverse professional backgrounds in healthcare, business, education, and nonprofits discussing their engagement and advocacy with migration issues in their careers. The panel included Emily Hoffman from the Massachusetts Migrant Education Program, Professor Emilia Bianco from the Boston University School of Social Work, Jeannette Huezo from United for a Fair Economy, and BC Connell School of Nursing Professor Shelley White.

Bianco and White shared personal experiences that had led them towards social work. By learning and observing the lives of vulnerable populations that led them to migrate, they began recognizing the oppressive systems and unfair treatment towards immigrants in their journeys and upon re-settlement. Huezo, who works with immigrant workers and advocates for policy changes for a more inclusive economy, emphasized differences in how the US can favor certain populations over others. Hoffman, in her experience with immigrant children in education, mentioned the importance of recognizing the intersectionality that expands the vulnerability of the population with whom she works. Unfortunately, systems of oppression persist throughout history, often appearing in “new clothes” as mentioned by White. Part of the work of social workers, as noted by Bianco, is recognizing that the fight for human rights is universal and affects populations throughout an increasingly fragmented world.

The Center also collaborated with three BC undergraduate students who organized a display on campus of 20 *mantas*, a type of traditional handmade embroidered cloth, by Artisans Beyond Borders (ABB), a non-profit organization based in the Arizona Borderlands supporting art handmade by asylum seekers. The exhibition, *Presente: El Arte de la Humanidad*, celebrated empathy and solidarity, inviting viewers to reflect on the “common threads of humanity that connect us all,” regardless of national origin and circumstances. The students’ primary mission was to challenge the pervasive stereotypes and misconceptions surrounding immigration. By displaying the artistic agency and human dignity of individuals often labeled as “illegal” or criminal, the exhibit highlighted the humanity of immigrants amidst the false narratives and stereotypes that surround them today.

Following this exhibit, the mantas were displayed at BC’s annual Arts Festival in April and some were sold at a fair held by Bentley University’s Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Center. The students sold 15 mantas to those

in the Greater Boston community, with funds from the sales benefiting ABB, and five additional mantas remain with the Center for ongoing displays on campus.

The students who organized Undocuweek reflected on the “immense power of teamwork in working towards migration justice, but especially the power of art as a way to bridge gaps and counteract dehumanizing narratives.” As they continue to pursue immigration advocacy as part of their lives, their encounter with ABB will remain a strong call to action.



Mary Holper



BC students with mantas



Immigration Advocacy Across Careers panel



Panelists from the Immigration 101 workshop

Catching up with alumni of CHRIJ undergraduate internship program

For over 10 years, the CHRIJ has hosted an internship program for undergraduate students at Boston College. This has resulted in an impressive group of alumni/ae who are now making multiple contributions to human rights work, many citing their internship with the CHRIJ as instrumental in their acquiring skills that helped prepare them for their current path. Some have also credited the CHRIJ and the internship as having provided an important space at a time in their lives during which they could connect with and think through contemporary human rights issues in tangible ways, deepening their commitments to work for justice post-graduation.

CHRIJ Assistant Director Timothy Karcz has played a leading role in the development of the internship program over the years. He has worked to connect a cadre of students each year with research projects headed by the Center's directors and affiliated faculty. Additionally, he has worked with the students in co-creating initiatives, including a range of programs for the BC community aimed at fostering a better, more empathetic understanding of immigration issues and the immigration system in the US and refugee issues globally. This past spring's Undocuweek at BC (see page 13-14 of this issue) is one example of such work. Karcz notes that "It made a lot of sense to leverage the resources made available to us through the CHRIJ to both provide faculty with much needed research assistance, while giving undergraduates interested in human rights an important experience and exposure to diverse human rights issues and action research issues and methodologies that could help them discern or foster their life goals while at BC. They have been able to take these experiences forward with them into their careers and it is exciting to see what many of them have gone on to do."

Raquel Muñiz, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Higher Education at the Lynch School of Education and Human Development, and an affiliated faculty member of the Center, has had the assistance of the Center's interns on her research projects for several years. She commented, "I have thoroughly enjoyed working with interns from the Center across the years. They are thoughtful, dedicated, insightful, and overall excellent. I was pleased to invite fellows to co-author across the years, one of the most rewarding aspects of the work as I get to see them share their brilliance with the world."

Brinton Lykes, CHRIJ Co-director and Professor of Community-Cultural Psychology at the Lynch School of Education and Human Development, noted that the CHRIJ Interns have made extraordinary contributions to the multiple human rights and psychosocial wellbeing projects and programs with which she has been affiliated at BC. She got to know multiple future interns as sophomores through the McGillycuddy-Logue Program and was delighted that their participation in that interdisciplinary international program sowed interest in the CHRIJ and the internship program. She also deeply appreciated the work that multiple students contributed to and participated in workshops with transnational migrants, as co-authors and editors of the newsletter of the Martín-Baró Initiative for Wellbeing and Human Rights (MBI), and traveling to Guatemala with her and the Center's other co-director, BC Law Professor Dan Kanstroom, on summer trips. She delights in learning how they are putting these experiences into praxis in diverse professional settings focused on human rights and wellbeing.

In the summer of 2024, the Center caught up with a number of alumni of the program about what they are doing and reflecting back on how their internship experience impacted them:



Lori Niehaus

For **Lori Niehaus**, class of 2018, the CHRIJ internship position involved her in interdisciplinary dialogue that continues to serve her in her current employment at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention. Niehaus graduated from BC with a double major in Biology and International Studies, and also completed the McGillicuddy-Logue Fellows (MLF) Program for Undergraduate Global Studies, through which she was able to connect with Center co-director Brinton Lykes, then an MLF program faculty member. Niehaus has always had an interest in public health, particularly within the context of the experience of migrancy. After serving at a local health center during a semester abroad in Quito, Ecuador, Niehaus joined the Center as an undergraduate intern, motivated by a desire to dive further into the intersection of health and injustice on a global scale.

Niehaus's experience at the Center informed both her personal and academic journey after graduation. Working with then visiting International Studies professor, Laurie Johnston, on a project examining experiences of Muslim students on Catholic campuses across the US, Niehaus developed a deep interest in interfaith dialogue and the intersection of religion and access to services. She built off this interest, to write her senior thesis on the ways in which Islamophobia affects Muslim immigrants' access to healthcare in the US. This experience in part motivated her decision to serve in the majority Muslim country of Malaysia as an English Teaching

Assistant under a Fulbright Grant following her graduation. Niehaus's time at the Center additionally helped her to discern which fields of study she wished to pursue within the intersection of global health and injustice.

Following her year teaching English, Niehaus co-founded the nonprofit organization, Feed the Frontline. Based in Chicago soon after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Feed the Frontline provided meals to essential workers while simultaneously supporting local restaurants that were facing unprecedented economic challenges. Shortly thereafter, Niehaus completed her Master's of Science in Public Health (MSPH) in the Global Disease Epidemiology and Control Program at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. During her MSPH program, Niehaus was awarded a PAVE fellowship to work in the Immunization Section at the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) global headquarters in New York City. Currently, she is a Health Scientist at the CDC in the Global Health Center's Global Immunization Division, where she works with partners and country governments primarily in low- and middle-income countries to improve access to and utilization of life-saving vaccines.

Ivana Wijedasa graduated from BC in 2022 with a bachelor's in International Studies with a concentration in ethics and social justice. She also graduated with minors in Hispanic Studies and Philosophy. At BC, she developed an interest in a career dedicated to social justice and human rights. Since graduating, she continued this interest by working with the International Rescue Committee's education department enrolling refugee youth in schools, advocating for accommodations, and providing translation services to address language barriers. Wijedasa is currently pursuing her law degree at Boston University School of Law where she will be Vice President of the Immigration Law and Policy Society and will be part of the immigration clinic next year.

When reflecting on her role as a CHRIJ intern, she recalls her desire to explore her interests in immigration and advocacy more deeply. She found the discussions with Assistant Director Tim Karcz and her fellow interns valuable in learning more about human rights issues and tying them to the Center's work. Wijedasa also highlighted her experience working with Professor Raquel Muñiz reading amicus briefs regarding the DACA Supreme Court case as important to gaining a glimpse into the legal field and research. In addition to her internship, Wijedasa cited the course Interdisciplinary Approaches to Borderlands and Human Mobility, taught by SSW Professor Alejandro Olayo Méndez, SJ, as revelatory. The course involved traveling to the US-Mexico border between San Diego and Tijuana to gain a better understanding of the intersectional issues migrants face. With the experience gained, she plans to continue her work in social justice and migration advocacy in the future.



Ivana Wijedasa



Emma Kane

Emma Kane graduated from BC in 2021 with a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Political Science. Throughout college, she developed a passion for immigration advocacy which she decided to continue to pursue post-graduation. During the year following graduation, she worked at Project Citizenship as a part of the Americorps New American Integration Program. Afterward, she continued her immigration advocacy by working at a small immigration firm assisting newly arrived immigrants. Kane is currently pursuing her law degree at Boston College Law School in hopes of creating a larger impact for the communities she will serve.

When reflecting on the impact of her role as a CHRIJ intern, Kane recalls her ongoing interest in human rights and immigration. The internship provided her with valuable tangible experience in those fields. She highlighted her research experience with Lynch School of Education and Human Development Professor Raquel Muñiz, an affiliated faculty member of the CHRIJ, on cases related to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, and the narratives surrounding it as great exposure to issues of immigrants' human rights. The research experience was also the most impactful part of the internship leaving her with interesting insights into the portrayal of DACA. The research project resulted in the publishing of the academic article, "The Story of DACA as Told by Friends of the Court: The Role of Interest Convergence, Color-Evasiveness, and Exceptionality in Policy Discourse,"

for which she is a co-author. With the experience gained from the internship, she plans on continuing her passion for working for human rights at BC Law and beyond.

Tugce Tumer studied International Studies and Hispanic Studies, graduating from BC in 2021. During the summer of 2024, she was an intern at Clifford Chance, a law firm in New York. Prior to this, she worked as an Immigration Paralegal at Goldstein Immigration Lawyers, where she collaborated with clients and attorneys to prepare immigrant cases.

In addition to her professional work, Tumer is currently pursuing her law degree at Duke University Law School. She serves as a Pro Bono Coordinator for the Duke Immigrant Refugee Project, where she assists asylum clients with their applications and leads a group of student volunteers.

Reflecting on her time at the Center, Tumer notes that learning about social justice in the classroom was vastly different from working on related projects. Her internship at the Center was pivotal, shaping her career path. She collaborated with Professor Raquel Muñiz and other interns, publishing a manuscript on the 2020 US SCOTUS decision on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) immigration policy. The Center introduced her to immigration law and inspired her to pursue this field. "It offered me many skills I continue to use today, such as research, teamwork, and critical thinking," Tumer shares. Working with the Martín-Baró Initiative for Wellbeing and Human Rights (MBI), which was co-founded by Center co-director Brinton Lykes, was eye-opening, exposing her to grassroots work and helping with fundraising projects.

Tumer expressed that the experiences at the Center and the MBI have been instrumental in her journey, equipping her with the tools and inspiration to advocate for social justice and immigrant rights.



Tugce Tumer

For more profiles of students we caught up with in the summer of 2024, visit the News & Notes section of our website, bc.edu/humanrights

Student Awards



Morris (R) with Center co-director Daniel Kanstroom

CERTIFICATE IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

Congratulations to the following students who earned the Center's Certificate in Human Rights and International Justice this past year. We wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

Sotiris Georgakopoulos (J.D. '24, Law School)

Aaron Morris (J.D. '24, Law School)

SUMMER RESEARCH GRANTS

The Center is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2024 summer research grants, who will present their research findings on campus during AY24-25. The following are the recipients and their topics of study:

Charles Currie

PhD candidate in Social Work '25, SSW

"Transitioning from residential care to adulthood: A phenomenological study of care leaving in Sierra Leone"

Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Ndiaye

LLM student, Law School

"Transitional Justice: The Use of Amnesty in Recent Political Crises in Sub-Saharan Africa — Cases of Senegal and Chad"

Will Paterson

MA in Mental Health Counseling '25, LSEHD

"Examining contributions of men's masculinity and misogyny to human rights correlates"

KELSEY RENNEBOHM MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP

This year is the twelfth annual award of the Kelsey Rennebohm Memorial Fellowship, to honor the memory of Kelsey Rennebohm, a student in the Lynch School of Education and Human Development who was killed by a vehicle while riding her bicycle in Boston in 2012. To reflect Kelsey's passions, the award goes to a student whose proposed research or activist scholarship is at the interface of psychology, mental health, gender, social justice, and human rights. This year's recipient and topic of study are:

Ireneé Saguedare Ouedraogo

STL student, CSTM

"Traditional marriage among the Mossi people of Burkina Faso through the eyes of its victims: A pastoral approach"



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