



BOSTON CENTER FOR REFUGEE HEALTH & HUMAN RIGHTS Winter 2018 NEWSLETTER

Pictured above: Dr. Lin with the Goldman Family.

OPEN AVENUES FUNDRAISER

Co-founder and Director of the Boston Center for Refugee Health & Human Rights, Dr. Lin Piwowarczyk, was presented the 2018 Humanitarian Award by Open Avenues Foundation on September 27, 2018 at the "Response to Migrant Family Separation Crisis Fundraiser" in Boston's Intercontinental Hotel. The award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated an "unwavering commitment to welcome, support, and empower foreign nationals in the United States." Open Avenues' founder, Jeff Goldman, introduced Dr. Lin and thanked her for her for twenty-five years of work providing mental health services to refugees and survivors of torture.

The event also recognized the work of the PAIR Project, attorney Harvey Kaplan and attorney Howard Silverman for their contributions to helping refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in the Greater Boston area. Dr. Ruth Bersin was acknowledged for her provision of supportive housing through her innovative cluster model.



2018 Humanitarian Award
presented to Dr. Lin Piwowarczyk.

Open Avenues is a newly formed non-profit with a mission "to equip and empower immigrants with opportunities that enable them to reach their full potential and contribute to American society." Reuniting separated family is a necessary step in ensuring immigrants are able to reach their full potential, as the event highlighted.

Fall Fête 2018

Fall Fête 2018 was a great success, bringing together over one hundred fifty people and raising \$160,000. The evening was emceed by Reverend Liz Walker, who introduced all of the speakers with her usual charm and rallied the crowd to give us much as they could to support refugees and asylum seekers in the Greater Boston area. Dr. Lin, pictured to the right, shared challenges that clients at BCRHHR



have faced during these uncertain times. To that point, she introduced the client speaker who talked about the challenges he overcame while fleeing his home country in Africa. He also spoke about the peace of mind he has found since seeking assistance at the Boston Center for Refugee Health & Human Rights.

Kate Walsh and Sarah Kimball spoke about the expansion of services that are taking place throughout the hospital to help refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants who use BMC services.



CAREER CORNER: BY LINDA ZIMMERMAN

In September, 2018, BCRHHR welcomed Madeleine Jackman, an AmeriCorps member, to our team. Madeleine's key responsibility is to support programming within the Career Development Program (CDP). Madeleine's strong technology and facilitation skills have enabled us to enrich our current career services. During the fall of 2018, we offered the following opportunities to our clients: a Job Club, bringing industry experts on-site for career education; an Online Job Readiness Program to complement our face-to-face training format; a special event on Worker Rights led by the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General; and increased support for individuals seeking resume development, job search advice, and resources for education and volunteering.

Recently, two BCRHHR clients who were assisted by CDP staff have navigated their way into occupations with bright futures. Charles completed a 22 week building maintenance program with the Asian American Civic Association and began working with Peabody Properties in Lynn as a Building Maintenance Technician. His responsibilities include the full range of maintenance tasks including drywall, tiling, painting, installation of garbage disposals and replacement of bathroom and kitchen fixtures. Another client recently gained a competitive unpaid internship with the MA Department of Environmental Protection as a result of dogged persistence and intense motivation. He has received several offers to continue with the agency in a paid position or use his newly acquired knowledge and skills in the private sector.

We also need to include a shout-out to Susan Reason, a longtime CDP volunteer, who cheerfully assists with all manner of tasks for the Job Readiness Program. The CDP team aims to partner with clients so that they can progress toward their employment/career goals and greater economic self-sufficiency.

REFUGEE PATIENT NAVIGATOR (RPN) IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Kayla Paton graduated from Clark University in 2014 with a B.A. in Psychology and International Development Social Change. Moving forward post-graduation, she intends to pursue her PhD in Clinical Psychology with a research focus on Global Mental Health and Trauma. Kayla's interest in working with this population grew out of an intersection of experiences with ethnic minority women in rural Vietnam, where she witnessed first-hand the devastating burden of trauma and mental illness as a result of structural violence, and her experiences working with victims of sexual assault and domestic violence here in the U.S. Seeing that the lack of comprehensive and accessible mental health care services for the people who need it most as a wake up call, Kayla decided to pursue her dream of helping these populations as a volunteer at the Boston Center for Refugee Health & Human Rights (BCRHHR).



As a Refugee Patient Navigator (RPN) at the BCRHHR, she has been able to work with and learn from clinicians who, "bring me hope about the future of mental health treatment in this country and patients who inspire me," as she put it. She continued by saying, "The trauma-informed and holistic care provided at the BCRHHR drew me to the Center... While the experience has been challenging at times, as the center gets busy and there can be many moving pieces to juggle when helping patients to navigate the health care system, it has been incredibly rewarding. Each day at the center is an opportunity to feel humbled by the experiences of the patients and their ability to continue moving forward. It is also an opportunity to learn what trauma-informed care, mental health care treatment, and case management work consists of. This has helped me in my decision to pursue graduate work in psychology, engage in work improving access to mental health services for vulnerable populations, and help find culturally-sensitive approaches to trauma counseling and trauma-informed care." We all support Kayla's decision to pursue a

career in helping survivors of trauma and are confident that she will show them all the kindness and care that she has shown to BCRHHR's clients.

Get your steps in and join the Winter Walk!



It is that time of year again! We are raising money to help our clients (who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless) by participating in a fundraising walk on February 10th, 2019. BCRHHR's team is looking for more membersso please sign up to walk for BCRHHR on Feb. 10th by registering HERE. Thank you for the support!

To Donate:

- 1) Please click the link below, which will bring you to the Development Page**
- 2) Under "Gift Designation", click the bubble next to "Direct my gift to"**
- 3) Select "Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights" from the dropdown menu.**

Thank you for your support!

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