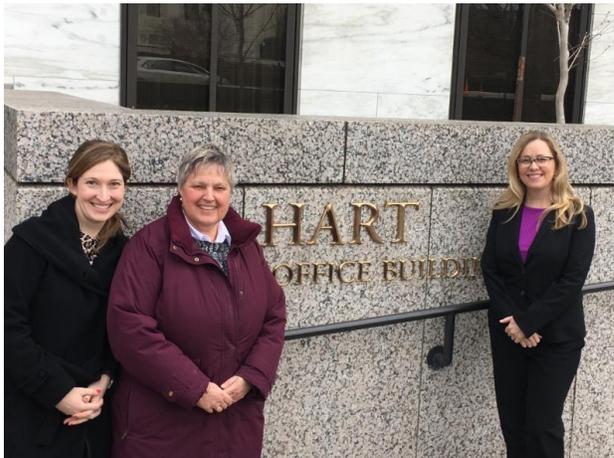




**Boston Center for Refugee Health & Human Rights
Welcomes the Spring with our
May 2018 Newsletter!**



From left to right: Eliza Keegan, Dr. Lin Piwowarczyk and Robbie Adams in front of the Hart Senate Office Building before meeting with Senator Warren's staff.

**10th Annual NCTTP Symposium
and a Visit to our Legislators**

The National Consortium for Torture Treatment Programs' (NCTTP)

10th Annual Research Symposium was held on March 5th, 2018 at George Washington University in Washington D.C. It was a great success with over 130 practitioners, students, nurses, lawyers, doctors, and program staff in attendance.

There were a variety of presentations on research topics ranging from the "Global State of the Right to Rehabilitation for Torture Survivors," by the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims' Victor Madigal-Borloz to the "Impact of

Gun Violence on Refugees and Survivors of Torture," which was given by our very own Dr. Lin Piwowarczyk and Eliza Keegan (database coordinator at BCRHHR). Dr. Piwowarczyk and Mrs. Keegan stated that hearing about gun violence can re-trigger our clients, bringing back memories of past trauma. Our clients are incredibly resilient and are working through these renewed fears with the help of our clinicians. Their reaction to stories of gun violence in the US are a reminder of how external factors impact people in vulnerable

positions, and why we need programs like ours to help them heal.

After the Symposium, members of various NCTTP programs visited their elected officials to make the case for increased funding for Survivors of Torture programs. Dr. Lin Piwowarczyk, Eliza Keegan, and Robbie Adams (program coordinator at BCRHHR) met with staff members of Senator Warren, Senator Markey, Representative Clark, and Representative Capuano's offices. All staff expressed support for our program while acknowledging the tension present in Congress over immigration issues. It is a particularly challenging time for refugees and asylum seekers in this country, but we are fortunate to have support from our Massachusetts delegation.

FUNDRAISERS & DONATION DRIVES

Over the last couple of months, the Center put out specific requests for our clients and we were met with overwhelming support! [Members of Boston Friends of Refugee Support](#), a network of socially conscious individuals interested in helping refugees, gave our clients desperately needed items. The staff and clients of BCRHHR would like to express how thankful we are to all of those who gave; thank you for Charlie Cards so that our clients can attend appointments at BMC; toiletries and sanitary napkins for those who cannot afford these items; and three stroller/car-seat combos for clients with young children.



The picture featured here is of our special projects assistant, Sara Wagner (on the left), and case management intern, Victoria Kachinski (on the right) just after they finished assembling one of the car seat/stroller combos. Our clients have been so grateful for all of these desperately needed items!

CAREER CORNER: INDUSTRY EXPLORATION PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

Based on the success of our Job Readiness Training Program, we are pleased to announce a new **Industry Exploration Program (IEP)**.

This program will enable clients and employers to meet informally for purposes of career conversation, networking, and cross-cultural exchange. IEP will improve clients' familiarity with major career paths in high growth industries in the Greater Boston area, educate clients about best practices in recruitment, and support actionable ways to increase workplace diversity and inclusion. To learn more about the Industry Exploration Program, please contact Linda Zimmerman, Career Counselor at: linda.zimmerman@bmc.org or 617-414-4338.



INTERNS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Boston Center for Refugee Health & Human Rights (BCRHHR) has been very fortunate to attract some of the most talented social work interns in the city, and 2017-2018 was no exception. Four of our amazing interns this year were Molly Sherry, Maria Campos Rojo, Madeline Ray and Victoria Kachinski. They formed a cohesive team as they evaluated and treated our clients, as well as seeing walk-ins.

A bit more about the interns themselves:

Madeline Ray is a master's candidate in the dual degree program at BU School of Social Work and BU School of Public Health. During her second-year clinical social work internship at BCRHHR, she focused on intake assessment and case management. Working with another intern, she started a monthly social hour for gay and lesbian asylum-seeker clients at the Center. Madeline stated that she was constantly surprised by the common ground, humor, and friendship she had with clients. She remains committed to working with refugee and immigrant populations in a public health social work capacity, whether in the US or abroad. This internship helped Madeline fulfill a life goal by managing caseloads in 3 languages: English, French, and Spanish. Madeline's favorite part of the work at BCRHHR was working with walk-ins (when potential clients present for rapid assessment for physical and emotional safety and clinicians make a quick follow-up plan or referral). Madeline stated that, "Work at BCRHHR has been eye-opening for the diversity of its clients' histories, the breadth and depth of the work, and the commitment to training and support for staff."

Victoria M. Kachinski was a case management intern at BCRHHR over the past academic year and is a candidate for a master's degree from the Boston College School of Social Work. Victoria worked with high-risk refugee patients at the OB/GYN Refugee Clinic in Boston Medical Center, in addition to helping clients at BCRHHR. Victoria stated that while it is clear to her that there is much more that needs to be done for our clients, she also finds strength from them. "Our clients live in constant uncertainty and ambiguity. Their strength and faith has taught me to welcome the uncertainty and ambiguity in my life and to stay grateful for the present moment... My clients are truly the hardest working and most hopeful people I have ever encountered!"



From left to right: Molly Sherry, Maria Campos Rojo, Madeline Ray and Victoria Kachinski with a BMC therapy dog.

Maria Campos Rojo is also a master's candidate in the dual degree program at BU School of Social Work and BU School of Public Health. She has just finished her second year placement as a clinical social work intern at BCRHHR. She reflected back on the experience stating, "It has been surprising to me to see the distance that clients travel to get to BCRHHR; a testament of both the importance of the clinic and the need for more resources such as BCRHHR." Maria found that the internship highlighted the importance of having an integrative health care system that addresses the physical and social determinants of health for clients. She feels that taking care of the presenting issue without looking at the bigger picture and communicating across departments/resources is not enough. Maria hopes to continue working with immigrant communities, especially asylum seekers. "I will take my lessons of trauma-informed healthcare and make sure that it is a crucial piece in my social work practice," she stated.

Molly Sherry is a master's candidate in the Simmons School of Social Work. Having spent some time in Uganda, Molly's interest in the country has only grown since working with several Ugandan clients as a clinical intern at BCRHHR. She stated that she learned a lot from the clients and expressed surprise at how many came to wish her well with gifts, cards, and emotional goodbyes. She said that she was struck the most by the clients that she had not seen in weeks, who made the effort to thank her before her internship ended. Molly has been offered a position in the school where she did her first year placement and is excited to start her career there.

Maria, Molly, Maddy, and Victoria will be missed by BCRHHR's team. However, we are confident that they will all continue to build upon what they have learned at the Center to help vulnerable populations. They are sure to share their natural talent, intelligence, and heart wherever they go, just as they shared those qualities with our clients at BCRHHR.

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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