

September 2008



ADVANCING SCIENCE. SERVING SOCIETY

Program News

Science and Human Rights Coalition

From the Science Community

From the Human Rights Community

About

## Science and Human Rights Program Newsletter

### Program News

#### Science Serving Human Rights: Making It Happen - October 23, 2008

We are delighted to announce an upcoming event that will highlight what has been accomplished by teams of scientists and human rights practitioners working together. Featuring a conversation with three such teams, we will hear from both perspectives about the challenges and opportunities presented by such partnerships, and what collaborations of this sort can achieve. The event will be held on October 23, 2008 from 3:00-5:30pm at AAAS in Washington, DC. Please register [here](#).

#### Program Bids Fond Farewell to Josh Robbins

With regret, in August, SHRP bid Josh Robbins a fond farewell. Josh joined the Program in 2006 as a project coordinator and within a year was promoted to program associate. He introduced the idea of partnering community wireless networks and local human rights

#### SHRP EVENTS

**September 15, 2008**  
**Washington, DC**  
[6<sup>th</sup> Science and Human Rights Coalition Planning Meeting](#)

**October 23, 2008**  
**Washington, DC**  
[Science Serving Human Rights: Making It Happen](#)

#### PUBLICATIONS

***The New Invisible College: Science for Development***  
Caroline Wagner ([link](#))

"In *The New Invisible College*, Caroline Wagner combines quantitative data and extensive interviews to map the emergence of global science networks and trace the dynamics driving their growth. She argues that ...

organizations, and laid the foundations of the AAAS Wireless Technologies and Human Rights Project. Committed to the human right to communicate, Josh will go on to make important contributions to human rights and the right to information as a member of a DC law firm, working on issues related to internet policy and broadband innovation. A wonderful colleague to all at AAAS, we will miss him.

### **Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights Project Welcomes (Another) New Staff Member**



The Geospatial Technologies Project has continued to grow and in August added a third full-time staff member, Jonathan Drake. Jonathan recently completed his M.A. in geology from Arizona State University, where he conducted research on the periglacial environment on Mars. Jonathan will provide a range of critical computing skills to the project while evaluating the potential of radar satellites for human rights purposes. Project staff is now engaged in several ongoing activities with Amnesty International and other organizations while gearing up for an active and productive Fall.

## **Science and Human Rights Coalition**

### ***Final Planning Meeting: September 15, 2008***

With the public launch of the Coalition rapidly approaching, the final planning meeting will take place on Monday, September 15 at 8:45 am-1:00 pm at AAAS headquarters in Washington, DC. The purpose of this meeting is to consider two final sets of recommendations for Organizational Structure and a Plan of Action (2009-2011) and to review the full set of foundational documents to be presented at the Coalition Launch in January (Mission and Goals, Membership, and five Areas of Activity). View the agenda and meeting materials, and RSVP [here](#).

### ***Introducing our Areas of Activity: Service to the Human Rights Community***

"Service to the Human Rights Community" is one of the

[r]ather than squander resources in vain efforts to mimic the scientific establishments of the twentieth century, developing country governments can leverage networks by creating incentives for top-notch scientists to focus on research that addresses their concerns and by finding ways to tie knowledge to local problem solving."

***Using human rights to improve maternal and neo-natal health: history, connections and a proposed practical approach***  
Sofia Gruskin et al. ([link](#))

The authors "describe the historical development of how maternal and neonatal mortality in the developing world came to be seen as a public-health concern, a human rights concern, and ultimately as both, leading to the development of approaches using human rights concepts and methods to advance maternal and neonatal health." The authors describe "the different contributions of the international community, women's health advocates and human rights activists [and] ... briefly present a recent effort ... that applies a human rights framework to reinforce current efforts to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality."

***Human Right to Health Care: Nominees' Plans***

Coalition's five areas of planned activity. The primary goal of this area is to bridge the scientific and human rights communities with the aim of encouraging and facilitating the greater engagement of scientists in efforts to advance human rights. Proposed activities include: establishing ongoing channels of communication between the scientific and human rights communities; encouraging scientists to volunteer their time and expertise to the human rights community, including through the AAAS "On-call" Scientists network; facilitating the use of scientific techniques and methods by the human rights community; and publicizing the value of collaboration between scientists and human rights practitioners.

Further details about the rationale, objectives, and content of the Service to the Human Rights Community area of activity are available [here](#). If you wish to find out more about this area of activity and how your association can participate, please contact the committee chairs, [Susan Hinkins](#) (American Statistical Association) and [Hormuzd Katki](#) (Washington Statistical Society).

### **Introducing our Members: Scholars at Risk Network**

"Around the world today, scholars are attacked because of their words, their



ideas and their place in society. Those seeking power and control work to limit access to information and new ideas by targeting scholars, restricting academic freedom and repressing research, publication, teaching and learning. The Scholars at Risk Network (SAR) is an international network of universities and colleges responding to these attacks. SAR promotes academic freedom and defends the human rights of scholars and their communities worldwide." [Read more.](#)

*For more information about the Coalition and how you or your organization can become involved, please [visit our website](#). To receive the latest information about the Coalition, please sign-up for our [Coalition Listserv](#).*

## From the Science Community

### ***The Buenos Aires Declaration on the Ethics of Clinical Trials***

### ***Lag Behind Public Demands***

National Economic and Social Rights Initiative (NESRI) and National Health Law Program [\(link\)](#)

NESRI and the National Health Law Program have released a human rights assessment of the presidential nominees' health care plans. Their assessment is based on the premise that, "[t]he ongoing health care reform debate can appear complex and daunting. Human rights principles offer straightforward guidance, starting not with calculations of financing mechanisms but a basic understanding: everyone must be able to get appropriate health care in order to protect their own and other people's health."

The Buenos Aires Declaration on the Ethics of Clinical Trials was adopted at the conclusion of the First Latin American Workshop on Ethics and Clinical Trials held in Buenos Aires on May 12-13, 2008. Organized by a US/Argentinean non-profit organization, Salud y Fármacos, the Workshop and Declaration were a response to the rapidly increasing number of clinical trials that are taking place in the region and to the alleged violations of ethics during the approval and implementation of these trials. The Declaration was endorsed by approximately 20 non-profit and academic institutions from across Latin America concerned with health, ethics, and the rights of consumers. [Read more.](#)

### ***Global Public Health Goals Thwarted by Human Rights Violations, Gender Inequality and Stigma***



"As the XVII International AIDS Conference drew to a close, HIV experts from around the globe highlighted the dramatic negative impact that stigma and the denial of human rights, including gender inequality, continue to have on the effectiveness of HIV treatment and prevention scale up. Fear of violence, discrimination and unwarranted prosecution prevent many people living with or at risk for HIV from seeking testing and treatment, and drive others to place themselves at risk for infection." [Read more.](#)

## From the Human Rights Community

### **New Tactics in Human Rights: New Database**

New Tactics in Human Rights is an organization that promotes tactical innovation and strategic thinking within the international



human rights community. The newly redesigned tactics database has been launched and contains over 100 examples of tactics being used by practitioners around the world. These tactics are divided into four main categories: Prevention Tactics, Intervention Tactics, Restorative Tactics, and Building Human Rights Cultures and Institutions. [Access the database.](#)

## ***Sanitation: A Human Rights Imperative***



Developed by the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, this publication is "a call to recognize sanitation as a crucial aspect of the right to an adequate standard of living, setting out the most important strategies and measures that stakeholders and decision-makers can prioritize in order to ensure that sanitation is accessible and affordable to all. It is an advocacy tool to encourage more funding for sanitation, more debate and more research into the barriers to accessing affordable sanitation and how to remove them." [Read more.](#)

## About the SHRP Newsletter

The Science & Human Rights Newsletter is issued monthly by the AAAS Science and Human Rights Program. Through the newsletter we strive to keep scientists and human rights practitioners informed with news items, program updates, new resources, and upcoming events at the intersection of science and human rights. Submissions to the newsletter are welcome and can be made via our [online submission form](#).

*Please visit our website to learn more about our [programs](#) as well as our [past accomplishments](#).*

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