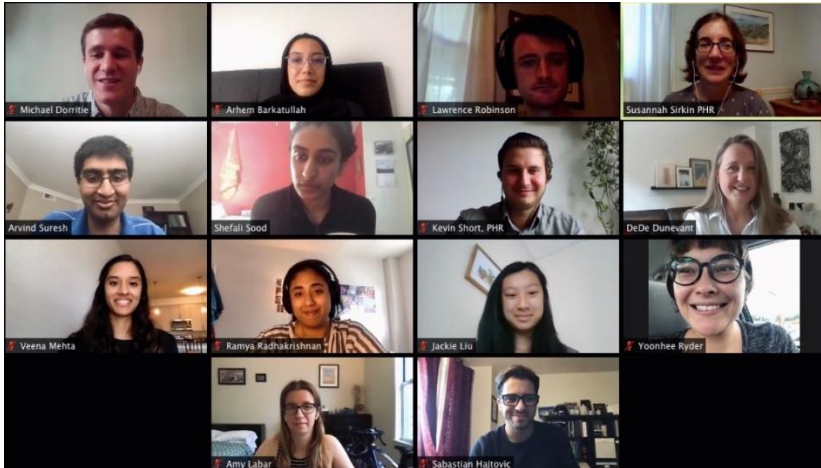


PHR STUDENT PROGRAM

Letter from the Co-Chairs



Above: PHR staff and Student Advisory Board members attended the 2020 PHR SAB retreat in August, held virtually for the first time.

On behalf of the 2020-2021 PHR Student Advisory Board (SAB), we are excited to share our Fall 2020 newsletter with you. Since our last newsletter went out in early March, the world has changed quite drastically for us all. We hope you and your families have been able to stay safe and well through the turmoil of this year.

From the COVID-19 pandemic, to police brutality in the United States, to devastating civil conflict in Yemen, and more, 2020 has presented unprecedented challenges to the human rights community. Yet in response, our medical student community has exploded with activity. Since March, 17 new medical student chapters have joined PHR's network, and we have seen a burst in blog post submissions and asylum trainings. We encourage anyone interested in PHR's work to contact us with any inquiries you may have to get more involved.

The SAB has also explored ways to engage more deeply with our chapters and clinics to keep you updated with PHR-related events, learning opportunities, and calls to action around the world. In addition to PHR's weekly webinars, the SAB has offered monthly webinars geared specifically to medical students. We have also expanded our website to include more information on our ongoing advocacy and letter writing campaigns.

We are delighted to share our work this year with you, but more importantly, we would like to hear from our chapters! You can find our contact info on the final page of this newsletter, and we would be happy to connect you with any of our Advocacy, Asylum & Refugee, Conference, Media, or Regional Chapter Mentor committee members. Enjoy perusing!

Mike Dorritie & Michelle Munyikwa, PHR SAB Co-Chairs

Spring – Summer 2020

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Connect with us on social media!



Physicians for Human Rights
National Student Program



@phr.students



@PHR_Students

Interested in publishing your own blog piece? Send us a copy of your draft to phr.sab@gmail.com and we will review it for publication.



Physicians for Human
Rights Student Program

PHR's Ongoing Work

PHR is a non-governmental organization that mobilizes health professionals around the world in order to advocate for health, dignity, and justice for all. The PHR Student Program was created to develop a network of future physician leaders committed to ending human rights violations through careers guided by a human rights framework. To accomplish this goal, the student program attempts to highlight and engage in PHR's ongoing areas of involvement. For budding and active chapters alike, we encourage you to be aware of these areas of involvement as you plan educational and advocacy events.

PHR Focus Areas:

- COVID-19 Pandemic
- Weapons
- Asylum & Persecution
- Attacks on Health Care
- Killings & Mass Atrocities
- Sexual Violence
- Torture
- When Doctors Harm

PHR focuses on collecting evidence within these focus areas to document human rights violations and support policy change. While PHR's work extends across the globe, their current expertise focuses on these issues in the following regions:

- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Iraq
- Kenya
- Myanmar
- Syria
- United States



For a more complete picture of PHR's work, please visit their website: phr.org. The PHR Student Advisory Board is always planning advocacy and educational events for students, and we want to know what our fellow chapter members are doing, as well! Please share your initiatives with us and remember that you can always use us as a resource. You may reach us at phr.sab@gmail.com and view the last page of this newsletter for the rest of our contact info!

COVID-19 Webinar Series



PHR is using global digital platforms to elevate the voices of health care professionals on the front lines. Launched in March 2020, [PHR's webinar series](#) aims to educate advocates and health providers alike in these uncertain times. [Sign up here](#) to receive invitations to future webinars.



May 2020 PHR Advocacy Initiative: Police Brutality Campaign

The death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 sparked nationwide protests across the United States and brought heightened scrutiny to police brutality tactics deployed across the country. In light of these events, the PHR SAB became one of the first medical student organizations to release a [letter](#) condemning police brutality, racial profiling, and the excessive use of force. Within days, the letter received over 2,000 signatures from medical students across the world in support of the goals spelled out in the letter.

As trainees and practitioners of the health profession, we are responsible not only for learning how to provide exemplary medical care to patients of different races and ethnicities, but also for fighting the structural and interpersonal racism that contributes to worse health outcomes for people of color in the U.S. Police brutality is a critical public health concern that disproportionately affects the Black American population. Each year, police in the U.S. kill more than 300 Black Americans, and many more are injured and unjustly targeted, which has profound adverse effects on the mental and physical health of the Black American community.

The call to treat police brutality as a public health issue falls within a continuum of decades of work

conducted by organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Public Health Association (APHA), and the World Health Organization (WHO). In a landmark 2002 report on violence, the WHO recognized excessive use of force by police as a form of violence and noted that individuals and entities wielding power can cause violence through the absence of assistance, as in the case of neglect.

While our initial campaign has ended, the advocacy efforts to root out police brutality in the U.S. have only begun. We encourage you to continue to contact your local, state, and federal representatives to advocate for meaningful and long-lasting improvements in policing. Moreover, you can still visit our website to [download a letter template](#) that you may use to contact your representatives.

Over the past few months, PHR has conducted on-the-ground research and collected medical evidence examining the effects of police brutality tactics and the use of non-lethal weapons. You can read more of their findings via their Non-Lethal Weapons Report released just last month, which is linked on the next page. You may also view their recent webinars on [racial injustice](#) and [police violence](#) at [their website](#).

Get Involved

Join the Asylum Network

More than 1,100 health professionals across the United States are members of the PHR Asylum Network. Join their ranks today. Click [here](#) for more information about how to apply, and [subscribe](#) to our asylum mailing list to receive monthly updates about upcoming training sessions (many of which have now moved online).

Contribute to Our Advocacy Initiatives

We recently updated our website to include more information about upcoming [advocacy initiatives](#), [webinars](#), and letter writing campaigns. Please [subscribe](#) to our calendar, follow us on [Twitter/Instagram/Facebook](#), and join our [mailing lists](#) so you don't miss any of the critical human rights issues that we are tackling. Is there a human rights topic that you would like to see us cover? Contact us or submit a [blog post](#) to phr.sab@gmail.com!

Take Action

Protect U.S. Health Care Workers

The U.S. federal government's response to COVID-19 has been scattered, disorganized, misleading, and downright dangerous. To protect medical workers, PHR is urging the National Governors Association to enact consistent and essential protections for health care workers. [Join PHR](#) to demand that governors take meaningful and consistent steps to protect health care workers across the nation.

Restrict the Use of Crowd-Control Weapons

U.S. Attorney General Barr lied on national television about the kinds of crowd-control measures used on peaceful protesters in Washington, D.C. [Join PHR](#) in demanding that Congress immediately commit to restricting the use of weapons like tear gas and pepper spray.

PHR Reports



Preliminary Findings: Use of Crowd-Control Weapons on Protesters in Portland, OR
[Non-Lethal Weapons Report](#)



"I ripped the IV out of my arm and started running": Attacks on Health Care in Yemen
[Yemeni Armed Conflict Report](#)



"You Will Never See Your Child Again": The Persistent Psychological Effects of Family Separation
[U.S. Immigration and Family Separation Report](#)



2020 PHR National Student Conference CUNY School of Medicine in New York, NY

We are excited to announce that the 2020 Physicians for Human Rights National Student Conference will be hosted this year on November 20-21 by the City University of New York School of Medicine. The conference's theme, "Defending Human Rights in the Age of the Pandemic," will highlight the multitude of human rights abuses that have occurred across the world in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to ongoing travel restrictions related to COVID-19, the two-day conference will take place in an entirely virtual format this year. Friday night will kick off the weekend with introductory remarks and research poster presentations. You can find more information about how to **submit an abstract** for the poster session at: tinyurl.com/PHR2020Abstract.

On Saturday, the program will continue with keynote speakers, panel discussions, and breakout sessions led by leading physicians and human rights advocates. Please visit our conference [Eventbrite page](#) or check the [PHR students website](#) for more information, including the full agenda and registration information. We hope to see you there!

PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
NATIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE

DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE AGE OF THE PANDEMIC

Virtually hosted by the City University of New York School of Medicine

Friday Nov. 20th - 5pm Introduction & Poster Session
CALL FOR ABSTRACTS!
tinyurl.com/PHR2020Abstract

Saturday Nov. 21st - 9am Main Conference Day



REGISTRATION
tinyurl.com/PHRConference2020

Update from the 2020-2021 PHR SAB Advocacy Committee

PHR SAB Advocacy Highlights

Over the past months, the PHR Advocacy team has been working to advance medical student advocacy in multiple arenas.

We recently disseminated a letter signed by over 2,000 medical trainees in condemnation of police brutality, racial profiling, and the excessive use of force. The letter was sent to U.S. mayors, senators, and congressmen representing cities, states, and districts across the country. Several senators including Kamala Harris, Margaret Wood Hassan, and Dianne Feinstein responded. But our fight has only begun. You can download a letter template [here](#) to send your own letter to your state or local representatives. We encourage you to use our template to organize letter writing campaigns for your local chapter, residency, or medical school. Your voice as a medical trainee can make a difference!

We have also turned to the U.S.-Mexico border over the past months to advocate strongly for immigrants and refugees during the COVID-19 pandemic. We recently hosted two webinars by Dr. Katherine Peeler and Dr. Kate Sugarman highlighting the role of medical student/physician advocacy for human rights activism on the border. Please watch these and future webinars [here](#) to learn about how you can get involved!

Additionally, we joined PHR to take action against a new proposed rule that would illegally and unjustly bar many asylum seekers on public health grounds. While the time to submit a public comment has ended, the time to advocate on behalf of those affected by this new rule is only beginning. Please read more about the rule [here](#) and continue to follow our website for upcoming advocacy campaigns to support refugees and immigrants.

Please write to inform us of any advocacy campaigns your chapter is working on so we can support you and to let us know of the human rights issues you think we should be working on! While we as a small team can't focus on every issue, we want to advocate for what is important to you. Email phr.sab@gmail.com with any suggestions!

COVID-19 and Detained Immigrant Children: The Importance of Medical Student Advocacy

"We all want to protect children and those we love. We cannot forget about the ones we cannot see."



Dr. Katherine Peeler

From medical school to ICE jails: How to promote human rights activism as a physician



Dr. Kate Sugarman

Child Health and Human Rights





If you are a medical trainee interested in working to address inequities in child health and development towards social justice, then we have great news! Our new partnership with the [International Society for Social Pediatrics and Child Health](#) aims to provide you as a medical trainee with the tools you need to become a powerful advocate for the health and human rights of children globally. We are actively working to create [new content](#) to support you in your journey. Add your email [here](#) to learn more, including information about our new mentorship program for medical students and residents.

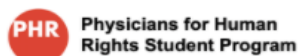
Faculty Highlights – Coming Soon!

Are you a medical student or resident looking to pursue a career in human rights work but aren't sure how to take the first step or what options are out there? Stay tuned for video biographies from renowned faculty and physicians who have dedicated their careers to human rights reporting from the field. Check back on our [website](#) to hear physicians offer insight into how they developed careers as physician human rights advocates. Do you know someone whom we should interview? Please email phr.sab@gmail.com with suggestions!

Social Media Tips for Medical Activism

How to use Social Media for Activism

-  Post in a timely manner--situations change quickly and people pay attention to the most up to date info + opinions
-  Use trending hashtags relevant to your cause
-  Turn awareness into action by sharing actionable items (petition, donation link, event sign up, volunteer opportunity, share your post)
-  Tag us in your posts + tweets for the opportunity to be reposted by our accounts!



Advocacy Blog — Call for Submissions

To all interested students: the Advocacy Committee is excited to continue accepting posts for our student-run blog written by any medical student who wants their voice to be heard! Our perspectives as students and future physicians are very powerful, and we want to showcase your ideas and work. The posts submitted and accepted can be about anything related to science/medicine, humanitarianism, or human rights, including the experiences you have had throughout medical school or with PHR asylum clinics. If you are passionate about and would like to advocate for any issues, please consider writing and submitting a post!

Submission Requirements

Media Forms Accepted:

- Blog Post (Word Limit: 1000 words or 1-2 pages)
- Petitions
- Scientific Abstracts (Word Limit: 250 words)
- Perspective Pieces

For examples of previous submissions, please visit the blog page at: <https://www.phrstudents.com/blog>

Send submissions to phradvocacy@gmail.com with subject line "PHR Blog Post"

Questions? Please contact phradvocacy@gmail.com.

Fighting for the Vulnerable: Asylum Clinic Initiatives

One of the most impactful programs that our student chapters and affiliated groups take on is the creation and operation of an asylum clinic.

What is an asylum clinic?

A student-run asylum clinic at a medical school is a program that connects PHR-trained clinicians and medical students to asylum seekers and their attorneys. These clinicians conduct forensic medical or mental health evaluations to document signs and sequelae of torture or trauma and report their findings in affidavits that serve as evidence in the client's legal application for asylum. Clinics focus on advocating for their clients, while also training the next generation of physicians to continue this line of work.



For more information:

E-mail our Asylum & Refugee Committee:
phr.asylumrefugee@gmail.com

Visit our website to access the Asylum Clinic Guide:

<https://www.phrstudents.com/asylum-clinic-guide>

Current Work

At this time, PHR has approximately 20 official asylum clinics across the United States. PHR has relationships with about 30 additional student-run asylum clinics with which we share resources and data, and we encourage research presentation from all clinic members at our annual National Student Conference.

This year, our Asylum & Refugee Committee is currently in the process of helping numerous institutions start their own asylum clinics, including 5 in the Southwest/West Region, 4 in the Southern/Mid-Atlantic region, and 1 in the Midwest region.

The Expert Declarations Initiative

When the COVID-19 pandemic surged in the United States, many groups had to put a hold on conducting in-person evaluations but wanted to continue serving the asylee community. With the help of the PHR headquarters staff, our committee launched the Expert Declarations Initiative. This was an opportunity for student-run clinics to continue advocating for asylum seekers and other immigrants seeking humanitarian relief during the COVID-19 pandemic. PHR partnered with attorneys to write expert declarations supporting the release of immigrant detainees from crowded ICE detention centers. These expert declarations are used to advocate for the release of at-risk detainees on a case-by-case basis. Recently, we hosted a webinar to on-board 15 schools who were interested in joining the initiative.

Regional Meet and Greets

This year, our committee is dedicated to fostering collaboration among student-run clinics. One way we have worked to expand partnerships is by virtually hosting regional meet-and-greets, where clinics have the opportunity to meet and connect with other clinic leadership teams in their respective region. These sessions have helped folks exchange ideas and advice, troubleshoot common problems, and encourage regional collaboration. The committee plans to host a few more of these meetings this year to continue building community among our student-run asylum clinics. Make sure to [join our asylum mailing list](#) to stay informed on upcoming meet-and-greets!

Chapter Spotlight: PHR Student Program at Johns Creek High School



Since its founding a few years ago, the Johns Creek Physicians for Human Rights chapter has played a unique role as the sole high-school-level PHR chapter in the United States. Established at Johns Creek High School in Atlanta, Georgia, the chapter has conducted various activities to help those in need during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Johns Creek PHR students have conducted a food drive, created and distributed hand sanitizer, made over 140 masks, and constructed 145 COVID-19 kits to assist human trafficking survivors. The kits consisted of masks, face shields, hand-sanitizers, soap paper sheets, and other essentials.

Their food drive brought them to more than 65 houses in the greater Atlanta area, with canned food items delivered door-to-door. This project was carried out with the assistance of the H-Cubed

foundation, which donated the food items to those in need.

For the hand sanitizer bottles, the Johns Creek board members were determined to increase availability to the community when local supplies ran short. Using the guidelines laid out by the CDC, they created their own hand sanitizer solutions and donated them to various shelters through Rita Mital, the founder of Lend-E-Hand.



Additionally, the COVID-19 kits that they assembled consisted of multiple sanitary essentials, including hand sanitizers, masks, and face shields

to donate to three anti-trafficking foundations: House of Cherith, YouthSpark, and Wellspring Living.

Advocacy for human trafficking survivors has been a focus of the chapter since its inception. Therefore, chapter members made homemade cloth masks for human trafficking survivors and donated these fully functional masks to Wellspring Living to help their staff and residents.

Moving forward, the chapter plans to conduct online tutor sessions to survivors of human trafficking to facilitate distance learning during school and university closures. They are also continuing to work with local shelters to increase food delivery services to those in need. We look forward to hearing more about the Johns Creek PHR chapter in the future and are extremely proud of the efforts these young leaders have taken to help their community during the COVID-19 pandemic!

Veena Mehta is the PHR SAB Regional Chapter Mentors for the South Atlantic and South regions.



Contact us!
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Twitter: [@PHR_students](https://twitter.com/PHR_students)

Instagram: [phr.students](https://www.instagram.com/phr.students)

Facebook: [PHR National Student Program](https://www.facebook.com/PHR.National.Student.Program)

