Program News

Senior Level Position Available!

AAAS is seeking an experienced Program Director for the Science & Human Rights Program. The Program Director will oversee multiple projects, and manage financial and staff resources in order to raise awareness and increase participation in the field of science and human rights. Find out more about the position and apply here.

Welcoming New Staff: Jen Makrides

Joining us today as Program Associate is Jen Makrides. Jen will be working with Jessica Wyndham in the coordination of our "On-call" Scientists initiative and the Science and Human Rights Coalition. Jen comes to the Program with an interest in global health and experience as a freelance researcher and writer for Physicians for Human Rights, outreach director for a cultural heritage institution, and adjunct faculty at Pace University.

AAAS Board Urges Scientists to Join Discussion on Right to Benefit from Science

AAAS
April 16, 2010

"The AAAS Board of Directors has adopted a statement on the human right to the benefits of science, pledging to help get scientists more involved in an ongoing global effort to clarify the meaning of that right. In recognizing that the right to the benefits of scientific progress 'lies at the heart of the AAAS mission and the social responsibilities of scientists,' the Board said, 'AAAS will pursue opportunities to collaborate with the global scientific community so that the voice, interests and concerns of scientists can be brought to this global process [of clarifying the meaning of the right]." Read more.

Science for Human Rights Explorer Tool Launched

In early April 2010, the Geospatial Technologies for Human Rights project, with partner organization Amnesty International-USA, constructed a large multi-media display and learning center to raise awareness of the uses of GPS, satellite imagery, and mapping technologies for human rights. At the Amnesty International All General Meeting in New Orleans, LA, staff
member Susan Wolfinbarger presented a number of projects that have resulted from the AAAS-AI partnership. Debuted at the conference was the Science for Human Rights Explorer tool which showcases some of the major projects undertaken during the partnership.

Science and Human Rights Coalition

Next Council and Coalition Meetings: July 26-27, 2010

The Coalition Council will meet for the second time at AAAS headquarters on July 26, from 1-5pm. As the Coalition's policy-setting body, the Council will review the progress made since its last meeting, and consider for adoption the "Article 15" Joint Initiative Plan of Action, as well as other policy matters. The Coalition Council is comprised of the two representatives of member organizations. Affiliated organizations and individuals are welcome to attend the meeting as observers. Register here.

Following the Council meeting, the Coalition will meet at AAAS headquarters beginning on Monday evening, July 26, with a panel discussion on the topic "Enjoying the Benefits of Scientific Progress: Access, Innovation and Impediments" followed by a reception. The meeting will continue the following day with presentations, workshops, and working meetings on human rights issues central to the mission of the Coalition. Sessions will include: "Climate Change: Rights and Responsibilities," "Human Rights and Professional Ethics: Developments and Dilemmas," and "The Next Generation: Incorporating Human Rights into Science Curricula." View the agenda and register here.

Working Group Update
Service to the Human Rights Community

As part of the Coalition's Joint Initiative focused on the right to benefit from science, the working group is developing techniques to evaluate how well a government is meeting its obligation to implement the right. The precise meaning of the right is currently in the process of being identified. As the meaning of the right is clarified, the human rights community will need principled methods to assess achievements or lack of achievement in the implementation of the right. For several components of the right, such as the availability of quality science education, the working group is investigating how to adapt current techniques or develop new measurement techniques that are practical and provide useful information for evaluating progress towards realization of the right. Further information about the working group is available here.

News from Coalition Members
American Psychological Association

APA News Release
February 24, 2010

"The [APA] has amended its Code of Ethics to make clear that its standards can never be interpreted to justify or defend violating human rights. The action, with reference, for example, to the work of anthropologists and geneticists who helped in identifying the disappeared in Argentina and considers the contribution of doctors and psychologists to the international movement against torture. The book draws from a rich body of literature and experience, including the work of the AAAS Science and Human Rights Program, and its counterparts. [Translation of the book from Italian to English is planned.]

Biomedicine and human rights - The Oviedo Convention and its additional protocols
Council of Europe

The Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine (1999), also known as the "Oviedo Convention," aims to protect the rights of all individuals with respect to the application of biology and medicine. The principles contained in the Convention were further developed and complemented in additional protocols addressing: prohibition of human cloning, human organ and tissue transplantation, and biomedical research and genetic testing for health purposes. The texts of the Convention and protocols are compiled in this one edition.

The Emerging Market Mapping and Analysis Toolkit (EMMA)
Mike Albu

"EMMA is a guidance manual to assist front-line staff to do rapid assessments of market systems in the first few weeks of a crisis. Its purpose is to improve early response planning so that..."
which came during the winter meeting of APA's governing Council of Representatives, amended the Codes Introduction and Applicability section, as well as Ethical Standards 1.02 and 1.03, to resolve any potential ambiguity in the original language. These changes become effective June 1, 2010. 'APA's longstanding policy is that psychologists may never violate human rights,' said APA President Carol D. Goodheart, EdD, Saturday in announcing the changes. "These standards now unquestionably conform to that policy." Read more.

**Introducing our members**

**Committee of Concerned Scientists**

The Committee of Concerned Scientists is an independent organization of scientists, physicians and engineers dedicated to the protection and advancement of the human rights and scientific freedom of colleagues throughout the world. Read more.

**From the Science Community**

**Sociologist Expands US Conversation about Human Rights**

Psyr.org  
February 23, 2010

"Issues of race and gender are important aspects of American sociology; however, the U.S. is behind the curve in consideration of a subject that affects individuals internationally on a daily basis - the human rights of all people. The American Sociological Association added the sociology of human rights as a section only recently, while Canada has included the issue of human rights for more than 10 years. Now, David Brunsma, associate professor of sociology in the University of Missouri College of Arts and Science and the interim director of the Black Studies Program, is working on a three-book series, The Handbook of Sociology and Human Rights, with co-editors Keri Iyall Smith and Brian Gran, that he hopes will raise questions about human rights issues domestically and abroad." Read more.

**New Study on Maternal Health Sparks Reaction**

EurekAlert  
February 24, 2010

On April 12, 2010 The *Lancet* published an important new study on maternal health, and specifically the progress made towards achieving Millennium Development Goal 5 aimed at reducing maternal mortality. The study concluded that, "[s]ubstantial, albeit varied, progress has been made towards MDG 5, [a]though only 23 countries are on track to achieve a 75% decrease in MMR by 2015." The study sparked a rapid response from the human rights community, including former High Commissioner resources are used effectively, and so that opportunities are not missed to bolster future recovery in the local economy. ... EMMA is designed for generalists, as well as specialist staff working in the food security, shelter, water and sanitation sectors."

**New WaterAid Lesson Plan**

WaterAid

Exploring how human rights are denied in the provision of water and access to sanitation, and how this is being overcome, WaterAid has developed a new secondary module on human rights and sanitation which comprises a set of lesson plans and materials around the theme of access to basic sanitation. Questions considered in the materials include: What is the difference between needs and wants, and does the answer depend on where you are? Do adults and children have the same needs?
for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, who emphasized that, while this new data "is encouraging, it must not be allowed to undermine the urgent need to address the factors that contribute to high levels of maternal mortality and morbidity and deny the right to health for all." Read the *Lancet* report and *letter from Mary Robinson to NYT editor*.

### From the Human Rights Community

**Human Rights Budget Work: New Website**

IHRIP  
April 1, 2010

The International Human Rights Internship Program has launched a website specifically devoted to human rights budget work. "The website has been created in response to the strong interest expressed by many groups in having a central repository of information about human rights budget work in countries around the world and about resources that exist to support the work. While the website currently has a strong emphasis on economic and social rights, its intended focus is wider and will include information on budget work to advance civil, political and cultural rights as well." [Visit website](#)

**The Human Right to Health Care: Telebriefing**

Opportunity Agenda and US Human Rights Network  
March 31, 2010

"Health care is a hot topic in public discourse and a top priority for our policymakers. However, missing from most of the debates has been the fact that a majority of the American public consider health care a human right. What would and should real reform look like if this principle guided policy? And how would that affect health care policy and people's lives in areas like maternal health?" On March 31, The Opportunity Agenda and the U.S. Human Rights Network hosted a telebriefing on the human right to health care. Speakers from the National Economic and Social Rights Initiative, Amnesty International, and The Opportunity Agenda analyzed health reform legislation, maternal health issues, and public opinion. [Slides](#) are now available and the audio in mp3 format ([Part I](#), [Part II](#)).

### From the UN

**Call For Contributions: Water And Sanitation**

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

"The Independent Expert on human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, Ms. Catarina de Albuquerque has been requested by the Human Rights Council to collect good practices with a view to preparing a compendium in 2011. In this regard, the Independent Expert has elaborated a questionnaire on good practices from a human rights perspective in the fields of water and sanitation. Your experiences with good practices in water and sanitation will inform the Independent Expert's work on this issue, and also help to raise
awareness about the many different, creative approaches to ensuring human rights as they relate to water and sanitation. The questionnaire is available in English, French and Spanish and should be returned to the Independent Expert by 30 June 2010."

About the SHRP Newsletter

The Science & Human Rights Newsletter is issued bi-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 form.

Please visit our website to learn more about our programs as well as our past accomplishments.

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