

THE JUST WORD



THE IGNACIO MARTÍN-BARÓ FUND FOR MENTAL HEALTH & HUMAN RIGHTS

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Ignacio Martín-Baró Fund for Mental Health and Human Rights was created to foster psychological well-being, social consciousness and active resistance in communities affected by institutional violence, repression, and social injustice. We believe that the scars of such experiences are deeply seated in both the individual and society and, therefore, seek to support projects that explore the power of community to collectively heal these wounds and move forward.

Through grants, networking, and technical support, the Fund seeks to encourage the development of innovative, grassroots community projects that promote progressive social change and community mental health. In pursuit of this mission, the Fund's goals are:

- ◆ To develop a holistic perspective for understanding the connections between state and institutional violence and repression, and the mental health of communities and individuals;
- ◆ To support innovative projects that explore the power of community to foster healing within individuals and communities trying to recover from experiences of institutional violence, repression, and social injustice;
- ◆ To build collaborative relationships among the Fund, its grantees, and its contributors for mutual education and empowerment; and
- ◆ To develop social consciousness within the United States regarding the psychological consequences of structural violence, repression, and social injustice.

COMPASSION WITHOUT BORDERS

by Lauren Rogers-Sirin and M. Brinton Lykes

Last year, after the attacks of September 11, we received letters of support and sympathy from funding recipients from around the world (see *The Just Word*, Fall, 2001). Their compassion for our tragedy is especially poignant when one considers the hardships that the citizens of these nations have and continue to endure. It is also ironic that those condolences came from many who live in countries that have been the direct or indirect targets of U.S. aggression. Reflecting on their content and the sources, we examine some of the many ways in which our government, through commission or omission, promotes rather than deters violence and human suffering in the global community.

Among the messages we received was one from Cambodia. Members of Indradevi wrote: "On behalf of the Cambodian people we would like to share our condolences with the American people who were attacked by a terrorist group. ..." Cambodia endured one of the most heinous acts of genocide the world has ever known. Although the United States



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U.S. POLICIES CONTRIBUTE TO VIOLENCE MBF GRANTEES CONFRONT

by Ramsay Liem

State-sponsored violence that undermines individual and community mental health does not simply happen due to political or economic repression "over there." Many of the projects the Martín-Baró Fund supports are coping with the mental health consequences of massive abuse, some of which is indirectly the product of our government's policies. The Children's Rehabilitation Center in the Philippines (see "2002 Grantees" and previous issues), for example, has worked for years with children whose families have faced the violence of dislocation, "salvaging" (disappearance), and murder as a product of the Philippine government's military campaigns against movements for Muslim autonomy in the country's Mindanao region. Now, George Bush's war against terrorism is being used as a guise to reinsert U.S. military forces in the Philippines only a decade following the closing of the Subic Naval

and Clark Air Force Bases and the ouster of U.S. forces from the islands. Over the past several months, increasing numbers of

advisors, special forces troops, and other military personnel have been quietly sent to the Philippines with full cooperation of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Their presence is ostensibly to train Philippine forces to more effectively eliminate one of the more violent groups in the Muslim region, Abu Sayyaf. Some analysts have suggested, however,

that this war on terrorism is being used to regain a U.S. military foothold in the region.

Other worries concern the scope of this initiative which respected Filipino commentators believe could be much more dramatic than either the Arroyo or Bush administrations is willing to acknowledge.

Roland Simbulan, University of the Philippines, has said: "It should be pointed out that this reality of direct involvement of U.S. troops in the actual military operations against the Abu Sayyaf or what are perceived as 'threats to U.S. interests' could act as a trigger, if not a precedent, for more massive U.S. military intervention against both the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Moro National Liberation Front in Mindanao. Inevitably, these U.S. forces could in the future also be directed against other "terrorists" or "communist terrorists" in the U.S. list." (*Forum*, University of the Philippines, March 28, 2002)

Walden Bello, co-director of Focus on the Global South, also notes: "The fact is, unlike the

Afghanistan campaign, Basilan (site of joint U.S./Filipino military exercises) will be a counterinsurgency war where civilians will become inevitably involved, harmed, and mobilized into participation. This is why the American objective of crushing the Abu Sayyaf will ultimately fail and will merely create new recruits for that organiza-



MBF'ers Brinton Lykes and Joan Liem march for Justice Not War.

tion....U.S. intervention...will mark the acceleration of a communal civil war that could end up in communal massacres. Those who think the dynamics of this conflict will be confined to Basilan are dreaming. We are likely to see as a result the acceleration of a de facto alliance among the MNLF, the MILF, and the Abu Sayyaf, and equally momentous dynamics on the Christian side." (*Focus on the Philippines*, #5, January 30, 2002)

What this means for the Children's Rehabilitation Center and others doing similar work is that the assaults on mental health they seek to repair are perpetrated not only by local actions but by those of our country, as well. Given the current 'war on terror' climate, many in the United States are likely to see our incursion into the Philippines, to the extent that they are aware of it at all, as aiding an ally or combating threats to U.S. security. As the Martín-Baró Fund has learned, this self-serving perception is at best naïve. At worst it is a failure to accept our responsibility for the plight of children "out of mind's eye" that may ultimately return to haunt us. We must be vigilant about the impact of our government's actions, and be in solidarity with groups like the CRC by opposing U.S. policies that incite state sponsored violence abroad. ♦



COMMITTEE MEMBERS MEET FOUNDER OF PALESTINIAN YOUTH CENTER

by Catherine M. Mooney

Eight Martín-Baró Fund committee members had dinner in Boston last January with Ziad Abas, co-founder and director of the



IbdAA Cultural Center, located in Dheisheh Refugee Camp in Bethlehem, in the West Bank, Palestine.

MBF supported IbdAA in 2000 with a grant to fund an oral history project designed to reconnect young people with their family and community histories. Our dinner was a welcome chance to meet Ziad personally, learn more about conditions in Dheisheh, about IbdAA, and about IbdAA projects that address the mental health needs of the community.

CONDITIONS IN DHEISHEH REFUGEE CAMP

Dheisheh is one of 59 Palestinian refugee camps created with the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. Dheisheh, which occupies less than half a square kilometer, is home to about 11,000 refugees. Conditions in the camp are physically quite difficult. Electrical failures in the winter are common and in summer, there are frequent water shortages. The UN manages education, health and security in Dheisheh, but the services provided are meager. One doctor, who works six hours a day, attends to the entire camp. On average, he sees about 160 patients, mostly children, each day. Only two schools provide basic elementary and preparatory education for over 2,300 children.

ZIAD ABAS AND THE FOUNDING OF IBDAACULTURAL CENTER

Ziad Abas, now 38 years old, was born and grew up in Dheisheh, sharing a small one-room house with four siblings and his parents. At a very young age he realized that he was not free, that his family lacked basic services, and that they had been forced out of their homes into the refugee camp. He is a journalist who has worked in TV, films, and with various news agencies to educate the world about the Palestinian situation. He recently collaborated on "Promises," an award-winning documentary that provides a glimpse of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the eyes of young people, including participants in IbdAA projects.

Over half the 11,000 refugees in Dheisheh are under 18 years old. Dheisheh children, says Ziad, are experts at identifying bullets, F-16s, and helicopters. Once when he saw his 9-year-old nephew throwing stones, he ran to him and told him to put down the stones and go to school. His nephew responded, "I don't want to be a coward like you." As their despair rises, Palestinian youth are becoming increasingly radicalized. Ziad helped found IbdAA, which means "to create something out of nothing," in 1995 to give Dheisheh youth physical and psychological space and programs for responding constructively to the violence permeating their lives.

IbdAA programs all stress human rights, gender equity and a democratic process. Specifically, IbdAA provides after school activities to protect youth from street violence. Its computer center hosts a web site that facilitates communication among Palestinian youth in different refugee camps. There is a nursery school,

kindergarten, and a library. IbdAA's internationally-known dance troupe is the only Palestinian project for both boys and girls.

Girls and women are especially promoted by IbdAA, which has started the first all-girls baseball team and designated Sunday as women's day. Women receive free medical care, learn about health and other women's issues, and are free to remove their burkhas and enjoy other activities traditionally denied to them. IbdAA leadership is now dominated by women who participated as girls in IbdAA programs.

The IbdAA Cultural Center is an immense source of pride for Dheisheh residents. As a focal point for community organizing, IbdAA has also been the subject of attacks. In August 2000, its computer server was stolen and the Center, together with its 14 computers, was burned. They rebuilt, and Ziad told us how the four-story building, the tallest in Dheisheh, created a psychological space separate from the noise and violence permeating the streets below. In March, however, the Israeli Defense Forces invaded the camp and took over the Center, positioning snipers on its top floor overlooking the entire camp. They ransacked the Center and once again, its computers, library and kindergarten have been severely damaged. IbdAA youth were rounded up, bound and kept blindfolded for more than 20 hours before finally being released without charges.

The Martín-Baró Fund has granted IbdAA an emergency grant to help rebuild (see "Emergency Relief Grant," this issue). You can learn more about IbdAA by consulting their web site once it is again in service: www.dheisheh-ibdaa.net. ♦

EMERGENCY RELIEF GRANT – IbdAA CULTURAL CENTER, BETHLEHEM

IbdAA CULTURAL CENTER, BETHLEHEM, WEST BANK, PALESTINE, \$5,000

Two years ago the MBF gave IbdAA (see “Committee Members Meet...,” this issue) a grant to support an oral history project designed to reconnect youth with their family and community histories. This spring, the reoccupation by Israeli Defense Forces of Dheisheh, the refugee camp in which IbdAA is located, has caused the destruction of many of the Center’s facilities including the library, the hub of much of the group’s activities for young children. The Fund has, therefore, awarded IbdAA an emergency relief grant in the amount of \$5000 to help rebuild the library. Although not our usual practice, the Fund’s past support of IbdAA and the extreme trauma with which its children are grappling today warranted this exception. In support of children’s mental health, IbdAA conducts workshops and special events (e.g. theater, picnics, academic competitions, cultural performances), holds after-school programs, and, in the present moment, provides youth with the only space where they have relative safety and the opportunity simply to play. ♦



2002 GRANTEES

CHAJUL, GUATEMALA – ASOCIACIÓN DE LA MUJER MAYA IXIL – NUEVO AMANECER/ASSOCIATION OF MAYA IXIL WOMEN – NEW DAWN (ADMI) – \$7,000



After more than 8 years of psychosocial and development work through which women and children have been able to: 1) discuss the origins of the war, 2) understand the impact of the war on mental health, 3) analyze the condition of women in Guatemala, and 4) develop projects to meet their psychosocial needs in Chajul, ADMI has extended its work to the rural villages surrounding the town. Through creative workshops and organizational development training they are accompanying women in these remote areas in the development of material and psychosocial resources to confront the painful and long-standing legacy of state-sponsored violence and war.

This year’s grant will enable ADMI to extend its work to the villages and develop popular education manuals and teaching resources that will be used by local women in this work. Through our continuing partnership with this group, we hope to learn more about this ongoing work and to share that information in the USA through our educational programming.

2002 GRANTEES

CHENNAI, INDIA – SLUM DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY (SDS) – \$7,000



The Slum Development Society is a grassroots organization formed to address the human rights and mental health problems of the Dalit, or undercaste, in India. In past years the MBF has supported programs of the SDS designed to provide civil rights education and emotional and community support to the Dalit of rural Tamilnadu.

This year's grant is to enable the SDS to focus on fifteen villages in its target area and offer a range of activities - literacy education, sports and games, play therapy, meditation, charades, street theater, music, and human rights seminars - aimed at fostering mental health and self-esteem and information on civil and human rights.

CHIAPAS, MEXICO – K'INAL ANTZETIK – \$7,000

K'in al Antzetik works with communities of resistance to support community-organizing, strengthen community networks of support, and craft culturally appropriate community strategies to deal with the psychosocial and emotional consequences of regional violence against native people. The area in which K'in al Antzetik is located has suffered years of state repression against indigenous peoples that gave rise to the Zapatista uprising.



This year's grant will be used to run mental health and human rights workshops in a number of municipalities and support mental health visits in the communities as well as meetings of health promoters. The group will train more human rights and mental health promoters to work on issues concerning the nature of human rights and the denunciation of human rights violations. Mental health promoters will also learn how to take testimonies from victims, provide psychosocial and emotional support, and initiate legal advocacy.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO – SOLIDARITE DES FEMMES DE FIZI POUR LE BIEN-ETRE FAMILIAL (SOFIBEF) – \$7,000



SOFIBEF was founded by a group of peasant women in the Fizi region of the Democratic Republic of Congo in response to armed tribal and regional conflict which began four years ago. SOFIBEF is dedicated to defending and protecting the human rights of women and children who have become even more vulnerable since the onset of violence that has particularly devastated the Fizi region of the Congo.

Despite their limited resources, SOFIBEF has provided mental health services in the form of group and individual counseling and a micro-credit program for women, and created a newsletter in order to share information about the ways in which people can develop and maintain coping skills when faced with overwhelming difficulties. This work will be continued with the support of this year's MBF grant.

HUANCAVELICA, PERU – INSTITUTO ACCION PARA EL PROGRESO (INSTITUTE OF ACTION FOR PROGRESS) (INAPRO) – \$5,000

INAPRO is a social service organization working with Andean families that have been subjected to violence from both the Sendero and Peruvian military forces. Both sides accuse the people of collaborating with the other and have threatened, assassinated, and tor-



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tured them. This situation has led to enormous stress and familial violence. The children face both political and social violence and suffer psychosocial trauma.

In past years the MBF supported a project focused on very poor Andean children seeking to help them develop basic capacities such as self-esteem, autonomy, creativity, age-appropriate humor, cultural identity, and socialization skills. This year's grant will enable INAPRO to continue this work, the goal of which is to create conditions that ultimately favor the development of children's capacity to participate responsibly as citizens in a democracy.

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES – CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION CENTER – \$7,000



The Children's Rehabilitation Center (CRC) has been one of the most effective groups working with children whose families have been dislocated by years of military actions against supporters of autonomy for Muslims in the southern Philippines. The CRC has also responded to the needs of children facing urban poverty and government neglect of housing and employment needs of the poor.

Last year's grant aided work with children who suffered the loss of family and friends in Payatas, the site of a huge garbage dump that collapsed. The first two phases of mental health support for Payatas children, emotional release and meaning construction were completed. The 2002 grant will be used for the third and final stage, cognitive mastery, part of which involves children becoming advocates through the use of theater arts and provision of direct aid to help other children facing similar human rights abuses.

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, CHIAPAS, MEXICO – FORTALEZA DE LA MUJER MAYA (FOMMA) – \$5,000



Since the colonial era, the indigenous communities of Chiapas have been isolated from the cities and have suffered from marginalization, land seizure, racial discrimination, lack of education, and poor health and hygiene. People who have protested these conditions have often been persecuted, disappeared, or assassinated giving rise to popular movements such as the Zapatistas. Women suffer disproportionately under these conditions and many are forced to come to cities such as San Cristobal to survive.

Some of these Mayan women in San Cristobal founded FOMMA with the goal of helping others facing a similar plight. The organization provides literacy workshops and creative means of enhancing self-esteem and teaching basic skills. One example is to stage theater performances written by participants in their own languages that enable them to analyze their reality and work to improve their quality of life. The MBF is providing a third year of support to FOMMA to enable them to continue this important work and expand its reach.

SAN MARCOS, GUATEMALA – PASTORAL DE SOLIDARIDAD Y RECONCILIACIÓN – \$7,000

Thirty-six years of war and state-sponsored violence have left seemingly irreversible physical and psychosocial damage in communities throughout Guatemala. Those who survived the torture of family members, massacres, and displacement frequently lived under a code of silence. The San Marcos Pastoral for Solidarity and Reconciliation has participated in the Recovery of Historical Memory Project sponsored by the Human Rights Office of the Archdiocese of Guatemala, a major effort to break that silence and record



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the genocide, torture, rapes, kidnappings and militarization of society and press for justice.

The MBF grant to the Pastoral for Solidarity and Reconciliation will support workshops through which survivors share their traumatic experiences and work together to find ways to solve their individual and community problems in a spirit of solidarity. The organization will facilitate training workshops for 40 'animators of reconciliation' who will then offer a series of three participatory workshops (for 30 participants in each community) focusing on: (1) the Guatemalan Historical Context, (2) Violence – focusing on strategies behind the violence and its effects on communities, and (3) the challenges of repairing the social fabric.

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador – ASOCIACIÓN MUJERES EN APOYO PARA LA SALUD MENTAL COMMUNITARIA (AMUSAMECO) – \$7,000



AMUSAMECO (Women's Association for Community Mental Health) works with women in poor and marginalized communities contending with the effects of Salvador's long civil war and two devastating earthquakes in 2001. Trained mental health workers facilitate meetings in which women participate in group dynamics, share experiences, and learn about basic human rights regarding healthcare, education, employment, housing, and violence against women. Parallel meetings are undertaken with participants' children.

AMUSAMECO has had particular success developing women leaders, debunking taboos about psychology and mental health, and incorporating young women into their Coordinating Committee. In 2002 they will continue this work and focus especially on establishing the independence of longer-term participants as protagonists within their families and communities, expanding their work among other women, and making the organization more widely known in their communities. ♦

"The armed repression destroyed community organization and crushed human dignity and trust within the communities. Because of this, we can not see mental health only as an individual psychological state, but rather as something that affects the entire community. The response to the pain must also be directed at the community level. With the workshops we hope to restore communities' abilities to participate and organize in order to increase their ability to speak for themselves and to restructure their communal way of life."

Pastoral de Solidaridad y Reconciliación
San Marcos, Guatemala

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MBF ANNUAL EVENT HONORS JAMES P. MCGOVERN

by Joan H. Liem

On December 2, 2001, the Ignacio Martín Baró Fund held its annual commemorative event marking the 12th anniversary of the assassinations of Nacho, his five Jesuit brothers, their housekeeper and her daughter, in San



Salvador. U.S. Representative James P. McGovern who, as an aide to Senator Joseph Moakley, was instrumental in organizing the congressional commission led by the senator to look into the assassinations, was this year's honoree and featured speaker. (See, "He spoke of "the arrogance of US policy..."", this issue) Congressman McGovern spoke of the work of the commission, the trial that resulted, and his continuing frustration that the intellectual authors of the murders, although named by the commission, remain untouched to this day. He spoke of his efforts in Congress to cut aid to the Salvadoran military regime and contribute to bringing about a negotiated peace, and about the lessons that U.S. policy makers might draw from El Salvador. He characterized U.S. involvement there

as a history of lost opportunities to settle the war through diplomacy, noting that had the U.S. used its influence to negotiate a settlement, much loss of life might have been prevented. He described as arrogant the United States's policy that "rationalized, explained away, and even condoned a level of violence against the Salvadoran people that would have been intolerable if perpetrated against our own citizens."

McGovern also spoke of the lessons that might be applied from U.S. involvement in El Salvador to our post-September 11th incursion into Afghanistan and elsewhere. He asserted his commitment to fight in Congress to insure that the U.S. government provides economic development and humanitarian aid for the people of Afghanistan and does not walk away from that commitment as it did in El Salvador and earlier in



Afghanistan. Drawing on the words of a mentor, Senator George McGovern, he expressed his desire to insure that U.S. policy situate the U.S. as "a witness to the world for what is just and noble in human affairs."

The commemorative event was also an opportunity for the Fund to inform its supporters about four of the

mental health and human rights projects it has been supporting. Posters described the work being done by the Children's Rehabilitation Center in the Philippines with children displaced by war and poverty, the Association of Maya Ixil Women-New Dawn in Guatemala that supports the psychosocial and community development work of Mayan women survivors of war, and Solidarite des Femmes de Fizi pour le Bien-Etre Familial in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that helps women and children coping with the violence of tribal and regional conflict. (See descriptions of the "2002 Grantees", this issue). Laura Wald also gave a slide presentation on the work of Indradevi, a Cambodian project addressing the health and mental health needs of the urban poor in



Phnom Penh. She had visited the project while spending the past year in Vietnam.

The program began and concluded with the music of local artist, Dean Stevens, who was recognized by the Fund for his generous and talented support of this event over the past four years. We would also like to thank those who attended the evening and helped once again to make this program a special reminder of the mission of the Fund and the broad support we have for pursuing it. ♦

HE SPOKE OF "THE ARROGANCE OF US policy..."

The MBF honored US Representative Jim McGovern at its annual event (see "MBF Honors James P. McGovern", this issue) in December. The introduction of Rep. McGovern was made by Douglas Marcouiller, SJ, Associate Professor of International Economics and Economic Development at Boston College, The text of Doug's remarks follows.

This afternoon I visited the state prison in Norfolk for Sunday Mass. I told people there that tonight I would be introducing Representative Jim McGovern, and one of the prisoners piped up, "He's a good one. I hope he'll serve as long as I will."

Congressman McGovern is serving his third term as the forward-looking Representative of the Third Congressional District of Massachusetts. He has worked on technology in the schools, home health care, public transit, and social security. He serves on the Resources Committee, when energy and the environment seem to be at war. He serves on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, when concern for security seems to justify all sorts of things. His district includes Worcester, where ACT is experimenting with the therapeutic cloning of human embryos. And, lest he feel under-challenged, as Regional Whip he is charged with keeping the Democrats of New England in line.

Those of us of a certain age trust Jim's leadership on most of these issues because we've seen his work in the past. I am especially familiar with his leadership of the Speaker's Task Force on Central America, the Moakley Commission

El Salvador is full of stories about

the Moakley Commission, many of them built around the larger-than-life figure of Joe Moakley himself. You know them as well as I. "What? Me work in foreign affairs?" he asked. "I used to think a foreign affair was a trip to East Boston for an Italian sandwich." When preparing to travel to El Salvador, Moakley faced the question of what small gift to leave with the people who would meet him. "What could I give? I'm not one of those guys who writes books. . . but Gillette's in my district. I'll give



them disposable razors." There's the story of the trip to a small town in territory controlled by the FMLN where Joe and Jim were met by a choir of schoolchildren. Then it was Joe's turn to sing something back, "If You're Irish, Come into the Parlor." But the most famous line of all, as the stories go, is the one Joe used when the Salvadoran High Command tried to tell him that the people of the UCA had been murdered by the FMLN. His response, they say, was, "That's crap. You should know not to bullshit a bullshitter."

Moakley kept going, against the

Salvadoran armed forces and against the Department of State, until the truth was known. He kept going until those who had ordered the murders were named, although never tried. He kept going until military aid was cut off. He kept going because "it just wasn't right."

Of course, when we say that Joe kept going, we really mean that Jim McGovern kept going. If Joe was able to recognize deceit, it's because Jim was energetically seeking the truth.

Many of us who are here tonight were together in El Salvador on the tenth anniversary of the murders at the UCA. Representative McGovern was there, too. His words caused quite a stir. He spoke of "the arrogance of US foreign policy that rationalized, explained away, and even condoned a level of violence that would have been intolerable if perpetrated against our own citizens." He acknowledged that in more recent times "US Presidents, Vice Presidents, Senators and Members of Congress have come to El Salvador to tell you what changes you must make in your nation. . .," all too ". . . rarely talking about the institutional changes we need to make in the United States." His words were moving and memorable. "I was honored to know these priests for many years. I was honored to call them my friends. I learned from their insights, research, and analysis. I laughed and sang songs with them. And I have been inspired by the lives they led." ♦

As we continue to be inspired by yours, Jim. My friends, Representative James P. McGovern.

COMPASSION WITHOUT BORDERS

continued from page 1

failed to act to prevent this terrible loss, the Cambodian people retain compassion for the losses experienced in New York City and Washington.

Similarly, our friends in Kyrgyztan wrote: "The Crisis Center for Women and Family 'Sezim,' expresses its deepest condolences in accordance with inhumane terrorist acts, the victims of which were thousands of innocent people. We are with you in this difficult moment for your nation." Kyrgyztan is struggling for human rights for its citizens, who face torture, religious intimidation, the trafficking of sex slaves, and other violations of freedom and dignity at the hands of its own government. Again, the interest the United States has shown in the people of Kyrgyztan's plight has been minimal at best, and yet they show concern for the welfare of our people.

Both the Philippines and El Salvador asked the United States to think beyond our own boundaries as we envision responses to the events of September 11. The people of El Salvador, wrote: "We ... who are still suffering and have experienced in our own flesh the consequences of terrorist attacks denounce these deeds and add our voice to the multitude crying out 'Basta [Enough]. Let there be an end to injustice and to the deaths of so many innocent people!' We put our hope in God that the decisions about to be made by the governments involved will be the most prudent for the well-being of the United States and the rest of the world..." Similarly, our friends in the Philippines wrote: "... We would like to express our condolences for the

loss of the lives of the innocent people because of the terrorist attacks.... We just hope that seeking justice will not be a military retaliation that will also impede the rights of innocent civilians in other nations...."

These two nations have faced terrible natural disasters, political and cultural fighting, and human rights



abuses. Our government's direct involvement in supporting repressive policies in their countries and our training of military personnel responsible for, among other murders, that of Ignacio Martín-Baró for whom the Fund is named, are widely known within their countries yet frequently denied in our own. Ironically, despite our bellicose history in their countries, they reach out to us in the midst of their own struggles and losses. They gently remind us not to fuel the cycle of violence by

supporting military incursions where innocent civilians will suffer (see article, this issue, on the CRC and the U.S. military return to the Philippines).

If not surprising, it is at least ironic that citizens of countries so deeply affected by U.S. military force send condolences to the people of the United States. The events of September 11 and these words of support from our grantees remind us of what we experience through the work of the Martín-Baró Fund: as United Statesians we do not live in a vacuum. El Salvador and the Philippines are but two examples of how U.S. policies have directly and indirectly promoted the violence and terror experienced by the same children and their families who are served by projects supported by the Fund. In our post 9/11 longing for safety or revenge or both, we can further aggravate the cycle of violence if we fail to "love our neighbor as ourselves."

The losses and fear we suffered were devastating. We hope that out of our pain we may find the inspiration to work



towards peace the only way possible, by valuing all human life, regardless of borders. ♦

Lauren Rogers-Sirin is a Ph.D. candidate in Counseling Psychology at Boston College

STRIKING FOR JUSTICE

by *Laura Wald*

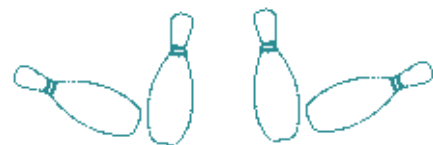


The Ignacio Martín-Baró Fund's annual fundraising Bowlathon was held this year on April 7th at our usual bowling haunt, Lanes and Games in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Fourteen fabulous and enthusiastic teams, including several groups of students from UMass Boston and Boston College and two bowlers-in-training (you have to be able to walk and eat solids before they let you hold the ball by yourself) bowled to raise money for the Fund's grantmaking activities. Everyone had a wonderful time comparing high scores, practicing new bowling techniques, trying on their newly printed Martín-Baró Fund t-shirts, and competing for team prizes.



The event raised an unprecedented \$13,000 (!) this year, a cause for much celebration. The members of the Fund wish to express their deep appreciation to all those who pledged to support their favorite bowlers, as well as to those who collected pledges and came out to bowl for a worthy cause. This annual event has become not only one of our most important ways to raise funds to support our grantees, but also a time to affirm and strengthen our community of activism over baskets of chips and oreos. Thanks so much to all who participated or supported us. We invite your ongoing support throughout the year and look forward to rolling more strikes with you next year! ♦



THANKS TO MBF ANNUAL EVENT CONTRIBUTORS

We want to express our gratitude to Blanchard's Liquors at 741 Centre Street in Jamaica Plain and Natural Frontier Markets at 1028 Beacon Street in Brookline, for generously collaborating with the Fund for our December event honoring Representative Jim McGovern. We encourage your support of community stores like these that give back to the community. Special thanks also to the Boston College Center for Media and Instructional Technology, Graphics Services, for producing the posters of our partner's programs displayed at the event.

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