



# TAHIRIH JUSTICE CENTER®

Protecting Immigrant Women and Girls Fleeing Violence

## PUBLIC POLICY COUNCIL



The Tahirih Justice Center serves women and girls fleeing gender-based violence such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage, torture, rape, domestic violence, honor crimes, human trafficking, widow rituals, and other human rights abuses. Tahirih's award-winning approach leverages pro bono resources to provide a combination of high-quality legal services, groundbreaking public policy advocacy,

and transformative public education programs. Through this coordinated effort, Tahirih seeks to both ensure the safety and wellbeing of individual clients, and ultimately, by raising clients' voices in the public policy arena, create lasting legal and social change.

Drawing directly from our clients' experiences, Tahirih plays a leading role in national advocacy to protect women and girls from violence. In 2004, for example, Tahirih won the first-ever lawsuit against an International Marriage Broker for its role in enabling the abuse of a Ukrainian woman. A year later, mobilizing a nationwide coalition, **Tahirih successfully campaigned for the passage of a new law**, the International Marriage Broker Regulation Act (IMBRA) of 2005, to protect so-called "mail-order brides" from abuse and exploitation.

The Public Policy Council is a group of committed Tahirih supporters who have come together to provide financial support and leverage resources for Tahirih's pioneering advocacy initiatives. Founding Co-Chairs of the Public Policy Council include Sara Glenn (Government Relations, Shell Oil); Randa Fahmy Hudome (President, Fahmy Hudome International); Fern O'Brian, (Partner, Thompson Hine, LLP); and Marti Thomas (Vice President, The Duberstein Group). The Council's critical support will further Tahirih's efforts to enhance legal protections available to women and girls fleeing violence, and allow Tahirih to respond to developments and engage in policy debates that affect our clients at the national, state, and local levels.

## HELP US ADVOCATE FOR COURAGEOUS WOMEN FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Joelle,\* a native of Cameroon, fled her country because the local chief, who already had many wives and children, wanted to take her from her husband and marry her himself. Although Joelle was at that time expecting her first child, she was repeatedly arrested and beaten for refusing to marry the chief. Eventually, knowing she would never be safe in Cameroon, Joelle fled to the United States. The Tahirih Justice Center successfully petitioned for asylum for Joelle, and eventually assisted in bringing her husband to the United States. Joelle now is a passionate ambassador of Tahirih's mission to protect women and girls, has served as a member of Tahirih's Board of Directors, and courageously shared her story during a Congressional Briefing convened by Tahirih to call attention to the challenges faced by women asylum seekers.



*\*Names have been changed to protect privacy. Photos are generously donated by Sergio Pessolano and are not of clients.*

## YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN TAHIRIH'S PUBLIC POLICY COUNCIL

We need your help to protect women and girls fleeing violence and invite you to join the Public Policy Council today. Please consider contributing at one of the following levels:

Individuals - an annual donation of \$500, \$1000, or \$1500

Corporations - an annual donation of \$2500 or \$5000

**Benefits of Membership** include:

- Invitations to three Council Briefings per year;
- Invitations to events with policymakers and networking opportunities with public policy professionals;
- Inside access to advocacy efforts on behalf of women and girls fleeing human rights abuses;
- Special recognition and VIP access to Tahirih events;
- The opportunity to develop an informed understanding of issues facing Tahirih's clients and to serve as an ambassador for Tahirih.

*For more information about joining, please contact Jeanne Smoot, Director of Public Policy, at [Jeanne@tahirih.org](mailto:Jeanne@tahirih.org) or 571-282-6196.*



- Tahirih's recent Public Policy accomplishments include:**
- ⇒ **Working with Congress and the Administration** to strengthen protections available to women fleeing violence;
  - ⇒ **Convening a Congressional Briefing** to highlight challenges facing women who seek protection through the US asylum system;
  - ⇒ **Issuing a new report**, "Precarious Protection: How Unsettled Policy and Current Laws Harm Women and Girls Seeking Asylum."



**Tahirih is honored to receive the support of a wide range of organizations and individuals as it works to protect women and girls fleeing human rights abuses:**

**Honorary Congressional Co-Chairs for Tahirih's Annual Benefit have included:**

Senator Benjamin L. Cardin	Congressman Gerald E. Connolly
Senator Robert K. Casey, Jr.	Congressman Jim Gerlach
Senator Mike Crapo	Congressman Phil Gingray
Senator Dianne Feinstein	Congresswoman Kay Granger
Senator Kay Hagan	Congressman Gene Green
Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison	Congressman Luis V. Gutierrez
Senator Patrick J. Leahy	Congressman Alcee L. Hastings
Senator Joseph I. Lieberman	Congresswoman Nita M. Lowey
Senator Robert Menendez	Congressman Joseph R. Pitts
Senator Barbara Mikulski	Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard
Senator Lisa Murkowski	Congresswoman Linda T. Sanchez
Senator Patty Murray	Congresswoman Janice Schakowsky
Senator Jim Risch	Congressman Frank Wolf

**Speakers at Tahirih's Annual Benefit have included:**

Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan	Congressman James Moran
Vice President (then Senator) Joseph R. Biden	Harold Koh (then Assistant Secretary of State)
Senator Sam Brownback	Oscar-nominated actor Sam Waterston
Senator Jim Webb	Emmy-nominated actor Rainn Wilson
Congresswoman Shelia Jackson Lee	Oscar-nominated actress Debra Winger

**Pro Bono Partners include:**

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP	Howery LLP	Prism Public Affairs
Arnold & Porter LLP	Hunton & Williams LLP	Quinn Gillespie & Associates
Covington & Burling LLP	Jones Day	Sidley Austin LLP
Crowell & Moring LLP	Latham & Watkins LLP	Step toe & Johnson LLP
Davis Wright Tremaine LLP	Maggio & Kattar, PC	Van Scoyoc Associates
DLA Piper LLP	Mayer Brown LLP	White & Case LLP
Goodwin Proctor LLP	Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky & Popeo LLP	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale & Dorr LLP
Hogan & Hartson LLP	Patton Boggs LLP	

**Corporate Supporters include:**

Allstate	Eileen Fisher	Goldman Sachs & Co.
Altria Group, Inc.	The Estée Lauder Companies, Inc.	LexisNexis
Calvert Asset Management	Exelon	Lifetime Entertainment Services
Chevron	Exxon Mobil Corporation	The PNC Financial Services

**Collaborating Organizations include:**

American Immigration Lawyers Association	National Immigration Forum
Amnesty International USA	National Network to End Domestic Violence
Center for Gender and Refugee Studies	Nation Network to End Violence Against Immigrant Women
Family Violence Prevention Fund	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society	Vital Voices
Human Rights First	Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance
Legal Momentum	Women Thrive Worldwide
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service	Women's Refugee Commission
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum	