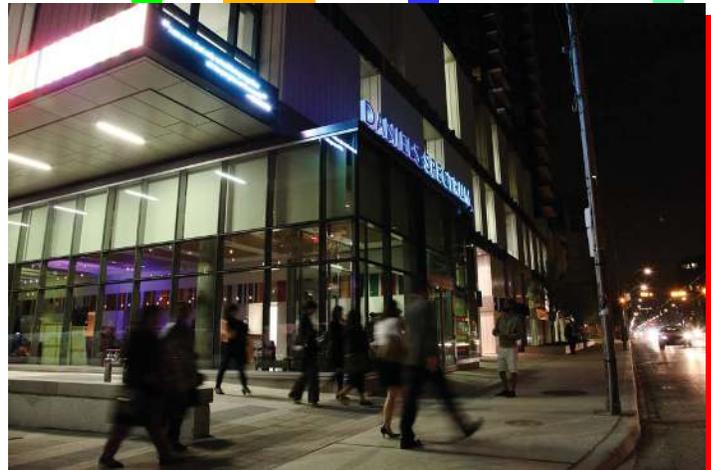


The Tribute fundraising event, presented by Blakes LLP, moves to 'Brilliant eye-catching' space . . .

This year, our Annual Tribute fundraiser, presented by Blakes, will be held on June 13, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. at the spectacular architectural gem, the Daniels Spectrum. This newly constructed venue is the talk of Toronto, and, with an expected attendance of over 500 Clinic supporters, it is the ideal place to accommodate the growth of this event.

Join our 19th Annual Tribute Facebook Event Page!

This year, we will confer the first ever Spirit of Barbra Schlifer Award, sponsored by Torys LLP, to a woman who burns with the passion for justice that Barbra herself represents. We will feature our popular silent and live auctions, excellent food, beverages as well as entertainment.



Artscape Event Services

Don't miss out on a fabulous, fun filled night for a good cause !

Designed by the city's wunder-firm, Diamond Schmitt Architects, *The Globe and Mail* called this space the "creative hub of the city's Regent Park reboot". We called it home away from home as soon as we walked in! Light, incredibly spacious, brand-spanking new and the centre of a cultural revival that includes the women we work with. Add the impeccable professionalism and delicious creativity of Daniel et Daniel catering, a full service bar, and you have a new era in the magic evening that sustains the Clinic each year. We will get back in touch with more details as things unfold, but prepare to have that first special patio night in June in support of the Clinic overlooking the new cityscapes of a neighbourhood that beats with a full heart.

Come out, get real, and put the FUN back into fundraising with us at Daniels Spectrum.

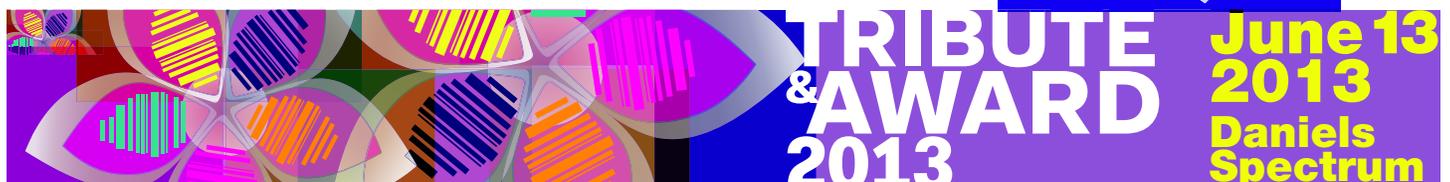
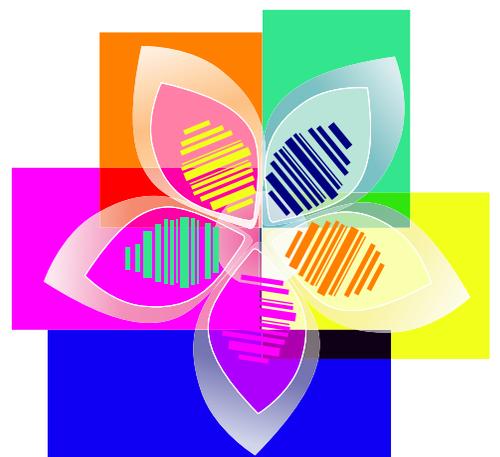
Picture the space "...brilliant...eye-catching...the kind of place that puts people at ease and makes them feel comfortable."

—Christopher Hume, *Toronto Star*

For tickets, call (416) 323-9149 ext 237.

title sponsor

Blakes



Come meet the first ever Spirit of Barbra Schlifer Award recipient: a champion of women's human rights!

Tory's LLP and the Barbra Schlifer Clinic are pleased to announce the recipient of the inaugural Spirit of Barbra Schlifer Award! Come meet her at the Tribute where her award will be conferred!

Tory's will present the first ever Spirit of Barbra Schlifer Award. With their generous support, we opened nominations at the Tribute in 2012. The inaugural recipient has set the bar high!

With a strong application supported by such people as the Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada, Alex Neve, **Leilani Farha** is the chosen recipient for our first year.

Leilani Farha is the Executive Director of Canada Without Poverty. She is a lawyer, social worker, community activist and policy analyst, and past Executive Director of the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation. She is dedicated to preventing and addressing violence against women and the right to adequate housing. She has made a difference not only in the lives of individual women, but also to the systemic, underlying issues that cause impoverishment and violence. As a woman of colour, the issues Leilani has tackled in her efforts to challenge human rights violations in Canada and around the world are personal as well as professional. Amongst her greatest contributions in advancing women's rights is a clear articulation that embeds adequate housing issues in a framework of international human rights, specifically, social, cultural and political rights.

Leilani has taught in the faculty of law at both the University of Windsor and the University of Toronto. She has participated in over fifty government and UN committees and meetings, also making presentations at various conferences, the UN Human Rights Council and in other fora. She has authored over twenty publications and major reports. And she has undertaken over a dozen international consultancies and fact-finding missions, mostly for various United Nations bodies. Leilani has the uncanny ability to bring together disparate people and perspectives and find common ground while never compromising or losing sight of her focus on issues critical to achieving meaningful equality for women, resulting in policy and legislative gains related directly to combating violence against women where it was not thought possible. A warm and engaging speaker, you will want to see Leilani at the annual Tribute fundraising event for the Barbra Schlifer Clinic June 13 2013 to hear from her directly as she accepts her award. Contact Meldina Smith to sponsor this event, or to buy your tickets to ensure you get a spot! msmith@schliferclinic.com, 416-323-9149, x237.

Each year, the Spirit of Barbra Schlifer Award recipient will be a woman who burns with the passion for justice that Barbra Schlifer herself was unable to fulfill. She will be someone who has made a demonstrable contribution to increased access to safety and justice for women.

If you wish to nominate someone for the 2014 award, please visit <http://schliferaward.com/>.



Ride for A Dream is a non-profit campaign to end violence against women, consisting mainly of young men and women from various post-secondary institutions. Four young men will begin a bicycling journey from Toronto to St. John's Newfoundland. The ride will begin June 1st and should take approximately 30 days to complete. The bike-a-thon is to raise awareness across Canada, especially to show the role that men need to play in ending violence against women, while raising money that will be donated to the Clinic!

Donations can be made through the Clinic's Canada Helps page.

Website: <http://www.rideforadream.ca/>

Twitter: [@rideforadream](https://twitter.com/rideforadream)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/rideforadream>



April 11, 2013

Barbra Schlifer award honours legal advocate for women's housing

By Laura Kane

Leilani Farha wants to wake up in a better world for women.

The executive director of Canada Without Poverty says that some mornings when she opens her eyes and turns on the news, she thinks, "Is this the best we can do?"

Now, she is being honoured with the first annual Spirit of Barbra Schlifer Award for her efforts to make that world better. For two decades, Farha has worked tirelessly to ensure female victims of violence have access to housing in Canada and across the globe.

The award was introduced this year by the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic, which offers legal help, counselling and language interpretation to women who have experienced violence.

The clinic was established in the memory of Barbra Schlifer, a 33-year-old Toronto lawyer whose promising life was cut short when she was raped and murdered shortly after being called to the bar in 1980.

"You can kind of go through our mission statement and tick off every sentence through Leilani," said Amanda Dale, executive director of the clinic.

"She's done a tremendous amount of work on women's access to housing . . . and she's brought us into conversation with the world on that."

Farha — a lawyer and social worker — spent several years at an international housing rights organization based in Geneva, where she first made the link between violence against women and the lack of safe, accessible housing.

Women might not be able to flee an abusive household because they have no safe housing to turn to, or they may face violence in shelters or on the streets, she said.

"The mainstream understanding has never really embraced what the right to adequate housing would look like for women," she said.

She brought her international experience back to Canada in 2000 and has been working to change legal and political understandings of the right to adequate housing ever since. For example, she has aggressively campaigned to broaden the definition of "forced evictions" to include violence in the home.

At the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation in Toronto, where she began as a student and then returned to after working in Geneva, Farha worked to convince landlords to accept women who had experienced violence, among other things.

Often, the rental applications of domestic abuse victims are rejected because landlords fear the perpetrator will follow them to the home and pose a safety threat, she explained.

But Farha, who lives in Ottawa and has two children, insists Canada still has a long way to go and is calling on the country to implement a national housing strategy.

The award is being announced Thursday, Barbra Schlifer Day. Farha said Schlifer's tragic story reminds her how lucky she is to be able to pursue human rights work.

"I think of young Barbra's life being cut short and being prevented from contributing. Then, I think about how meaningful the world is to me because I can do this work," she said.

"It just seems grossly unfair that Barbra and many other women like her didn't have that chance."

Now, in her role at Canada Without Poverty, she tries to educate Canadians about why and where poverty exists in such an affluent country — and convince policy-makers to create change.

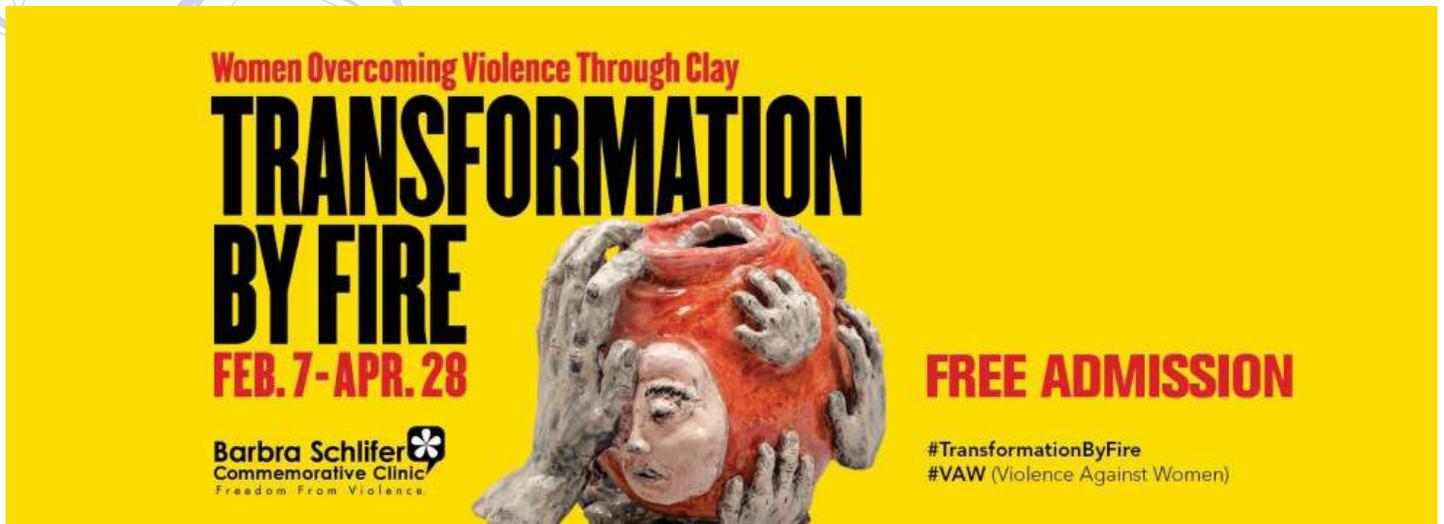
She said the recent suicide of a Nova Scotia teenager who four boys allegedly gang-raped reveals that Canada is still, tragically, struggling with gendered violence.

"It feels like a broken world," she said. "I think of the parents. My compassion comes first and I just feel incredibly upset."

"Then, I think, the fight kicks in, to say, 'OK, what part can I play in making this a better place for a young woman like this person?' The award — sponsored by Torys LLP — will be presented to Farha June 13 at 6:30 p.m. at the Daniel's Spectrum in Regent Park. She will receive a handmade necklace that represents the equality goals of the clinic."

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Gardiner Museum and Schlifer Clinic make history!

{Editorial from the catalogue of the Gardiner Museum *Transformation By Fire* Exhibit, reprinted for *In Brief*.}

Transformation by Fire is a ground breaking exhibition that gives shape to an issue we usually keep silent about: intimate violence against women. Originated by the Gardiner Museum in partnership with the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic, Transformation by Fire addresses the issue of violence against women by providing victims of violence with the opportunity to tell their own stories in their own way.

The Gardiner Museum and the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic have been working together for a decade to offer annual psychotherapeutic clay workshops for women who have experienced intimate violence. This exhibition features approximately 30 sculptures created by clients of the Barbra Schlifer Clinic during the annual workshops lead by ceramic artist Susan Low-Beer and art therapist Suzanne Thomson in the Gardiner Museum's clay studios.

Transformation by Fire draws on work created during the last ten years that speaks to themes of hope and resilience, metamorphosis, mind and body and sanctuary and shelter and is accompanied by unmediated personal statements and short videos of the participating women. The exhibition also features a selection of work by Susan Low Beer that explores the relationship between mind and body.

Transformation by Fire illustrates the uniquely therapeutic qualities of clay, which is malleable, responsive and expressive, and should serve a catalytic role in our community by giving victims of violence a voice and raising public awareness of an important social justice issue.

We are humbled by the courage women whose work is featured in this exhibition and grateful to them sharing their stories of strength and resilience in the face of violence.

We are also grateful to Susan Low-Beer and Suzanne Thomson for the extraordinary contribution they have made by leading the workshops for victims of violence throughout our decade long partnership, and by working with Rachel Gotlieb, Senior Curator, Gardiner Museum, and Lynne Jenkins, Director of Counseling Services, Barbra Schlifer Clinic to organize this landmark exhibition.

It was critically important to be able to offer free admission during Transformation by Fire to ensure there were no barriers to access. We deeply appreciate the generosity of the many individual donors who contributed to our ability to do so.

We are also grateful to the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council and the City of Toronto for their annual operating support which makes exhibitions like Transformation by Fire possible.

*Amanda Dale, Executive Director,
Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic*
&
*Alexandra Montgomery, Executive Director,
Gardiner Museum*



L to R: Rachel Gotlieb and Alexandra Montgomery (Gardiner Museum), Suzanne Thomson (Group Co-facilitator), Lynne Jenkins (Schlifer Clinic), Susan Low-Beer (Group Co-facilitator)

How you can help make the Schlifer Clinic's annual fundraiser a success!

Buy tickets at \$60.00 each, and be part of the "must be there" legal and community event of the year, for June 13.

You can also help us by contributing in-kind donations to our silent and live auctions. Help us by asking the businesses you frequent for:

- **Restaurant gift certificates**
- **Home improvement services**
- **Sports tickets**
- **Entertainment packages**
- **Travel gifts from your favourite hotel or airline**

Contact Stefania Sdao at s.stefania@schliferclinic.com, or call her at 416-323-9149, x240.

DREAM BIG . . . Schlifer Clinic opens new space

Since 2010, the Barbra Schlifer Clinic has been growing. In 2010, we assisted **3,500** women build lives free from violence. Our numbers for 2012/13 are over **5,000!**

With new projects and programs, and expanded services in our regular programs, we have grown out of our original space. In addition to taking our services out to the isolated parts of Toronto where women need us most, we have decided to address the lack of guidance for unrepresented litigants. Luckily, our neighbour in a smaller suite down the hall moved on, and our landlord, Clinic donors the Peters Family, were ready to rent to us with favourable terms. We have now added 1600 square feet to our service area. Our dream is to open an **Access to Justice Centre for women**. The centre will assist women who are increasingly required to go unrepresented in all their legal matters, to use the new online forms and legal filing tools mandated by various government agencies and the courts, and provide guided access with a lawyer and law students as well as pro bono volunteers.

The Clinic is looking for a naming sponsor to help us cover the cost of our Access to Justice Centre for the next three years.

Law firms and public interest funders are invited to discuss this with our Executive Director, Amanda Dale, or with Legal Director, Mary Lou Fassel. Call us at 416-323-9149.

Exciting times!

Violence Against Women and the Supreme Court of Canada's recent decisions

In mid-January, the Supreme Court has rendered two decisions which impact women who experience violence in their intimate relationships. Seen together, they are perplexing from the perspective of how the courts understand the effects of long-term or chronic abuse on women.

In *R v Ryan* the court appears to acknowledge the long term effects of abuse and the failures of the system, and in *O'Brien*, the majority decision appears to misconstrue those effects.

In *R v O'Brien*, the Supreme Court is sending a chilling message to Canadian men and women, that uttering threats as a way of life protects you from prosecution. It is a perverse moral to the crying wolf story: if a woman is inured to abuse as a way of life, then the threat isn't real? Research and front line experience have taught us the opposite.

In *R v Ryan*, the Nova Scotia case of a woman who was acquitted of "counselling the commission of an offence" by hiring a hit man to rid her of her abusive husband, the Supreme Court stayed the proceedings in part by recognizing that "the abuse which she suffered at the hands of Mr. Ryan took an enormous toll on her", which the court characterized as a "reign of terror". The Court also acknowledged that the failures of the system, and the protracted court proceedings were factors in the stay. For more commentary on these decisions, and to see Executive Director Amanda Dale's media interviews related to these decisions, go to <http://schliferclinic.com>.

We would agree with retired Supreme Court Judge Madame L'Heureux-Dubé, who, at a talk we recently attended, hosted by McCarthy Tétrault, in honour of those of us engaged with Pro Bono Students Canada, stated that she thought Charter decision-making had yet to adequately address two main issues: violence against women and poverty.



Clinic staff and Board with Madame Justice L'Heureux-Dubé and MPP Laurel Broten. The Clinic has recently grown its compliment of Pro Bono Students assisting with clients' legal matters

Long gun update – it's not over until . . .

On April 3 2012, a new set of gun laws became official in Canada.

In May 2012, the Barbra Schlifer Clinic, made application to the Ontario Superior Court to challenge the new gun law provisions of the federal government on the basis that they violate of Sections 7 (Security of Person) and 15 (Equality of women) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

You may have heard the battle was lost, but in fact the matter has not yet been heard. Last July, the Ontario Superior Court heard only a preliminary stage of the matter, having to do with the destruction of the existing registry records.

The main application, on the Charter issues, has not yet been heard. The hearing for this is now scheduled for June 10-12, 2014.

That the Schlifer Clinic is taking on this battle is a measure of our distress at the certain deaths that will result from the new, weaker firearms regime.

These laws killed the gun registry for the same class of firearms that was used in the Montreal massacre of 14 women, and weakened other provisions designed to make Canadians safer.

As Canada joined the world in mourning for the lives lost at Sandy Hook, and as the U.S. contemplates stiffer gun control, we may well ask how we got so out of step with the world that we are implementing regressive measures that will take us back decades. Are we emulating the American style “gun freedom” that common sense tells us contributed to those horrific events?

Meanwhile, as this was unfolding in the media, the Toronto Star reported two related things:

1. The purported savings of “billions” by destroying the registry was known by the Minister all along to be a savings of only 2 million dollars, making Canadian women's lives worth less than 2 million.
2. The RCMP had warned the government that the savings would be minimal and that the program works directly with front-line police officers and “plays a key role in tracing the illegal movement and criminal use of firearms both in Canada and abroad.”

The lives of women and children are at risk without the registry. The lack of registration makes it impossible to properly enforce prohibition orders in situations of

domestic violence as there is no way of knowing how many guns to remove after a court order. The package of changes introduced with the loss of the registry also weakens the protections of safe storage regulations and the licensing process by making it impossible to trace guns and hold those who break the law to account. The lack of mandatory license verification before a purchase was already a flaw in the old system which contributed to the homicide of Arlene May (examined in the 1998 May Iles Ontario Coroner's Report), and could put women and children particularly at risk if men who have had their license revoked then buy from friends or acquaintances who may not be aware or want to ask too many questions about a ‘personal’ issue.

Our Clinic in Toronto sees over 4,000 women a year for whom violence is a life and death matter.

While the Canadian long-gun registry is often portrayed as a rural versus urban issue, rates of deaths with guns is higher in rural and northern areas, where access to guns is higher, and it is women and children living in these regions who are facing the greatest increased danger with the weakening of gun control in Canada. Nonetheless, we see the issue present regularly at our Clinic in downtown Toronto, as women relocate from rural areas in order to gain safety from potentially lethal partners, all part of the “legal gun owners” lauded by the Conservatives as perfectly safe and “law abiding”.

We argue the line between law abiding and law breaking is a fine one in the case of domestic violence.

- Gun violence is present in many domestic violence cases, taking such forms as intimidation, control and homicide.
- Studies have shown that rates of homicide in domestic violence situations increase significantly when there is a firearm in the home.
- Rifles and shotguns are the guns most likely to be used in domestic violence situations.

Controlling access to all firearms is crucial to preventing avoidable deaths, as the US is now openly debating. While the right to bear arms has never previously been a part of the constitutional or social context of Canada, we, too, have reason to be concerned.

Our legal proceedings are generously supported by concerned donors like you. Contact Meldina Smith at msmith@schliferclinic.com or Amanda Dale at adale@schliferclinic.com to find out how you can help.

Amanda Dale, Executive Director, Barbra Schlifer Clinic

Shaun O'Brien, Cavalluzzo Shilton McIntyre & Cornish LLP (counsel to the Barbra Schlifer Clinic in the gun registry challenge)

The Schlifer Clinic launches new website

Redesigned from top to bottom, the Clinic's new website has been launched. It was created for the primary use of women who need information in dangerous and life-threatening situations. With safety features, disability accommodations and plain language information, there is also a daily update section that helps you stay in touch with the issues between newsletters.

Thanks to Web Coordinator Paula Wansborough, writer Linda Hossie and coder Tim Lin, and designer Denis Leclerc of Costa Leclerc Design for taking us to the next level. Check it out at the same old address: updates several times a week, keeping it fresh! Sign up for an E-newsletter, save us money!
<http://schliferclinic.com>

University of Toronto Law School supports the Clinic

Walk a day in her shoes shows the support of men for the metaphoric and literal shoes women walk in. Once again the U of T Law School raised funds to support the vital work the Clinic does year round. This time they raised \$10,000 to support both the Clinic and the White Ribbon Campaign. **Thanks guys!!!!**



Schlifer Clinic wins immigration case for client

When Domestic Abuse a Refugee Makes . . .

Rosa Juarez's claim for refugee protection, based on decades of physical, psychological and sexual abuse by her former husband, Alejandro, looked all but doomed. Sweeping changes to Canada's federal immigration laws were implemented starting mid-December, and women like Rosa, whom the Clinic assists each day, have seen their chances of finding understanding and protection in Canada vastly decreased. Some Refugee decision-makers have NEVER allowed a woman to stay in Canada to build a life free from violence.

Rosa's husband regularly sexually assaulted and beat Rosa, and maintained near-complete control over her. During the course of their marriage, he subjected Rosa to intimate forms of torture, including gang rapes and other degrading acts.

Rosa's husband was found guilty of multiple offences against Rosa in Canada, and yet the Immigration and Refugee Board was set to deny her claim under new provisions that reverse decades of recognized leadership in gender persecution cases.

Working with Rosa since 2009, the Clinic never gave up—on her right to be safe, or on Canada's ability to assist her to build a life free from violence.

We represented Rosa in her legal matters, provided individual counselling, group support in her first language, and consistent language interpretation with one interpreter who could accompany her to all her other appointments, thereby minimizing the number of members of her community that would know her

personal story. The Barbra Schlifer Clinic also helped Rosa by providing expert assessments which confirmed her credibility as a survivor of abuse. We also worked with our community partners to find excellent help for her child.

Now, a claim that there is a lack of protection available to her and her child in her country of origin is now compared to a list of countries that only the federal immigration Minister, Jason Kenney, can update. The new laws strip away essential procedural rights and protections from claimants who happen to originate from countries the Minister deems "safe". In gender persecution cases, this list of "safe" countries is meaningless. Often, what state protections are said to exist for all citizens, certainly don't exist for women reporting abuse to the authorities. Routinely, in most parts of the world, women who report abuse are laughed at, raped by the officials to whom they report the crimes committed against them, or simply left unprotected and exposed to further assaults by the original perpetrator.

But our inexhaustible staff, and the indefatigable Rosa herself, were rewarded for their perseverance and innate sense of justice: after three years of seemingly endless appearances before officials telling and retelling this terrible story of oppression, and enduring attacks on her credibility, Rosa visited the Clinic this week to pick up the written decision. Rosa has now been offered the best that Canada can be, the asylum from persecution imagined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Please join us in saying congratulations to Rosa and her child! By being part of the Clinic, you help us achieve access to justice every day for women like Rosa.

To contribute to the Clinic's ongoing work, contact Meldina Smith msmith@schliferclinic.com or 416-323-9149, x237.



Trillium funding

The Barbra Schlifer Clinic received 3-year Trillium Funding for Young Women Affected by Honour-related Violence and Forced Marriage

The Schlifer Clinic will receive \$225,000 over three years to provide young Toronto Muslim women with leadership skills and empower them to develop their own responses to family violence, forced marriage and honour-related crimes. Young women in our programs will help lead convened conversations and a forum. With their guidance, we will develop principles, promising practices and protocols, as well as educational materials

to help service providers respond in a more holistic manner when these matters might be part of a young woman's reality.

This project has also received support from the Laidlaw Foundation, the Tippet Foundation, CIBC, Art Reach, through Tides Canada, and recently with the Ontario Women's Directorate (to develop on-line training for service providers to respond to these issues). Project Coordinator Farrah Khan also received Toronto Community Foundation money to work directly with women's groups in Washington DC and London UK on sharing international protocols and screening tools to make young women safer.

Clinic Executive Director wins Women of Distinction Social Justice Award

The Board of Directors of the Barbra Schlifer Clinic is thrilled to announce that Executive Director, Amanda Dale, is receiving the 2013 Women of Distinction Award for Social Justice. The ceremony will be held in Toronto on Thursday May 2, 2013. Tickets are available through YWCA Toronto. Amanda joins a distinguished alumnae of Women of Distinction, including former Barbra Schlifer Clinic Executive Director, Darlene Lawson.



Paula Todd, award-winning journalist & Osgoode grad, hosts the 2013 Tribute

An incisive mind and a warm heart make Paula the perfect fit with the Clinic's mission. **Come to the Tribute on June 13 to spend an evening in her company and ours!**

Paula is a journalist, broadcaster, lawyer and author, who has worked with Canada's largest networks, newspapers, and magazines as a TV host, investigative reporter, legal analyst, political columnist and feature writer. Paula has hosted or reported for such television programs as The Verdict and W5, Person to Person with Paula Todd and Studio 2, a Gemini Award-winning nightly live current affairs program. She entered broadcasting full-time after more than a dozen years at the Toronto Star as a news and political reporter and member of the Editorial Board. She is the bestselling author of *Finding Karla: How I Tracked Down a Serial Child Killer and Discovered A Mother of Three* as well as *A Quiet Courage: Extraordinary Stories From All of Us*.

Paula holds degrees in literature and law, attended Osgoode Hall Law School and is called to the Ontario Bar. She serves on the Board of Directors for Canadian Journalists for Free Expression and chairs their Digital Issues Committee. She is currently at work on her third non-fiction book. **For tickets, contact Meldina at msmith@schliferclinic.com, 416-323-9149, x237.**



Michaël Tenaglia, photographer, www.michaelphotography.com

Amanda Dale

- legal 
- counselling 
- interpretation 
- education 
- advocacy 

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