



Rebuilding Lives in the City of Second Chances

By Executive Director Julie Gutman
June 17, 2010

Dear Friends –

I started my journey as executive director of PTV last month, and each passing day deepens my sense that this is where I belong.

Perhaps it was listening to Rossana, who fled El Salvador after being beaten and raped by death squads. “I had no job, no home, no family,” said Rossana. “I wanted to die. PTV saved my life, and I am now able to help others in Los Angeles without fear I will be tortured.”



Julie Gutman

Or maybe it was meeting Kyaw, who was an activist fighting for freedom and democracy in Burma before the military regime put him in prison and tortured him six times. “When I escaped to the U.S., I felt my life was over until I found PTV,” stated Kyaw. “PTV helped me start again.”

Hearing stories like this takes me back to my childhood. I will never forget sitting around the dining room table with my cousin Irma Gutman, a Holocaust survivor who endured torture at the hands of the Nazis, and whose parents and siblings died in concentration camps. Though I was just a girl, listening to her tales of courage in the face of unspeakable horror left an indelible impression.

I have dedicated my career as an attorney to working on behalf of the oppressed – from human rights work in Guatemala with the families of the disappeared to advocating for low-wage immigrant workers and communities of color in California, most recently as a city commissioner and senior advisor to Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.



“I felt my life was over until I found PTV. PTV helped me start again.” –Kyaw, Survivor

And who is more oppressed than those who come to this country not just with nothing, but also with the burden and trauma of the torture they fled and must relive as they embark upon the arduous asylum process?

Leading PTV, an organization whose mission is to help rebuild the lives of the most vulnerable members of our society, is now my calling. The first human rights group of its kind in the country, PTV literally saves lives. Through its dedicated staff and volunteers, PTV provides a new lease on life to impoverished immigrant adults and children in Los Angeles whose lives have been shattered by state-sponsored torture, offering comprehensive medical, psychological, legal and case management services.

Abandoned and aggrieved by their own countries, the thousands of men and women who have walked through our doors from over 65 different countries have sought a new beginning here in Los Angeles – the city of second chances, and the largest home to torture survivors in the U.S. Thanks to the remarkable efforts of PTV, they have found that new beginning, re-entering society and the workforce and becoming contributing members of our community.

Later this month, the Los Angeles City Council, local businesses and our clients, staff and allies will kick off PTV's 30th anniversary year by commemorating U.N. International Day in Support of Torture Victims. Please join us (visit www.ptvla.org for details).

I eagerly embrace the challenge of advancing and expanding the vital work of PTV – work that, more than ever, needs your support. In the months and years ahead, I know we will do great things together. I hope you will join me in this journey.

Warmly,

Julie Gutman
Executive Director
jgutman@ptvla.org
www.ptvla.org

Join us in celebrating 30 years of service and rebuilding lives by donating to PTV.

Program for Torture Victims

3655 S. Grand Ave, Suite 290 Los Angeles, CA 90007
T: (213) 747-4944/ F: (213) 747-4662/ info@ptvla.org
Visit us at www.ptvla.org



30th Anniversary Kickoff Activities

Commemorating UN International Day in Support of Torture Victims

June 25, 11:00 AM

L.A. City Council resolution and celebration in honor of PTV and its work, featuring survivors and staff

Council Chambers, City Hall, downtown Los Angeles

June 25, 12:30 PM

Kickoff Lunch at Takami Sushi

Join PTV staff, clients, and supporters for lunch at Takami Sushi and Robata Restaurant. Twenty percent of your purchase will be donated to the Program for Torture Victims.

811 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 2100, Los Angeles, CA, 90017

June 26

Launch of “Profits for Peace” campaign, with Los Angeles-area businesses donating a portion of proceeds to PTV

Please visit www.ptvla.org for details on participating businesses

June 27, 7:00 PM

“First Do No Harm,” forum co-sponsored by PTV about the role of medical professionals in U.S.-sponsored torture

All Saints Church, Pasadena

Further Information: 818-225-0410 or vclassick@aol.com

July 1, 6:30 PM

“Expressions of Hope,” co-sponsored by PTV, featuring performances and art work by torture survivors

Rosenthal Theater, downtown Los Angeles

Further information: gperez@lafla.biz or call Gloria Perez at (323) 801-7901