The Program for Torture Victims (PTV) assists the courageous survivors of government–sponsored or government-instigated torture or persecution who have stood up for freedom, equality and human dignity. For 38 years, PTV has helped new U.S. refugees, from over 70 countries, heal their physical and psychological wounds, and start a second life here in California.

**HEAL THE WOUNDS**
with integrated medical and mental health care for uninsured survivors

**ENSURE JUSTICE**
by authoring expert reports that provide evidence and credibility for survivors’ claims for asylum

**RESTORE HOPE**
by helping survivors rediscover their strengths and dreams

**RE-ESTABLISH TRUST**
and self-confidence that human rights abuses have taken away

**HELP WITH BASIC NEEDS**
such as food, housing, and transportation while we plan a path to self-sufficiency

**MISSION**

Miranda
Survivor from Honduras

Johnson
Survivor from Cameroon
Asylum seekers flee traumatic experiences. But frequently a second trauma occurs during the flight or journey — such as when the refugee is robbed, raped, or forced into servitude by a captor.

The last few years, we have seen a third trauma caused after the survivor’s arrival in the US. The Trump Administration lowered the cap for refugees to the lowest level in history and created many additional barriers for those seeking asylum, an international legal right. Family separations at the border, indefinite detention of asylum seekers in jail-like conditions, and immigration judges’ decisions overruled by politicians all contribute to an environment of fear, stress, and uncertainty that profoundly affected our survivors. And yet, Southern California continues to be a beacon for those fleeing persecution or other human rights abuse. There are an estimated 250,000 asylum seekers now living in California who have suffered first, second and, now, third traumas.

PTV has answered the crisis with medical care, mental health counseling, peer support, food and housing assistance, job training, and help with other unmet needs.

Thanks to your commitment to healing the most traumatized and vulnerable refugees, 2018 was a year of incredible growth for PTV. We launched a new emergency housing program, began serving asylum seekers in detention facilities, and planned for a new office in Orange County.

Thank you for your compassion and humanity. Please know that your gifts helped us heal and assist more than 350 vulnerable asylum seekers who remained resilient, even after countless traumas.

Warmly,

Trip Oldfield
Executive Director

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Torture is almost exclusively carried out, or allowed to be carried out, by government leaders or their agents — the military, the police, village mayors, hate groups, drug cartels, or tribal leaders — to intimidate, repress and dehumanize individuals who are speaking out for governmental accountability, freedom, or equality. It’s used to break the human spirit. It’s used to instill fear in populations and keep regimes in power at any cost.

Persecution is the creation of systematic oppression, hostility, and violence directed at minority ethnic, religious, or other groups such as the LGBT community. Persecution commonly leads to segregation, forced resettlement, or extermination.

Although illegal under international law, both torture and persecution are prevalent. These devastating violations of human rights shatter lives, separate families, and can destroy whole communities.

FREQUENT TARGETS OF TORTURE AND PERSECUTION
INCLUDE HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS, UNION LEADERS, JOURNALISTS, TEACHERS, LGBT AND WOMEN’S RIGHTS DEFENDERS, RELIGIOUS OR ETHNIC MINORITIES, ENVIRONMENTALISTS, AND STUDENT LEADERS.

Scars caused by cigarette burns on a survivor from the Democratic Republic of Congo.
WHAT WE DO

MENTAL HEALTH CARE
As the pioneer in torture rehabilitation, PTV has developed an integrated and successful approach to healing survivors with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other disorders associated with torture or human rights abuse. PTV offers psychological evaluation, individual and family psychotherapy, peer support, and follow-up care.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL CARE
Most survivors cannot access government or workplace health coverage during their first year in the US. Through our Human Rights Health Clinic at Eisner Health, PTV provides outpatient medical care by physicians who are trained in refugee trauma. When specialists are needed, we utilize the network we have created at Eisner Health, California Hospital, and at other local health care facilities at no cost to the client. PTV also offers emergency or trauma-related dental care through our partnership with the Change a Life Foundation.

LEGAL SUPPORT
PTV works with an extensive network of attorneys and legal aid organizations to ensure high-quality legal assistance for our clients. Our staff conducts forensic medical and psychological evaluations, serves as expert witnesses for asylum cases in federal immigration proceedings, as well as for human rights or war crimes tribunals in international courts. Additionally, we provide training to attorneys and federal immigration officers.

BASIC NEEDS AND NAVIGATION
PTV provides basic needs such as emergency food, clothing, housing, and transportation, as well as linkages to employment training and language classes. Our Survivor Advocates help survivors navigate the complex and bureaucratic US legal, healthcare and workplace sectors and help acclimate refugees to U.S. culture.

COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES
Our holistic and integrated approach to healing also includes massage therapy, chiropractic care, acupuncture, relaxation classes, art therapy, storytelling and theatre, which are provided through our innovative partnerships with local teaching institutions or by dedicated volunteer professionals.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY
PTV initiates public programs to educate the general public about the global use of government-sponsored torture and persecution and its consequences for individuals and society. We also engage elected officials and policymakers in efforts to identify and combat human rights abuses and advocate for resources to heal refugees and ensure fair treatment and justice for asylum seekers.

“PTV’S WORK DEFIES EVIL BY RESURRECTING AND INSISTING ON THE TRIUMPH OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT.”

MIKE FARRELL
SAFE SHELTER
One of the dire circumstances that survivors face once they arrive in the US is homelessness. Having arrived with little to no resources, many come to our doors needing a place to sleep. High rents and the lack of a support network force far too many survivors to sleep in a car or on the streets. Through an innovative new partnership with All Saints’ Church in Highland Park, PTV now offers a year-round emergency shelter with 9 bed capacity.

On an emergency basis, PTV provides men and women with a safe place to sleep where survivors can rest and prepare for the work of healing and the legal challenges of asylum that lie ahead. PTV is proud to have the support of Change a Life Foundation to ensure the ongoing operation of this invaluable space where survivors can find a safe alternative to the streets.

SOUTHERN EXPANSION
In October 2018, PTV began services for survivors of torture and persecution in Orange County. Supported by a new grant from the US Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), PTV opened a satellite office in Santa Ana. With Public Law Center as our partner, PTV staff now provide high quality health, legal, and case management services to a region that previously had no dedicated services for asylum seekers.

While the federal grant supported a new team of caring staff, generous gifts from Change a Life Foundation and The Samueli Foundation transformed the office into a welcoming space where healing and sharing can take place. With soft touches and warm colors, the new office has become a new home for survivors in Orange County. This expansion south solidifies our commitment to helping refugees impacted by human rights abuse and furthers our goal to be a leader in rehabilitation and healing in Southern California.

PTV’s new Orange County satellite office in Santa Ana.
Berihun is a refugee from Eritrea where the United Nations has documented lawless killings, widespread imprisonment of political activists, and involuntary military service of children. Freedoms of speech, religion, and assembly are severely limited.

As a teenager, Berihun was forcibly taken from his family and enlisted into military service. His life was no longer his own and each day became, as he says, a “quest for survival.” The years of his military training can only be described as sadistic. He says, “We were beaten, fed contaminated food, exposed to the scorching heat of the Eritrean desert.” Verbal abuse, degradation, and extended periods of confinement in metal cages exposed to the burning sun were normal practices.

Though he suffered through years of this, Berihun refused to take part in the harm and killing of other soldiers as was expected. As punishment, he was taken to a detention center, imprisoned and tortured. Upon his release, his family helped him flee the country. When he arrived in Los Angeles, he found PTV. His treatment team diagnosed him with PTSD and counseled him through his unending nightmares. He has received therapy to cope with the memories of those merciless years in military servitude and their resulting PTSD symptoms. He also received food, help with housing and transportation, and English language classes. PTV helped him find an attorney to aid with the complicated asylum process.

Today, Berihun greets everyone with a smile. He brings a wholeness that he wasn’t able to when he first arrived at PTV. He is grateful to have escaped with his life and to have renewed hope for the future. His life reflects the best of what generous support and kindness make possible.
PTV THANKS THE INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND INSTITUTIONS WHO, THROUGH GIFTS OR CONTRIBUTIONS, MADE OUR IMPORTANT WORK POSSIBLE....

CONTRIBUTORS

$100,000 OR MORE
Change a Life Foundation
Eisner Health
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services/Office of Refugee Resettlement

$50,000 OR MORE
State of California/Governor’s Office of Emergency Services
California Community Foundation/LA Justice Fund
City of Los Angeles/LA Justice Fund
The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
Queenscare

$25,000 OR MORE
S Mark Taper Foundation
T. June and Simon K.C. Li

$10,000 OR MORE
California Int’l Education Foundation
Jimmy and Janet Lee
Teamsters Local 572
The Herb Block Foundation
The Samuell Foundation
United Nations Voluntary Fund

$5,000 OR MORE
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$2,500 OR MORE
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Nina Shaw
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$1,000 OR MORE
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Hannah Plucinski
Keenan Porterfield
Bien T. Quach
Dominique Quevedo
Nora Quinn
Ralphs/Food4Less Foundation
Joan Reiter
Joanne Renaud

Andrey
Survivor from Russia
Faizah grew up in a part of Sudan where almost all girls undergo female genital mutilation (or FGM). In her tribe, the brutal procedure is considered an induction into proper womanhood and is typically done to girls as young as five.

Faizah was seven when she was held down by tribal elders for the first time. The first procedure was considered a failure so her elders sent her to have it done a second time where she endured even more horrific pain as the procedure was more aggressive and done with no anesthesia. The long-term consequences of FGM left Faizah with physical ailments such as recurring infections, and difficult births with each of her five children.

When Faizah had her own daughters, she knew that she needed to do all she could to prevent them from experiencing the same pain she had.

Faizah and her husband Azim realized that the only sure way to protect their girls would be to flee. Their family sought refuge and started a new life in Los Angeles. With a mix of trepidation and hope, Faizah moved forward to seek basic needs and legal support from PTV.

Working with a Survivor Advocate, Faizah has been able to work through the immense challenges of resettling in a new culture on a new continent with a family of seven. PTV assisted Faizah and her family in navigating fraught legal channels that resulted in the family receiving asylum last year. Faizah is comforted in finally knowing that her daughters are free from FGM and the pain that she endured.
Bakti arrived at PTV worn down. He had struggled his whole life to practice his Buddhist faith in peace in his native Bangladesh. After a massive wave of violence targeted Buddhists, he, his wife Sopa, and their 16 year old son Taji, fled to the US in 2012. Bakti was a tireless community organizer helping other Buddhists suffering from the rampant attacks. One night, as he left a meeting, he was gruesomely beaten and left unconscious with a broken leg and bleeding head wound. This final incident forced his family to flee.

In Los Angeles, Bakti couldn’t sleep without having nightmares that included thrashing, kicking and yelling. His waking hours were filled with fears of being sent back. His family’s arduous task navigating the asylum process in their native language, Bengali, resulted in missed appointments and ongoing frustrations.

At PTV, Bakti worked closely with a therapist and a trusted translator to produce a psychological evaluation. These sessions also helped him manage his confusion and anxieties stemming from his past. PTV’s medical director also wrote up key findings for a medical forensic report. These reports would be critical to establishing credibility in court for his family’s forthcoming asylum case.

“Finally,” he said, “I can be understood. I have such relief to tell my story and know that the truth of my case will be heard.” One afternoon in March, the family visited PTV with news. After so much uncertainty, their family had won asylum and were finally free to imagine a future in California.

Of life since getting asylum, Bakti reports finally feeling safe, Sopa reports that she can sleep without fear of being physically hurt by her husband’s nightmares, and Taji reports that he can breathe a little easier and focus on his own dreams as a young man.

Fr. Clarke Prescott gives a tour of the organic garden at the new Emergency Shelter.
**KEY VOLUNTEERS**

Danae Bowen  
Development Intern  

Peggy Farrell  
Attorney  

Miranda Garcia  
Survivor Speaker  

Michael Leck  
Videographer  

Adam Lee, MD  
Patient Advocate  

Diane Lefer  
Art Group Facilitator  

Susan Matranga  
Educational Support  

Angeles Medina  
Development Volunteer  

Ben Nganoah  
Survivor Speaker  

Sharon Plunkett  
Employment Advocate  

Fr. Clarke Prescott  
Housing Advocate  

Robin Schoenfeld, RN  
TRE Instructor  

Rev. Catherine Wagar and Bruce Rankin  
Housing Advocates  

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* The name, image, or other identifying characteristics of some survivors may be changed to protect client confidentiality and the safety of family and friends that still live in the survivor’s country of origin.