

THE HRSI Herald

HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE

November/December 2014

Aware. Concerned. Engaged.



16 days of activism against gender-based violence at CEU (1/2)

The Human RightS Initiative has once again organized the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. It is part of an international campaign taking place between November 25th (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) and December 10th (Human Rights Day) to raise awareness on related topics.

This year's campaign has included a wide range of events covering many different issues - the campaign kicked off with the installment of a memorial site for the victims of transphobic violence in the Japanese Garden (Nov20-26). This was followed by an ongoing installation in the Octagon to commemorate victims of domestic violence (Nov25-Dec2). The third and final phase included a week-long exhibition dedicated to body positivity (Dec6-13) in the Laptop Area.

Apart from the ongoing elements, there were a number of specific events and activities as well: an infotable with cookies raising awareness about privileges of male and cis persons was set up in the Octagon (Nov25). A community remembrance event for victims of transphobia as part of the TdoR events took place with the reading out of the names and a candle vigil of victims of transphobia over the previous twelve months (Nov26).

Mexican students at CEU mobilize following abduction of 43 students

Several students from various CEU programs with the support of the Human RightS Initiative have reacted to the abduction of 43 college students in Ayotzinapa. Following the establishment of a traditional memorial altar in the N9 Laptop Area and a presentation on the current political situation and roots of escalating violence in Mexico, participants could take part in preparations for a video campaign calling for the return of the missing students. The video has since received widespread attention and has been published in the Mexican online media as well. The video is available via the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1s6vmcS5uU>



CEU volunteers for Chance for Children Foundation

The cooperation between HRSI and CFCF resulted in various volunteering opportunities and the CEU community did indeed contribute immediately to their work. In the first round, several people helped with sorting out data to identify which primary schools in Hungary have segregated classes, a crucial part for a lawsuit CFCF launched and eventually won in November. Following the court decision, CFCF continued to help the families affected, organizing day-long trips to the village of Gyöngyöspata - where the local school also violated law - by gathering their data in order to demand compensation. Many members of the staff and students volunteered. Below is the account of Annamária Tóth, research assistant at the Department of Cognitive Science, who visited the village and helped with surveys:

„They informed us about the ongoing lawsuit, how it will be a legal precedent, its background and how we will survey the families (...) It was good to know what exactly our task will be and how important the case is. We then travelled to Gyöngyöspata by car and formed pairs of one volunteer and one CFCF employee. People were welcoming and answered our questions. (...) I was a bit tired by the end of the day, but it felt good that we contributed to a good cause. I recommend volunteering at CFCF for everybody!”

CFCF is among the organizations attending the 11th annual NGO Fair organized by HRSI which will take place on February 5th between 11 am - 2 pm and future cooperation with them is expected.

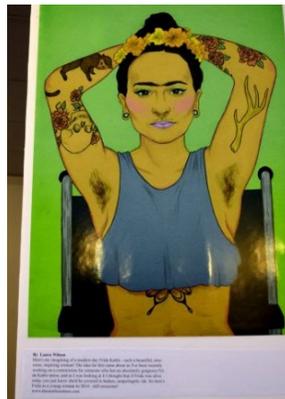
16 days of activism against gender-based violence at CEU (2/2)

Exploring the topic of obstetric violence, we organized a screening of Freedom for Birth (Nov27) with guests from the organization Birth House Association. Another documentary, Ruins - Chronicles of an HIV-hunt was also presented on the occasion of World AIDS Day (Dec1) with Antonios Pesinis, a Human Rights LLM student answering questions about the situation in Greece and details of the case. Furthermore, a workshop on bystander intervention and how to effectively identify situations in which we should speak up or act (Dec2) was held by Gender Studies MA student Andreea Catalina Ros. We celebrated and concluded the campaign with an informal event in the office on Human Rights Day (Dec10) with inviting all those who supported/helped/contributed to our various activities throughout the semester.



Movement Amy Edgington

I want to see a ballerina
with hairy legs
and underarms;
a fat ballerina
with huge breasts;
a ballerina who
wears dreadlocks;
one who's old and grey
in ordinary clothes.
I want to watch
a ballerina stumble
and laugh or pirouette
in a wheelchair;
I want to see her
clasp another woman
and lift her high.
Then I will be moved.



Winter Clothing Drive and Shoebox Full of Love Campaign Breaks Record

HRSI has been organizing both events for several years now, and this year, thanks to many enthusiastic students and staff members, we have managed to collect more than 350 kilograms (around 50 large-sized bags) of warm clothing items as well as over 70 packages of toys and presents destined for children coming from a disadvantaged background. The main beneficiary this year were pupils of the Miklós Zrínyi Elementary School, located in the 20th district of Budapest, as well as their families. Distribution of donations was coordinated by the local minority self-government (in Hungarian: kisebbségi önkormányzat) which has ties with local communities. Following the positive experience, HRSI and the self-government agreed to continue cooperation which will be one of the main topics for the next semester and envisions an English tutoring as well as a social sensitivity training program for local youth. We would like to thank the support of the CEU community once more!



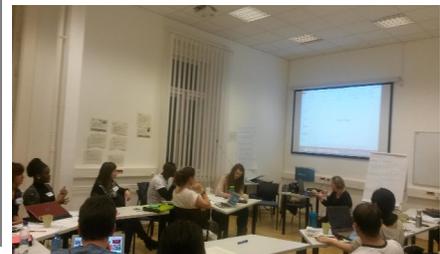
Events commemorating the Day Against Fascism and Anti-Semitism

HRSI was pleased to support an initiative of RGPP and RELP students regarding the International Day Against Fascism and Anti-Semitism. On the occasion, a guided tour was organized to the Holocaust Memorial Centre in the 8th district of Budapest (Nov9). Following a brief presentation on the persecution and prejudices against Roma throughout the history of Europe. Furthermore, a screening of an award-winning documentary, 'A People Uncounted' was held on November 11th.



Workshop on Social Entrepreneurship

The second workshop of the 2014/15 Academic Year was held on November 29th with the topic being social entrepreneurship, led by Anna Horváth, country director at NESST. Twenty participants could take part in the day-long seminar focusing on how can one come up with innovative and sustainable solutions to solve various social problems. Based on the feedback, participants were quite satisfied with the knowledge acquired and they also received a certificate of attendance.



Other events

Due to the campus redevelopment program and the reconstruction of the Nádor 13 and 15 buildings, many items of office furniture became obsolete. Thanks to CEU's objective to take into account environmental and sustainability considerations during the project, HRSI could play an essential role in helping the donation of these to Hungarian NGOs and other formations. Menhely Association, dealing with homelessness, the Roma Press Center, the Migrants Help Association, the Szigony Foundation, offering psychological and psychiatric help, and Baptist Aid received numerous items of furniture including tables, drawers, chairs and so on. One of the most active CEU members, Judith Rason, Assistant Professor at the Department of Medieval Studies, again knitted scarves for all 42 children attending the Wesley János Kindergarten which we were happy to transport along with another 42 advent calendar surprises, ensured by the support of CEU staff members.