

# PORT CALL

Harbor of Hospitality



Seafarers International House

Winter 2016

## Looking Ahead:

### Setting the Course

Annual Awards Banquet

Thursday, April 21, 2016  
New York Athletic Club

Honoring

### H. Marshall Ainley

Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association

### Captain Ian T. Blackley

OSG Shipholding Group, Inc.

### Raymond J. Burke, Jr. Esq.

Burke & Parsons

Reservations or Information:

212-677-4800 (ext. 1203)

cvr@sihny.org

## Special Reception

Meet

### Mr. Ian Urbina

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Investigative Reporter & Author

"The Outlaw Ocean"

Sunday, March 6, 2016, 2:00 pm

J. Gordon Swanson Conference Center

Seafarers International House

123 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003

RSVP

212-677-4800 ext. 1203 or cvr@sihny.org

## Seafarers International House

123 East 15th Street

New York, NY 10003

212-677-4800 (24/7)

www.sihny.org

Seafarers International House serves seafarers and immigrants with pastoral care, hospitality, social assistance, advocacy and prayer in the ports in Baltimore, Philadelphia, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island, and in an 84-room guesthouse in Manhattan.

## Criminal Justice For Seafarers

It's always easier to prosecute a foreign seafarer.

After the M/V NISSOS AMORGOS, grounded in the Maracaibo Channel in 1997, even the Venezuelan Navy's findings of unrecorded channel siltage and obstructions did not stop the Venezuelan Government from detaining and convicting the Greek captain of criminal negligence. Eight years later, when the public outrage quieted, the conviction was dismissed. No action was ever taken against its port authorities or pilots.

In 2003, the M/V TASMEN SPIRIT was entering the Port of Karachi, when the local pilot ran her aground. She broke and spilled thousands of tons of crude oil in the port. Only after compensation agreements satisfactory to various port businesses were negotiated eight years later, did Pakistan release the Greek captain and seven crew members who had been charged with criminal intent to pollute. The Pakistani pilot was neither charged or detained.

The M/V HEBEI SPIRIT, anchored off the Korean coast in December 2007 was hit by a loose crane barge, causing heavy pollution. The ship's captain and chief officer, both Indian nationals, were arrested, convicted of marine pollution and two years later were released in June 2009.

In 2009, the supertanker MC TOSA, on voyage from South Korea to Singapore was more than one hour away from the position where a Taiwanese fishing boat sunk, killing two fishermen. The hull of the tanker exhibited no signs of collision. Nevertheless, the ship was escorted from international waters by the Taiwanese Coast Guard into port and the captain, another officer and a crew member were arrested. The

authority official is seemingly more acceptable.

Additionally, foreign seafarers are less likely to know the local laws, customs and language. They are miles from home, well beyond their social and business networks. Unfamiliar with their surroundings, they will be cautious and, as a result, less likely to assert whatever legal rights they may have. Even in the United States Attorneys' practice of isolating and detaining foreign crews as material witnesses for months on end is abusive and wouldn't be tolerated by U.S. seafarers and their lawyers.

Flags of Convenience exacerbate the poor treatment of seafarers. There is no national commonality among registry, ship and crew.

This is not to say that flag states and ship owners are quick to throw the crew "under the bus", but the relationship is commercial, largely unaffected by national nostalgia. If a ship master is jailed in some faraway port, the ship owner or agent is primarily concerned with getting a replacement to keep the ship on schedule. Moreover, most crew hiring is handled by subcontracting to manning agents, allowing the ship owner to further distance itself from the plight of an arrested crew member.

Ship masters, in particular, are



M/V Hebei Spirit Master Jaspritt Chawla and family united after 551 days of "false arrest"

Indian captain was charged with involuntary manslaughter and detained. Two years later, the charges were dropped. <sup>1</sup>

Cause and effect do not always play a large role in maritime prosecutions, which instead may amount to little more than efforts to assuage local public opinion, outraged at the death of a local fisherman or the fouling of a local beach. Casting the blame on a foreign seafarer instead of a local pilot or port

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## Criminal Justice (continued from page 1)

susceptible to pressure by ship owners. "We know you have the right not to take this risk, but other captains are taking it and save us a lot of money." Ship masters who insist on sound, but expensive safety improvements (e.g. an increase of crew manpower) are risking contract non-renewal.<sup>2</sup>

And when a marine casualty follows, the ship owner will deny exerting any improper influence, as the masters of the M/V NISSOS AMORGOS and M/V PRESTIGE can attest.

One of "conveniences" of foreign registries is that business decisions can be made largely free of public opinion. When a ship is flagged in Panama, chartered to a French firm, operated with Indian officers and a Filipino crew, and carrying iron ore from Australia to China, it's

hard to identify the relevant "public" that might decry an injustice to a seafarer.

Moreover, different nations with different cultures will see "injustice" through different lenses. As such, it is difficult to quantify the extent to which foreign seafarers are subject to criminal injustice. Nevertheless, a survey of seafarers' experience with criminal prosecutions showed a frequent lack of due process, as understood among developed nations.<sup>3</sup> For example:

- 91% of the seafarers weren't offered the services of a translator.
- 90% weren't provided legal representation.
- 63% of their cabins were searched without consent or warrant.

While the multiplicity of legal

systems to which seafarers are subject are problematic, the transnational character of the maritime industry effectively prevents any paternal regard for seafarers.

Or, as one seafarer observed, "[i]n most cases the seafarers are used as scapegoats and someone has to take the blame and all too often it's the little person who takes the fall, especially when huge corporations are involved."<sup>4</sup>

Sad, but probably quite true.

1. *Seafarers and the Criminal Law: High Profile Cases*, Seafarers Rights International, 2015

2. *Masters Advisory Panel Report*, INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SHIPMASTER'S ASSOCIATIONS, Annual General Assembly, Lübeck 2001

3. *SRI Survey: Seafarers and the Criminal Law*, SEAFARERS RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL, 2nd Edition, 2013

4. *Ibid*

Christopher V. Roehrer, Director  
Development and Communications

## Safety vs. Schedule

It was only four months since the M/V EL FARO was lost at sea during Hurricane Joaquin.

Yet earlier this month, the Royal Caribbean's new Quantam Class cruise ship, ANTHEM OF THE SEAS set sail from Bayonne NJ to Port Canaveral FL in the face of hurricane-force winds this last February 6<sup>th</sup> with 4,529 passengers and 1,616 crew members onboard.

The El Faro is lying three miles below the surface of the Atlantic, its entire 33-man crew having perished.

The ANTHEM OF THE SEAS, a giant cruise ship over 1,100 feet long, survived the 125+ mph winds and 30-foot waves, returned to Bayonne with major interior damage and,



Extreme Cruising

fortunately, few injuries.

According to the ship's master, the "extreme wind and sea conditions" were unexpected and not accurately forecast.<sup>1</sup>

That statement is "in stark contrast to meteorologists who have stated that the storm was accurately forecast last week."

"It's hard to believe no one at Royal Caribbean had been aware of a storm system that had been forecast . . . days in advance."<sup>2</sup>

A Royal Caribbean statement said, "In an abundance of caution, the Captain asked all guests to stay in their stateroom until the weather improved."<sup>3</sup>

Really? Wouldn't an "abundance of caution" been never to have sailed in the face of the storm

in the first place?

1. *Jim Walker, "Anthem of the Seas Cruises into Rough Weather"*, CRUISE LAW NEWS, February 8, 2016

2. *Jim Walker, "Master of Anthem of the Seas: Storm Not Accurately Forecast"*, CRUISE LAW NEWS, February 9, 2016

3. *AnneClaire Stapleton, "Cruise Ship Turns around, Calls off Trip after Storm"*, CNN, February 9, 2016

## Not Prepared For Snow



Rev. Marsh Luther Drege  
Pastor and Executive Director

seen a snowflake before. Well, then, perhaps they would like to go outside and enjoy this infrequent phenomenon of New York City streets transformed into pedestrian malls because all vehicular traffic had been suspended throughout the whole city?

They smiled and showed me their shoes: flip flops. They were wholly unprepared for winter in New York. I found out their shoe size and lent them some of mine. Then they were able to experience for the first time the wonders of winter! They came back smiling and full of stories of their new adventure.

Each of the twelve asylum

seekers who stayed in our Guesthouse last year (for a total of over 700 nights) came with very few resources: little money and only a few changes of clothing, but nothing for winter. Dressing properly, getting food and accessing mass transit are huge challenges.

Seafarers International House provides them one major thing that they desperately need: housing. But resources for the other basic needs are sparse.

So, we're introducing a *Getting Started Fund* to help them with food, transit and clothing, basic things that they will need, and we invite you to consider a donation to this special fund.

A Metrocard providing four round trips costs just over \$20. A winter coat at a nearby thrift shop will run about \$30. A pair of water-resistant shoes, about \$50. So for \$100 you can outfit an asylee with proper clothes for his or her new life in the United States and several subway rides.

Another \$50 for a gift card at a local supermarket will provide an asylee with food for one week, (nothing fancy, but nutritious). Clearly, at Manhattan prices, restaurants are not an option.

Most of our asylees stay at our Guesthouse for one month while they finish the immigration documentation, secure a job and find an apartment.

So, for \$200, you can "adopt" an asylee and get them started for the first month in their new home in this Country: basic clothing, basic transportation, and basic food. Basic hospitality.

Please consider "adopting" the financial support of one of our asylum seekers. They will be grateful, and we will be able to thank you with stories of how your care and contributions helped to welcome these newest arrivals to America.

Blessings,

*Marsh Luther Drege*

I suppose my first clue should have been that they are from central Africa. Still, I was surprised that two of our asylum seeker guests, one from Nigeria and one from Cameroon, were inside the Guesthouse lobby when the empty, snow-laden streets were calling their names.

I asked them if they had ever experienced a blizzard before. They both smiled and indicated not only hadn't they experienced a blizzard before, but had never

## To Beth From Tiberiu

"Beth

Thank you for even taking the time to write few warm words to me, a total stranger! You really made this a better world, as I also try! I can only repay your gesture by being helpful to others as you did for me. God bless you all that made this possible!

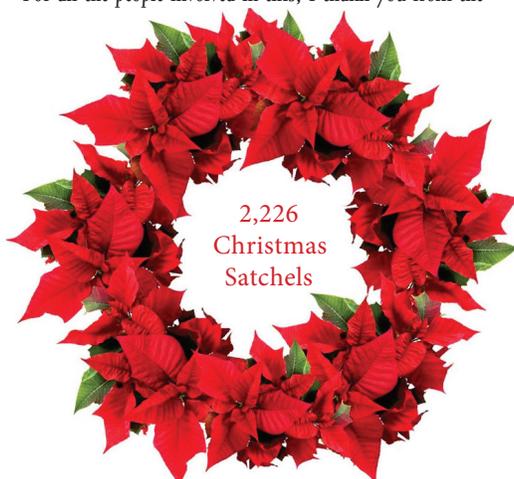
Tiberiu"

Other than the fact that he's a seafarer, we don't know who Tiberiu is. Other than the fact that she participated in Christmas-at-Sea, we don't know who Beth is either. And it's pretty clear from the note that Tiberiu and Beth don't know each other.

Complete strangers joined together for a moment in gratitude and joy. Tiberiu explained how important this Christmas gesture was for him.

I was extremely surprised and impressed by the gift you made, and I can only imagine the beautiful heart of the

person behind it. It gave me strength and belief that there is still good in the world. I want you to know that this didn't go unnoticed! Your efforts were much appreciated! For all the people involved in this, I thank you from the



Beth, if this story reaches you, we'll forward your response to Tiberiu

bottom of my heart! It is not the first time someone is helping me, but is the first time when such a thing comes from a total stranger so far from home.

The likelihood that "Beth" will receive this newsletter and read this note from "Tiberiu" is slim. We're sharing it with everybody, however, because Tiberiu's message is so powerful: It gave me strength and belief that there is still good in the world.

Our port chaplains delivered a record 2,226 satchels to seafarers this last Christmas, and we'd like to believe that an equal number of landlubbers and seafarers, giving and receiving the Christmas-at-Sea satchels, also came to the strengthened belief that there is still good in the world.

That belief may be the second-best gift of Christmas.

## FOCs—Some Better, Some Worse

The Paris MoU is an association of 27 maritime nations, formed for the purpose of auditing the operation and condition of ships in the waters of the European coastal States and the North Atlantic basin from North America to Europe.

Paris MoU, established in 1982, was a reaction to the failure of port states, primarily the FOCs, to fulfil their survey and certification duties.

There are four levels of sanction that Paris MoU can impose on a substandard ship: (a) a minor infraction to be rectified within fourteen days, (b) a deficiency to be rectified when the ship arrives at the next MoU port,

(c) a more serious deficiency to be rectified before the ship can depart from port and (d) ultimately, denying the ship entry into any covered port.

With the adoption of MLC 2006, many port states have become more diligent in monitoring the ships in their registry. But some are better than others, and accordingly, the Paris MoU divides them into three groups – white, gray and black.

For 2014, a total number of 72 flags are listed, with 43 on the White List (highest performance and lowest number of detentions), 19 on the Grey List (average performance) and 10

on the Black list (lowest performance and highest detentions).

For the third year in a row, France has placed highest on the White List, followed by Hong Kong, Bahamas, Norway and Sweden. The United States was ninth. New to the White List is India, which in 2013 was on the Grey List.

New to the Grey List are Spain, Lithuania, Poland and Thailand, which in 2013 were on the White List.

The Black List includes Tanzania, Moldova, Togo, Cook Islands and Dominica. New to the Black List is Belize, which in 2013 was on the Grey List.

In twenty instances in 2014, ships were banned from Paris MoU waters. Some were scrapped and others simply had their routes moved to other ports areas. With the implementation of MLC 2006 and the efforts of the Paris MoU and similar organizations, it

is becoming more difficult for sub-standard ships to operate. Nevertheless, some of these ships “continue to take their chances visiting [Paris MoU] ports. These ships and their owners do not respect these international requirements and apparently have no intentions of doing so. They continue to pose a threat to safety, the environment and working and living conditions on board.”<sup>1</sup>

The members of the Paris MOU are Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom and Canada, but not the United States.

1. Statement by the Secretary General, PORT STATE CONTROL, ANNUAL REPORT 2014, Paris MoU, page 7

## Cheap Fish, Cheap People

President Obama will sign into law an amendment of the Tariff Act of 1930, thereby banning the import of fish caught by slave labor, often teenage boys.<sup>1</sup> For 85 years, the earlier Act sanctioned a leveraged morality: if domestic production could not meet demand, then goods derived from slavery were permitted.

The long overdue amendment follows a United Nations report on transnational organized crime in the fishing industry. The report noted that “fishers are held as *de facto* prisoners of the sea [with] instances of reported deaths, severe physical and sexual abuse, coercion and general disregard for safety”<sup>2</sup> The enslaved fishers are often trafficked children.

The amendment also follows an indepth investigation entitled “The Outlaw Ocean” by Ian Urbina, one segment of which featured servitude on fishing boats, in which those who fled recounted the sick cast overboard, the defiant beheaded and the insubordinate locked below deck in a dark, fetid fishing hold.<sup>3</sup>

The ability to combat sea slavery and marine resource crimes is hampered by FOCs – the practice of corporate entities to register their ships in flag states that are unable or unwilling to enforce what little criminal jurisdiction they have. Indeed, the UN report concluded that the licensing and control of fishing is riddled with corruption. Fleets are “awarded” fishing rights in the fishing grounds of undeveloped

nation lacking the ability to protect their marine resources.

Thailand seems to be a magnet for illegal fishing. Boats arrested by its government regularly escape port, disappearing on the high seas. The nation has a shortage of 50,000 mariners and relies on the migrants from Myanmar and Cambodia. As always, migrants are easy targets.

1. Ian Urbina, “U.S. Closing a LooHole on Prodcuts Tied to Slaves,” THE NEW YORK TIMES, February 16, 2016, page A8

2. “Transactional Organized Crime in the Fishing Industry”, UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME, Vienna, 2011

3. Ian Urbina, “Sea Slaves: The Human Misery That Feeds Pets and Livestock” (The Outlaw Ocean), THE NEW YORK TIMES, July 27, 2015



Some of these kids are not even teenagers

## What Are Your Intentions?

So there you are: stopped at a red-light and observing a car approaching the intersection from your right. You're late for an appointment, so you call the driver of the other car, explain your schedule predicament and ask if he would slow down and allow you to cross ahead against the light. He declines, so you calculate that, with a little throttle, you can cross the intersection before the other car enters it.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Richard Madden poses this hypothetical situation to illustrate a disturbing scenario played out by a senior deck officer in a ship simulator training exercise.

Since 1972, the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) have set out the "rules of the road" for ships and other vessels at sea to prevent collisions. There is no absolute "right of way" in COLREGS. Instead the emphasis

is on a shared responsibility to avoid collisions, with ships categorized as "give-way" (i.e. burdened) vessels and "stand-on" (i.e. privileged) vessels.

In the ship simulator crossing situation mentioned, the ship on the starboard side must give way to the ship on the port side, and must take early and substantial action to keep well clear.<sup>2</sup>

It's not a green light, however, for the stand-on vessel. She shall maintain her course and speed, but she may take action to avoid collision if it becomes clear that the give-way vessel is not taking appropriate action, or when the two are so close that a collision can no longer be avoided by the give-way vessel alone.

The problem Capt. Madden identifies is the use of the bridge-to-bridge VHF radio to ask "What are your intentions?"

Surely, one might presume that

the intent of the other vessel is to follow COLREGS, and yet the question amounts to a request to digress from those rules.

Ship owners aren't pleased when the ship is late for a pilot, a dock or a longshore gang, and ship masters are well aware of this. As we know, sometimes they'll sail into hurricanes to keep on schedule.

Time spent on the VHF radio about intentions uses up time and concentration that might have been spent on collision avoidance. It also runs the risk that English is not everybody's first language. Lastly, it invites ad hoc deviation from rules



Whoops. What did you say your intentions were?

reasonably well designed to avoid collisions.<sup>3</sup>

1. Captain Richard Madden, "What If We Drove Cars Like We Drove Ships?", MARITIME EXECUTIVE, February 2, 2016

2. Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs) 1972 (adopted) and 1977 (effective)

3. Op cit. 1

## Rescued in Philadelphia

M/V Venta, a Lithuanian-flagged and state-owned bulk carrier, arrived in Port Philadelphia last June 30<sup>th</sup> and within three days was arrested for non-payment of numerous bills owing, including several months back wages to the 20-person Russian and Lithuanian crew.

Lacking credit for wharfage fees, the VENTA remained at anchorage for weeks, making it difficult for Rev. Bill Rex, our port chaplain and his colleagues at the Seamen's Church Institute in Philadelphia (with whom Seafarers International House collaborates in the port) to access the ship and meet the needs of the crew.

To keep operating costs down, the ship master reportedly rationed food, overworked the crew and threatened violence. Moreover,

LISCO reportedly pressured the mariners' families in Lithuania to drop their wage claims.<sup>1</sup>

While the port chaplains provided fans to alleviate the summer heat bearing down of the anchored vessel and fresh food and water, the local ITF inspectors worked to secure the crew's back wages.

On July 23rd LISCO filed a bankruptcy petition in Lithuania. When it became apparent that the petition would result in the sale and liquidation of LISCO's ships at very low values, it quickly negotiated a €3 million loan from the Scandinavian SEB Bank. The bankruptcy petition was promptly withdrawn and the VENTA released and set sail for Canada with a load of steel reportedly worth more than the poorly maintained ship. On ar-

rival, the crew received the rest of their wages and were repatriated.

Lithuania's prime minister commented "Of course, we have to take care of the seamen."<sup>2</sup>

With a new crew, the VENTA sailed from Canada to Lithuania, where on November 27, 2015 LISCO filed for bankruptcy again.<sup>3</sup>

We're left to wonder whether the prime minister still wants to "take care of the seamen".



## Enslaving Your Mother

Imagine you lived in Zimbabwe and everyone around you was struggling to stay alive, make ends meet and keep food on the table. Then you get a call from your daughter in the United States, asking you to leave Zimbabwe and come to America to live with her and her family.

That's exactly what happened to Miriam (not her real name). The opportunity to escape the death and destitution of the African village and the opportunity to reunite with her daughter and dote over grandchildren whom she had never seen was almost too good to be true.

So Miriam left Zimbabwe with the help of her daughter. When she arrived at JFK International, she was greeted with joy and open arms by the daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren.

The happiness and gratitude were shared. Miriam had food, water, a safe place to sleep and the company of her grandchildren – all things she lacked in Zimbabwe. And her daughter and son-in-law had a cook, a housekeeper and a babysitter.

Over time, however, Miriam felt less and less like a family member and more and more like an unpaid servant.

Over time, the daughter and son-in-law felt a diminished family connection with Miriam and a greater preoccupation with the cooking, housekeeping and babysitting services she was supposed to provide.

The family relationship became more of a business relationship, in which Miriam disintegrated from valued household assistant to indentured servant. She was not invited to join in family outings or neighborhood social events.

When her daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren left for a day, Miriam was not given run of the house. She couldn't watch television, brew a cup of tea in the kitchen or take a stroll around the block. She was locked up in her room, dimly lit and without a bed or furniture.

Miriam had become a human trafficking victim, by her own family, no less.

After months of this isolation and abuse, a concerned neighbor called the police, and she reported her suspicions about Miriam's treatment at the hands of her daughter and son-in-law. A patrol car was dispatched, and the police entered the home. They found Miriam locked in the dimly lit, unfurnished room. After a brief exchange of questions and answers, the police decided that she needed to be freed and taken to a safe location.

A nonprofit human trafficking rescue agency was contacted, and the agency accepted Miriam into their trafficking recovery program. The agency needed a place for Miriam to stay for a few weeks during the recovery process. They turned to Seafarers International House.

In addition to the agency's



regular meetings with Miriam, Seafarers International House's social worker intern visited Miriam and provided reassurance and encouragement. After several weeks, Miriam departed the Guesthouse and re-started a life of freedom and dignity.

Human trafficking is a terrible crime in which innocent people are offered work, then forced to give up their wages, their passports and their freedom.

Human trafficking is pernicious and can happen virtually under our noses in our own blocks and neighborhoods.

## Getting Started Fund

The vision is pretty clearly impressed on our imaginations: asylum seekers lucky to escape death and injury with only the clothes on their backs.

In the winter months, if their asylum claim is granted, their clothes are utterly insubstantial to keep them warm in the evening hours when the private prison operators release them. Needless to say, neither ICE nor Elizabeth Detention Center provides them with a warm coat. Nor transportation funds. Nor a food allowance.

After persecution in their homelands and incarceration in immigration detention centers in this country, the freedom that an asylee feels after arriving at our Guesthouse is euphoric. In a short time, the reality sinks in: "How can I get food? Where can I get clothing to keep me warm and dry? How do I get to my immigration lawyer or my doctor? Freedom can turn into loneliness and despair. In the past, Seafarers International



House's volunteers have purchased coats, shirts and jeans for released asylees, staying at its Guesthouse, along with food and MTA mass transit cards. Those resources are modest, however, and the need is great.

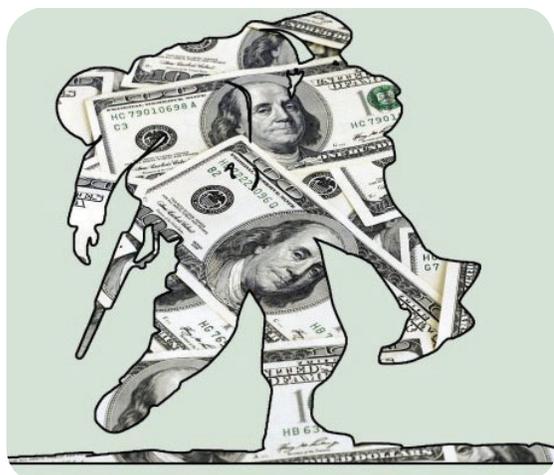
Seafarers International House is inviting all its constituents to make a donation to its special "Getting Started Fund". These restricted funds will give Seafarers International House more flexibility to meet a specific need, be it food, a transportation voucher or a new coat and shoes in the proper size and appropriate for the weather season then prevailing.

Fleeing persecution wasn't easy for asylum seekers nor was detention in a private prison. Let's pull together to make the asylee's first few months of freedom in this Country easier and more hospitable. Let's get our new neighbors started on the right foot with the basics. Consider a generous donation to the Getting Started Fund, and welcome an asylee to this country of immigrants.

## Overhead Myth?

It came to a head with the news about overhead spending at a veterans charity service organization: Is overhead spending a valid measure of nonprofit effectiveness?

It was reported that 500 of the organization's employees were flown to Colorado Springs for an "all hands" meeting at a five-star hotel, spotlighting its chief executive officer rappelling down a 10-story bell tower to a cheering crowd.<sup>1</sup>



The report noted that \$124 million (including the CEO's nearly \$0.5 million compensation) were spend on overhead in 2014 – 40% of total donations.

The organization claims that these overhead expenses have enabled it to grow faster and serve more people.

This argument has its defenders in the fundraising profession. GuideStar, Charity Navigator, and the BBB Wise Giving Alliance are campaigning to change the way people measure a nonprofits' success. Their *Overhead Myth Campaign*, denounces the overhead ratio (i.e. the amount of money spent of mission activities versus the amount spent on non-mission, support) as a valid indicator of nonprofit performance. "In fact,

they say, many charities should spend more on overhead [for] training, planning, evaluation, and internal systems."<sup>2</sup>

While the *Overhead Myth Campaign* acknowledges the usefulness of overhead ratios in rooting out fraud and poor financial management, high salaries and opulent travel expenses are not mentioned by the three watchdog agencies.

Indeed, the "need" for higher compensation to recruit staff and improve mission results is regularly trotted out in THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY.

CHRONICLE noted that a paltry 3.1% compensation increase in 2013 left many nonprofit chief executive officers so unhap-

py, that nonprofit boards were seeking other ways to keep their CEOs motivated, such as performance-based bonuses and incentives<sup>3</sup>

One might have thought that the mission itself would serve as a basis for CEO "happiness" without burdening the nonprofit with substantial six-figure salaries.

Sometimes mission grandeur can be mistaken for mission excellence. Grand buildings, grand brochures and websites, grand celebrity-filled galas and donor adoration don't necessarily translate to mission excellence.

Low-overhead ratios alone are an incomplete indicator of mission excellence, and there are instances in which the cost

allocations are contorted and the resulting ratios misleading.

That does not mean that high overhead ratios are acceptable. Furthermore, the argument that high salaries are needed to attract talented leaders is grossly overstated. There are sectors of the economy where fabulous wealth can be earned. The nonprofit community should not be one of them.

It isn't easy to discern mission excellence. There is a great deal of subjectivity involved, and mission mediocrity can be hidden in mission testimonials and metrics. Mission excellence might be defined as "significant or lasting changes in people's lives, brought about by a given action or series of actions"<sup>4</sup> Of course, what is significant and lasting may only reflect our values and not those of the mission clientele.

For what it is worth, Seafarers International House is engaged now in strategic planning; its 17% overhead ratio is drawn from its audited financial statements; and none of its staff are jumping off ledges and rappelling down ten-foot walls, lest we injure ourselves and raise insurance premiums.

1. Dave Phillips, "Wounded Warrior Project Spends Lavishly on Itself, Insiders Say", THE NEW YORK TIMES, January 27, 2016

2. "The Overhead Myth – Moving Toward an Overhead Solution", [www.overheadmyth.com](http://www.overheadmyth.com)

3. Doug Donovan, Sarah Frostenson, Emma Carew Grovum, Sam Speicher, and Marisa López-Rivera, "Bonuses Can Help Make Up for Spartan Executive Pay Raises", THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY, September 22, 2013

4. Chris J. R. Roche, IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES: LEARNING TO VALUE CHANGE. Oxfam 1999

Christopher V. Roehrer, Director  
Development and Communications

### Mission Rationale

Within the shipping industry there is often little concern for seafarer welfare beyond recruitment and productivity, and within the government, any concern for their welfare is displaced by fear and homeland security.

Within the prison industry, there is little concern for the welfare of immigrants beyond very lucrative government contracts to warehouse people with little accountability and minimal cost. Again, within the government, any concern for their welfare is displaced by fear and homeland security.

### Mission Highlights

Our seven port chaplains visited over 22,400 seafarers last year. Our guesthouse was ready and able to offer accommodations to far more asylum seekers than the government was willing to release from private prisons, due in part to intense lobbying by the prison industry. So we have inaugurated a program of regular visitation of immigrants in their prisons and warehouses.

### Sleep Well By Doing Good

Our guesthouse accommodates not only seafarers and immigrants, but church gatherings, civic groups and individuals in need of safe, affordable lodging. It helps them accomplish their goals and missions, and their patronage helps us support our missions to seafarers and immigrants.

Book online at [www.sihnyc.org](http://www.sihnyc.org).

143 Years of Service



Harbor of Hospitality

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# Seafarers International House

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