

Karin Orr- Project Description

This summer I am working as a Peace Fellow in Peru for The Advocacy Project (AP); an organization that helps marginalized communities tell their story, claim their rights, and produce social change. I will be working full-time from June 21 through September 3rd, 2010 to report on the progress of the “Humanitarian Umbrella Project”, a project that works with the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF) in using forensic anthropology to search for the forcibly disappeared persons of Peru’s 20 year long Internal Conflict. EPAF and the AP are partnering to support 240 families of the disappeared from 6 communities in the Pampas-Qaracha River Basin in Ayacucho.

My role is as the liaison in this partnership, working out of the Lima office to help the family associations that are capable of advocating for the recovery and identification of their loved ones’ remains. I will be reporting the progress of the “Humanitarian Umbrella Project” by using various multi media and online tools. I will accomplish this through consistent blogging, piecing together interviews of victims’ family members, video editing, mapping of the gravesites, and chronicling community efforts in seeing this project through.

Much of my work will be evident on the Humanitarian Umbrella website which I will be helping to design. I will be working closely with EPAFs’ testimonies of victims’ families, in order to disseminate their findings for the purpose of developing a national and international constituency that will support these families in advocating for the progression of this project. On a larger scale, this project is aimed at nurturing the healing process of the families of the disappeared. In 2003, Peru’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) reported that nearly 70,000 people were killed or disappeared during the 20 year long conflict, devastating families and forcing many of them to leave their communities. The work of EPAF and AP will be carrying out the recommendation put forth by the TRC, to recover the bodies to the rightful family members for proper burial.