

A Snapshot of Michael Sandler's Returns on Investments in Global Justice 2002-2008



About Michael Sandler

“The Time is always ripe to do right” -Nelson Mandela

Born and raised in South Africa, Michael Sandler was acutely aware of social injustice and the deep seeded devastation that widespread human rights violations leave in their wake. He made quiet and persistent contributions to making the world a better place. The founding of the Global Justice Center was possible solely due to his faith, foresight, and financial support - a fact we are reminded of daily as our vision of international law and gender justice advances.



Above: 2004 Women's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq conference on Human Rights, Women and Law at the Criminal Court in Baghdad.

The Investment:

- ◆ Provided \$20,000 in 2004 for Janet Benshoof and Iraqi American women to go to Baghdad and train Iraqi women on international law during the country's constitution drafting in 2004. During these meetings Janet met the judges of the Iraq High Tribunal, charged with trying Saddam Hussein's regime for war crimes.

The Return:

- ◆ In 2006, the GJC led a historic training of Middle Eastern judges on international law and gender jurisprudence. For the first time, the Iraq High Tribunal judges and women civil society leaders learned to use international equality law to provide Saddam era victims of rape and genocide with access to justice.
- ◆ In 2007, as a result of this training, the Iraq High Tribunal issued its opinion in the *Anfal* trial, which used international law on rape for the first time in the Middle East and found that the rape of Kurdish women constituted genocide and torture entitling them to reparations.
- ◆ In 2008, in a meeting organized by the Global Justice Center, the President of the Tribunal, Judge Arif, and a delegation of judges went to the U.S. Supreme Court, where Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg praised them for so carefully including crimes against women in the *Anfal* decision. While in DC, the GJC also arranged for the Judges to visit the US Holocaust Memorial Museum where they lit candles for Kurdish and Jewish genocide victims.

Below: At the Prime Minister's Home, Green Zone, Baghdad. Friday night March 24th, 2006. Carole Basri, Prime Minister Jaafari, Basma Fakri, Janet Benshoof



Far Left: Janet and Judge Mohammed, Chief IHT Judge in the *Anfal* genocide case and author of opinion supporting women's rights. Immediate Left: the Judges of the Iraq High Tribunal at the US Supreme Court with Justice Ginsburg.

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The Investment:

- ◆ In 2002, provided \$15,000 and computers for Janet Benshoof to provide human rights training for young women leaders fleeing Burma for exile to Mae Sot, Thailand, including 17 year-old Ying Lao.



Students at the human rights training in Burma in 2002. Seventeen year -old Ying Lao is in the back row wearing pink.

The Return:

- ◆ In 2006, the GJC led a three-day seminar for members of the Women's League of Burma (WLB), in Chiang Mai, Thailand, to help women's groups from Burma to develop a model constitution that included gender equality. This model constitution served as a tool for the WLB to successfully advocate for a 30% quota for women in all branches of government of the exiled democratic government of Burma.



Janet and Noe Noe, head of the Constitution Study Team, at Constitution drafting seminar in 2006 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

The Return:

- ◆ In 2008, Ying Lao and two other members of the WLB received the Madeline K. Albright award from the National Democratic Institute, recognizing the Women's League of Burma for their global example empowering women in political and civil life.



Ying Lao (left), and two other Burmese women living in exile from the WLB receive the Madeline K. Albright Award in 2008.

The Investment:

- ◆ In 2004, provided \$15,000 for Colombian lawyer Monica Roa to work with Janet Benshoof to investigate a constitutional challenge to the Colombia abortion law.



Protesters outside the Constitutional Court.



2005 Janet and Monica Roa before the Constitutional Court in Bogota.

The Return:

- ◆ Michael's initial 2004 investment was followed by a \$200,000 grant from Susie Buffett in 2005, leading to a 2006 lawsuit that resulted in the first case ever decriminalizing abortion in Latin America on May 10th, 2006.