

expat LIVING

**MEDICAL
REVIEWS**
Your Choice

INTERVIEWS
Human Rights Activist
Triathlon Trainer

Maldives
Honeymoon

ORCHARD ROAD
Historic Emerald Hill
Dining Hot Spots

**Dim Sum
DELIGHTS**

Short Breaks

**2010
PHOTO
COMPETITION**
ENTER
NOW>>



84



49



273

CONTENTS

COMPETITIONS

- Handbag Heroes: Win a handbag and all its contents, worth over \$1,500 84
- Win a DivineMedSpa Facial 91
- Win tickets to the Handa Int'l Golf Tournament 114
- Budding Photographer? Enter our photography competition 116

HAIR & BEAUTY

- News 89
- What's Hot 104
- Tried & Tested: Treatments at Privé Clinic 106
- Hair Care Highlights 108
- The Family Nail Spa 111
- East Meets West Massage 118
- Taming the Frizz 120

PROPERTY

- Smart Moves: A time to rent, a time to buy – in Bukit Timah 160
- Hot Property: What's on the market? 173
- A Flying Start: Katherine Whitehead on helping expats find their feet 176
- Property Watch: Nassim Regency 178



106

ARTS & LEISURE

- Spotted: Out on the town 124
- Holistic Living: Body Mind Spirit Festival floats into town 120
- Costumes, Customs and Tequila! 123
- Inspirational Women: Hilary Stauffer fights for justice 123
- Portrait of a Photographer 138
- Magical History Tour of Emerald Hill 143
- Tech News 150
- Bookcase 154
- On the Couch 156
- Music Reviews 158

77



FASHION

- Centrespread: Head-turning cocktail dresses 122
- The Laciest Fashion Trends: Spice up your wardrobe 102

HILARY STAUFFER arrived here in January this year to join the new Singapore office of International Bridges to Justice (IBJ). For this in our series on inspirational women, I visited her at her River Valley apartment to find out all about it.

At Home with Hilary Stauffer

*by Verne Maree; portrait of Hilary
by Hart Tan of Tomato Photo*

What is IBJ?

International Bridges to Justice (IBJ) is a global movement to improve criminal defence systems, focusing on due process and the rights of the accused. It works to guarantee the rights of all citizens to competent legal representation, to be protected from cruel and unusual punishment, and to a fair trial.

It was founded in 2000 by former San Francisco defence lawyer Karen Tse. In 1994, she had relocated to Cambodia to train the country's first core group of public defenders. Moved by the plight of prisoners routinely subjected to torture in the absence of a proper judicial system, she committed herself to helping develop Cambodia's legal system. From there, IBJ's work has extended to China, India, Zimbabwe and various other countries.



How are you settling in?

After staying with some incredibly kind friends of a friend, I found this apartment and soon acquired a couple of flatmates to share expenses.

River Valley is so convenient for my Clarke Quay workplace. With assistance from contacts in the American Singapore Chamber of Commerce, our office space was kindly donated by Cognita, which owns and operates schools such as the Australian International School and the Stamford American International School here.

How has your experience so far equipped you for what you are doing now?

From the age of 14 or 15, I always, *always* wanted to do international work. Around the family table, we'd be fighting over who'd get which part of the *Washington Post* to read, and I'd always go for the international section.

So I majored in international affairs, and then went on to law school specifically because I thought it would stand me in good stead in an international career. When choosing a school, my main requirement was that it had to be at least 500 miles from home; otherwise, I feared, I might never leave Washington DC! I also chose California – the University of San Diego School of Law – because I thought law would be so horrible that I'd need to have the sunshine and the beach to help me through it.

And was law school as horrible as you'd expected it to be?

The first year was; when it came to criminal law and commercial law, I often just didn't get it. But later, when I moved on to the areas that really interested me – such as human rights, gender issues and international law – that all changed.



I'm glad I did it, because otherwise I wouldn't be doing the work I do now.

In my final year, I had a law professor who took a group of us to the UN in Geneva. That's where I first met Karen Tse, the founder of International Bridges to Justice, who offered me an internship at IBJ's Geneva headquarters.

So I returned to California, did my bar exam, put all my loans on hold and started with IBJ in 2005. It was amazing, and just exactly what I wanted to do as a lawyer.

How did you become Israel's Advisor on Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs to the UN?

Just as my loans were falling due and money was becoming an issue, I met someone at a dinner party who, after a few searching questions, asked me to apply for the position. When I said, "But I'm not Jewish!", she said they already had plenty of Jewish people in the office; what they really needed was a native English-speaking lawyer who understood international law.

I'd never even visited Israel. When I met the Ambassador of Israel to the UN in Switzerland, I gave my best interview – I was

completely relaxed because I thought I had no chance. Then he said, "When can you start?"

My life changed dramatically overnight. It was the coolest job, a dream job – going to meetings of the UN, dealing with issues such as refugees and the laws of war; the right to food and water; gender, race and women's rights. Hours spent in small meeting rooms with up-and-coming junior diplomats to work out the wording for resolutions and treaties with the potential to affect the lives and circumstances of millions.

What made you move on?

Advocating for an unpopular client on a highly contentious and fraught issue helped me grow as a lawyer. But representing Israel has its drawbacks. Learning the Israeli viewpoint on the Palestinian situation first-hand was fascinating, but the issues are not likely to be resolved anytime soon, and it did wear me down. After two and a half years of writing speeches, I had run out of things to say.

So in October 2008, when the law professor who had taken me to Geneva told me he was moving to Liberia to train lawyers, I was so ready. It was just the right time for

me to do some fieldwork. At the University of Liberia Law School, I taught a class in analytical thinking; then I joined a UN project at Monrovia Central Prison, where we developed a fast-track system to help process those who had been stuck in pre-trial detention for a long time. A drawback of any aid work is that the Westerners leave before a system is in place; so we worked to empower Liberian law students, training them to be “law clerks” so they could continue the work after we left.

What took you to London after six months in Liberia?

I moved there to join my then boyfriend, but unfortunately that did not work out. While there, I volunteered with Reprieve, a legal charity that provides representation to prisoners on Death Row and detainees in Guantanamo Bay. But the end of a relationship is never fun, and in dark, cold, wintry London it was horrible.

Serendipitously, I again bumped into Karen, and she offered me the position of programme coordinator at a new Singapore Justice Training Centre.

Singapore isn't a poor country and it has plenty of lawyers. Why open an office here?

Singapore's legal system is highly developed and its rule of law very institutionalised. We're based here, but are not mandated to train Singaporean lawyers in any way.

Through the Lien Centre for Social Innovation, IBJ was one of eight social enterprise groups that won an award grant in October 2009 – that seed money was what attracted us to Singapore in the first place.

Soon after, we were invited to apply for funding from the Singapore Economic Development



IBJ JusticeMaker (2009) Rommel Abitra conducting a training session for Filipino prison paralegals

Board. Under its International Organisations scheme, EDB has encouraged a lot of NGOs and not-for-profit organisations to set up shop here in order to promote upliftment and stability in the region.

Other countries could use Singapore as an example. The reason it's been able to attract so much foreign investment is that its laws are efficiently implemented and enforced. What's more, it has provided sufficient resources for its legal system: judges and other officials are well paid, and there is not even a hint of corruption.

What does IBJ do?

Basically, we train lawyers for poor people in poor countries, who otherwise have no real chance of realising their legal rights. That's the short answer.

Having found office space and registered our organisation, we're busy with the logistics for our first training event, bringing a total of 17 trainees here in August for advanced legal skills training by both IBJ and Singapore lawyers. They'll learn media skills, fundraising, how to network, project management and so on.

Seven of the trainees are our staff lawyers from China, Cambodia, India, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Burundi – all places where IBJ has country programmes. The other 11 are what we call “JusticeMakers” – winners of our online competition for the most innovative ideas

for promoting justice in their community. Last year, for example, one of our JusticeMakers trained Filipino prisoners as paralegals to empower them to move their own cases through the Philippines court system.

How receptive have people here been to you?

I have never met so many people who are interested in my project and willing to help. In Geneva, by contrast, there are so many not-for-profit organisations that donor-fatigue has set in; it's hard to get anyone to listen to your message.

For example, Jennifer Anderson, a volunteer that I met at a Kind Exchange event (www.thekindexchange.com), has events management experience, and has been very helpful in planning our gala fundraising event at the St. Regis on 12 August. And Kim Nee, whom I met at an AWA (American Women's Association) event, has been instrumental in helping us get auction items. I have no event planning experience, and couldn't make the gala a reality without help from people like them.

Impressions of Singapore so far?

It's by far the easiest place I've ever lived in. I'm a flip-flops kind of girl, and I love the year-round sweaty humidity.

The only thing I don't like about Singapore is that everyone seems to be married. On the plus side, there's nothing to distract me from the mission! 