



The  
CENTER for  
VICTIMS of  
TORTURE

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## **Center for Victims of Torture Honors Reed Smith Human Rights Attorney Jayne Fleming with 2017 Eclipse Award**

**ST. PAUL, Minn. and WASHINGTON** — [The Center for Victims of Torture™](#) (CVT), an international NGO dedicated to healing survivors of torture and eradicating torture worldwide, is today presenting its annual Eclipse Award to human rights lawyer Jayne Fleming in recognition of her devotion to applying the law to preserve human rights and ensure protection for those who have survived torture, war crimes and persecution. The award is presented each year to an individual or organization that has played a crucial role in ending torture or in the treatment of torture survivors.

Fleming leads the human rights practice at global law firm Reed Smith. She has represented torture survivors and asylum seekers in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Greece, Haiti, Central America and the United States. Many of her appellate cases in the United States have helped move the law forward and expand protection for victims of torture, persecution and gender-based violence.

Fleming's efforts reach across the globe and include human rights projects in Haiti, where her teams identified women and girls who had suffered sexual torture and obtained legal protection for them. Jayne's Reed Smith team was the first to file applications for humanitarian parole for Haitian victims of sexual violence with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Reed Smith is also the only law firm that partnered with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to relocate victims of sexual violence to permanent safety in the United States and Canada.

Building on her successes in Haiti and Latin America, Jayne launched a human rights project in the Middle East in January 2015. The goal of the project is to identify the most vulnerable Syrian and Iraqi refugees who have suffered torture and persecution, and relocate them to places where they may heal. So far, Jayne has led over a dozen missions to Jordan, Lebanon, Iraqi Kurdistan and Greece, where her teams have interviewed several hundred refugees and torture victims, and identified dozens of the most at-risk survivors, for whom they are developing comprehensive legal protection strategies.

In September 2016, Jayne further developed an ongoing torture victim rehabilitation program in Athens, Greece, which provides holistic legal, medical, mental health and psychosocial support to Syrian refugees in partnership with Doctors without Borders and other partners.

News coverage of Fleming's legal advocacy has also drawn much-needed attention to the plight of refugees and victims of torture.

Many of Fleming's clients in Jordan and Lebanon are torture survivors with extreme mental health

pathologies. Many are children, who are suffering war trauma or are victims of gender-based violence, including those at risk of “honor killing” in retaliation for seeking access to justice in their countries.

“Although they are from many different places, our clients are all victims of sexual, gender-based violence or other forms of torture,” said Fleming. “As a result, they are all in need of international protection.”

In 2010, Fleming established The Patricia Fleming Foundation in honor of her mother, Patricia Fleming, a humanitarian, poet and advocate for social justice. Donations to the fund are used to directly protect refugees and displaced persons who have been victims of torture, persecution, gender-based violence and other forms of harm.

“Jayne Fleming is a stalwart legal champion for those who have survived the unimaginable, including some of CVT’s clients. CVT commends Jayne for her leadership and tireless work as an advocate for survivors,” said Curt Goering, CVT’s executive director. “Jayne’s work embodies the spirit of the Eclipse Award. The world is a better place because of her.”

CVT presents the Eclipse Award each year on or around June 26, the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. On June 26, 1987, the United Nations Convention against Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment went into effect. Events are held around the world honoring and celebrating this day.

Fleming will receive the Eclipse Award in Washington, D.C., at a reception held to honor her work to help torture survivors and asylum seekers.

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*The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization headquartered in St. Paul, MN, with offices in Atlanta, GA, and Washington, D.C.; and healing initiatives in Africa and the Middle East.*

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