

From Mary Pat Higgins, President and CEO



We have so many exciting things happening at the Museum and Education Center. Most recently, we launched our *Upstander Speaker Series*, sponsored by Bank of Texas. We began the series with a powerful presentation by Phillip Gourevitch, the *New Yorker* columnist who first wrote about the Rwandan genocide in 1996, just two years after the tragedy occurred, and has since followed Rwanda's justice and reconciliation process. He explained how 20 years later, many survivors and perpetrators are living peacefully side by side. From the lingering horrors of this genocide we can all learn an extraordinary lesson about the complex balance of punishment and forgiveness that necessarily follows the end of any conflict.

Sadly, two years after the Rwandan genocide, almost no one was talking about it. It was easier to forget what had occurred because the rest of world felt guilty for not intervening. However, Phillip Gourevitch was willing to stand up and document the atrocities that happened in his book, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families*, so the world could not deny what happened. It was a great honor to host him as our first speaker in the new series, which reflects the Museum's continuing commitment to human rights and the ending of silence and indifference to the suffering of others – to encourage Upstander behavior in our community.

As the only institution in North Texas dedicated to teaching the Holocaust and tolerance, it is our responsibility to extend awareness of genocide and human rights to the Dallas community. One of the greatest failures of our society is the continued prevalence of bystander behavior – looking the other way because hateful or harmful words and actions are not directed at us personally. We must remind people that the lessons of the past have yet to be learned, that genocide and human rights violations continue today, and that the role of Upstanders in our society is more critical than ever.

Later this year, we will host two more outstanding speakers through our *Upstander Speaker Series*. They, too, will offer remarkable stories of courage, reconciliation and the power of simple human dignity. Amidst continuing crimes against humanity, they bring messages of hope—proving actions do matter, that stopping atrocities is possible, and that change for the better can happen if we all stand up.

On September 9, Dorothy (Dori) Budd, the local author of *Tested: How Twelve Wrongly Imprisoned Men Held onto Hope*, will speak to us about the remarkable experience she and her daughter, Peyton Budd, had getting to know the men highlighted in their book. A former child sex crimes prosecutor for the Dallas County District Attorney's office, Dorothy Budd worked as a DA in the Juvenile Division, trying juvenile, domestic violence, and child welfare cases until becoming a felony prosecutor in the Crimes Against Children Division. In 2009, the Budd family became interested in the plight of wrongly convicted men and put together a book exploring the lives of twelve exonerated men, helping them share their personal journeys of hope, forgiveness and redemption. Budd will focus on how the men found strength to maintain their dignity, gratitude, gentleness, and hope while serving time behind bars for crimes they did not commit. She explains, "Every one of these men has lost something that can never be restored. We hope

that the powerful stories in *Tested* cause readers to reexamine and reevaluate prejudices and preconceptions.”

The series concludes December 4 with a presentation by Harry Wu. Wu is the Director of the Laogai Research Foundation and the author of several books, including *Bitter Winds*, a memoir of his years as an internee in Chinese labor camps. Imprisoned, tortured, and starved in the Chinese work-camp system for 19 years, Wu understands firsthand the excesses and arbitrary nature of unchecked ideology and government power. He explores the ways and means for each of us to assist in ending oppression and puts a human face on the sometimes remote issues of cruelty and abuse in foreign lands. He has been called to testify before Congress several times. For his work, he has received numerous awards including the Columbia Human Rights Law Review award and the first Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders.

Each of these speakers will leave us with much to contemplate and will inspire us to stand up for what we believe and to speak out when we see discrimination and injustice. Please don't miss the opportunity to hear Dorothy Budd and Harry Wu.