

Speaker Series and GM ... October 26, 2021 ... 7:30 pm



Dr Rachel Silver

Topic ... Borderless Higher Education for Refugees (BHER)

Topic Preview ...

The Borderless Higher Education for Refugees (BHER) Project is a consortium of Canadian and Kenyan universities and NGOs that aims to make educational programs available where refugees need them. The Project is housed and managed at York University while classes take place at the BHER Learning Centre in Dadaab Town, Kenya, Africa.

The goal of BHER is to deliver post-secondary education to refugees in order to improve the quality of teaching and education for children in the camps. Many teachers in the refugee camp schools are unqualified. BHER students from the camps and local towns graduate from York University with the University's Certificate in Educational Studies as their first credential and most proceed to a Bachelors of Educational Studies. From the first graduating class of 59 students, two-thirds already work as teachers in the Dadaab camps' schools. A second class of 64 students recently graduated. Since 2017, BHER has been offering Masters of Education programs to small cohorts. The first Masters graduating class of 7 completed in 2019 and most work in education related occupations.

Those engaged with the BHER Project believe offering higher education where it is needed will contribute to the conditions for justice, sustainability, and peace in Kenya, Somalia and the surrounding Eastern and Central African region.

Our Speaker ... Dr Rachel Silver

Dr Rachel Silver is the Co-Director of BHER and an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at York University. She has conducted extensive fieldwork in Southern and Eastern Africa including Malawi and Kenya's Dadaab refugee camps which host over 223,000 people. She has also worked with refugee communities resettled in the U.S.

Silver has a joint-degree PhD in Educational Policy Studies and Anthropology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison as well as M.A. degrees in Anthropology (UW-Madison) and African Studies (Yale), plus a B.A. in Anthropology from Bates College in Maine.