



International Refugee  
Assistance Project

## For Immediate Release

May 8, 2019

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## John Oliver and Wyatt Cenac Celebrate IRAP's Life-Saving Work Providing Legal Services To Refugees And Displaced People Worldwide at "IRAP Tonight"

(New York, NY) – On Tuesday, the **International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)** held its inaugural fundraising event "IRAP Tonight" hosted by **John Oliver**, with standup from both Oliver and **Wyatt Cenac**. During the event, IRAP presented both **Masooma Hussaini** and **Sourya Saleh**, First Female Afghan Pilots & Former IRAP Clients, with the **Portrait of Courage Award** and Carl Reisner, Partner, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, with the **Visionary Award**.

Last night's event celebrated a decade of IRAP's life-saving work providing legal services to refugees and displaced people throughout the world. In fact, IRAP has mobilized its vast network of law students, lawyers, and local, on-the-ground resources to help vulnerable individuals find legal pathways to safety. The event shined a light on the resilience and strength of displaced people and celebrated the tremendous community working to provide solutions for those seeking freedom and safe haven.

### [Photos from the event are available here](#)

Please credit to: Rick Gilbert/Skyhook Entertainment for IRAP

### **Highlights from "IRAP Tonight" include:**

- **John Oliver** opened the program by sharing his commitment to IRAP's life-saving work and the importance of the evening's celebration – stressing the problems with the anti-refugee and anti-immigration policies in the U.S. and the importance of supporting IRAP's work to reunite families and bring hope to millions of refugees around the world.
- **Oliver** wasn't without jokes, commenting: *"I think we'll know when America is in a better place, when America is absolutely furious with Anne Hathaway... You know what seems more important*



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*now than being angry with Anne Hathaway? Absolutely everything. That's why I think she's the canary in the coal mine for America."*

- IRAP Co-founder and Executive Director, **Becca Heller**, who was introduced by John Oliver, started her opening by thanking IRAP's longtime friends and supporters and introduced the animated video "A Refugee's Journey," created by Igor + Valentine. Heller relentlessly reminded the audience of the importance to *"change the narrative around forced migration"* and take action on behalf of refugees and displaced people to *"show up, make your voice heard and demand [of the government]: Let. Them. In."*
- **Joanna Coles** led a thorough conversation with former IRAP clients and honorees **Masooma Hussaini** and **Sourya Saleh** about their experience facing gender discrimination and threats to their lives and families, after becoming the first female Afghan fighter pilots, and about their refugee journeys. **Masooma Hussaini** commented: *"It looked like I was stuck in a very well dug hole that was so dark, that no matter how loud I screamed for help no one would help me [and] IRAP was the only one that came to help me."*
- Brad Karp, chair of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, presented the Visionary Award to his longtime friend and firm partner, **Carl Reisner**, who remarked about his work and the validity of the IRAP model: *"They gave me training material, they gave me support, they took this corporate lawyer and turned me into an immigration lawyer.... You're a human being, you should have rights, that is what IRAP is about."*
- When Carl left his award on the podium after accepting, **Wyatt Cenac** was more than happy to take the award on his behalf – joking that he must have done nearly enough to be considered a visionary for refugees. [\[PHOTO\]](#)

To view the press release, click [here](#).

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