

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PRESS CONTACT**

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[hdessaules@refugeerights.org](mailto:hdessaules@refugeerights.org)**IRAP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BECCA HELLER RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS MACARTHUR FELLOWSHIP**

**New York, NY** – Today, Becca Heller, the Executive Director and Co-Founder of the [International Refugee Assistance Project](#) (IRAP), was named a recipient of this year’s prestigious [MacArthur Fellowship](#).

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation states that the award recognizes individuals “who show exceptional creativity in their work and the prospect for still more in the future.” Becca Heller is being recognized for “mobilizing the resources of law schools and law firms to defend the rights of refugees and improve protection outcomes for many of the world’s most at-risk populations.”

Becca Heller, who co-founded IRAP in 2008 at Yale Law School, is one of 25 individuals honored this year by the Foundation.

In response to her nomination, **Becca Heller said:** “I am honored and humbled by this incredible recognition. The rights of refugees and displaced people are under attack and our work is more important than ever. We need bold and creative solutions to protect those rights and our team has worked tirelessly to maintain access to safety. Every day, I feel emboldened by the tenacity of our clients and staff whose persistence sends a strong message: we won’t back down.”

Becca Heller has served as Co-founder and Executive Director of the International Refugee Assistance Project since 2008 and was a visiting clinical lecturer at Yale Law School from 2010 to 2018. Prior to receiving this Fellowship, she received numerous awards in recognition of her work with IRAP, including the Charles Bronfman Prize, the American Constitutional Society David Carliner Public Interest Award, a Skadden Fellowship, a Draper Richards Kaplan Fellowship, a Gruber Human Rights Fellowship, and an Echoing Green Fellowship, to name a few. She graduated from Dartmouth College *summa cum laude* in 2005 and received a J.D. from Yale Law School in 2010. In 2006, she was a Fulbright Scholar in Malawi.

To learn more about the recognition, read [Becca Heller’s profile](#) on the MacArthur Foundation’s website.

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