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Becoming Human Rights Pros

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Students with a passion to give back and gear their life's work to the service of others have a new tool to help chart a career path.

Richard Ghere, a University of Dayton associate political science professor, has written a career guide for people interested in humanitarian careers — *NGO Leadership and Human Rights* — to help those with career aspirations in development, humanitarian and rights-advocacy organizations understand the nature of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and what

shapes them.

Ghere, who teaches a course on NGO leadership in the undergraduate human rights studies program at the University of Dayton, points out more public service and humanitarian work is moving from government agencies to non-governmental organizations. One thing those NGOs should do, Ghere said, is integrate human rights strategies into everything they do and how they communicate with each other.

Participants in the U.N.'s Interagency Workshop on a Human Rights-based Approach wrote that human rights principles should guide all programming in all phases of the programming process, including assessment and analysis, program planning and design; implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Throughout the book, Ghere touches on numerous issues that affect the ability of NGO leaders to pursue rights-based missions. He feels it is important for students to understand that assisting people in gaining control of their lives involves developing and exercising their own innate leadership abilities.

Ghere's book also include discussions of management structures that affect NGOs' ability to leverage their influence to promote human rights, the obstacles encountered in those efforts, the management competencies needed to advance human rights agendas and realistic career development strategies.

The University of Dayton has been preparing students for careers in human rights advocacy since 1998 when it started one of the nation's first undergraduate programs. The University started offering a bachelor's degree in human rights studies in 2008.

Earlier this year, Catholic Relief Services invited the University of Dayton to pilot its new Scholars in Global Solidarity. CRS chose the University because of its established record of commitment to education, research, advocacy and service in the areas of global justice and peace.

Also this year, a \$100,000 gift from alumnus Peter McGrath will allow six faculty members to receive \$10,000 stipends to conduct and publish research in human rights and social justice that promotes human dignity and alleviates suffering. The McGrath fellows will involve undergraduate and graduate students in their research, which may take them to parts of the world grappling with genocide, poverty and other human rights issues.

The Peter McGrath Research Fellows program is envisioned as the first step toward establishing a human rights center at the University of Dayton.

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