The morning workshops shared experiences of healing through the use of cultural traditions, pilgrimages, and exhumations as a tool for transformation. The afternoon award program included keynote remarks by Dianna Ortiz, a survivor and co-founder of Torture Abolition and Survivor Support Coalition. She described the event, “This weekend has given me the courage to dare to believe the impossible: looking beyond pain and distress may lead to the uncovering of a calm, healthy and an unblemished soul surrounded by hope and tranquility. Perhaps healing from torture is, indeed, possible.”

Dr. Hamzeh, nominated by her friend and colleague, Suzanne Jabbour, spoke eloquently about the moral obligation providers come to feel, “I am here to give the hundreds of torture survivors I have worked with throughout the years, a voice. I am giving my voice to their pain, needs, fears, hopes, strength, resilience and survival stories.” She also voiced the feeling that Barbara Chester Awardees share when they learn of their receiving the award, “a realization that our hard work and efforts can, and will be, recognized” that then renews our hopes and motivations.

The Barbara Chester Award is given every three years and nominations are solicited from around the world. Past awardees are: Shari Eppel of Zimbabwe (2000); Juan Almendarez of Honduras (2001); Allen Keller from the United States (2003); Mary Fabri from the United States (2009); and Sana Hamzeh from Lebanon (2019).

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From Left to Right: Shari Eppel from Zimbabwe 2000 BCA recipient; Juan Almendarez from Honduras 2001 BCA recipient; Allen Keller from the United States 2003 BCA recipient; Mary Fabri from the United States 2009 BCA recipient; Sana Hamzeh from Lebanon 2019 BCA recipient.
(2001); Allen Keller of the United States (2003); Alp Ayan of Turkey (2006); Mary Fabri of the United States (2009); Naasson Munyandamutsa of Rwanda (2013); and Diana Kordon of Argentina (2016). Sana Hamzeh of Lebanon (2019) is welcomed to the family of Barbara Chester Awardees.

The next request for nominations will be in October of 2021 for the October 2022 award that includes a cash prize of $10,000 USD and a silver sculpture featuring Hopi symbolism for healing and Qa Tutsawinvu — freedom from fear of intimidation from any source. Noted Hopi artisan, Floyd Lomakuyvaya, handcrafts the award.

Please be ready to nominate a dedicated and tenacious practitioner for the 2022 Barbara Chester Award. http://barbaracheresteraward.hopifoundation.org/home