During fall 2017, the Rapoport Center hosted a biweekly speaker series which brought in scholars from law and the social sciences to explore barriers to realizing labor and human rights in the context of a globalized world marked by increasing inequalities. Speakers examined some of the structural conditions that help produce and sustain labor exploitation and precarity, situated a variety of domestic spaces – from the UK, France, and Turkey to the United States and Mexico. The colloquium was co-sponsored by the Center for European Studies. The speaker series was part of a semester-long seminar taught by Professor Karen Engle (Law, Rapoport Center) for law and public policy students. The students read work by and wrote response papers for each of the invited speakers, and also produced their own research papers on the topic.

Law student David Engleman, who participated in the seminar, remarked that it "offered students a remarkable opportunity to engage closely with leading scholars at the intersection of labor, inequality, and human rights," as well as to produce a substantive piece of writing on a topic at the intersection of the three areas.

To continue the conversation and allow the various speakers to have a chance to interact directly with one another, the Rapoport Center sponsored a panel on "Labor, Inequality, and Human Rights: Local Manifestations of Global Challenges" at the Law and Society Association Annual Conference, hosted in Toronto on June 9, 2018.