



May 2016

Newsletter of Initiatives of Change

Issue No. 37

In the midst of busy weeks our team is also experiencing big transitions. We welcomed the new executive director Jake Hershman, who has contributed his initial thoughts in this issue.

More than fifty people gathered to celebrate Cricket White, who is retiring from full-time work. We will still call her in for special projects including work that she and Tee Turner are doing in Troup County, GA. She continues service on the Initiatives of Change International Council until the end of the year. So this is not good-bye. She has also written some reflections.

Seeing another outstanding class graduate from the Community Trustbuilding Fellowship and celebrating 25 years of the Caux Scholars Program encourages us to find more dynamic ways to engage with the alumni who are an amazing global network of peacemakers and trustbuilders.

Introducing Jake Hershman

Dear friends,

Until I have the pleasure of meeting you in person this slightly impersonal, introductory note will have to suffice.

As you know, I recently joined the Initiatives of Change, USA (IofC) as its new Executive Director. It genuinely is a privilege to be entrusted with leading this organization in a way that will honor and accentuate its spiritual foundation while creatively responding to the needs of our communities here in the United States and beyond.



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IofC office

After nearly two decades of living and working in conflict/post-conflict zones around the world, I have become convinced that enduring social change and "peace" will only be possible when it is pursued by ordinary citizens, communities and leaders who draw on transformative spiritual discernment and reserves for their efforts. Going forward, we intend for IofC to accompany those efforts with increased relevance and dynamism.

For this organization to fully live up to its lofty name and mission here in the US and globally, we are working to instill an organizational process that constantly looks inwardly and outwardly. Are we stewarding our resources to the maximum by leveraging our network and executing convincing, impactful initiatives? How do we know whether our perspective and actions are appropriate for building trust and social cohesion? If determined to be impactful, how do we more strategically detail and share those experiences and approaches? These are some of the questions we've begun grappling with within the IofC team as we map out our collective next steps.

At a pivotal moment within this country and internationally, we sense that our change agenda is appropriately ambitious. Of course, we'll need your support and presence to make it happen. I already have heard extraordinary stories about many of you and again, I'm looking forward to identifying ways that your partnership with IofC can be strengthened as we move forward.

Sincerely,
[Jake](#)

Caux Scholars 25th Anniversary

Peacebuilding for the 21st Century

Randy Ruffin

Swiss Ambassador Martin Dahinden welcomed alumni, academic and program directors, faculty and supporters to a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Caux Scholars Program at his embassy on April 28.

Referring to

Switzerland's hosting of the Syria peace talks in Geneva, the Iran nuclear talks in Montreux and the World Economic Forum in Davos, the Ambassador underlined his country's commitment to global peacebuilding, from which followed support for the Caux Scholars Program. The embassy not only provided a meeting space, but also invited everyone to the residence on the grounds for a generous reception following the program.



Ambassador Dahinden talks with Jitka Hromek-Vaitla and Ian Ralby

Celebrating Cricket White

I couldn't have imagined where this journey would take me



I remember driving home one afternoon in 1995 and the question that filled my mind was, "What did I do? Is this the right move?"

I had just left my job in the Mayor's office and city hall to work with Hope in the Cities. Our 'office' was a dining room table where we worked together drafting a letter to several mayors. From this beginning the Call to Community was launched which formed the foundation of the work we would be engaged in for the next 20 years.

And now, just recently I was sitting in a room at a southern college with about 24 citizens from the area. I was encouraging them to share the ways in which their racial group had contributed to tension and division in the country. Through activities and conversations they began to build the trust necessary to explore this difficult question. What a privilege to be a part of that kind of courage and honesty. What a responsibility to co-facilitate it.

From working around the dining

Liberian alum, Dr. Samuel Gbaydee Doe (CSP 1995), who has also been a member of the faculty many summers, was the featured speaker. He currently serves as Senior Policy Advisor and Team Leader of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery with the UN Development Program, based in New York. Arriving at Caux in 1995 straight from the terrible Civil War in Liberia, Sam spoke of the huge contrast that Caux offered - "an alternative to deprivation, to terror; another world where people are people again." His second principal takeaway was that Caux is a place where "the ordinary confounds the extraordinary" - where a person like Kofi Anan might be found washing dishes - the sort of occurrence that "shook my image of the world." And thirdly, Sam emphasized the impact of the stories that are told in meetings, over meals and on walks. "Each encounter changes something in me" he said, underlining "the courage of opening oneself to another's stories, even if that person is an enemy. Weaving them into a tapestry recreates our world."



Barbara Hintermann

Barbara Hintermann, who became Secretary General of the Caux Foundation just over a year ago after serving in numerous positions with the International Committee of the Red Cross, came from Switzerland for the occasion. Noting that

Caux was celebrating its 70th anniversary, she spoke of IofC's commitment to training future leaders in peacebuilding and ethical business. Using the powerful tools of "inner reflection" and "storytelling", the Caux Foundation hopes to help build bridges of trust between the migrant and resident populations in Switzerland. It also plans to offer training in ethical leadership for the private sector and to continue hosting confidential dialogues between groups in conflict.

Appealing for "investments" in future scholars and to "ensure the program's continuation," graduate Dr. Ian Ralby (CSP 2001) said that "more often than not, CSP ends up being a pivotal moment in the lives of the scholars." Elaborating on his experience that "the best things that happen to the scholars often come together after they leave the program," Ralby told of helpful encounters with fellow alum, often from quite different years, in Bosnia, Malaysia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Abu Dhabi, as well as how his experience with leaders from Sierra Leone at Caux prepared him for later work on security issues there. Ralby, founder and director of I.R. Consilium, works with governments and organizations solving complex security-related problems.

"Every place in the world should look like Caux. Unfortunately we have not arrived there yet, but the Caux Scholars are the first soldiers striving towards these ideals," concluded Ambassador Dahinden.

2016 CSP class is remarkably diverse with students from Syria,

room table to stepping into groups separated by fear, distrust, and hate, in the US and internationally, my work through Initiatives of Change has been a gift to me, challenging me, pushing me, filling me, enlightening me. As a teenager and native Richmonder, I couldn't have imagined where this journey would take me. My life has been filled with people from countries around the world and I have been given the opportunity to work with peacebuilders in highly volatile areas. But most importantly, I have had the chance to impact the city I love, in ways that has brought folks together, across racial and religious barriers.

With IofC's focus on core values and quiet time, this has been a journey of asking me to be my best self, recognizing when I fail, sharing honestly about it, and drawing others out so they too can share. It is about following my inner leading, listening to that voice and choosing to do the things I feel called to do in teamwork with others.

So, I know that there is no 'retirement' from this sort of commitment and I look forward to continuing as one of the thousands of people across the globe following their inner leading to make a positive change where they live and in the world around them.

Join the 2017 CTF class!

Now is the time to apply!



The [Community Trustbuilding Fellowship](#) is a unique program that increases the capacity of

Turkey, Pakistan, Sudan, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Qatar, Kenya, Brazil, Mexico, Armenia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Nepal, Bulgaria, Germany, Switzerland, Australia and United States. They are teachers, journalists, social workers, business professionals, government employees, lawyers, and students.

Generous gifts were made to support the Caux Scholars class of 2016 including a gift of \$7500 from one family. We still need to raise 4 full scholarships of \$3800 each for scholars coming from Syria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Mexico.

Community Trustbuilding Fellowship

A gift beyond description

Rob Corcoran

"It has been life-changing," said Rubie Britt-Height, the director of community relations at the Mint Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina, as she graduated from the 2016 Community Trustbuilding Fellowship in April. Many of the twenty participants from Virginia, as well as four other states and Washington, DC, who completed the five residential weekend modules in Richmond starting last October, expressed similar feelings.

Meghan Resler, a macro social worker in Richmond, reflected, "When I came, my thoughts were transactional. I was focused on skills. I absolutely got those, but the experience was transformational. That is what has risen to the top."

The regular quiet times built into the program featured strongly in the personal assessments. "I realize how natural silence can be. You showed us something very powerful," said Jessica Anderson, who directs a program for freshman at Armstrong High School in one of Richmond's most underserved neighborhoods. "It's an honor to be in such a sacred space," said Cheryl Groce-Wright who leads the Neighborhood Resource Center in the city's east end. "This has been a gift beyond description. Most surprising is the quiet. I am impressed with myself and how I have found a way to make it a part of my daily life. It has become an important part of my personal mental care and my ability to be who I am."



During the final module, Hasan Zarif was called away to attend Governor Terry McAuliffe's signing of an executive order that returned voting rights to more than 200,000 returning citizens who had completed their prison sentences and probation periods. * Hasan had served 17 years of a life sentence when he was

community leaders to overcome divisions of race, culture, economics and politics by creating a network of skilled facilitators, capable team builders and credible role models.

The 2017 program will begin in January and run through May.

[More information and the application are available online.](#)

2016 Caux Conferences



Celebrating 70 years of Trustbuilding

June 29-July 3

Caux Dialogue on Land and Security

July 5-10

Trust and Integrity in the Global Economy

July 12-17

Just Governance for Human Security

July 19-23

Addressing Europe's Unfinished Business

July 19-23

International Peace-Builders' Forum

July 26-August 1

CATS - Children as Actors for Transforming Society

August 4-10

Creators of Peace

Living Peace: Celebrating 25 Years of Creators of Peace

paroled in 1989. He subsequently became a prison chaplain and re-entry specialist. After his civil rights were restored by Governor Tim Kaine in 2009, Hasan worked for restoration of rights to other ex-felons. The day after the historic event at the state capitol, a picture in the Richmond Times-Dispatch showed him seated in the front row as the governor made his announcement.

"Can you really have honest conversation with yourself and then with others?" asked Hasan as he reviewed his Fellowship experience. "I have already begun to use this in my job. We often let stuff fester inside us because we have not had honest conversation with ourselves. Don't expect from others more than what you would do yourself."



Over the course of the program, the Fellows explored qualities of authentic leadership, the impact of history, and the essentials of dialogue design and facilitation. The final weekend focused on building teams and networks of trust,

using the insights and skills gained in previous modules. They conducted personal inventories of their teambuilding styles. Case studies illustrated the value of implicit teams and networks of trust. Finally they imagined practical ways to apply the learning through new projects or to strengthen existing ones by engaging others as potential allies. These projects included a school dialogue about race and diversity; creating an orientation to Richmond's history in the university curriculum; a social justice venue café; and a "listening project" in a community of 400 households.

The program is designed to challenge participants. Shelli Brady, a social entrepreneur and restorative justice facilitator and trainer, said the difficulties of the program reminded her of the struggle of a caterpillar's metamorphosis from a cocoon to a butterfly. "If you try and help it, the butterfly will die. My approach is to fix things. I need to learn to trust the process."

"I was immersed in a completely new experience in my life, learning the history of this country and all of your stories," Danna Johnson told the class. A native of Honduras, she works with Catholic Charities, Inc. in Vardaman, MS, where she teaches English to Hispanics and connects them to resources. "At first I thought, 'What does this (the history of race) have to do with me?' It has been a discovery, an opening of a window to a new way of thinking. I go back to do things differently and respond differently. I have also learned that it is OK to be vulnerable."

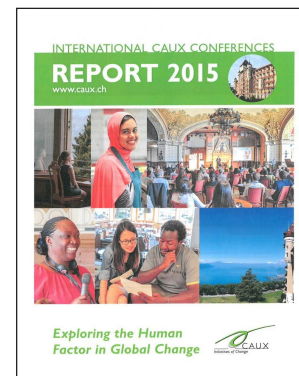
"I arrived presenting myself in a certain way," said Andrew Trotter, a writer from Washington, DC. "Not only have I had the opportunity to be my authentic self, but I learned that my authentic self is enough, more powerful than any contrived presentation of myself."

August 12-17
Seeds of Inspiration

[For more information](#)

2015 Caux Report

More than 1400 people from all continents attended the eight International Caux Conferences in 2015.



[Download the PDF version](#)

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Hope & inspiration

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Michael Silva, who teaches biotechnology, traveled from California to attend the program, only missing one module to be present at the birth of his son, Benjamin. He aims to use the skills learned to motivate others.

Participation represented a significant investment of time and money. But Joshua Ballew, a dispute resolution specialist with Virginia's Office of the Attorney General, stressed the importance of the five weekends the group spent together. "You not only provided the container, the space, but the time which is necessary for trust."

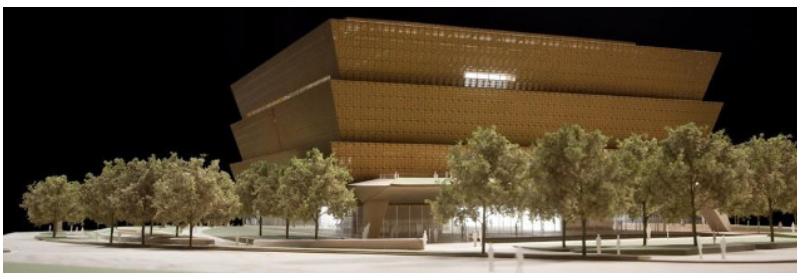


*McAuliffe's action was aimed at rectifying Virginia's "long and sad history" of suppressing African American voting power. The state's 1901-1902 constitutional convention set up poll taxes, literacy tests and disenfranchisement for felons specifically as barriers for African American participation. "This plan will eliminate the darkey as a political factor in this state in less than five years, so that in no single county will there be the least concern felt for the complete supremacy of the white race in the affairs of government," claimed one legislator at the time.

Healing History

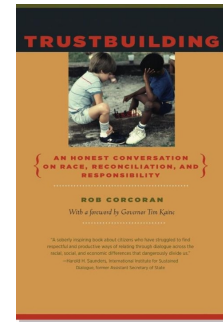
Countdown to an opening!

Susan Corcoran



"The African American museum movement began in people's living rooms," says Dr. John W. Franklin, Senior Manager of the Office of External Affairs at the National Museum of African American History and Culture at the Smithsonian. He was in Richmond for two days at the invitation of Hope in the Cities to address a variety of audiences at the Library of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, Armstrong High School and eager young students at the Boys & Girls Club. September 24, 2016 will see the historic opening of the new museum on the National Mall in Washington, DC. President Obama will cut the ribbon to open the doors to the public and commence a week-long celebration. It has taken decades to realize this dream and is the culmination of the work of

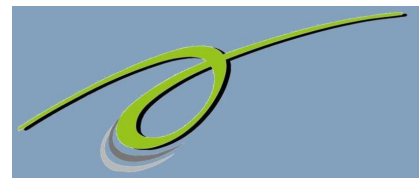
Trustbuilding



Trustbuilding by Rob Corcoran



Read Rob Corcoran's latest blog
[Leading with love](#)



Initiatives of Change, USA
is part of a diverse global network with an 80-year track record of peacebuilding, conflict transformation and forging partnerships across divides of race, class, religion and politics.

Our vision

We inspire a vision of community where a commitment to reconciliation and justice transcends competing identities and interests.

Our mission

We equip leaders to build trust in diverse communities through a process of personal change, inclusive dialogue, healing historical conflict and

many communities who have begun to acknowledge and heal their own painful history. The museum will be a place where everyone can explore the story of America through the lens of the African American experience.



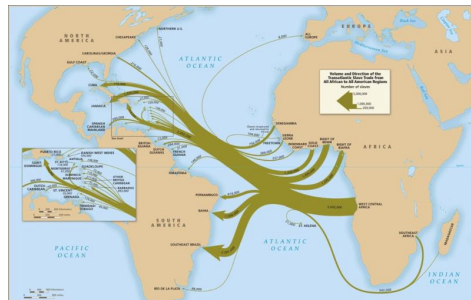
Dr. John W. Franklin

While the specific stories of persecution and struggle, resiliency and triumph are presented in the museum's exhibitions, the building itself stands as a powerful testament to the centrality and relevance of African

American culture and history. Clad in 3600 bronze mesh panels the building draws on African tradition and the African American presence that is a permanent part of the American landscape. Dr. Franklin talked of the remarkable support the museum has received. "The people who have given their grandmother's china are as invested as those who have given large sums of money."

In setting the context for his presentation, Franklin pointed out that during the centennial of the Civil War in the 1960s there was no mention of slavery. It was a story of the white and powerful. In the intervening 50 years African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, women and many from other countries have taken their place in our universities. This has opened the way for a whole new study of history and culture and a broader look at society. At one time there were only two national parks honoring African Americans. There were no stories of African Americans in museums or text books. There were no depictions in art. In many cases the collections existed but were never displayed or made accessible. "It is important for children to know their story and see themselves in history," Franklin said. Now there are more than 30 museums and in more recent times these have given rise to other museums about Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, and Arab Americans.

"How did we get here and where did we come from? The story is not all here. This has always been an international story. It starts way back in Africa. Who brought Africans to Florida in the 1500s? When did Africans arrive in Louisiana?" Franklin



asked. He presented maps showing that only five percent of the enslaved people came to North America. The vast majority went to the Caribbean and Brazil and were even walked across the narrow neck of Panama and picked up by ships on the west coast to be transported to Ecuador and Peru. Slave records are in France, Denmark, Portugal and many other places. "So the telling of the story needs to include all these places. And many of these countries are grappling with their own story in new ways and

teambuilding

Our focus

We connect core values with personal and public action with a focus on racial reconciliation, economic inclusion and interfaith understanding.

For more information
<http://us.iofc.org>

Follow-up Links

[Initiatives of Change](#)
[Hope in the Cities \(HIC\)](#)
[Caux Scholars Program](#)
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[Trustbuilding on Facebook](#)
[HIC on Facebook](#)
[IofC on YouTube](#)
[IofC Vimeo film archives](#)

reassessing how they teach history," he added.

"This story belongs to all of us in this country," Franklin remarked. "Demonization of the south expunges the north from talking about the fact that it had slavery before the revolution." Recent excavations of African burial grounds discovered near Wall Street reveal that as many as 20,000 were buried there in the seventeen hundreds.

"What stories do you want to tell? How do you find the artifacts? Everything must be authenticated," Franklin explained. The collection being assembled includes Nat Turner's bible that had been in the possession of a white family whose ancestors were killed in the slave uprising. Harriet Tubman's hymnal was among a collection that another family gave. Rosa Park's dress will be on display as well as shards of glass from the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham where the four young girls were killed in the 1963 bombing. You will walk through a segregated rail car.

Included in the display are Michael Jackson's fedora, Chuck Berry's Cadillac and Louis Armstrong's trumpet. The story of the violence used to control the African American population in the past and even the present is shown in images of slavery, the clan, an actual Angola prison guard tower from Louisiana, and today's The Black Lives Matter movement focused on bias in the justice system. When a young couple in California who were restoring a World War II biplane discovered that it had been used by the Tuskegee pilots, they flew it east so it could be included in the museum.

Dr. Sandra Treadway, the Librarian of the Library of Virginia, welcomed Dr. Franklin's presentation. She noted that it followed two recent exhibitions, "To be Sold," which documents Virginia's role as a center of the slave trade and "Remaking Virginia: Transformation through Emancipation" which highlights the resilience and initiative of African Americans after the Civil War.

The opening of the new museum will be a global event. Preview tours are planned for the 900 members of the international press who are stationed in Washington. Other special opportunities will be given to the tour guides and concierge services in DC so they can discover what the many visitors to Washington will experience at the museum.



Students at VCU

Dr. Franklin stressed that the museum is not just about the past. As a cultural center it will constantly tell the story of today. The website describes it as "a place that transcends the boundaries of race and culture that divide us, and becomes a lens into a story that unites us all."

Unpacking the census: 5 years later

Move beyond what you currently know

Qesarah Spencer is a graduate of the Community Trustbuilding Fellowship. She was also one of the trained community facilitators who took the "Unpacking the Census" presentation to more than 1000 people in the Richmond, VA, region as part of a public process to educate citizens about the facts of poverty and to mobilize community support for action. At the recent forum on "Unpacking the Census: 5 years later"

I'm a Richmond native, born and raised on the Northside. My family moved to Henrico briefly, and returned to the City. As soon as I was able, I moved away for about ten years. Then I returned to pursue graduate education a little more than ten years ago. When I



returned, I recalled growing up feeling like there was a secret people knew, but no one would talk about. My grandparents lived into their nineties. Neither would talk much about what it was like living here in Richmond. However, my engagement through Hope in the Cities and "Unpacking the Census" shed light on that hidden history.

There is a familiar quote that admonishes us that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. But simply remembering the past does not guarantee we won't be condemned. Nor does it ensure we won't repeat it.

We can reminisce about a half-hidden past with rose-colored glasses and become stagnant, gazing into days that were good for some at the expense of others. We can look back on a dreadful past with fear and trepidation, becoming paralyzed, unable to move beyond its tragedies. And we can dwell on an unjust past with anger and become polarized, unable to trust each other.

There are many ways we can remember the past. So when we do recall our history, we must have proper perspective in order to clearly see our way into a better future. Our memories must connect honestly to our present-day reality. Otherwise, the solutions we try to implement to address our unequal systems will not truly address the root causes, but rather only serve to create greater inequity.

That's why the "Unpacking the Census" initiative is important. It provides a corrective to our perspective of history and the role that history has played in where we are today. If we learn from

the lessons "Unpacking" can teach, we can use our collective power to reset our priorities, to address basic structural and systemic issues and move the metro Richmond region forward in ways that include ALL its citizens.

And when we begin to talk about changing structures and systems it's easy to forget that they are created by people - people like you and me. So really we are really talking about changing people, changing us - that's you and me, our family members and friends, our social norms and traditions. We can make a difference when each of us takes this new knowledge from the "Unpacking the Census" presentation and makes it a part of our world-view. Allow it to influence our personal and public lives.

So if you are looking for a day when "they" fix what is broken in our community, just remember we are the "they" and that day is always TODAY.

If you are not yet involved, I urge you to start TODAY. Learn the truth about our collective history and the legacy that we see all around us. Move beyond what you currently know and understand as reality. Then tell the truth to others you know. Be willing to challenge common misperceptions and traditions of living that do not affirm the truth or serve the greater good.

Examine your potential role as a change agent in your sphere of influence. Step into that role knowing you are joining others who have accepted their role as well.

If you have been involved, I thank you for your hard work, perseverance and commitment. I encourage you to continue to stay engaged. I urge you to consider mentoring an up and coming idealistic change agent to make room for young, new energy while sharing your insight and your expertise. Wisdom gleaned from experience is invaluable.

We have the ability to escape the condemnation of repeating our past. There is much work to be done and many ways to do it. We need willing workers from all segments of the metro Richmond region.

Initiatives of Change, 2201 W. Broad Street, Suite 200, Richmond, VA 23220

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