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Winter 2015

Greetings!

It is that time of the year when the Caux Scholars Program (CSP) needs your help! Please think of potential scholars for the 2015 summer program and encourage them to apply. The application deadline is February 27, 2015!



I was happy to have been part of the CSP Alumni Reunion this summer. How inspiring to meet a sampling of our wonderful Caux Scholar alumni network! Returning to Caux certainly reignites us on many levels, so please do look at the experiences captured in our [CSP Reunion report](#) and photo-journalist Abdualil Abdurasulov's (CSP 2003) pictures on [Flickr](#) and the [video](#) he made of the reunion. A big thank you for his work! The alumni who were present at Caux took responsibility to create regional networks to help spread the CSP-Caux spirit. As we have over 400 alumni, it will take some work, so you may be asked to help in this endeavor!

An important way to connect with our network promoting peace and transformation is to sign on to Khalil's platform (Khalil, CSP 2010, tells his story in an article in this issue!). These are challenging times, so to continue to cultivate a sense of care is what Amaha Selassie (CSP 2012) reflects on in his article about the beloved community. Asifa Koul (CSP 2010) interviewed Mohammed Abu-Nimer, who will join us this summer in Caux.

You would have been very proud of the CSP-AP pilot program that graduated 17 CSP-AP alumni from 13 countries. Patrick McNamara (CSP 1996, USA) was on faculty, focusing on peacebuilding and sustainable development. And Christie Shrestha (CSP 2004, Nepal/USA) came to work with Prerna Rathi (CSP 2014, India), who was organizing the program (see article below). We are grateful to the donors and contributors, as well

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### Please help us raise scholarship funds

**DONATE**

Donate online or send checks to our office payable to Initiatives of Change

## 2015 Caux Conferences



### Exploring the human factor in global change

**June 26-July 1**

Trust and Integrity in the Global Economy

as the probono time and energy by many who made this CSP-AP launch successful!

Do you believe that your work can be enhanced by connection with fellow scholars? We look forward to a deeper and more meaningful connection in the coming years!

Thinking of you as you launch into 2015,

**Jitka**

**Program Director**



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## From the Academic Director

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### Peacebuilding as sanctuary

*Dr. Carl Stauffer, Academic Director, Caux Scholars Program, writes.*



One of the most rewarding elements of my work is to experience how our CSP alumni are both willing and ready to give back to the work of CSP and Initiatives of Change. The loyalty, commitment and service that emanates from our alumni is

remarkable. In fact, it's unprecedented. Why is this so? I surmise that this dedication flows out of the unique encounter of a "real-time" sense of sanctuary - a form of togetherness that is transformative and long lasting.

The idea of "sanctuary" has many meanings from a religious meeting hall, to a location for the protection of certain species of animals, to a place of shelter for undocumented immigrants, to what Dr. Sandra Bloom\* described as a nurturing community that creates safety and promotes wellbeing. Bloom and her associates utilized the term "sanctuary" to identify the treatment modality they developed for working with at-risk youth. Bloom's model was described as an alternative to a sick society racked by emotional numbness, addiction to violence, alienation from self and others, and entrapped in a vicious cycle of destructive behaviour.

This genuine community experience becomes the nucleus of authentic healing. In a healthy co-operative setting, individuals

#### **July 3-8**

Just Governance for Human Security

#### **July 10-14**

Caux Dialogue on Land and Security

#### **July 16-19**

Addressing Europe's Unfinished Business  
International Peace-Builders' Forum

#### **July 27-August 2**

CATS - Children and Adults - Partners for Change?

#### **August 4-9**

Seeds of Inspiration

#### **August 10-15**

Impact Initiatives Challenge

[More information](#)

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## Healing History 2015

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**April 6-9, 2015  
Richmond, VA, USA**

What can we, as a global community, learn about how to heal history, understand the legacies that keep us apart and generate energy for building healthy inclusive societies?

This conference seeks to build trust and constructive partnerships across race, class, politics and religion through honest conversation. It will make explicit the link between

have their own needs and aspirations affirmed and at the same time, as a collective they are interdependent and must continually rely on each other to confront harms, set boundaries and move forward with group goals, learning and growth. Central to the sanctuary environment is the value of "sharing" - shared space, assumptions, goals, and practice. In short, sanctuary provides a psychological safety net to be honest with yourself and others, a spiritual space for deep personal and corporate reflection, and a socially diverse place for where "beloved community"\*\*\* is explored, built and nurtured under the canopy of justice and peacebuilding.

It is this sense of sanctuary that I have seen reenacted by CSP alumni on multiple occasions in this past year:

- Numerous alumni put in long hours of planning and organizing in order to make our CSP alumni gathering a rich place of reunion, engagement and exchange this past summer in Caux, Switzerland. <http://us.iofc.org/csp-iofc-alumni>
- In November at a public workshop in Washington DC, CSP alumni brought together community members to discuss and role-play how we could strive for civil conversations around polarizing issues - political, racial and cultural that divide our families across the USA.
- Passionate CSP alumni gave bold, creative leadership to the successful launch of the Caux Scholars Program (Asia Plateau) in Panchgani, India. CSP alumni were part of the academic faculty and program coordination who assisted the 20 gathered scholars in forming their own experience of sanctuary - from sun-up to sun-down - they wrestled with the integration of peacebuilding and development both in the classroom and in the field. <http://in.iofc.org/caux-scholars-program-asia-plateau>

Thank you to all the alumni who have given of their energy, time, expertise and finances over the years to make CSP the powerful program that it is. If you are not an alumnus, we invite you to join this vision for 2015!

## CSP faculty engaged in dialogue

### Finding a path away from violence

*Asifa Koul (CSP 2010) is working on her PhD in International Relations at American University under the direction of CSP faculty member Mohammed Abu-Nimer. We asked her to find out more about his recent dialogue work in Vienna.*

When it comes to the field of interfaith/interreligious dialogue and peacebuilding, Professor Mohammed Abu-Nimer needs no introduction. He has been actively involved as an interreligious

change in individuals' attitudes and behaviors and change in the structures of society.

[More information](#)

## Peace Circles in Washington, DC



Two Caux Scholars participated in a Peace Circle recently held in the Washington, DC, area. Both shared that the experience reminded them of Caux. Do consider participating in the [Creators of Peace network](#) which is active in many parts of the world.

[More information](#)

## A new film from South Africa

### Beyond Forgiving



This award winning film depicts the true story of two South Africans trying to move beyond their pain towards forgiveness and healing.

[Order a copy from our office](#)

conflict resolution and interfaith dialogue practitioner for more than two decades in different parts of the world, including Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Mindanao (Philippines), and the United States. Prof. Mohammed also teaches peace and conflict resolution at American University, Washington, DC.

For the past one year, he has been serving as Senior Advisor to an intergovernmental organization, the KAICIID Dialogue Center (King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and



Intercultural Dialogue), Vienna (<http://www.kaiciid.org/en/the-centre/>). Established in 2012, the center was founded to encourage dialogue among followers of different religions and cultures around the world. The KAICIID's Council of parties consists of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Austria, and the Kingdom of Spain.

According to Professor Mohammed, the center is unique in several ways: First, the governing Board of Directors is comprised of representatives from some of the major world religions-Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Second, it serves as a multiplatform for religion, governmental and nongovernmental institutions and civil society in order to improve interfaith and intercultural initiatives. Third, the center is the first of its kind that brings together policymakers and religious leaders to address conflict, whether social, political, religious, or ethnic. "And this (the Center) is based on the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and respect for religious diversity," Prof. Mohammed added.

Prof. Mohammed moderated the conference that was held in November last year in which the religious leaders from the Middle East issued the historic Vienna Declaration, "United Against Violence in the Name of Religion." Religious leaders representing Christian, Sunni, Shiite, Mandeian, and Yazidi from Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Egypt, denounced ISIS with one voice for marginalizing, persecuting and killing people in the name of religion. Prof. Mohammed notes that the Center's focus is on religious leaders because "they have a positive role to play in solving policy problems as well as the conflict. "And we need to invest in that direction," he urges.

Some of KICIID's programs focus on education, and how social media and the Internet can be utilized in ways to respond to the negative imaging of the other. "One of these programs will soon start in Indonesia this year. I am also part of the Center's program focused on the Central African Republic aimed to foster

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### **Caux Scholars is a program of Initiatives of Change**

IofC USA focuses on the link between personal and global change and seeks to inspire, equip, and engage individuals as peacemakers and trustbuilders.

It starts with listening and responding to the still small voice within, applying values of integrity to everyday living, and taking risks to bridge divides.

Visit our [website](#) for more information.

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### **Follow-up Links**

[Initiatives of Change](#)  
[Hope in the Cities \(HIC\)](#)  
[Caux Scholars Program](#)  
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[HIC on Facebook](#)



cooperation among Muslim and Christian leaders for humanitarian efforts. Similar programs in the pipeline are for other conflict-ridden areas, such as The Philippines and Myanmar."

While representing the KAICIID at a UN High-Level Forum in New York on September 9, 2014, Prof. Mohammed believes that "the myth must be corrected that the basis of the conflict is religious identity. That understanding will help people impacted by the conflict to refuse to be manipulated and find a path away from violence."

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## Caux Scholars Program in India

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### Moral courage to live differently

*Patrick McNamara, PhD, executive vice-chair of the board of directors of Initiatives of Change USA, has just returned from serving on the faculty of the Caux Scholars Program at Asia Plateau, India. He is Visiting Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.*

I was a Caux Scholar in 1996 and it changed my life. Now coming full circle, I serve on the faculty of the new Caux Scholars Program at Asia Plateau and I watched it change others' lives.



There were 17 scholars from 13 countries in this new class who gathered from December 28, 2014 through January 16, 2015. This impressive group of scholars in their 20s and 30s came to the beautiful IofC conference center in Panchgani, India with a common hope to take new skills as peacebuilders back to their communities. They are leaving with more than just those skills. Many expressed a deeper spiritual direction and moral courage to live differently as models of peace in their families, organizations, communities and nations.

Some examples of the amazing Caux Scholars include: an Iraqi immigrant to Sweden who works to integrate Muslim youth into European societies, even more important after the recent Paris attacks and backlash we are seeing; a social entrepreneur who launched a "friendships across borders" program to link young people in India and Pakistan; a director of Seeds of Peace building bridges of reconciliation originally between Israelis and Palestinians and now expanding into divides between Hindus and Muslims; two young women from Afghanistan working on the rights of girls and women in that country; a Ugandan student leader who is working to bring conflicting communities together at her university; and an Egyptian woman who participated in the revolution there.

The Caux Scholars Program has been a premiere initiative of IofC-USA since it was launched in the early 1990s. This new program in India builds on the model from Switzerland, but is adapted to the context of Asia and Africa by the dynamic Academic Director Sriprakash Mayasandra and our faculty team. Special thanks to CSP Program Director Jitka Hromek-Vaitla for bringing the vision of CSP at Asia Plateau to fruition.

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## CSP alumni report from the field

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### Bringing together the bridgebuilders

*Khalil El Masry (CSP 2010) is from Egypt. In 2011 he returned to Caux as the CSP Assistant. He writes about an opportunity for CSP alumni to gain momentum as a network and make an impact:*



My name is Khalil El-Masry, I'm an IT Consultant, a Peace Activist, and one of the founders of Selmiyah "Peaceful" which is an Egyptian youth movement promoting a culture of peace within the Egyptian society.

We are working to weave a network of different initiatives and organizations working on various disciplines that are crucial for peace such as Education, Arts, Media, Environment, and Human Rights. During the past two and a half years, Selmiyah has expanded into a multi-hub network and has worked on different projects in collaboration with such international organizations as GIZ, UNHCR, Save the Children, and the British Council.

My career in Information Technology has led me to developing an online platform supporting the civil society actors in Egypt and beyond. I would like to share about how I developed this

passion for being a network weaver, and for being a "peacebuilder". Many events in my life have shaped my personality and have been source of motivation. Among these events, one is worth mentioning, and that is the Egyptian revolution. The main lesson I learned from the revolution is straightforward. It can be summarized as "People want ... people decide ... people lead". The positive change starts with any group of people willing to make difference within their environment. The important thing here is to create space where we can bring these people together so that they can decide together to pursue their common goals. Then, it is up to their passion, persistence, and courage for them to be able to lead and achieve these goals.

Throughout the past few years, many incidents have been validating this theory of change. Whenever we were able to unite, to respect our differences, and to build consensus, we were able to achieve our common goals. Therefore, it is important not to fall into the old win-lose fight trap that can be summarized by "us" vs. "them", as we might end up excluding people who share the same vision and could have been strengthening our efforts. Our main challenge is how to manage our diversity, and how to engage in conflicts in the most efficient ways. We know that the challenges that we are facing are tremendous but we still continue to work separately with no sense of unity of direction. Our efforts are scattered, which prevents us from scaling up to meet our challenges.

"Bawabbet El-Midan" (Square Gate) is an online portal designed to be a space where we can share about our initiatives, projects and activities in order to better collaborate with each other. We need to create as many spaces as possible where we can live and adopt the values that we are promoting and that will confirm that our differences are sources of our richness. Indeed, any conflict can be an opportunity for growth and a source for creative solutions. Consequently, it is crucial to bring together all those who are in favor of values of freedom, justice, and peace, and those who are willing to build bridges of trust and understanding across divides.

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## A call to lovers of peace

*Amaha Selassie (CSP 2012) is presently working on his PhD in Sociology in Dayton, OH, and is taking part in the [Community Trustbuilding Fellowship](#) in Richmond, VA. Recently he has been involved in community action protesting the shooting of unarmed black men in Ferguson, New York and Ohio, #BlackLivesMatter. Amaha was recently awarded the Freedom and Justice award from SCLC\*. He calls on lovers of peace to go deeper:*

Dr. Martin Luther King warns us never to confuse the "isness" of the status quo with the "oughtness" of what society can be. For

me, the status quo is rooted in fear manifesting itself in 1st and 2nd class citizenship, dehumanization, exploitation and denial of the worth and unique gifts every culture has to offer.

From my perspective, the oughtness can be best summarized by King's World House vision that states that people of all ethnicities, religions, and cultures can no longer live separated from each other and therefore must learn how to live together in peace. Within America we are in a period of great social change. There are many, including me, who know that a world with a more universal sense of belonging beyond arbitrary socially constructed categories of difference is possible.

To press towards this ideal, many have taken to non-violent direct action to create community transformation in a way that acknowledges the dignity and worth of all those involved. I caution us not to stop there. Now more than ever, we need those that choose to love through their actions towards one another.



What is required now to sustain a strong sense of community beyond this "movement moment" is to develop deep relationships and trust.

We must be the invitation into a higher more authentic level of fellowship. To get to this level of mutual understanding, we will have to have the courage to have the open and honest conversations necessary to bring our deep historical wounds to the surface where they can be healed in the presence of air, light, and truth.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. states "Those that love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war." So to my fellow CSP alumni, lovers of peace, we have been trained and prepared for such a moment, and I look forward to exploring how we can strengthen our connections in order to emerge with a global platform that can tangibly build bridges of trust across the globe strong enough to bear the weight of whatever needs to pass over it.

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## Please send us your feedback

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### Building resilience

Please send us by **March 2, 2015**, 100-350 words on practices you employ to keep yourself growing and creative. We will put your contributions in the newsletter (as many as we can) and



online. Listed below are notes from Barry Hart on building resilience which gives some good guidelines.

Resilience, a mainly interior capacity that allows us to cope with adversity that gives us the ability to adapt to challenges and difficult emergent circumstances, becomes a critical force in dealing with compassion fatigue. But this innate ability to 'bounce back' or survive under difficult circumstances must be linked to external helps found in our social environment.

We can build resilience through self-care practices that include:

- Spiritual and meditative disciplines
- Understand that the exhaustion and stress you feel are normal for caregivers who deal with high stress and trauma.
- Making sleep, deep breathing, exercise and good nutrition a priority
- Talking with others
- Getting professional help if symptoms persist. (Be aware that professional help might reveal personal unhealed trauma that needs to be addressed.)
- Build into your life time to cultivate what gives you joy and meaning.
- Take time off to reflect and rest. (There are some studies that say this is what most people do to reduce stress and regain their sense of equilibrium.)

Who you are, what culture and context you come from and what context you find yourself in as a caregiver, contribute to finding ways to better help others and take care of yourself.

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We hope you enjoyed this issue of *Cauxmunique*. Please share this newsletter with your friends and forward it to those you know have a passion for peacebuilding.

Thank you!

**Kathy Aquilina**



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