

September 2016

Newsletter of Initiatives of Change

Issue No. 39

Greetings!

As we head into the fall we are reminded every day through the media of the pressing need to build trust both globally and at home. There is an urgent need for trustbuilders who have the courage to reach across the divides and begin the difficult and necessary conversations.

This month, The Atlantic published an interview with our director of reconciliation programs, Tee Turner, on "How to get Americans to talk about race" (see links in right column). People everywhere are recognizing the need but they want to know "how?" Some are looking to the work of Hope in the Cities in Richmond for answers. Under the leadership of our new executive director, Jake Hershman, we are seeking ways to build our capacity and position ourselves to respond to this need.

Jake had hoped to write a piece for this issue of Trustbuilders but he is dealing with a 15,000 pound oak tree that fell on his house during one of the summer storms! Mercifully nobody was hurt. He promises to catch up with Trustbuilders in the next issue.

Tulsa, Oklahoma

[A story of resilience to share with the world](#)

By Susan Corcoran



"What is the story that nobody wants to hear?" asked Dr. Anthony Marshall, a high school history teacher who was part of the 10

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person delegation from Tulsa, OK, that attended the Just Governance conference at Caux, Switzerland, this summer. "Tell the whole story, tell the truth. We must educate about atrocities. If it doesn't challenge you it won't change you." But he added, "Be prepared to be ostracized and criticized."

This group of city leaders and historians was led by John Franklin, senior manager, Office of External Affairs at the soon to be opened National Museum of African American History and Culture at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC. They came to Caux to tell the story of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, or pogrom as some prefer to call it. Often referred to as a "riot," it was in fact the white citizens who destroyed the thriving black community. The white economic and political power structures felt threatened by the success of this area known as the "Black Wall Street." By naming it a "riot" insurance companies did not have to compensate property owners. In the wake of the violence, 35 city blocks lay in charred ruins, over 800 people were treated for injuries and it is now believed that close to 300 people died.

Franklin said that the Tulsa Massacre is one of the stories that will be told in the new National Museum. Many of those who came to Caux helped him to gather the documents, artifacts and oral history needed to tell the story. "This is a story of resilience that must be shared with the world," said John's wife Karen. The families of several of the delegation, including Dr. Jan Christopher of the Williams family that owned the Dreamland Theater, had been personally impacted by the event, losing property and businesses.

Susan Savage, a former mayor of Tulsa, is the third generation of her family to live in the city. She grew up never knowing this story. A short paragraph in a history book in Junior High School referencing the Tulsa Race Riot prompted her to start asking questions. She was told it was not important. Clearly it was not important to white families who had not been impacted by the violence except perhaps inconvenienced by disruption in the schedule of their domestic help. She has learned the truth late in life. Does she feel guilty? "No, but it has instilled in me a great sense of responsibility to mend our community's race relations." She has made it her mission to talk about the neglect of the poor, the marginalized, and people of color in a deliberate way.

"Oklahoma has not invested in education and healthcare." She now serves as senior director of the Morton Comprehensive Health Services that was established after the riots and which for many years was the only place that African Americans could receive medical care. "The only way to heal from 1921 is to have a relentless moral effort that keeps us focused on the lives of those affected by this tragedy. If we are not active in solutions we are complicit in keeping things as they are."

Others who spoke at the workshop, both black and white, echoed the fact that growing up they knew nothing of this story of Tulsa. Michelle Place, Director of the Tulsa Historical Society, has worked tirelessly to research the story, make sure it is told and is easy to access by the community and the world beyond. The story of Tulsa cannot remain "the rich white oil man's story," she says. Alicia Latimer, the Minority Resource Center Coordinator at Tulsa City-County Library, talked about the hesitation of teachers to talk with their students even though in 2013 the State Board of

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

CTF alumni voices

[Accepting the person in front of me](#)

Joshua Ballew (CTF 2016) is a Dispute Resolution Specialist in the Virginia Attorney General's Office. He writes of his experience as a Community Trustbuilding Fellow.



Shortly after arriving in Richmond, VA, my wife and I applied for the [Community Trustbuilding Fellowship](#) as newlyweds. I was eager to learn how I could play a role in what I saw as a great need for constructive dialogue in society. The Fellowship was a life changing experience that I strongly urge you to consider applying for. The following are three truths about trustbuilding that I learned through the

Education mandated that the race massacre be taught. So with the support of the YWCA and the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation she has created a teaching kit, appropriate for different ages, that includes books, videos and lesson plans that allow the victims to tell their own stories.

The final word went to Byron Crenshaw, a young jazz musician, who urged us to learn from the past. "This story becomes more and more relevant each day with the incidents of police brutality and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement."

The Tulsa story was further dramatized by Vanessa Adams Harris who performed a one-woman play "Big Mama Speaks" giving voice to those who survived the race massacre.

A center for community trustbuilding

Learning from Richmond

By Rob Corcoran

Community leaders across the country are looking to Richmond's work of racial reconciliation, inclusive dialogue and trustbuilding. Many people are inspired by the vision of Richmond as a national center for community trustbuilding carrying forward the work of Hope in the Cities.



Mike Berry, a pastor from Annapolis, Maryland, came to the Richmond office in August to discuss how Hope in the Cities might support an initiative among Annapolis area churches which are

engaged in "sacred conversations on race." Berry contacted me after Bill Haley, a grandson of Alex Haley, gave him a copy of my book, *Trustbuilding*. Haley joined the Richmond conversation. He and Berry reminded us that Annapolis was a major slave port and is the site of the Kunta Kinte-Alex Haley Memorial that acknowledges Kunta Kinte's arrival on a slave ship in 1767.

The previous month, a diverse group also came from Williamsburg, VA, to explore how to build on dialogues that have been occurring over several years. They noted that the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation is increasingly moving toward a more inclusive and honest telling of the history of the city.

Mike McQuillan, a former US Senate aide who teaches history in New York City and who served on the NYPD Advisory Board, highlights the relevance of Richmond's model of walking through history in a commentary in *History News*. With more than 20 cities under Federal Consent Decrees to monitor and reform police behavior, McQuillan proposes that New York - and other cities - might draw on Richmond's example and that police personnel and community delegates could tour "pride and pain" places from both sides' perspectives: "Let's learn from Richmond to 'think beyond

Fellowship: the necessity of personal transformation, the nature of belonging, and value of empowering my community.

The Fellowship's operating assumption that personal transformation is what leads to social change intrigued me. Was this a disguised form of the idea that you have to help yourself before you can help others? From my experience, that sentiment is only used as an excuse to delay social change. However, it has also been my experience that social change is undermined by a lack of self-awareness and reflection. The Fellowship beautifully brought these two seemingly opposing positions together in harmony. The first truth of trustbuilding is that personal transformation helps social change flourish, and social change gives personal transformation its purpose. Trustbuilding requires purposeful transformation.

Once I was in the Fellowship, it quickly became apparent that belonging would be an integral part of trustbuilding. I grew up in a small Portuguese-colony-turned-Chinese-gambling-mecca. What was I doing in a room with people discussing generations of hate, hurt, and healing in the American context? I would evaluate my purpose in the group and wonder if I really belonged. Through this intense process of questioning I learned the second truth of trustbuilding, that people must take precedence over productivity. I judged whether a person belonged by what I believed was their contribution. Trustbuilding does not occur between ideal humans. It can only be accomplished when I accept the person in front of me, including myself, as worthy of trust just as they are.

Lastly, I benefited greatly in my professional work as a Dispute Resolution Specialist at the Attorney General's Office by going through this Fellowship. As

the box' where we are. If we'll bridge the race barrier to walk together to places resonant with historic memories that touch emotions we'll start talking about issues that face us all and the work that we, in a spirit of community can do to unite police and community as well as our cities at large."

Richmond's anti-poverty initiative, which Hope in the Cities supported through its Unpacking the Census project, is also drawing attention. Thad Williamson, who directed the city's Office of Community Wealth Building for its first two years, told Lancaster, PA's poverty commission recently that if Lancaster was serious about reducing poverty, its leaders should consider being forthright about racial segregation and other policies of the past that contributed to today's problems. He said, "The first thing we had to do is acknowledge history head on." (See the report on his speech) Richmond's history included segregated neighborhoods and schools, highway construction that destroyed thriving black communities and public housing projects that isolated the poor and kept them out of the community's mainstream.

Initiatives of Change has joined a wide range of diverse organizations and individuals as partners in developing a Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) process led by the W.K.Kellogg Foundation. It will "prioritize inclusive, community-based healing activities and policy design that seek to change collective community narratives and broaden the understanding that Americans have for their diverse experiences." The goal is to assemble national and local commissions to hold public meetings on the consequences of racial inequity and work toward mobilizing systems and structures to create more equitable opportunities. Civic, religious, philanthropic, corporate, civic rights and government leaders will create ways to hold the nation and communities accountable and monitor progress. Public programs are expected to kick off in 2017. I am serving as a consultant to the enterprise on behalf of IofC and have written several case studies as part of the preparation. Recently I was part of a TRHT team that facilitated a racial healing session for participants in a national conference of the Association of Black Journalists and Hispanic Journalists.

Dr. Gail C. Christopher, vice president of TRHT, who has spoken at several Initiatives of Change conferences, says that racial hierarchy plays a central role in social, economic and government policies. "Until we change the consciousness of this nation to one that embraces all of humanity as having equal worth and all of our children as deserving of equal opportunity, our democratic ideals will not be realized."

This month IofC is accepting applications for its 2017 Community Trustbuilding Fellowship. Each cohort is comprised of 25 outstanding community leaders from all sectors. A recently completed long-term impact study funded by the Robins Foundation surveyed 127 graduates from five cohorts over a span of 12 years. As well as Richmond, the survey included alumni in Dayton, Tulsa, Memphis, Norfolk, Austin, Cincinnati and Washington, DC. Over 70% reported that they use the core principles taught in the program as guides in their thinking and decision-making "quite a bit" or "a lot." More than 55% say they were motivated to act as agents of change in their communities and are more active in groups working for justice and reconciliation as a result of the Fellowship experience. More than

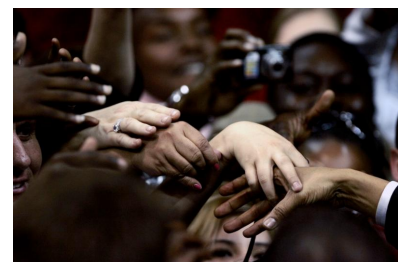
someone who attempts to resolve disputes between consumers and businesses I am routinely criticized by complainants with unresolved disputes. The third truth of trustbuilding is that all must be empowered to do the work that is theirs. I empower complainants by reminding them that they are the ones who know what resolution would look like better than anyone else. I cannot determine that for them. Our office's process is an opportunity for them to pursue resolution, and I am here to assist and facilitate that resolution. The Fellowship has equipped me to empower others and that is how trust is built.

Whoever you are, the Community Trustbuilding Fellowship is right for you. Like anything worthwhile, the Fellowship will be difficult, but I can guarantee there is no other way to learn how to engage in the rewarding task of trustbuilding than to actually do it.

Apply to the Community Trustbuilding Fellowship today so you can be building trust tomorrow!

Press article

The Atlantic



[How to Get Americans to Talk About Race](#)

"Start with simple questions, and establish a baseline of trust." This excellent interview with Tee Turner appeared this month in The Atlantic. [Read more](#)

75% identified relationships where trust increased due to efforts to engage in more honest conversations with family, friends, or at work and 56 % identified policies or practices at work that changed as a result of their promotion of diversity or inclusion.

Seeking to understand

Living peace: 25 years of Creators of Peace

Kimberly Weichel, author of the recently published memoir, "Beyond Borders: One Woman's Journey of Courage, Passion and Inspiration," and **Kathy Aquilina**, responsible for Washington outreach programs for Initiatives of Change, were part of the American delegation attending "Living Peace," the 25th anniversary of Creators of Peace. They write of their experience.

"People are everything," said Gill Hicks, a woman who lost both legs in a suicide bombing in London. Gill shared her wisdom and compelling story with 200 of us from 43 countries attending the Creators of Peace conference in Caux, Switzerland. (Photo: Gail Hicks)

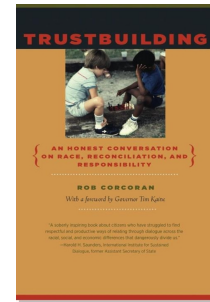
"Seek to understand and become part of the solution to end violence and violent extremism," Gill offered, explaining "confidence is the greatest antidote to fear." She strongly believes in the power of the individual and that we all have "the ability to make or break the world around us... Each of us has the ability to choose how to react and respond." Love saved her life, and she poignantly shared, "Someone somewhere is feeling the effects of something you have said or done." What we do or do not do matters. And her powerful question resounded throughout the conference: "Does it have to take a tragedy or disaster for us to feel deeply connected as one species?"



Her story was one of many remarkable stories shared in a "Living Peace" conference held in one of the most majestic venues overlooking Lake Geneva and Montreux, Switzerland. Creators of Peace, an international association, focuses on being radical peacebuilders by addressing the root of conflict and understanding the link between our personal attitudes and actions and our outer work. By embodying peacebuilding principles we are better able to live them in our daily life. Yes, ordinary people can do extraordinary things.

There was the moving story of different ethnic groups in Kenya who worked together to bridge some deep-seated differences that divided them for decades/centuries. When a group of Kenyans told this story, a Kenyan woman sitting in the audience from a neighboring ethnic group rose to give each of them hugs. Love and

Trustbuilding



Trustbuilding
by Rob Corcoran



Read Rob Corcoran's latest blog
[Snapshots of the America I know and love](#)



2015 International IofC Annual Report



The annual report of Initiatives of Change International is now available online. Discover what is happening in some of the more than 40 countries where IofC is active.

understanding connected them.

There were several moving stories of women who were raped, one in Rwanda and another in South Africa, and their long journey of healing and transforming their pain into positive action. Jo Berry, whose father was a politician in Northern Ireland and was killed by a bomb thrown by an IRA member, shared her story of choosing to meet the IRA bomber and get to understand why he had thrown the bomb. After years of healing work, they now speak publicly together about the power of forgiveness.

We talked a lot about forgiveness at the conference, and had opportunities to do our own forgiveness work. Forgiveness is not about forgetting or making the situation suddenly right, rather forgiving is "setting the prisoner free and discovering the prisoner is you." It's about understanding that we are all human and make mistakes, and transforming our pain so it doesn't define us. It is about creating a new story, where we move from focus on the pain to focus on what we've learned and how that empowers us to step forward.

Jean Brown challenged us to "take on being advocates for a new story." Jean has shepherded Creators of Peace for the past 25 years, and encouraged us to "claim our practices and claim our authentic voice." But how does one start? One of the Founding Mothers of Creators of Peace, Ahunna Eziakonwa-Onochie from Nigeria, said, "Peace begins with an inner choice. War zones in our hearts can spread from the bedrooms to the boardrooms, to the classrooms and courtrooms."

Are there practices that can help us face the "war zones" in our hearts and can aid us in living peace? One is to take a daily time of quiet reflection. This can be accompanied by reading sacred text or some inspirational writing. During the conference we shared quiet time together in our small community groups. Slowing down to digest accumulated impressions during an intense conference was vital! That gave us time and space to resonate with a challenge, to forgive hurts or address fears.

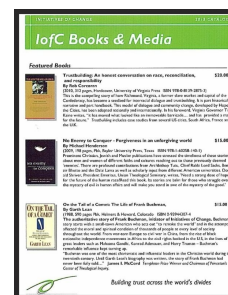
Another practice is to take a step. In a plenary session, a Christian and a Muslim from Lebanon told us why they now stand together. "Her character helped me see the beauty of my enemy. Our differences have become a cherished challenge for introspection." It dawned on them that they were "united in fear for the future of our country," and how this same fear "was polluting the tender hearts of our children." They became "united in our decision to change." They now run a camp for teens of different faiths in order to multiply change.

In the balancing of silence and action, we can move towards peace and continue to be on the cutting edge of discovery. "Look for clues of what it means to live peace, not just in our heads, but in our hearts," was Jean Brown's closing recommendation.

In summing it up Kimberly Weichel says, "One of my biggest take-aways from the conference was how many participants had done deep, inner work, and in doing so had transformed themselves to become powerful, positive leaders. These are the stories we are yearning to hear, how to move beyond victim to powerful change agent. Living Peace was for me a living example of the power of

Hope & inspiration

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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 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>

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positive action."

In the US, we are building a team of Creators of Peace circle facilitators. If you are interested in participating in a peace circle, a gathering of 10-12 women to explore starting a peace process, contact Kathy Aquilina through our office.

Connecting with Caux Scholars

Bringing the best hope to Afghanistan

Patrick McNamara (CSP 1996) is vice-chair of the Initiatives of Change USA board and has served on the faculty of the Caux Scholars Program in India at Asia Plateau. Dr. McNamara has worked locally and internationally with universities, corporations, governments, NGOs, and foundations for 20 years. He serves as Director of International Studies at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He writes:

Twice in the past year, I have traveled to Afghanistan. Both times I re-connected with two of the best and brightest Caux Scholars. The first time in October 2015, was with a team from University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO) when we were facilitating dialogues about water conflicts with neighbors. (For more on that project, please watch my TEDxOmaha talk titled Water Conflict, Water Peace.) My second time in Afghanistan was April 2016 when a team from UNO went for a \$2.2 million grant from USAID to help start new degree programs in Communication Studies at Kabul University and Balkh University.



Shabnam Hamra and Hajer Wariss were star students in the CSP-AP 2014 course in India. These two remarkable young women graduated from the prestigious Faculty of Law at Kabul University. They both have a heart for changing their country for the better. Shabnam was working on a grant project in a camp near Kabul for internally displaced people sponsored by the Danish Refugee Council in Afghanistan. Hajer was volunteering at a girls' school mentoring at-risk students who could use a strong, smart older role model.

Both Hajer and Shabnam have been frustrated by the lack of job opportunities in Afghanistan, a sentiment I heard echoed by dozens of other young Afghans I spoke to. As we sat under the shade at a picnic table on the beautifully lush campus of Kabul University, both talked about exploring opportunities outside Afghanistan, but have family and other ties that will make that hard. I feel for their struggle. I too want to see these talented women succeed in life and career, but also know that their country needs them right now more than ever. There has been a huge "brain-drain" from Afghanistan in the past four decades of conflict there. And Shabnam and Hajer could easily find opportunities elsewhere. However, the young people of Afghanistan bring the

best hope that country has of economic development and peacebuilding. In Afghanistan, 63% of the total population of 27.5 million is under age 25. There is a sense of optimism in many of those young people that I spoke with. In guest lecturing to university students, I found their engagement and curiosity extraordinary. They asked about American culture, foreign policy regarding Afghanistan, why the U.S. gives such huge amounts of aid - especially for the military - to Pakistan, and then, "Who will you vote for as President?" I answered that I think Donald Trump as President would be a disaster for America, for Afghanistan, and for the world. The Afghan students broke into applause.

IofC has many initiatives in many places of the world. I am biased as a former Caux Scholar and current faculty in CSP-AP, but I think that our CSP initiative has had among the greatest impact of all on personal and societal change over the past 25 years. By exploring "conflict where I come from" as an essential element in CSP curriculum, the scholars have an opportunity to reflect on some conflict that they can have personal impact on changing upon their return to their home communities.

The network of CSP alumni has amazing people who are doing amazing work under often difficult circumstances. Like Hajer and Shabnam in Afghanistan, staying connected to the network is important for them. If you have an opportunity to connect with any of our CSP-ers anywhere in the world, please do. You might be surprised at how impactful the CSP experience was and still is. And by re-connecting them to others in the IofC network, they might again feel the spark that inspired them to personal and societal change and, in doing so, might light a spark in others.

We hope you enjoyed this issue of [Trustbuilders](#). Please share this newsletter with your friends and forward it to those you know have a passion for trustbuilding.

Thank you!

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

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