



March 2013

Issue No. 20

Greetings!

Change in a community in Richmond, VA, can sow seeds of hope for a movement of healing and reconciliation half way around the world in South Sudan. The global network of Initiatives of Change helps create these links for greater impact.

A number of the initiatives that are described in these articles need financial support so we encourage you to consider a donation.

Several IofC training opportunities are offered this May in Richmond. See the upcoming events. They are scheduled on the week-end so if you wish to come from out-of-town you are most welcome. Information is on the website or call 804 358 1764.

News from Hope in the Cities

Three neighborhoods - one community?

Cricket White

Three distinct neighborhoods, adjacent to each other, with distrust between them based on historical events - could they become one community that honors their distinct boundaries?



*Bulldozers in Fulton Bottom
(Style Weekly)*

Hope in the Cities was invited by the Neighborhood Resource Center to lead a process for residents of the three neighborhoods who were wary of each other, if not downright hostile.

And, like so many stories today, it begins with history ignored, history forgotten, history repressed. And it is bigger than just a neighborhood.

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DONATE!

Please consider a gift to support one of these initiatives!

Sixty percent of our support comes from people just like you! No gift is too large or too small.

Mail a check to the office or go to the website to donate www.us.iofc.org

Upcoming Events

March 22-23

Hope in the Cities Facilitator Training, Richmond, VA

- A 12-hour facilitator training focused on building both

The mythology is that Richmond, VA, is built on seven hills. But it is the "valleys" between the hills where much of the story took place. Fulton is built in a valley with Fulton Hill and Montrose Heights overlooking it. Historically, Fulton was a thriving African American neighborhood, with businesses and shops, professionals and blue collar workers living side by side.

Montrose Heights and Fulton Hill were traditionally white blue-collar neighborhoods with businesses, shops and homes. They tended, as much of Richmond did, to think of the African American neighborhood in the valley below as "the bottom." That name expressed location but, more importantly, an attitude of thinly veiled disdain.

In the national movement called urban renewal in the 1970s, Richmond government decided to bulldoze all of Fulton to build a "better neighborhood." Families were displaced, elderly were moved, and the area changed fundamentally. Those that stayed behind moved into "new" homes, homes built in a quick and shabby fashion, with many structural problems. Businesses, shops and services never relocated to the "new" neighborhood. White Fulton Hill and Montrose Heights neighborhoods were not touched, even though they were adjacent to Fulton.

Hope in the Cities facilitated dialogues between members of each community designed to elicit core trust issues, hopes and concerns. Over the course of five months deep hurts and anger were expressed, relationships were slowly built, and the participants began to plan for shared programs and activities.

At the last meeting, the group began to make a list of things that had been accomplished since the dialogue began and a list of the things they want to do together. Hope in the Cities remains in the background as a support for this effort. Telling the history honestly, bringing people together in dialogue to build trust, and working together for the good of all - this community is a role model for other communities wrestling with discord and mistrust.

From Richmond to Ukraine

Susan Corcoran



Diana Damsa facilitates a dialogue

Diana Damsa, from Baia Mare, Romania, spent 10 weeks as an international intern with Hope in the Cities last fall. As a result a partnership is growing between Richmond and the Healing the Past project in Ukraine.

In evaluating her time in Richmond Diana writes, "I

competence and confidence in facilitating difficult and heated dialogues and discussions. Location: Hope in the Cities Office. Time: Fri. 6:00 - 9:00pm, Sat. 9:00am - 6:00 pm.

March 23

Creators of Peace Circle, Annapolis, MD - This experience offers women an opportunity to embrace their value as peace-creators in family, community and nation. If you are interested in learning more about Creators of Peace Circles contact Kathy Aquilina at 202 872 9077.

March 25

Interfaith Network, Washington, DC - Courtney Brode of The Institute for Global Engagement will lead a discussion on religious freedom. The Institute for Global Engagement promotes sustainable environments for religious freedom worldwide. We meet over a brown bag lunch from 12:15 - 1:30. Venue TBA Contact Kathy Aquilina at 202 872 9077.

April 17-21

National Conference for Reconciliation and Healing, South Sudan - Initiatives of Change International will partner with the government in providing international speakers and facilitators with evidence of reconciliation and healing during this conference.

May 4

Trustbuilding and Community Change Workshop, Richmond, VA - A one-day interactive workshop exploring trust as social capital and trustbuilding as an essential skill for effective leaders in a diverse world. It draws on Rob Corcoran's book, *Trustbuilding*. Location: Richmond Hill. Time: Sat. 9:00am - 6:00pm.

May 17-18

Hope in the Cities Walking Through History Workshop, Richmond, VA - A 12-hour training with Hope in the Cities to explore the methodology that encourages healing and understanding. It will include a walk along the historic Slave Trail. Location: Richmond Hill. Time: Fri. 4:00 pm - Sat. 6:00 pm.

very much appreciated the constant availability of the Hope in the Cities trainers and coordinators in answering questions, giving details about their program and their methodology and valuable advice for the next step in our work with the Healing the Past project in Ukraine."

Diana was able to bring back to her colleagues in Eastern Europe some new ideas for curriculum and group exercises that could be applied to their projects. Diana writes "We re-thought the materials we use during our dialogues. We inserted a lot of the HIC materials - the History timeline, Environmental scan, Asking questions in service of the other, My side-your side. We used quite a lot from the design I planned with Cricket (White)."

At the end of February they held the 5th Healing the Past dialogue in the Zakarpattia region of Ukraine. The theme was "Unhealed history has a tendency to repeat itself." The new materials were well received. People very much appreciated the History timeline. For many participants dialogue is not a natural means of communication and seems uncomfortable. The experience requires both concentrated listening to the other person but at the same time a willingness to speak honestly.

Diana concludes, "For sure, my internship with HIC was a good investment of time, energy and money. We dream of a day when one of the Hope in the Cities facilitators will come to Ukraine to lead a dialogue with us!"

Not a head thing but a heart thing

Randy Ruffin

Rev. Sylvester "Tee" Turner, director of reconciliation programs with IofC, was the guest speaker at a Celebration of Emancipation and Recommitment to Reconciliation at Little Fork Episcopal Church in rural Rixeyville, VA, on February 23. The church, built in 1776, was a focus of activity by both North and South during the Civil War, and members wanted it to play a part in increasing trust and understanding across divides in the community today.



*Rev. Turner speaks with one of the congregation
(Photo: Randy Ruffin)*

Turner told his interracial, interdenominational audience that the Emancipation Proclamation was a "law" and that laws don't bring us together. Reconciliation "is not a head thing, but a heart thing," he continued, and "until hearts are changed, the battle for reconciliation will continue." There are legacies from the institution of slavery which "can't be brushed over... You can't talk about reconciliation until you talk about the action that created the division. You have to talk about the good, the bad and the ugly." Reconciliation, he said, is a three-legged stool

May 29-31

The Value of Reconciliation: opportunity, equity and race, Tulsa, OK

The John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation is convening this fourth national symposium. Hope in the Cities will be presenting a workshop.

June 21-22

Hope in the Cities Facilitator Training, Richmond, VA

- A 12-hour facilitator training focused on building both competence and confidence in facilitating difficult and heated dialogues and discussions. Location: Hope in the Cities Office. Time: Fri. 6:00 -9:00pm, Sat. 9:00am - 6:00 pm.

June 29-August 12

2013 Caux Summer Conferences, Switzerland

See the more detailed program below.

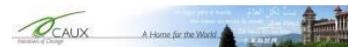
For more information or to register call 804 358 1764

Caux Conference Report



order from our office

Caux Conferences 2013



June 29-July 3

Just governance

Exploring the personal qualities needed for effective governance and structures which promote integrity and cooperation

July 3-7

Healing history

Overcoming racism, seeking equity, building community

July 7-11

Dialogue on land and security

Share experience and build

made up of acknowledgment, forgiveness and accountability.

Turner spoke of what the Emancipation Proclamation meant to the North - a ray of hope at a difficult time in the war; the South - an affirmation that the war really WAS about states' rights - the right to do what you wanted with your property; free blacks - an opportunity to show that they had as much "skin in the game" as anyone else; and enslaved blacks - an indication that at long last their prayers were being answered.

Turner said it's important for us to recognize that freedom wasn't simply given to African Americans - a misunderstanding that hinders reconciliation. Many struggled, fought and risked to gain their freedom.

Lively conversations were continued over refreshments in the parish hall.

Update from Caux Scholars

Reaching new heights while honoring our roots



Charlotte Freeman is the program development director for lofC USA. She gives an update on this year's Caux Scholars Program:

The Caux Scholars Program is moving full speed ahead into its

21st year! We received over 50 applications from over 30 countries. The applicants ranged in age from 21 to 42 and hailed from countries as diverse as Syria, Kenya, Tajikistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sudan, Myanmar, and the US!

The CSP Selection Committee had the difficult task of determining who would make up the 2013 class of Caux Scholars. After many hours of deliberation we settled on a group that we feel may be the most promising young leaders CSP has ever seen!

In addition to the upsurge in applicants, we are also celebrating the beginning of an exciting new project in the US.

Our CSP alumni are talented, experienced, energetic, and have been deeply immersed in the lofC's mission, and methodology. They leave CSP feeling inspired and eager to become part of community change. Any of these alumni would be an asset to a community trustbuilding initiative. Therefore, we are piloting a project in 2013 that will connect the Caux Scholars Program with the lofC national network of trustbuilders.

So, we have selected three fantastic Caux Scholars for this pilot

partnerships in restoring land, lives and peace.

July 13-19

Trust and integrity in the global economy

Toward economic justice and environmental stability

July 24-30

Children as actors in transforming society

The role of children and youth as active citizens

August 1-6

Learning to live in a multicultural world

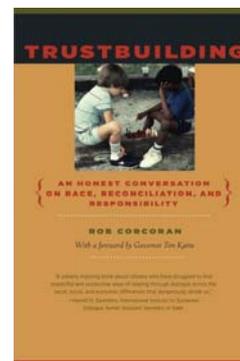
Imagining and co-creating a desired future in Europe through intergenerational and intercultural dialogue

August 7-12

Seeds of inspiration

People sharing the inspiration that shaped their lives

More information available on the Caux website at www.caux.ch



Read author
Rob Corcoran's latest blog,

After 52 years, an apology

<http://4trustbuilding.blogspot.com>



project: Tamara Hawes and Amaha Sellassie from Dayton, Ohio and Tyler Woodard from Memphis, Tennessee. We will be posting their profiles and information on their community projects in the coming months. So stay tuned!

Finally, many of this year's class are looking for financial assistance so we ask you to please consider helping us build the scholarship funds needed for the 2013 program.

Washington Outreach

Seeds of respecting diversity planted early

Kathy Aquilina



How many Americans know what some in the Muslim community in our country face? With 12 around the table, the DC-Interfaith Network had an up-close and personal encounter with Rabia Chaudry, an immigration lawyer of Pakistani origin, who poured

forth statistics, experience and issues relating to the Muslim community in the US.

Initiatives of Change is part of this network of young professionals in the DC area involved or interested in interfaith work. Monthly brown-bag lunches at various non-profit venues offer an opportunity to meet with peers who staff many of these NGO organizations and talk over similar projects and possibilities for collaboration. It is a place to learn, ask questions and share best practices.

Rabia Chaudry told us that her career grew out of the needs in her community. It all came to a head when she started getting calls from her Muslim clients. They were getting calls from US authorities asserting some pressure on them to become informers, to merely monitor the people they worshipped with, for instance. When one, a new immigrant who was also an Imam, was suddenly picked up and interrogated for eight hours, it became clear to her that this was a major challenge to take on: addressing the civil rights of Muslims.

Rabia knew that she would have to act, and so she created Safe Nation, a non-profit organization that would bridge the divide between law enforcement and the Muslim community. Rabia desired to provide cultural and religious literacy to law enforcement. She has seen marked improvement over the years with better communication and engagement.

Maggie Sidiqqi of The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)

The Imam & The Pastor

"The African model for finding peace amid the continent's warring communities"

The Times (London)



An African Answer

The second film about the work of these two African peacemakers.

To order the 2 DVD Packaged set call 804 358 1764



Initiatives of Change focuses on the link between personal and global change and seeks to inspire, equip, and engage individuals as 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.

shared her experience of volunteering in a juvenile facility. She had feared the worst of prison officials who had gained a reputation for being inhospitable. Yet when she arrived, the staff was quite welcoming. She wondered why this was so, and found that after two years of visits by those from the Muslim community, the prison staff saw a change in these young offenders. The classes run by Muslim volunteers for these Muslim youth were bearing fruit. The youth were less hostile and more open to working together.

Seeds of respecting diversity were planted in Rabia early in life. Her father, a veterinarian, came to this country when she was an infant. Like most immigrants, he started doing menial tasks to support his family. His potential was noticed by a man, who offered his second home for the family to live in. The American generosity impressed her family deeply, especially since the man who had helped them was Jewish. Rabia remembers her mother's strong defense of Jewish people ever after, because she had received crucial help from a Jewish man at a very vulnerable time in their lives.

So, how many Americans know what some in the Muslim community in our country face? According to Christina Warner from the Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign, said that less than 50% of Americans know a Muslim personally and the consequence is that we are more likely to believe negative media.

Initiatives of Change International

Journey of healing and reconciliation in South Sudan

Susan Corcoran



South Sudan's first anniversary celebrations

Several Americans will travel to South Sudan next month to support a process of reconciliation and healing in South Sudan, Africa's newest nation. Rev. Sylvester "Tee" Turner, director of reconciliation programs for Hope in the Cities, and Will Elliott, executive director of IofC USA, will be among the group.

A conference has been officially announced for April 18-21 and will be opened by President Salva Kiir. This will launch a national campaign for reconciliation coordinated over the next 4-5 years by the Office of the President and the South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Commission. Initiatives of Change International

has been asked to partner with the government in the first phase of this campaign, providing international speakers and facilitators with evidence of reconciliation and healing during the conference, and on-the-ground support in the lead-up to it.

In 2011, South Sudan became an independent nation after nearly 50 years war in which over two million died. Every family has suffered losses in the war, which has left deep divisions between the various ethnic groups and communities. But while the war with the north officially ended with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, a feeling of real peace is still illusive. There is ongoing conflict on the border between Sudan and South Sudan, particularly over a disputed area, Abyei, and border regions where oil reserves are concentrated. Once the unifying force behind the struggle for independence dissipated, ethnic and inter-communal violence has also been on the rise.

Five of the IofC advance team are now on the ground in South Sudan and have joined the able group of government officials, members of Initiatives of Change-South Sudan and volunteers to prepare for the launch of this initiative. As well as planning the four day conference in April, the other main focus is running six weeks of training for 200 youth "mobilizers" to promote peace in their communities across South Sudan.

Tee Turner says, "The challenges in South Sudan are great. It is reminiscent of the many social struggles the United States has faced during periods of transition. The good thing is that South Sudanese realize that in order for the country to move forward it has to address the history of Civil War and tribal differences to begin a process of healing. In my talks with people from South Sudan, including Dr. Akec Khoc, the Ambassador in Washington, DC, I recognize it is their love of country that will help shape its future. Through this new initiative of reconciliation South Sudan can become a model for other countries that have gone through similar experiences."

Please consider supporting this important initiative financially.

Making democracy real

Cricket White, director of education and training for IofC, USA and her husband Ralph White, recently retired as chief naturalist of the James River Park System in Richmond, VA, journeyed to India to participate in the Making Democracy Real conference. Cricket writes of their experience:

As our taxi pulled up at dawn and the sun surfaced from behind the tablelands, the wash of brilliant fuchsia bougainvillea and clear red geraniums welcomed us as we were serenaded by raucous birds and squabbling monkeys. After 40+ hours of



*Ralph and Cricket White
in the back row*

travel my husband Ralph and I had arrived at Asia Plateau, India, the Initiatives of Change international conference center, to attend the 2nd *Making Democracy Real* conference.

At the opening ceremony, Prabhat Kumar, a former Cabinet Secretary of India, former Governor of Jharkhand, and Chair of the IC Centre for Governance challenged us, "Democracy must deliver... people lose trust in democracy when it does not deliver," he said, adding that when that happens you get spontaneous uprisings.

Conference participants from Syria, China, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Switzerland, Philippines, Australia and many more countries, were then invited by Rajmohan Gandhi to consider the question, "Why had democracy survived" in India, regardless of the many challenges and threats there. We were encouraged to think through this question in light of our own nation's democracy or lack thereof.

I was asked to speak to the conference about the work done in Richmond - using history as a tool to begin to address the inequities that are the legacy of that history. Poverty, racism, socio-economic segregation and fear of the 'other' came out of the history in Richmond. I was astonished at how many participants were interested in the nuts and bolts of the Richmond work and its applicability to other cities. We were able to share processes, ideas and even program specifics as we talked of parallels and similarities.

As I interacted with many of the participants, my husband, Ralph, was fully engaged with Grampari, a teaching/learning center on the premises. It embodies the values and environmental standards it teaches. From bird walks to reforestation, geology of the region to a "tippy-tappy" (a way to wash one's hands with the smallest amount of water possible), Grampari is an inspiring, living model for India's ecological sustainability.

I left Asia Plateau with a much deeper appreciation of the democracy we enjoy here in the United States and my own sense of responsibility to emphasize that in our work. Everyone at the table, all voices matter, intentionally include those who were historically excluded - these are the bedrock of democracy. How do we make democracy real today, in our own lives?

Commentary

When majority becomes minority



This commentary, written by Rob Corcoran, national director of IofC USA, was first published as a "Global Voice" on the IofC international website.

When US Secretary of State John Kerry

met with Egypt's leaders he noted that the road to democracy is long: "I say with both humility and with a great deal of respect, that getting there requires a genuine give-and-take among Egypt's political leaders and civil society groups, just as we are continuing to struggle with that in our own country."

Today US democracy hangs in the balance. Political partisanship has paralyzed the federal government. There are many causes for the dysfunction in Washington but a major factor is the seismic demographic and cultural shift that is occurring as a long-established majority becomes a minority.

By 2043, according to latest predictions, whites will no longer make up the majority of Americans. "We as a society must begin to consider now what this change will mean for a nation mired in a majority/minority swamp of privilege, expectations, historical benefits and systematic discrimination," writes columnist Charles Blow. "The browning of America is very real and unrelenting. Our task is to find a way to move into this new Ecu Era with as much ease and grace as we can muster....What will it mean to be white after 'whiteness' no longer defines the mainstream? How should we consider a waning majority when their privilege of numbers gives way to what many other Americans have experienced as the minority plight?"

In the presidential elections last November Obama won 93 percent of the black vote, but the more than 70 percent Latino support was decisive. Blatant efforts to suppress the vote in several states backfired as minorities turned out in record numbers. The shift is not just racial. Young people and women voted Democratic by wide margins largely because of more liberal views on women's rights and gay marriage.

Even a convincing electoral victory does not translate into political capacity to drive legislation. Although the framers of the constitution deliberately created checks and balances, they could not have imagined a scenario where a minority party could effectively block any legislation.

"Power is a precious commodity," writes Blow. "It is rarely voluntarily surrendered, particularly by those who believe they have earned it. The task is to expand the franchise without casting some people as givers and others as takers."

The polarization in Washington reflects growing fragmentation in the country. In his book *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart* Bill Bishop says that Americans are choosing to live in regions where neighbors share their political and culture biases. What is the average American to do in this situation? How do we avoid simply affirming this pattern by our attitudes and behavior?

It is important for liberals like me to recognize that a significant section of the country feels under threat as traditional values are challenged and as previously homogeneous communities experience an influx of new cultures. It is the responsibility of new majorities to understand the anxieties of groups that fear loss of identity and privilege, particularly in times of rapid

change and economic stress. Mee Moua, the first member of the Lao community to be elected to Minnesota's state senate, says that in today's political climate "everyone has been given tacit permission to unleash their anxieties on those they believe to be the 'other.'"

Here's an idea: Could Obama make a "listening tour" of communities in the southern states? No speeches, just listening. With his perceived intellectual coolness and association with the liberal Harvard elite, the president has never connected emotionally with key constituents in the largely conservative South. Perhaps our Virginia Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine (Democrats, but broadly respected), might play a role in facilitating such a tour.

A listening ear and a welcoming attitude might break down stereotypes. Some unexpected allies might emerge. Liberals often make the mistake of assuming that conservatives are monolithic in their views; many are committed to racial and social justice. Not all liberals are as enlightened as they would like to think. In his second term Obama has little to lose and much to gain by encouraging honest conversation to overcome racial, political and cultural divides.

We hope you enjoyed this issue of *Breakthroughs*. Please share this newsletter with your friends and pass it on it to those you know have a passion for trustbuilding.

Thank you!

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