



January 2014

Newsletter of Initiatives of Change USA

Issue No. 25

Greetings!

As we enter 2014 there is violence and turmoil in many parts of the world as people struggle for freedom and democracy. The death of Nelson Mandela, a giant for justice and reconciliation, reminds us of the courage and determination it takes to be a changemaker.

Lena Kashkarova, our Hope in the Cities intern from Ukraine, returned home in the midst of the demonstrations in Kiev. Now with the Foundations for Freedom team she is organizing grassroots dialogues between protesters and those who don't support the protest. She writes, "if it works out I'll have plenty of practice for everything I learned in Richmond!"



Over the past two decades the Caux Scholars Program has graduated more than 400 peacemakers, many of whom are now engaged in global conflict situations. This is one of the best ways to invest in a more peaceful tomorrow.

We feature the Caux Scholars Program in this issue. Who are the emerging leaders who should be at Caux next summer? Please help recruit the 2014 class and raise funds to provide those who have need with scholarships.

Also, read more about the April 4-6 "Indzaba." This is the name given to the 2014 IofC National Forum. The purpose of the "Indzaba" is to deepen and strengthen IofC's national network. This is your chance to help shape IofC's engagement in this country.

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### Please consider a gift to Initiatives of Change!

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

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### Become a sustaining donor with a monthly gift!

Checks should be made out to Initiatives of Change and mailed to the IofC office.

## Caux Scholars 2014

### Peacebuilding unpacked

The [online application](#) for the Caux Scholars Program 2014 (CSP) is now open. The dates for this year are July 20 - August 16.

The focus of the program is on the themes of justice, conflict transformation, and reconciliation. Beginning with key theoretical underpinnings and a multidisciplinary approach to concepts of justice, this course will highlight the contemporary applications of justice in current and post-war settings internationally.

This past year, post-CSP internships have provided further opportunities for leadership experience. Xeniya Mironova, from Tajikistan, and Rashad Aliyev, from Azerbaijan, received extensive training from Foundations for Freedom and participated in a course entitled "In Search of Positive Change: Influence of Values on a Person and Society" in Ukraine.

Mercy Shahale from Kenya and Alex Nuwagaba from Uganda have been working together to develop their own organization and this month travel to India to participate in the Making Democracy Real conference in India. They see the relevance to the work they do in Africa of breaking the cycles of violence and creating stable governance systems.

Laurin Hodge from the Washington, DC, area has just joined the IofC USA team and is developing a 1-year fellowship program for graduating scholars to engage with the Washington community.

Please consider being a scholar in 2014 or pass this information on to others you think would be good candidates.



There is a short video on the website, made by Canadian Tim Hall (CSP 2013) that describes the program and is a good recruiting tool.

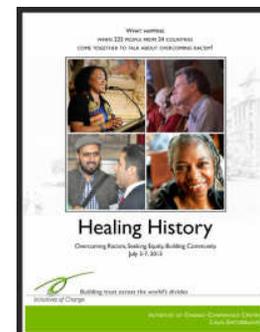
## Caux Scholars Report

### [Read the 2013 Report](#)



## Caux Conference Reports

### [Healing History conference July 3-7](#)



### [2013 Caux Conference Report](#)



Copies of these reports can be ordered from the IofC office.

## Caux Scholars in the Community

### A listening community is a learning community

This year IofC USA introduced a new project, *Caux Scholars in the Community*, which recruits US scholars committed to building trust in their home communities. **Amaha Sellassie** from Dayton, OH, is a mediator in conflict transformation, trained by the US Institute of Peace, and is a facilitator for the Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations, a project inspired by *Hope in the Cities*. Rob Corcoran interviews him about his experience as a Caux Scholar and at the Healing History conference.

#### What are the issues that concern you most in Dayton? Where does your passion lie?



The biggest issue is lack of trust and cooperation. The more I study about trust I see that it is the key to everything. Without trust you can't have collaboration. There's a lot of great community work going on in Dayton but people are often operating in separate silos. So I

am looking for ways to build trust and collaboration. I call it the "Switchboard" - connecting gifts with opportunities.

I am trying to develop a listening campaign to hear the experience of the marginalized within our community so that we can use this as the starting point of our organizing and coordinated activity, see where we are heading and what we are striving for collectively. Our theme is "A listening community is a learning community." It's hard to navigate the east-west divide (the east is largely white, the west is largely black) and get everyone talking together. Dayton has become known as a place that welcomes immigrants - there's a growing Turkish community and the city's "Welcome Dayton" initiative is picking up steam - but some of the older residents resent that newcomers are welcomed and not enough attention is given to needs in the existing community. The Switchboard is a way to collect stories from people and bring their voices to the center. This will help all the agencies to do their work better.

#### What was the "core" experience in Caux for you?

I saw a level of fellowship I had never seen before, the level of respect, the sharing of cultures. I always believed that the "beloved community" was possible but it was not until I got to Caux that I experienced it. Caux challenges stereotypes by challenging us to have real experiences. I began

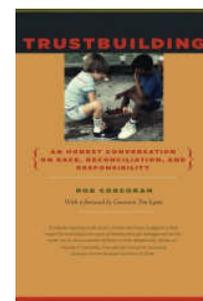


## Hope & inspiration

Check out the tools for change in our books and media catalog



The catalog and books can be ordered from our office.



### **Trustbuilding** by Rob Corcoran

Read his latest blog,  
[\*The war on America's poor\*](#)



### **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.

[Order the 2 DVD Packaged set](#)

to ask why it was possible there and not everywhere else. I also saw the power of service. Some of the greatest moments were cutting vegetables together!

### **Could you share some of what you wrote about the Healing History conference?**

One of the questions posed was: how do we overcome racism? Some participants suggested that we begin with our minds, in particular our unconscious bias, which is the lens through which we view the world and process information unconsciously. Unconscious bias is not about race but rather how we choose to process and categorize information that creates in-groups and out-groups. This process of assigning negative attributes to certain categories creates a sense of otherness which dehumanizes groups of people. Socially this "othering" creates systems and structures that support and validate it. The first step to combat this is to be aware that we all have unconscious bias. Next is to challenge stereotypes because each time we prove them to be false, we puncture little holes in them. It is hard to sustain stereotypes when we are in regular contact with those that we have "othered". Some participants suggested that we must pivot away from centering our discussions on race and look to transform the dominant power structures that have been constructed based on the concept of race. It is only when we address the underlying structures that were built based on the notion of racial hierarchy that we can truly eliminate racism.

### **How has the Dayton community received your new perspectives?**

By grace, the community looks at me differently and it is calling on me to take more responsibility. Recently I was appointed vice chair of the Human Relations Council. I am in a lot more conversations and I am seen as a resource and an asset. I was in three different meetings today with people who have been working for a long time but who seemed stuck at a certain level. Somehow I was able to shift the energy in the room. We need to start by inviting people into a space of belonging that models internally the relationships and change we hope to see in the community. We need to focus on how we interact with each other. It is slower but it is deeper and real and personal.

### **How did you come to be doing what you are doing?**

I gave my life to God 18 years ago; I had the conviction that if God was real I could surrender to him. I did a lot of work in the community and began to read all I could about building community, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. I went back to school and am completing a BA in sociology and a minor in Youth and Community Engagement. Then I got involved with the Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations and I met you and read your book, Trustbuilding and learned about the Caux Scholars Program. I have a 12 year-old daughter and I want her to experience a different world.

## **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.

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## A worthwhile investment

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### Support can be make-or-break

**Brian Kennedy** retired as treasurer and finance division senior vice president of Health Care Service Corporation, America's largest non-investor-owned health insurer. He is a former IofC board member and parent of a Caux Scholar. Randy Ruffin talks to him about his support for the Caux Scholars Program:

#### **Why do you think the Caux Scholars Program is important, or of special value at this time in the world?**



A program like this one would be of obvious value at any time in the world. The Caux Scholars Program came into being, a remarkable burst of foresight, just after the Berlin Wall came down and just before Boris Yeltsin climbed up on that tank.

Probably many of us never expected to see this historic new world in our lifetimes. The verdict of the intervening two decades is clear: that the Caux Scholars Program is uniquely "supplying" a vital need that this tumultuous world is "demanding."

#### **What have you observed about the impact of the program on participants that perhaps makes it different from other academic studies of conflict resolution/transformation?**

Over the years I've been privileged to meet, learn from and be inspired by different Caux Scholars. I've been grateful for a kind invitation to sit in, on-site at Caux as early as July 1999, for a memorable actual training session. I've seen a graduated Caux Scholar come back down from the Mountain and encapsulate his own life-changing four weeks with the quietly conclusive words, "I get it."

#### **What made you decide to support it among all the many possible worthwhile causes and needs that are all around us?**

This mindset and way of life are a bridge into why I support the Caux Scholars Program. At a crucial early point in my life, I was fortunate enough to encounter the revolutionary notion - this is so easy, it's hard - that change begins with me. It's initiated, and channeled, by certain standards and skills. But it's nurtured, and sustained, by a certain mindset and way of life.

From here, it can be a fascinating road, but it's also a quick leap, to the impact of the Caux Scholars Program upon its participants,

whose change begins inside; upon their mutually-supportive networking on a world stage; and upon their visible, and not-so-visible, insightful relieving of pressures and empathetic lifting-up of troubled human beings and problems.

Support can be make-or-break, for talented young idealists struggling to travel from hardscrabble economies. In a world of limited resources, we cannot be all things to all people. So we must pick our spots. But we must do what we can. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of that person shall be much required."

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## Join us at the Indzaba!

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### IofC National Forum, April 4-6, 2014

This is a Swahili word for an important community gathering.



It is the name given to the 2014 IofC National Forum. The purpose of the "Indzaba" is to deepen and strengthen IofC's national network.

This creative framework will engage people around their talents, experiences, and passions. It will provide a platform for conversations about opportunities for partnership and teamwork.

#### **We will:**

- Discover more about the approach of IofC, its history and its application in personal and professional life.
- Explore approaches to intergenerational dialogue to overcome the divides in the field of racial justice.
- Offer skillbuilding and project planning sessions for using the IofC model/methods.
- Share experience from other organizations
- Engage in informal interaction and times of reflection around the retreat center.
- Have creative/fun activities for everyone to draw on different talents.

**Dates:** April 4-6, 2014 (Friday afternoon to Sunday noon)

**Location:** Airlie Center, Warrenton, VA. ([www.airlie.com](http://www.airlie.com))

**Family Friendly:** Spouses and partners are welcome. Children's programming will be designed as necessary.

**Cost:** Double occupancy per person, includes 2 nights, meals and conference fee - \$375. (Single occupancy - \$450) Family rate: Spouse all inclusive for two nights \$250. Children 12 and under are free. Children 13-18 for two nights are \$50 (sharing a room with parents).

People are asked to contribute what they can and scholarships are available according to need.

The program outline will be available soon. For more information or to register call 804 358 1764

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## Global Engagement

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### **Making Democracy Real, Panchgani, India January 10-14**

A number of people from the United States have recently traveled to India to take part in the "Dialogue on Democracy, the next steps on democracy's journey."



Among the US delegation are Imam Mohamed Magid, president of the Islamic Society of North America and a number of distinguished academics including Dr. Niraj Verma, dean of the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government & Public Affairs at the Virginia Commonwealth University. Also attending are Charles Aquilina, Charlotte Freeman and Katie Hathaway from our IofC team.

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### **Encuentro of the Americas, Bogota, Colombia February 14-19**

This hemispheric gathering aims to weave a community of change across barriers of language and a history that has not been without conflict.



The organizers say, "Together, we will inspire each other, listen to each other, reconcile and build momentum for common action as a Community of the Americas." Among those attending from the US are Tanya Gonzalez, manager of the City of Richmond's office of multicultural affairs and Martha Gonzales-Cortes, from Michigan, who is working on issues of immigration.

To donate directly to the Heart of the Americas project please mail contributions to our office or call 804 358 1764.

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## Commentary

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### Tackling problems from multiple angles



I am Tamara Hawes from the United States, where I work as a Congressional staffer.

Participating as a 2013 Caux Scholar is a significant personal and professional highlight in my life. My fellow scholar, Laurin Hodge, summed up the ramifications of participating in

the Caux Scholars Program: "this is the kind of 'yes' that changes everything, even if you don't know what everything is yet." While most of us unpack our physical belongings from our trip down the mountain as soon as we get home, I believe that each Caux Scholar will continue to unpack our academic and peace building lessons long after we return to our home countries.

The beauty of Caux, other than the picturesque physical location, is that you can meet with scholars from around the world, practitioners of peace, giants in specialized academic fields, and government and non-governmental officials. Scholars gain firsthand knowledge of what each other is doing in different parts of the world. We, as CSP scholars, then take that knowledge and modify it to our own unique conflicts in order to make a positive impact in our own communities.

Whether we recognize it or not, each Caux Scholar comes to the Mountain House with preconceived notions about what type of change is more effective. Some will advocate that the top-down approach is best, while others advocate for a bottom-up solution to conflict. I am no different. Working at the governmental level, I must admit that I went to Caux with somewhat of a bias

towards the significant role of governments in conflict zones. This view was challenged by the program - within the context of the academic program, as well as the relationships formed inside and outside of the classroom.

CSP taught me that you have to tackle problems from multiple angles and there is "no right" way to enact change in a society. During one of the conferences, former Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan said that you can't do it alone - combined with other Caux experiences, I translate that to the need to capitalize on the strengths and skills at every level of society.

Pressure to change the status quo of a conflict or reverse its violent trend may come from below, but you have to have the political and societal infrastructure to have effective and long-lasting progress. Change in the name of peace building has to be ambitious enough to motivate people, but realistic enough to be achievable. While grassroots movements can provide the passion for change, the political structures institutionalize those changes and protect the rights of others.

CSP demonstrated to me that "the one solution" to a conflict is, in reality, many. In today's conflict environment, peace builders must expand their capacity for working relationships and partnerships across a wide spectrum of skill sets and organizations. In essence, we create our own transformational networks.

The Caux Scholars Program provides a great resource to develop those networks - whether it is a grassroots community organizer, like my fellow classmate from Dayton, or someone that works in a political office like me. CSP gives hope that there are people working on a practical level to be the change that they want to see in the world.

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

Thank you!



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