

## Rob Corcoran

In 2006, Rob Corcoran became the National Director of *Initiatives of Change USA* (IoC), a diverse network of concerned professionals and community leaders dedicated to building bridges of trust across racial, religious, political and class lines. In 1990, he founded *Hope in the Cities*, IoC's flagship program, which promotes honest conversation on race, reconciliation, and responsibility. He has developed an effective multi-sector approach for dialogue and community change that has been adopted both nationally and internationally. His book *Trustbuilding: an honest conversation on race, reconciliation, and responsibility* was published by University of Virginia Press in 2010.

The son of a Scottish trade unionist, Rob attended Jordanhill College School in Glasgow. Swept up in the idealism of the sixties, he spent over 20 years working with IoC programs in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australasia. A singer/songwriter, he performed in several touring stage productions. In the late sixties and early seventies he joined Rajmohan Gandhi's efforts in India to continue the tradition of his grandfather and build unity among India's numerous religious and ethnic groups. In 1976 he married Susan Thornhill, and the following year he and Susan led a team of young Europeans to South Africa soon after the brutal repression of the 1976 Soweto student uprising, and to Rhodesia at the height of its violent independence struggle.

In 1980, Rob and his family moved to Richmond, Virginia. This former Confederate capital, galvanized by the election of its first black mayor, would serve as the unlikely seedbed for a grassroots movement committed to breaking the cycle of blame, suspicion and resentment over historic wounds. In 1993, Rob led *Hope in the Cities* in a national conference, *Healing the Heart of America*, at which the first "walk through history" offered a model for other communities.

Over the last 20 years, Rob has convened numerous national and international forums and conferences. He has conducted workshops in Australia, India, France, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, South Africa, Brazil, and Jamaica. His commentaries have appeared in several national and international publications. In 1991 he initiated the Caux Scholars Program, an international student program in conflict transformation with alumni in 73 countries representing 160 universities. Robert (60) lives in Richmond with his wife, Susan. Their three sons are aged 30, 26 and 24.

**2006- Present** National Director, Initiatives of Change USA

**1990-2005** Founder/Director, Hope in the Cities

Led two-year dialogue project in U.S. cities funded by the Kellogg Foundation

Convened series of bi-annual international cities forums, Caux, Switzerland

Organized dialogues on race, economics, and jurisdiction in metropolitan Richmond

Collaborated on dialogue guide for President Clinton's Initiative on Race

Designed and facilitated dialogues with Muslims and evangelical Christians

Designed national fellowship program for community leaders

Directed Tools for Change, an international leadership training project

**1980-2005** Regional Director, Initiatives of Change USA

Author, *Trustbuilding: an honest conversation on race, reconciliation, and responsibility*

Producer, *The Courage to Change*, a video documentary on Richmond

Lead Writer, *Connecting Communities*, a handbook for community change agents

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