

Virginia Swain's Biography



Virginia Swain

Since 1991, Virginia Swain has developed a body of knowledge through prayer, reflection, study, and practice, to educate a cross-sectoral group of Reconciliation Leaders.

Founder and director of the Institute for Global Leadership, Virginia is an organization development consultant, mediator, ombudsperson, certified professional holistic counselor, mentor, and facilitator. The Institute for Global Leadership provides consultation and training for leaders in the post-September 11th world. Her personal mission is to engender a cross-sectoral approach to partnering for the common good — bringing people from business, society, philanthropists, and politics together by strategizing outreaches for social and economic development in local and international settings.

Virginia is dedicated to developing and supporting emerging and seasoned leaders and teams committed to providing resources for the right action in institutional, community and global settings.

Drawing on her 25 years as a human relation, organizational development professional and business consultant, Virginia created and introduced a unique process called the Peacebuilding Process of Reconciliation to Develop Political Will at the United Nations in 1992. The Institute provides Reconciliation Leadership to guide its delivery. The mastery of this concept has been described as timely as well as having the potential to lead to the maturation of humankind into a genuine planetary family. It has been praised by diplomats, policy makers, businesspeople, peace activists, theologians, and scholars.

Reconciliation Leadership is an interdisciplinary approach to sustainable peacebuilding — which includes components of mediation, counseling, community-building, intercultural and multiethnic conflict management, human rights, and international relations education. The Peacebuilding Process of Reconciliation began with Virginia's master's thesis Project at the United Nations: Celebration of the Children of the World: A Model for Building Global Community. Other projects of the Peacebuilding Process of Reconciliation, developed since 1991, addresses the crisis in leadership in the United States,

for post-conflict peacebuilding in mediation and reconciliation at the United Nations, and to provide an intercultural, multiethnic and interdisciplinary approach to global challenges called the [Global Mediation and Reconciliation Service](#).

The Reconciliation Leadership Certificate Programs and the Peacebuilding Process of Reconciliation are multi-faceted processes. They are an “exponent of the new language of international collaboration” (Collins). Since 1989, in collaboration with many diverse individuals and groups on five continents, Virginia has developed, taught, and/or facilitated various aspects and applications of the Reconciliation Leadership™ and Peacebuilding Process of Reconciliation, including:

- Working as a consultant to several organizations (Organization Transformation Network, International Business Task Force, Coalition for a Strong United Nations, Values Caucus of the United Nations, Pacem in Terris Society at the United Nations, Global Education Associates, and Burncoat Senior High School).
- Teaching (Adjunct faculty at the Clark University master’s Program of Professional Communication, Lesley University Independent Study master’s program, the Lesley School of Management, the Salve Regina University Holistic Counseling master’s program, and Andover Newton Theological Schools Institute on Spirituality and Business). Virginia taught Managing in a Global Economy and Negotiation and Mediation in Global and Organizational Settings from her holistic perspective and experience as adjunct faculty at Lesley University School of Management, Leadership for the United Nations and the Harmonization of Nations and Designing and Implementing Interventions for Global Change at Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island, and Change Management, Cross-Cultural Conflict Resolution and Leadership at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. She presented her work at Hartford Seminary with a former student, Dr. Sarah Sayeed.
- Lecturing and presenting (for International Educators for Peace, Norwich, Vermont, 1995; Business for Social Responsibility, Boston, 1996; International Symposium on Spirituality and Business, Boston, 1998, 1999; Hague Appeal for Peace, Netherlands, 1999; State of the World Forum, San Francisco, 1999; The Enterprise Forum at the State of the World Forum, 2000, and many more.)
- Organizing reconciling environments and celebrations at various events (e.g. Celebration of the Children of the World at the United Nations in New York; The United Nations Conferences: Environment and Development, UN Conference on Economic and Social Development, Copenhagen, 1996, Commission of Sustainable Development Co-Chair, Financing Agenda 21 Task Force, New York, 1993; International Rio de Janeiro, 1992; A Global Liturgy, Parliament of the World’s Religions, Chicago, 1993.)
- Utilizing the Peacebuilding Process of Reconciliation to Develop Political Will with individuals and groups suffering from abuse of human rights (e.g. in collaboration with others to establish collaborative relationships to end violence in the inner city, Buffalo, 1995; consultation with refugees from the former Yugoslavia, Boston, 1999 and ongoing; consultation with Rwandan genocide survivors, New York, 1998, Boston, 1999; and training now being implemented in Rwanda by the Rev. Erisa Mutabaazi).

Consulting and training since 1986, Virginia has worked with large and small businesses, nonprofits, groups, and religious organizations, promoting community building, communication, leadership, and

spiritual renewal. She was an active participant in the International Organizing Committee of the State of the World Forum Millennium 2000, Global Education Associates, and CIVICUS; World Alliance of Citizen Participation and is a member of many other organizations related to education, vocational and life planning, community building, organizational development, and world peace.

True to her belief that one must constantly balance teaching and learning, Virginia continues to expand and deepen her own education even as she devotes herself to teaching others the visionary, historic and pragmatic aspects of Reconciliation Leadership. Some of her recent experiences as a student have included Skills for the Religious Peacebuilder, Conflict Transformation, Ethnic Identity Training at Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, Virginia, 1999); Restorative Justice Training Conference (Boston, 1999); training with the Quaker United Nations office (Pendle Hill 2000); and Work, Purpose, Place and Peace, Reconciliation of Polarities and Expressive Arts Training (CRRC Counseling Center LLC, 2003 to present); Courage and Renewal for Leadership with Parker Palmer, 2016-2017), Consulting with Severely Conflicted Churches (Rev. Speed Leas 1992), Congregational Development 2 year program, Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut

Virginia brings a background in facilitating workshops at the Global Forum, the parallel conference for the UN Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the UN Social Development Summit in Copenhagen conference in 1995, and The World Social Summit. Additionally, Virginia has served as a United Nations NGO representative and citizen diplomat since 1991 and she co-convened an NGO working group on financing Agenda 21 at the Commission of Sustainable Development follow-up to the Earth Summit in 1993. Virginia also works globally for women's issues and has been a member of the UN Women's Caucus since 1992. Virginia has been an NGO delegate to the Commission on the Status of Women (UN) and the last preparation conference for the 1996 Beijing Women's Conference. She was a delegate to the NGO Millennium Forum (2000) and the State of the World Forum (1999-2000).

She has extensive experience providing consultation to severely conflicted churches and planning retreats for [houses of worship](#).

As an executive committee member of the Boston-based Coalition for a Strong United Nations, which offers public education through twelve conferences to Greater Boston citizens in partnership with the John F. Kennedy Library, from its founding in 1993 to 1999 Virginia offered leadership to deliver nine conferences and co-chaired the International Business Task Force. In 1996, Virginia co-facilitated a working group through the former UN Secretary-General's Office on industry-specific codes of conduct for business practices in 1996.

Virginia has written two books, [A Mantle of Roses: A Woman's Journey Home to Peace](#) (Xlibris, 2004) and [My Soul's Journey to Redefine Leadership: A New Phoenix Rises from the Ashes of 9/11](#) (Xlibris 2016, and as an [audio book on Audible](#) 2022), and contributed to [Immersed in Prayer: Storied from Lives of Prayer](#) (Friend Michael Resman, editor) and [Voices of Worcester Women: One Hundred Years after the First National Woman's Rights Convention](#).

Her articles include "Reconciliation Leaders in a Global Economy, A Vision for a 21st Century Leadership" (Breakthrough Magazine, Global Education Associates (1998), "The United Nations, Servant Leadership and a Peacebuilding Institute" (Abolishing War, 1998), and "Re-Imagining the Urban Environment: Strengthening Collaborative Relationships in the Inner City (1997). Articles presented at conferences

include: “The Interrelationship of Individual and State Cooperation for Peacebuilding” presented at The International Institute for Peace Agenda for Peace and NGOs Conference, Vienna (1994), “International Cooperation: Its Roots in Individual Responsibility” at the Comparative and International Education Society Conference (1995), and Global Ascendancy: Local and Global Challenges in Education and Development with Dr. Joseph Baratta (1995).

More about Virginia Swain

Virginia Swain, as Director of the Institute for Global Leadership, provides consultation and training to develop and support the personal and professional goals of seasoned and emerging leaders. Its purpose is to mentor leaders who act from their gifts and special calling; guide people and teams who lead others; provide consultation and training for leaders committed to a just, sustainable, intercultural, and multiethnic global peace; provide dispute resolution services for family community, institutional, national, and global challenges. Virginia had a television show called [Imagine Worcester and the World](#) from 2007-2013.

Virginia counsels, coaches, mentors, and offers consultations to individuals, families, organizations, institutions, communities, nations and international organizations on vocation, small and large system and culture change management, conflict transformation, gender and diversity issues management, cross-cultural and environmental sensitivity training, and engendering ethical business practices and social responsibility in the global marketplace.

The Institute for Global Leadership provides resources for people who are committed to make a difference in themselves, their professions and work, their organizations, their relationships, and their world by providing ombudsperson counseling and mentoring services for harmonious, respectful, just, and sustainable multiethnic community and institutional learning environments.

Virginia is an educator, ombudsperson, mentor, and facilitator. She has training in spiritual direction and is a certified professional holistic counselor, manager, consultant, vocational counselor, and trainer. Virginia has advanced training in ethnic identity conflict, reconciliation, training in conflict transformation and advanced skills for the peacebuilder. Her 25 years of work experience include being a human resources and marketing manager for a multinational corporation. Virginia began her work as an external consultant in 1986 in San Francisco, moved her practice to Connecticut and now works in New York and Worcester. Virginia has custom-designed over 250 consultations and trainings for business and global education. Their mission is to engender a cross-sectoral approach to partnering for the common good — bringing business, society, philanthropists, and politics together by strategizing outreaches for social and economic development in local and international settings.

Virginia’s master’s Thesis Project at the United Nations, Celebration of the Children of the World: A Model for Building Global Community™, was a pilot project of a cross-sectoral global mediation and reconciliation service developed over 14 years. The work has evolved to address post-conflict peacebuilding and to provide a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary approach to global challenges.

Virginia, as co-founder of the Center for Global Community and World Law, has expertise in global governance, the process and structure by which humanity is evolving to political union and world peace in a global economy. The Center provides research, education, and publications in a think tank to support the goals of the United Nations Charter through the harmonization of nations.

Virginia's work in career and life direction and spiritual care for individuals and groups can be found at virginiaswain.com.

Virginia is married to Dr. Joseph Baratta, retired Professor of History, Worcester State College, and mother to Thomas E. Cone, III, Associate Professor of Economics, State College of New York, Brockport. Tad and Karen Cone, also a Professor and Researcher in Suicide Prevention at the University of Rochester, have given Virginia and Joseph two grandchildren: Alexander (19) and Isabelle (16). Virginia and Joseph also have an adopted daughter originally from Uganda, Grace Akallo Baiden, and two grandchildren, Jonathan, and Racquelle.

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