

— THE INSTITUTE FOR — GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

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**Series to Support Building Civic Bridges Act (HR 6843) in partnership with
Listenfirstproject.org and America Talks**
National Conversation Week Sessions scheduled April 4 and/or 24; April 25 and April 27

**Sessions facilitated using America’s Soul Community Visioning Framework and hosting
partner Institute for Global Leadership**

Worcester, Mass. – A three-part series to support healing from the country’s current polarization on both a personal and legislative level will be hosted by America’s Soul Community as part of the Listenfirstproject.org and National Conversation Week in April. Sessions will be held April 4 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. EDT, April 24 from 3-5 p.m. and then April 25 and 27 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Participants in the online workshops will learn more about the [Building Civic Bridges Act](#) (HR 6843), proposed in February in the U.S. House of Representatives to establish the Office of Civic Bridgebuilding to forge a sense of [common civic purpose](#) through activities that strengthen relationships across lines of difference, solve community problems and diminish polarization. Attendees will undertake a series of visioning exercises illustrating their individual and communal dreams of a re-united nation through the passage of this bill, followed by action plans to realize their dreams.

“Visioning plays a key role in resolving challenges in our community,” said Virginia Swain, founder and director of the Institute for Global Leadership. “We believe we cannot resolve a challenge at the level it was created, but we can imagine finding a solution in the future. Once we ‘see’ a solution in our mind’s eye, we can work backwards into present time to identify the steps needed to achieve that ideal.”

The Institute is a hosting partner for America Talks, National Conversation Week and a partner of the ListenFirstProject.org and theTrustNetwork.net. A summary of the three-workshop series and registration link can be found at <https://citizenconnect.us/event/americas-soul-community/all/>

Background:

A public engagement project of the Worcester-based Institute for Global Leadership, “America’s Soul Community” has been gathering virtually since 2017 for monthly constructive [dialogues](#) designed to empower participants to build a community of hope, political will and a new [leadership model](#) for America.

The focused and intentional discussions are called dialogues and are hosted by trained volunteer moderators use the [World Café](#) format on Zoom, allowing for video chat rooms and screen sharing. Participants meet in the large group and break into small groups, rotating among the virtual tables to address a series of questions in conversations that are then “harvested” for common themes. The monthly events attract participants from across the United States and abroad who have an investment in America’s future.

Dialogue is a deeper conversation that engages personal, business, and organizational life, according to Virginia Swain, founder and director of the Institute for Global Leadership. America's Soul Community meetings are natural and effective ways to host meaningful conversations that awaken collective wisdom and engage collaborative action. These events offer effective antidotes to the fast-paced fragmentation and lack of connection in today's world.”

“It's time to step back and revision our country,” Swain says. She sees America Soul Community events as “respectful and celebratory ways to heal historic conflict patterns in the US as well as address the needs of America's disenfranchised.”

Through America’s Soul Community, the Institute for Global Leadership builds on a process of redefining leadership developed at the United Nations over 30 years called Reconciliation Leadership now focused on American leadership.

This process is articulated in Swain’s latest published work, [My Soul’s Journey to Redefine Leadership: A New Phoenix Rises from the Ashes of 9/11](#) (Xlibris 2017).

The planning team for the workshop series to support the Building Civic Bridges Act includes:

- Reconciliation Leader **Krista M. Conlon**, a software engineer for Wells Fargo who lives on Long Island, New York. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kristaconlon/>
- **Robert Kauffman**, an architect who lives in Atlanta, Georgia <https://www.linkedin.com/in/robert-kauffman-0012408/>
- **Sonrisa O’Toole**, a mental health provider who lives in Nashua, New Hampshire <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sonrisa-otoole-2538b2235/>
- Lisa Singh, an organization development consultant, mediator and coach <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ljsingh>
- Reconciliation Leader **Virginia Swain**, associated with the Friends Committee on National Legislation, is a career and life direction coach, mediator and leadership consultant who lives in Worcester, MA <https://www.linkedin.com/in/virginiaswain2/>

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More on the Institute for Global Leadership and Virginia Swain’s life’s work can be found at www.global-leader.org.

