PI: David Theo Goldberg, Director, UC Humanities Research Institute

The University of California Humanities Research Institute (UCHRI) proposes to the Luce Foundation a comprehensive research program focused on religions and their global diasporas. Specifically, we aim to examine the complex cultural and political relations between diasporic religious communities and their self-identified homelands. The research program will seek to comprehend and illuminate these issues with a view to translating humanities research in this crucial area for broader publics. We intend to draw on the networking strengths of the UC Humanities Network and the global partnerships of UCHRI.

This research initiative will include:
- a multidisciplinary working group on religions and their global diasporas to build collaboration among UC scholars, journalists, and public audiences;
- a global symposium on the topic to bring international scholars into the dialogue;
- a Humanities Lab to nurture substantive research collaborations focusing on global religious diasporas, their interactions, relations, and comparisons;
- a culminating Summer Institute on topics that emerge out of the working group and Lab to broaden the engagement with and pedagogy about the issues;
- and a robust digital portal to translate and share humanities research both among humanists interested in these areas and especially with broader publics.

These programs will take place on campuses across the University of California. They will draw on and promote the multidisciplinary research strengths of faculty and graduate students across the UC system, and make connections between researchers and the broader journalistic and policy communities in ways that will stimulate a more fully informed discussion about the ramifications of religious diversity for American foreign policy.

To support the proposed programs we respectfully request from the Luce Foundation a three-year grant totaling $500,000.

INTRODUCTION

The University of California Humanities Research Institute (UCHRI) was founded as a multicampus research unit of the University of California Office of the President under the UC Humanities Initiative, established by former UC President David P. Gardner in 1987. Based on the UC Irvine campus, UCHRI receives operational funding from the UC Office of the President, and serves all ten campuses in the UC system. UCHRI interacts with UC campus humanities centers, other campus research centers, and with individual faculty to promote collaborative, interdisciplinary humanities research and pedagogy throughout the University of California system and within the larger communities they inhabit. Through the administration of its own funding programs and those of the UC Humanities Network, UCHRI supports and showcases fellows, working groups, seminars, conferences, workshops and other research formations, on topics traditional to the humanities in disciplines such as literature, philosophy, classics, languages, and history, as well as the pressing human dimensions that arise in the social and natural sciences, technology, art, medicine, and the professions. Stressing interdisciplinary research, UCHRI bridges gaps between disciplines across the humanities and human sciences and seeks to overcome the intellectual and institutional barriers that can separate the humanities from other fields.

Recognized nationally and internationally for its leadership, UCHRI also directs its own robust program of intellectual collaborations and public events focused on crucial issues for the future of higher education and the humanities: global perspectives and partnerships; the past, present and future of critical theory; California studies for the 21st century; and digital innovation for learning and research.

In 2009, in response to changing conditions in California and higher education overall, the new UC Humanities Network was developed and funded by a five-year grant from the UC Office of Research and Graduate Studies, incorporating and expanding UC President Gardner's original 1987 Humanities Initiative. Representing a dynamic new structure and vision for multicampus engagement and collaboration, the Network links together the Humanities Advisory Committee, composed of humanities deans from each of the campuses; the UC Consortium of Humanities Centers, represented by the faculty directors of the campus-based humanities centers and the nationally renowned UC Humanities Research Institute (UCHRI); and the UC President's Society of Fellows in the Humanities, a multi-tiered program of research fellowships for faculty and graduate students.

Leveraging the collective and collaborative strengths of the ten UC campuses, while respecting each campus's individual profile, this new Network situates the humanities at the crossroads of important disciplinary and inter-disciplinary discussions and debates, while promoting knowledge, discovery, and modes of understanding crucial to California and its local and global communities. Informed by a strong vision of intellectual engagement and intellectual community, the Humanities Network contributes to the excellence of the University of California and helps it to fulfill its mission as a leading public research university.

INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND

Those inhabiting the more economically developed countries of the global North have only very recently come to experience what it means to live in a critical condition, as social and economic dislocations undermine or destroy altogether the sense of progressive development that had once characterized life there. Many of the social institutions constructed in an earlier era to protect citizens from chance by ensuring a certain minimum standard of living (for example, unemployment assistance, provision of education, assured health care, provision for a secure retirement) are rapidly being eroded or actively dismantled. A former sense of unilinear development—that is, of the inevitability of progress—has also broken down, as high and even growing rates of unemployment become permanent rather than cyclical conditions, as the process of de-industrialization and new technologies continue to make more of the population economically redundant, as educational institutions face greater strains and start to contract, as civil infrastructure deteriorates, and as present insecurity and total uncertainty about possible futures become conditions of everyday life. Growing income and wealth inequality and the loss of progressive social mobility have led to a breakdown in former discourses of smooth and even inevitable modernization and progress, and have contributed to a sense of paralysis and crisis. It is this we call *living in a critical condition*.

In the global South, religion has long played a central role among local populations in conjuring (or reconstituting) community in the face of colonization and externally imposed modernization, in part as a bulwark against or mediation of poverty in the absence of state support. Religious institutions and their leaders have often stood in principled ways against subjugation and inequality, repression and poverty, speaking in behalf of those with less access, sometimes at great risk to themselves.

As the welfare state is being undone in the developed world, religious organizations and communities have been encouraged to step up to fill the gaps left by the disappearance of a social infrastructure. Churches, temples, mosques and synagogues have come to play the role of a society within society, offering community, social services, education, recreation and cultural enrichment. This all-encompassing approach to community brings with it a more grounded and naturalized sense of identity within religious communities that has enabled them to amplify the religious, moral and political beliefs of their members. This has had significant implication for American politics, increasingly, for America's role in global affairs, and for the role of religion as a geopolitical force in key areas of the global South.

The US--and the global North more broadly--has become a fertile site of religious diaspora. Global patterns of immigration have resulted in the appearance of a wide variety of religious communities in diaspora within the United States and other geographies across the global North, all with intertwined ethnic identities and moral and political commitments. As these religious communities in diaspora become more established, they have served to support and reify the beliefs and commitments, both liturgical and political, of their corresponding religious communities in their countries of origin. This has long been the case in immigrant countries like the US and Canada in contrast to those societies across Europe and perhaps Japan that have tended to regard themselves demographically, religiously, and culturally as more homogeneous. But there is a long historical tail at work here too that ties together religious conversions carried out by missionary colonialism to more recent proselytizing conversions or revivals prompted by religious expressions such as the global evangelical movement.

Contemporary migrations, of comings and goings, not only have carried with them new, revised, or intensified religious expression. They have intensified also religiously driven ties between diaspora and departed home. The relationship of American Jewry to Israel is probably the most widely recognized example of this set of relations and their implications; others include the Irish Catholic community and its relationship to Irish politics and the IRA; Iranian Muslims in relationship to the Muslim politics of Iran or those of Pakistani background to Pakistan; Sikhs and Hindus and India's religious conflict; Korean Christians and the North-South divide; and Mexican (and Cuban) Catholics in relationship to American and Latin-American politics.

PROPOSED PROGRAM

Against this background, we propose a set of research programs dedicated to exploring the role of diasporic religious communities as a significant presence in global affairs, and as a political presence in both their countries of origin and their countries of adoption. That there is a question about which in the pair - or in some cases, series - of countries comes to be thought of as "home" throws the set of issues into sharp relief. Religious culture, identification, and commitment invariably remain connecting tissue between homes left behind and new homes adopted. In the new home ongoing religious engagement offers community--a home away from home--carrying not only economic opportunities but also a sense of belonging, support, and of wellbeing. This continuing engagement with diasporic communities allows their members to assume at once a national commitment to their adoptive homes and retain an ethno-religious identification with the countries of familial origin.

These identifications are as much political as they are cultural and religious. Remittances are provided to family, but political donations and support, and indeed politicking itself, insert themselves into the political life of the "old country". Irish Catholics in New York and Chicago often provided considerable support for Irish Republicans during "the troubles." Iranians in California push back against Iran. American Jews directly invest in Israeli political life. Muslims across America concern themselves more or less directly with the politics of their birth states. And Sikhs retain deep connection, as much political as nostalgic or familial, to the Punjab.

Over the last two decades, an explosion of new research on globalization and transnationalism has reshaped the scholarly understanding of diaspora, from the longstanding focus on the "classical" diasporas - Jewish, Armenian, and Greek - to the articulation in the 1960s of an African diaspora and more recently to the broad proliferation of research on diasporic communities, from Albanians to Zoroastrians. The scope of this recent work has led one scholar to describe a veritable "'diaspora' diaspora."[1]

Surprisingly, though religious affiliation and networks are often crucial factors in diasporic migrations and a core feature of diasporic communities, in the sprawling and often overlapping work on globalization, transnationalism and diaspora, other questions have largely overshadowed religion as the key categories of analysis. These include questions of labor, migration patterns, transnational networks, ethnicity, gender, citizenship, identity, po-

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[1] Rogers Brubaker, "The 'diaspora' diaspora" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28:1 (January 2005): 1-19.

litical engagement and/or resistance, among others. This work has been produced by scholars in an astonishingly wide range of fields and subfields in the social sciences and humanities. But anthropologists and sociologists, along with historians and ethnic studies scholars, have taken the lead in this new theorizing and problematizing of the concept of "diaspora(s)."

That said, scholars in religious studies and related fields have engaged productively with this research, opening up religious communities in diaspora as fertile sites of inquiry. The most recent trend appears to be more syncretic and comparative, spurred perhaps by calls by Steven Vertovec, Robin Cohen and other leading scholars of transnationalism for greater attention to religion in diasporic scholarship. This work has been important in linking migration and diaspora studies to religious experience, communities, and their transformations.

We propose to pursue this focus in three ways:

1. Our initiative charts a research trajectory focused explicitly on the relation to and impacts of diasporic religious communities on global politics, bringing scholars in religious studies together with a multidisciplinary group of researchers with diverse expertise in transnationalism, migration and diaspora studies, ethnic and gender studies, globalization and international politics.

2. This initiative will support comparative and relational scholarship, curating research collaborations involving a range of experts on different diasporic religious communities to engage around broad but clearly defined topics within the larger theme. The specific themes and projects will be developed collaboratively by the scholars themselves. Possibilities include the relationship between the erosion of the welfare state and the rise of private contributions through religious organizations; comparative strategies of engagement of diasporic religious communities in the political affairs of their respective homelands; the politics of naming (for example, Jews vs. Israelis, Persians vs. Iranians); and the role of new media in diasporic communities' religious and political engagement.

3. Furthering UCHRI's commitment to the translation for broader publics of scholarly work in the humanities, we propose to engage journalists, public intellectuals and/or policy experts at strategic points in the program: as members of the working group, as leaders of workshops for faculty and graduate students on writing for public audiences, as participants in the research collaborations of the Humanities Lab and the culminating Summer Institute, as advisors and contributors to Living in a Critical Condition (criticalcondition.uchri.org), UCHRI's digital portal for translating the humanities research produced by this (and other) initiatives, and for provoking engagement and debate around critical issues in our world today.

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES: JULY 2012-JUNE 2015

YEAR 1 (July 2012- June 2013): Collaboration Building

Year One of the proposed three-year initiative will focus on building multidisciplinary networks among scholars, across the UC and from international universities, as well as with writers and scholars outside the academy, and on identifying comparative approaches and developing a robust pool of proposals for two-year collaborative research projects through a Humanities Lab on religion in diaspora and global politics.

The planning year also is crucial to help humanities scholars think and work effectively with collaborators outside academia. Over the past decade UCHRI has been especially successful in developing structures and strategies for collaborative research among UC scholars. Expanding collaborations beyond the academy requires nurturing and support for new ways of thinking about how research projects are conceptualized and carried out, as well as about how to frame and disseminate humanities research in ways that are engaging for broader audiences and relevant for public policy and community engagement.

The planning year will include two key initiatives:

1. Working Group on Religion in Diaspora and Global Affairs
   Convened by UCHRI in consultation with the Advisory Board, this Working Group of up to 15 members will

include UC faculty in the humanities and interpretive social sciences, faculty from the Literary Journalism program at UC Irvine and/or the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, and one or more representatives from community or public policy organizations.

Fall quarter: UCHRI will host a one-day convening to enable Working Group participants to get to know one another, define the intellectual terrain, brainstorm potential projects and collaborations, and strategize outreach to potential participants from across the UC as well as journalists, public intellectuals and community and public policy leaders.

Winter quarter: Working virtually, the Working Group will take the lead in networking UC scholars, identifying collaborating journalists and public intellectuals, and helping to develop proposals for the Humanities Lab research projects in Years 2 and 3.

Spring quarter: Three Humanities Lab project proposals will be selected by the UCHRI Advisory Committee.

2. <u>Global Symposium on Religions in Diaspora and Global Affairs</u>

Held at UCHRI in November 2012 or January 2013, this symposium will bring the Working Group together with up to 10 multidisciplinary international scholars representing diverse global sites and expertise. This group of scholars will be joined by a broader pool of potential collaborating journalists and policy experts for 2-3 days of networking, sharing research and thinking in community. The symposium will be organized around workshops, breakout sessions, lightning presentations[2] and other strategies that encourage engagement and innovation. To help participants imagine possibilities and outcomes for the Humanities Lab projects, the symposium will highlight examples of new media and other "translation" projects for humanities research.[3] To broaden the conversation and encourage diverse feedback, the symposium will conclude with a public forum involving scholars, journalists, and public policy experts. Key sessions and the public forum will be videotaped and archived on the UCHRI websites.

Following the symposium, the Working Group members will serve as "ambassadors" for the research initiative on their home campuses, working with the Humanities Centers to host workshops to share information about the initiative, nurture cross-campus connectivities, help to identify potential projects and external participants, and develop proposals for the Humanities Lab projects in Years 2 and 3.

Years 2 and 3 (July 2013-June 2015): Collaborative Research/Public Engagement

Years Two and Three of the initiative will focus on carrying out three collaborative research projects and disseminating that research in innovative ways, using new media to translate humanities research for broader publics, to reach and engage new audiences and stakeholders, and to inform strategic thinking and policy around this critical issue. In connecting the work of the Humanities Lab to both research and public engagement, we seek to consolidate and expand UCHRI's commitment to innovative multidisciplinary collaborations and the use of new media in humanities research and dissemination.

A key projected outcome for this second stage of engagement will be to prepare print/online media journalists to cover issues related to religion and foreign affairs in a more nuanced and better-informed way, and to give more academics with expert knowledge in this area the rhetorical tools that will allow them to translate their research findings into publications that reach a broader audience. We also hope to make connections with nonpartisan

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[2] Designed as an antidote to the "talking head" presentations still prevalent at many academic gatherings, lightning presentations are essentially scholarly versions of TEDTalks: pithy, concise, provocative presentations – no more than ten minutes long – intended to offer the "so what" of one's research in ways that raise questions, provoke, disrupt, riff off of and springboard into the larger workshop thematic and the work and ideas of other participants.

[3] Examples might include the Israel-Palestine Project developed by Diane Winston at USC, the projects of the Bancroft Library's Regional Oral History Office at UC Berkeley, the video and other documentary projects of the California Council for the Humanities, the Art of Regional Change community media project at UC Davis, the Hypercities geospatial humanities collaboration at UCLA and USC, the digital archives and exhibits produced by the Center for History and New Media, among many others.

public institutes and community organizations with programs focused on foreign affairs, the role of religion in American life and other initiative themes to develop ongoing networking strategies and explore ways in which a broader spectrum of research might contribute to nuanced and thoughtful policy decisions.

Humanities Lab on Religion in Diaspora and Global Affairs

An emergent model for collaborative research, engagement, pedagogy and publication within the humanities, the Humanities Lab draws inspiration from both the classic science lab and the art and architecture studio, with explicit emphases not only on interdisciplinarity and collaboration but also on cross-project information sharing, extra-academic engagement, diverse skill-building and mentoring to encourage creativity, innovation and relevance for humanities research.

A Humanities Lab begins with an overarching theme – religion in diaspora and global affairs, in this case – and a set of core questions or problematics, that would be developed through the activities and engagements of the Working Group in Year One. Three collaborative research projects, framed around the core themes and questions, would be competitively selected to participate in the Humanities Lab during Years Two and Three. Each project would take on the larger issue from a different angle, such as comparative engagement with homeland politics, politics of naming, or new media in diasporic religious community/connectivity. Each project would convene a core community of researchers – a multidisciplinary mix of scholars (both faculty and graduate students), as well as journalists, public intellectuals, activists, artists, community members, policy makers and so on – to work on their specific research project.

Each research project within the Humanities Lab would operate independently but we would also build in opportunities – and expectations – for intellectual cross-fertilization and networking among the projects, from the in-person residency intensive at the beginning of Year 2 (see below) to webinars, wikis, social media and other digital strategies for connecting researchers and their ongoing work. Over the course of the two-year project, each group would produce a public "translation" component suitable for dissemination on UCHRI's digital platform, criticalconditions.uchri.org, or other digital publications or venues. Possibilities include: a digital archive, an interactive online exhibit, a documentary film or video, an oral history project, a community media project, or a curricular innovation.

Fall 2013: Residency Intensive at UCHRI on Religion in Diaspora and Global Affairs

Though each group will work independently, the three research projects will also be linked through the umbrella of the Humanities Lab. To encourage intellectual cross-fertilization and networking and awareness across projects, the two-year Humanities Lab projects will kick off with an intensive residency at UCHRI that brings together representatives from each project selected for the Humanities Lab, including the faculty PI, an additional faculty participant (either an international or another UC scholar), an "embedded" journalist or public intellectual, and a graduate student participant-coordinator. The approximately twelve participants will spend one week in residence at UCHRI, working in their project groups as well as in a larger collaboration and with UCHRI staff to plan their programs, create timelines and outcomes, and strategize the social media and public engagement elements of their projects.

Fall 2013: Workshop on Writing Humanities for Public Audiences

In conjunction with the Residency Intensive, UCHRI will host a workshop for faculty and graduate students on writing for public audiences. Led by the three participating journalists, the workshop will offer both general writing strategies for academics seeking non-academic publication and a discussion of publications focused on religion and politics. We also hope to include as featured participants Jonathan Van Antwerpen, editor-in-chief of *The Immanent Frame*, the SSRC-sponsored blogsite on secularism, religion and the public sphere, and Diane Winston, the Knight Chair in Media and Religion at the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism at the University of Southern California. The workshop will be open to the public and will be taped and webcast for broad dissemination. We will publicize this workshop through community organizations, libraries and especially the UCLA and other UC Extension writing programs, which draw substantially on non-academic writers in diverse communities. We would also draw on the diverse networks of the California Council for the Humanities, whose director Ralph Lewin would participate in the Year One Working Group for this initiative.

July 2015: Summer Institute on Religion in Diaspora and Global Affairs

This Institute is one in the annual series of Summer Institutes hosted by UCHRI on different themes in the human-ities.[4] The Institutes have been enormously successful and appealing. Participants come away having engaged intensely with others and experts in the field on the pressing issues related to the theme, often leading to new insights and ways of thinking about the subject matter, helping faculty and graduate students to think about their own research and teaching in transformative ways. The intensity of extended discussion often leads to insights and sustained work otherwise less likely achievable. Typically running ten days to two weeks, they attract 180 applicants on average for approximately 50 participating slots. Instructors are experts in the field; in this case they will be drawn from the diverse participants and consultants engaged in the research initiative on religion in dias-pora. Participation will be open to all Humanities Lab research project participants, but the Institute will also be open by competitive application to other faculty and graduate students from the UC and across the globe, as well as writers, thought leaders, policy experts and other interested parties.

The Summer Institute represents an opportunity to share the work produced by the Humanities Lab across the projects but also will enable us to broaden significantly the range of people thinking and writing about issues of religion in diaspora and international politics and to encourage further collaborations beyond the period of this research initiative. We will videotape the plenary sessions and archive the recorded discussions on the UCHRI websites as reference and teaching resources (http://vimeo.com/uchri).

RESOURCES SUPPORTING PROPOSED PROGRAM

The state of California represents a crucial site for examining issues of religion in diaspora and international politics. As of 2009, California led the nation in total number of immigrants (nearly 10 million), immigrants as percentage of total population (26.9%), and absolute growth of immigrant population between 1990 and 2000 (2,405,430)[5]. Over the past few decades, this immigration has dramatically changed the religious landscape of the United States overall, and California in particular.

According to the Pew Forum, Catholics represent 33% of the state's population, equaling the number of evangeli-cal and mainstream Protestants combined, and Catholicism is the fastest growing denomination in the state. Cali-fornia also is home to more Jews and Muslims than any other state, and boasts the largest number of Hindu and Buddhist temples in the nation. A recent study by the Association of Religion Data Archives listed nearly 17,000 religious congregations representing 108 different denominations practicing in the state of California in 2000, including Baha'i, Jains, Sikhs, Taoists, Zoroastrians, and more than a dozen Eastern Orthodox denominations in ad-dition to the major world religions.[6]

Reflecting this global diversity in religion and population, the University of California is internationally recognized as a site of premier scholarship and substantial institutional investment in these areas.

Notable hubs of research strength and interdisciplinary engagement in religious studies include the nationally ranked PhD program at UC Santa Barbara as well as smaller but robust religious studies PhD programs at UC Davis and UC Riverside, and the PhD program in Buddhist studies at UC Berkeley. At the undergraduate level, the ten UC campuses also offer a diverse cluster of religious studies programs, including those focusing on Catholic, Jewish, Middle Eastern, Indigenous American, and Asian religious traditions. Both UCLA and UC Santa Barbara support major research centers in comparative religious studies and several campuses have established centers for Jewish Studies and Buddhist Studies, while UC Santa Barbara recently launched the Center for Sikh and Punjab Studies.

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[4] See http://sect.uchri.org for more information on this program.
[5] http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=818#7a
[6] http://religions.pewforum.org/maps#; http://www.catholic.org/national/national_story.php?id=20272;
   http://www.thearda.com/mapsReports/reports/state/06_2000_Theology.asp.

The UC system is also globally recognized for the diversity and strength of its academic programs and research in ethnic studies, global/diaspora studies, and international relations. A sample of major interdisciplinary research centers in these areas includes the Center for Globalization and Information Technology and the Institute for European Studies at UC Berkeley, the Gifford Center for Population Studies and the Hemispheric Institute on the Americas at UC Davis, the Samuel Jordan Center for Persian Studies and Culture at UC Irvine, the International Institute at UCLA, the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies at UC San Diego, and the Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies at UC Santa Barbara.

This research initiative will draw on these established institutional structures and intellectual engagements across the UC system to build and enhance networks of faculty and graduate students for collaborative research around religion in diaspora and international politics. The initiative will also extend the connectivity of the UC Humanities Network, drawing on faculty and students from and building collaborations with other campus-based institutes and programs across the UC.

In addition, this project will build on UCHRI's robust program of global partnerships and collaborative programs. We partner in global workshops with a wide array of colleagues across numerous international sites, including Beirut, Hong Kong, Mexico City, Johannesburg, and Cape Town, among others. UCHRI's annual Summer Institute brings together 40-70 international scholars, artists and activists for ten days of intensive multidisciplinary engagement on core topics in humanities research and critical theory. In recent years, Summer Institutes have been organized in collaboration with external university partners, including the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences in 2009, the University of Hawai'i, Manoa in 2011, and upcoming in 2012, the American University of Beirut.

Finally, the research initiative will draw on UCHRI's already existing infrastructure of interdisciplinary multicampus workshops, seminars, residential research groups, publishing tools, and virtual platforms currently available to scholars across the UC. UCHRI already has in place the selection committees, online application and review system, and administrative infrastructure to handle effectively all logistical aspects of the proposed programs.

UCHRI's existing websites will provide the online platform for hosting blogs, webinars, and webcasts of events. UCHRI is currently in the development phase of a new digital portal: criticalconditions.uchri.edu. Designed to consolidate and translate UC-based humanities research for public audiences, this site will provide a digital platform for showcasing research as well as provoking discussion and engagement around the theme "Living in a Critical Condition." This research initiative on Religions in Diaspora and Global Affairs will provide compelling content and engagement over the three years of the initiative.

ADMINISTRATION

The grant activities will be overseen by the UC Humanities Research Institute, directed by David Theo Goldberg. UCHRI will coordinate activities, oversee assessment, and ensure that program goals are met. UCHRI will also provide technology support for the research collaborations and manage internal and external communications, including design and editorial work for criticalconditions.uchri.org.