



SUPREME COURT  
OF VIRGINIA

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# RESOLUTIONS

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

*Department of Judicial Services  
Division of Dispute Resolution*

100 North Ninth Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

## Family Mediator Fee Increase Request Arrives at General Assembly

### Fee Increase Proposal

The hard work of the Virginia Mediation Network's (VMN) Mediator Compensation Task Force (MCTF) over the past two years is being tested in this year's General Assembly Session.

Virginia  
General Assembly

LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM



Legislators have introduced bills into the House of Delegates (House Bill 287) and Senate (Senate Bill 606) that would amend Virginia Code § 20-124.4 to increase compensation for JDR mediators who conduct court-referred custody, visitation and support mediations from \$100 to \$120 per appointment. Furthermore, referrals that included both (i) custody or visitation and (ii) child or spousal support would be considered two separate appointments. In other words, if a mediation involved custody, visitation and child support, the compensation would total \$240: \$120 for custody and visitation and \$120 for child support.

The Virginia Bar Association's (VBA) Board of Governors endorsed this legislative proposal, including it as part of its legislative agenda for the 2016 session. The VBA assigned a lobbyist to shepherd the legislation through the General Assembly.

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In his proposed budget, Governor McAuliffe included funding for dividing the issues mediated into separate appointment categories. However, his budget does not include funding for the payment increase from \$100 to \$120. While it is encouraging to see partial funding in the proposed budget, it is too early to know what the final budget will hold.

### Crucial Next Steps

Passage of the fee increase legislation is definitely not assured. The voice of every mediator needs to be heard in support of these measures. We need you to contact your state delegate and senator via email or through a phone call and urge them to support these bills.

Mediators will be receiving information about how to contact their legislators and sample emails to use for contact.

VMN, the Virginia Association for Community Conflict Resolution (VACCR – the organization for community-based not-for-profit mediation centers), and other organizations will disseminate this information to mediators in the next week or two. If you do not receive the information, contact Lawrie or Betty at [virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com). If you are not sure who your state delegate or senator is, visit: <http://whosmy.viriniageneralassembly.gov/>

### **MCTF Work**

This journey to the General Assembly began September 28, 2013 when VMN's membership passed a resolution asking the organization to study the feasibility of seeking an increase in mediator pay for court-referred cases. VMN formed the MCTF which is comprised of VMN members, including the VACCR Executive Director and representatives from Dispute Resolution Services in OES.

To understand past statutory compensation issues and efforts, task force members talked to individuals from the early days of mediation who were involved with the compensation discussion that led to the 2000 amendment of §20-124.4 authorizing JDR mediator pay. The MCTF surveyed other states in the southeast to learn how they handled mediator compensation. It examined current funding mechanisms and contemplated possible proponents and opponents of fee increases. The MCTF concluded that for now, the most direct path to increase mediator compensation was to work towards amending §20-124.4 to increase the mediation fee for court-referred custody, visitation and support cases as described in the Fee Increase section above. Once that decision was made, task force members spoke with state delegates and staff in the governor's office about how to pursue the issue with the General Assembly, and approached the Joint ADR Committee of the Virginia State Bar and the Virginia Bar Association to ask the VBA to consider the fee increase proposal for its legislative agenda.

### **Mediator Action Essential**



**It is critical for every mediator – family or civil – to get behind this legislative effort. Mediators need to speak to the General Assembly with one voice and further educate elected officials about the value of mediation.**

Please direct any questions or offers of help to Lawrie or Betty at [virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com).

*Submitted by the Virginia Mediation Network Legislative Committee/MCTF Co-Chairs Lawrie Parker & Betty Russo*

## What Words Best Convey a Mediator's Certification?

The Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia (SCV) signs a mediator's paper certificate. The Executive Secretary heads the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES), the administrative arm of Virginia's judicial system, distinct from SCV. The paper certificate certifies the mediator has met the requirements established by the Judicial Council of Virginia (JCV) to receive particular levels of court referrals. The JCV is a policy making body that reports to the General Assembly and SCV annually. The Chief Justice presides over the JCV and heads Virginia's judicial system. Given these enigmatic judicial system relationships, it's no wonder mediators find themselves unsure how to describe their mediator certification.

Attentive mediators recognize and navigate potential ethical quagmires even in their marketing work. Section M of the Virginia Standards of Ethics and Professional Responsibility for Certified Mediators states "[a] mediator shall be truthful in advertising, solicitation, information distributed electronically through a website, or other communication about the mediator's qualifications, experience, services and fees." Accurate language in marketing materials reduces the potential for misleading consumers about mediator qualifications. To best convey mediator certification, a mediator 1) describes the certification grantor and 2) includes level(s) of certification achieved.



Who is the certification grantor? DRS recommends against "Virginia Supreme Court Certified Mediator" as it is technically incorrect. The most precise way to describe mediator certification is to use the statutory language: "certified pursuant to guidelines promulgated by the Judicial Council of Virginia" (Virginia Code § 8.01-576.8). While this is technically correct, it is not very practical (and note: JCV doesn't "certify," it "promulgates"). Instead, DRS suggests "Virginia Certified Mediator."

Should mediators indicate their certification level(s)? Consider the following scenario. A mediator is certified to receive GDC referrals, but not JDR, CCC or CCF referrals. The mediator knows certification is not necessary to conduct private (non-court-referred) mediations at those other levels, as long as he is competent to do so under the ethical standards. The mediator describes himself as a "Virginia Certified Mediator" in his marketing materials and omits reference to certification level. He lists case types he is available to mediate, including child custody, visitation and support, spousal support, medical malpractice, and divorce cases. Would a consumer assume the mediator is certified to mediate those case types? Would it lead to consumer misperceptions about the mediator's experience and credentials? If so, this might tread uncomfortably close to violating the ethical standards requirement for truthful advertising.

DRS suggests the best approach to ensure consumers understand mediator qualifications is to include certification levels in marketing materials. That way, consumers can see the parameters of the mediator's certification coverage, which might be important to them.

Establishing a private mediation practice is hard work, and marketing is a critical part of the process. Consumers need good information to select a mediator competent to mediate their particular dispute. Meeting consumers' expectations leads to a quality interaction, which in turn leads to public faith in mediators and mediation. Mediators who clearly and accurately describe their credentials and experience play an important part in reaching that end.

# Virginia Association for Community Conflict Resolution



## Helping Give Children the Two-Parent Advantage



The Virginia Association for Community Conflict Resolution (VACCR) received a grant through the Virginia Department of Social Services' Access and Visitation (AV) program to help give children the benefit of having both parents involved in their lives. Research indicates that parents who receive services through the AV grant program are more likely to spend increased time with their children and support them financially. The grant provides free co-parenting training and mediation to parents who have open cases with the Department of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE). Other parents who want to share time with their child(ren) may also qualify to receive free services.

When parents take time to listen to each other in mediation, they can change how they think and feel about things. Parents may better understand the financial and emotional needs of their children. They may become more trusting of each other. This can result in a parenting plan that increases a non-custodial parent's time with his or her child(ren). Co-parenting class instructors help parents understand how words and actions impact children, leading to more positive interactions between parents as well as positive interactions between parents and children.

Peaceful Alternatives Community Mediation Services in Amherst has provided services through the AV program for 10 years. In FY14-15, four VACCR member centers participated in the program. This year, DCSE requested statewide services and VACCR responded. Member centers and the Up Center of Portsmouth (a previous grant recipient) are providing services to 10 areas across the state in FY 15-16.

### **Does this Program Impact the Court's Mediation Program?**

The AV program seeks to engage parents in mediation *before* court involvement. Parents who have already petitioned the courts should continue to receive mediation services through the Court's mediation program. The AV program funding cannot be used in place of existing state funding, i.e., it cannot pay for court referred mediations.

### **Who Can Make Referrals?**

Referral sources include DCSE case managers, other social service agencies and Fatherhood Initiative programs. Centers providing grant services are publicizing the opportunity to local referral sources.

Any service provider who interacts with DCSE clients, including mediators in non-court-referred cases, can make referrals for parents that may benefit from the program. Referrals are made by contacting the appropriate center listed below. Program brochures are available. Contact VACCR for more information.

Parents can contact participating centers directly. Or they can call VACCR's main telephone number, 888-VA PEACE, to connect to the closest center offering grant-funded services. For mediation services, parents must be willing to try mediation and current contact information must be available.

Better Agreements, Inc. Blacksburg	1-866-832-5093
CMG Foundation, Richmond	(804) 254-2664
Conflict Resolution Center of Children's Trust, Roanoke	(540) 342-2063 ext. 24
FairField Center, Harrisonburg	(540) 434-0059 ext. 1
Mediation Center of Charlottesville	(434) 977-2926
NVMS (Northern Virginia Mediation Service)	(703) 865-7263
Peaceful Alternatives Community Mediation, Amherst	(434) 929-8224
Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center	(540) 347-6650
ReSOLUTIONS, Woodstock	(540) 260-5545
The Up Center, Portsmouth	(757) 397-2121 ext. 332

For questions about the program, please contact VACCR Executive Director, Christine Poulson at (540) 294-0732 or [info@vaccr.org](mailto:info@vaccr.org).

<sup>1</sup>**Access and Visitation Grant Program - FY2013 Update**

*Submitted by Christine Poulson, Executive Director, Virginia Association for Community Conflict Resolution*



**Virginia Association of  
Community Conflict Resolution**

**Better Agreements, Inc.**

305 Washington Street, SW  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
866-832-5093

T'aiya Shiner, Executive Director  
[info@betteragreements.org](mailto:info@betteragreements.org)

**CMG Foundation**

9100 Arboretum Parkway, Suite 190  
Richmond, VA 23236  
804-254-2664

Brenda Booth Lowry, Executive Director  
[info@cmg-foundation.org](mailto:info@cmg-foundation.org)

**Conflict Resolution Center  
at Children's Trust**

541 Luck Avenue, Suite 308  
Roanoke, VA 24018  
540-342-2063

Margaret Beazley, Acting Executive Director  
[director@conflictresolutioncenter.us](mailto:director@conflictresolutioncenter.us)

**Fairfield Center**

165 S. Main Street, Suite A  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801  
540-434-0059

Timothy Ruebke, Executive Director  
[tim@fairfieldcenter.org](mailto:tim@fairfieldcenter.org)

**Mediation Center of Charlottesville**

P.O. Box 133  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
434-977-2926

Van Parker, Executive Director  
[mcc@mediationville.org](mailto:mcc@mediationville.org)

**Northern Virginia Mediation Service**

9653 Fairfax Boulevard, Suite 203  
Fairfax, VA 22031  
703-865-7272

Megan Johnston, Executive Director  
[info@nvms.us](mailto:info@nvms.us)

**Peaceful Alternatives  
Community Mediation Services**

P.O. Box 1169  
Amherst, VA 244521  
434-929-8227

Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Executive Director  
[info@peaceful-alternatives.com](mailto:info@peaceful-alternatives.com)

**Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center**

P. O. Box 809  
Warrenton, VA 20188  
540-347-6650

Lawrie Parker, Executive Director  
[pdrc@verizon.net](mailto:pdrc@verizon.net)

**reSOLUTIONS, inc.**

505 North Main Street, Suite 105  
Woodstock, Virginia 22664  
540-459-8799

Renee Hudnall, Acting Executive Director  
[director@resolutions-inc.org](mailto:director@resolutions-inc.org)

## Community Mediation Center News



### CMG Foundation Announces the Appointment of Executive Director

Morna Ellis, President of CMG Foundation, Richmond's nonprofit community mediation center, is pleased to announce the appointment of Brenda Booth Lowry to the newly created position of Executive Director, effective January 1st, 2016. Brenda has served as a consultant to CMG Foundation since May 2015, providing strategic advice regarding organizational design, process analytics, and board development to set the stage for future growth. While with CMG Foundation, Brenda has achieved certification as a Virginia Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Mediator. Brenda's experience, skills, and leadership are the right combination at the right time to help CMG Foundation grow.

Brenda has experience in both the private and nonprofit sectors, working for over thirty years in the financial services industry with Fortune 500 companies. She served as a manager and internal consultant to senior executives in the securities industry where her counsel centered around two key areas—maximize existing operations and, secondly, help develop the roadmap for future growth. She also has strong experience in the development and execution of strategic initiatives. Brenda has been active in the nonprofit sector, receiving the Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2009, and has served on the Board of Directors of Offender Aid & Restoration of Richmond since 2011.



CMG Foundation, a member of the nonprofit Virginia Association of Community Conflict Resolution, is Richmond's nonprofit community mediation center. It provides mediation services to individuals, courts and businesses; teaches mediation skills and offers education programs in parenting and conflict management.

### Northern Virginia Mediation Service



### Investing in Local Communities through Partnering

Sustainable change requires participation and persistence. Creating change through program development is necessarily a long-term activity. I have learned and re-learned that even well-supported good ideas often take years to gain a foothold in program delivery. Partnering across agencies and communities adds both complexity and value to community projects and is worth the effort to create effective programs and positive outcomes. Those of us who believe in and practice the values of effective conflict resolution are well positioned to facilitate collaboration to address local challenges in the Commonwealth.

Tackling community challenges often requires more resources than a single organization or agency can provide alone. Partnering makes sense because each partner contributes an important element of the initiative, such as access to the target audience(s), referral services, facilities, subject matter expertise, legitimacy, connections, funding, staffing and volunteers. For example, NVMS is working with four County agencies to address juvenile crime and the disproportionate minority contact of youth with discipline and criminal justice structures in Fairfax County, Virginia. The Police and Schools provide referrals, access to the target audience (at-risk youth) and outcome data. The Courts provide legitimacy, data and staff support. The County community services department provides facilities and outreach support. NVMS provides coordination, subject matter expertise, staff, volunteers, data management and evaluation. The County provides funding support.



Through this collaboration, Fairfax County and the youth who have participated in the programs have experienced remarkable outcomes. So far, the program has a 0% recidivism rate. One youth participant wrote to their Restorative Justice conference facilitator “Thank you for giving us another chance to prove ourselves.” The program could not achieve its goals without the effective and consistent collaboration of multiple stakeholders.

Smaller partnerships can be equally effective. Two years ago, a career and college preparatory school in Washington, DC, invited NVMS to deliver basic conflict resolution skills workshops to the adults enrolled in their high school equivalency program. The program began with three groups of students and is currently growing. The school provides the target audience and facilities. NVMS provides the training content, trainers and evaluation. The target audience benefits from new services in their community to help them develop communication skills that will assist in gaining and retaining employment. Over 200 people received the training and the program is set to expand to other organizational partners and audiences. One participant wrote on their evaluation “This workshop was very helpful. I was able to learn: new vocabulary, the way I’m most likely to resolve issues, how to think twice about a certain situation and when accommodating other’s feelings isn’t good....”

In addition to the results achieved by direct beneficiaries and community stakeholders, there are many potential benefits to cross-agency partnerships. Relationships between key people in different agencies require communication that often raises awareness of important issues that might otherwise be overlooked. People or ideas that may have been lost in translation in the past become opportunities for successful collaboration as partner relationships grow. The work necessary to create joint programs with external partners also may benefit the internal communication and alignment of participating agencies. Finally, successful partnerships set apart their innovators as leaders and experts in the communities they serve.

There are many worthy causes in local communities for which mediation skills could be useful outside of the mediation process. I encourage individual practitioners, non-profit centers and businesses to explore local issues important to them for opportunities to invest their skills in developing or supporting community partnerships.

*NVMS is a 501(c)3 nonprofit dispute resolution center in Northern Virginia. It partners with local government agencies, schools, non-profit organizations, George Mason University and others on community projects in addition to providing services to individuals, groups and organizations. This year NVMS celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of community service with a new logo, tagline, website and office. Visit [www.nvms.us](http://www.nvms.us) to learn more.*

*Submitted by Megan Johnston, Executive Director, NVMS*

The FairField Center defines its work in five general areas: Conflict Resolution, Restorative Justice, Civic Engagement, Communication Training and Business Services. While the bulk of the Center's work is in the arena of Conflict Resolution and mediation services, we continue to innovate in all areas. Here is news from three FairField branches.

### **Restorative Justice: Victim Impact Listen and Learn**

"I'm glad I was here and I am anxious to turn my life around for good." So said a student from the first cohort of the *Victim Impact Listen and Learn* program run by FairField Center. She was one of sixty-one students who have participated in this program so far. *Listen and Learn* is designed to help youth understand the impact of their actions on victims and family members, and to develop empathy with others. The 26th District Juvenile Court Service Unit contracts with FairField Center for the program and refers all participants. Funding for the program comes from the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act,

The program uses the Circle format and interactive content. Most of the students rate the program as very helpful and claim they will "think before acting" in the future. Parents participate in the final session and they too have found it helpful and worthwhile. To date, eight rounds of this program have been completed in just over a year, with four more scheduled for the current fiscal year.

### **Civic Engagement: Harrisonburg International Festival**



On the last Saturday in September every year, the FairField Center works to build bridges across cultures in the central Shenandoah Valley by hosting the annual Harrisonburg International Festival. As an integral program of the Civic Engagement branch, the Festival facilitates inter-cultural understanding across different groups and sectors of the public and private arena. This is one way we carry our mission to *help people listen, plan and interact effectively*.

The Harrisonburg International Festival has been offering dance, music, artists and food drawn primarily from the diverse local population for 18 years (though not all under the FairField Center umbrella). Community service organizations and sponsoring businesses set up displays designed to reach out to all comers. More than 6000 visitors came out to the Festival this past September (by the count of the Harrisonburg Tourism Office). This year, FairField Center hired its first paid Director for the International Festival, Boris Ozuna.

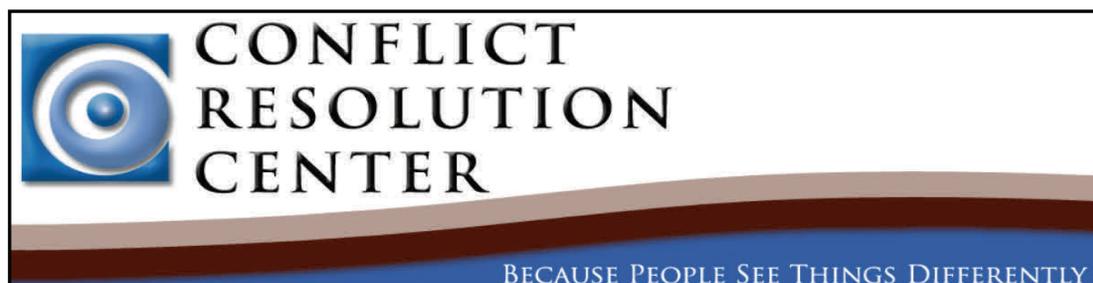
Ethnicities and nationalities represented in the 2015 Festival include, Congolese, Filipino, Kurdish, Eritrean, Ukrainian, Aztec, Italian, Greek, Korean, Thai, Jamaican, Indian, and many more. According to Ozuna, "Our community needs to celebrate together despite our differences, and the Festival offers a way to promote healthy relationship and to set the ground for a different way of solving our conflicts."

### **Communication Training: InterMediators**

InterMediators is a new collaborative project between FairField Center and NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center, funded by the United Way of Harrisonburg and Rockingham. This is a community mediation training program designed for Spanish speakers, mostly immigrants. The overarching goal of InterMediators is

to increase the engagement of Latinos at the community level and to infuse the mediation profession and processes with greater knowledge of cultural considerations. This is accomplished through a Basic Mediation Training course followed up by monthly Continuing Education meetings. Basic Mediation has been adapted to include material and instructional elements relevant to Latinos. The use of language interpreters and interpretation equipment allow for seamless interaction among bilingual and monolingual Spanish or English speakers.

Over 2015, InterMediators has provided training and continuing education opportunities for 20 local Spanish speaking community members who are committed to distributing their new skills throughout their social networks. Some participants are planning to continue on to obtain mediation certification through the Supreme Court of Virginia. Intermediators introduced mediation as a practical skill for daily living and a professional opportunity to more Spanish speakers. It provided participants with additional overviews and information on Coaching, Trauma Awareness and Resilience, the Virginia Court System and Restorative Justice. It increased the awareness and use of mediation as an alternative dispute resolution within the Spanish speaking community.



## Conflict Resolution Center at Children's Trust

After nearly twenty-six years as an independent, non-profit agency, the Conflict Resolution Center in Roanoke had a choice to either close its doors or find a partner. For almost 8 years the CRC had been in a “slow bleed” mode as grants dried up, funding sources vanished, leadership waned, the economy suffered, and donations hit an all-time low. The Conflict Resolution Center was at risk of failing within months.

At the suggestion of a former Board member, CRC Board President Margaret Beazley met with Janice Dinkens Davidson, Executive Director of Children’s Trust, to discuss the possibility of joining forces.

Janice and the Children’s Trust Board of Directors immediately saw the value and benefit of the CRC’s programming to families and children. The entities began working together first to relocate the CRC to the Children’s Trust facility and second, to provide administrative support to the staff. These two simple steps allowed the CRC to continue operations without interruption, while reducing overhead, eliminating redundancies, and improving economies of scale.

As of October 1, 2015, the new Conflict Resolution Center at Children’s Trust became a fully integrated program of the Children’s Trust family which includes CASA, Child Advocacy Center, and Child Abuse Prevention. The Conflict Resolution Center at Children’s Trust was recently honored with the 2015 Peacemaker of the Year Award by Plowshare Peace Center.



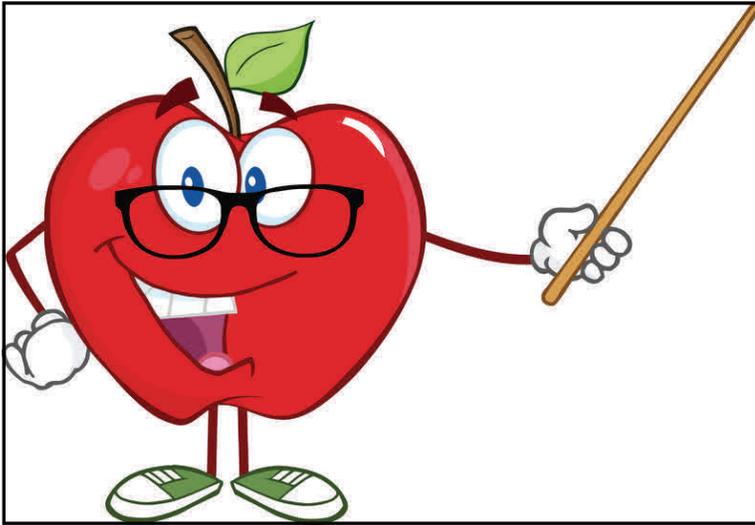
Chrys Bason, Mediation Specialist accepts Peacemaker Award

It was a stressful time for the CRC Board and Staff but the change has been like manna from Heaven as the CRC@CT is thriving and looking to have a greater impact on the community.

## Twelfth Annual Parent Educators Symposium

On September 18, 2015, DRS hosted the Twelfth Annual Parent Educators Symposium for mandatory parent education providers. The Symposium featured the theme, "Being the Best We Can Be."

The first half of the day was devoted to a continuation of the Best Practices dialogue initiated at last year's symposium. The goal of the session was to help mandatory parent educators **Be the Best We Can Be**.



Participants reviewed the purpose of the mandated seminars (see the Parent Education page of the Virginia's Judicial System Web site for [FAQ, "Why Is a Parenting Seminar Required?"](#) Using [the Toolkit](#) developed by the Virginia State-wide Parent Education Coalition (VSPEC), they studied "risk factors" and "protective factors" that confront and support those attending the mandated seminars. They also reviewed characteristics of Effective Parenting Education Programs.

Participants then reviewed the 10 Best Practices identified at the 2014 Symposium (see below) and in groups established correlations with the risk and

protective factors. Two of the four groups focused on challenges facing providers in complying with the Best Practice standard.

The second half of the symposium was devoted to domestic violence in the context of mandatory parent education seminars. Alarming statistics indicate 25 to 50% of contested custody cases involve some form of domestic violence. The session goal was to increase participants' awareness of issues to consider when seminar attendees are involved in domestic violence. Sandra Bromley, JD, Fairfax County-Wide Domestic Violence Coordinator, and Lori Wymore-Kirkland, Stronger Together Coordinator, Supervised Visitation and Supervised Exchange Program for Fairfax County J&DR court, led the program.

Session topics included trauma's effects on the brain and the brain's capacity for healing, and Parallel Parenting, the preferred parenting model when domestic violence is present. Sandy and Lori went over the dynamics of domestic violence, the various forms of domestic violence, understanding the behavior of victims of domestic violence, the effects on children who witness domestic violence, and how to promote safety and resiliency and strengthen families.

Many symposium attendees said that even though they had previously attended workshops on domestic violence, they learned a great deal of new information from the session.

Ann Warshauer, DRS's Parent Education Coordinator, is working with Sandy and Lori to develop a Parallel Parenting curriculum for parents involved in domestic violence. The goal is to create a program for parents with domestic violence that would qualify as a 4-hour mandated parent education seminar. A pilot Parallel Parenting seminar using the new curriculum is planned for northern VA. Eventually the curriculum should be available for purchase.

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# 10 BEST PRACTICES

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Identified at the 2014 PE Symposium



1. Provide a copy of your approved curriculum to all who attend your seminars.
2. Provide an evaluation form for each participant to fill out and give to the instructor at the end of each seminar conducted.
3. Ask participants to provide personal identification when they attend a mandated seminar.
4. Do not conduct a seminar with fewer than 4 or more than 34 attendees in a seminar.
5. Use a variety of teaching techniques in the seminars.
6. Teach the 4 topics required by the Code of Virginia.
7. Conduct the seminars in a private location, as opposed to a public setting.
8. Assure that all facilitators who conduct the seminars have attended a Train the Trainer session and have observed a seminar conducted by a qualified provider.
9. Assure that all facilitators clarify their role as an educator, not a counselor, when conducting the seminars.
10. Maintain professional interaction with participants, especially when handling resistance or responding to questions.



## Keeping You Informed

🌀 A DRS Update 🌀



*Best Wishes from DRS for a  
Very Happy New Year!*

### **Congratulations, Mandy!**

Paul DeLosh, Director of the Department of Judicial Services on behalf of The Office of the Executive Secretary, presented Mandy Sarkissian, our ADR Analyst, with a Personal Achievement Award in December.



Mandy finished the final course of her master's program in Public Administration at VCU's Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs on December 8, 2015. For several years Mandy has juggled demanding MPA courses with her full work schedule, consistently receiving high marks along the way. Her school work led Mandy, and as a result DRS, to a better understanding of governing entities, budget strategy, etc. Despite course challenges and life interruptions such as buying and selling homes and relentless accompanying nightmares), Mandy never lost her sense of humor, which is such a delightful and warming contribution to the DRS

ethos. DRS is proud of her achievement. Congratulations to Mandy for earning her master's degree in Public Administration!

### **Mediator Memorial**

It was with sadness that the DRS Office became aware of the passing during 2015 of three of our certified mediator colleagues. On behalf of the Virginia mediator community, we offer sincere condolences to the loved ones of these mediators.

Jack Baker, M.Ed. - Mentor and GDC, JDR, CCC and CCF mediator - certified 1999

John Curry, JD - Mentor GDC, JDR, CCC and CCF mediator - certified 2003

Honorable Ken Trabue - Mentor and CCC mediator - Certified in 2000

We wish to honor their dedicated service to the growth of ADR in Virginia. We are thankful for the assistance these professionals rendered to help parties find resolution for their conflicts and for the service they provided to the Virginia courts.

We would appreciate receiving news of this nature regarding our mediators so we may pay tribute in future newsletter issues.



### **Be on the Lookout!**

Following this issue of the **Resolutions** newsletter, watch for shorter and more frequent news and articles from the DRS office. These will continue to be posted to the **Resolutions** page on the Virginia Judicial System website.

### **When Screening for Intimate Partner Violence, Being Specific May Be Better**

All Virginia certified mediators must screen cases for appropriateness of mediation. Family mediators, who must undertake a more strenuous screening of cases for domestic abuse, will find this article by Jennifer Shack insightful. Article begins at the bottom of page 2 in the September 2015 issue of [Court ADR Connection - the eNewsletter of Resolutions Systems Institute](#).

### **JDR Filings Survey Update**

Thanks to all JDR mediators for your enthusiastic participation in the filings survey last fall. We had over 2,500 responses with few apparent data entry mistakes. DRS will begin analyzing the data over the next few months.

### **2016 Parent Educators Symposium - Save the Date!**

The Thirteenth Annual Parent Educators Symposium sponsored by the Office of the Executive Secretary will be held on Friday, October 21, 2016 at BH Media Group's production facility in Mechanicsville, Virginia. This continuing education opportunity is open to all current instructors affiliated with parent education providers approved by the courts and listed in the directory on the Virginia Judicial System website as well as potential new instructors who have taken the Train the Trainer class.

Registration fee is \$25.00 and the program will run from 8:00 AM to 1:30 PM. Details and registration materials will be emailed to providers/instructors the end of August. All instructors are strongly encouraged to attend and add this date to the calendar.

### **Mediation Training Opportunities**

Please consult the [ADR Training Calendar](#) for core and continuing education courses across the State.

Two mediation training conferences this fall provide opportunities for professional growth and mediator continuing education hours that can be used toward your recertification. Look for links with details about registration and the workshops on the [Mediation Conference Calendar](#).