



Dispute Resolution Center Newsletter

March & April 2018

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Youth Programming Update by Diana Halstead, Youth Programming Coordinator

Recently, Catholic Charities has seen an increase in the need for youth programming in our service areas. As a result, the agency has initiated some new programming to address the growing needs of this population. In the past year, Catholic Charities Mentoring Program has enrolled several at-risk youth throughout Delaware County. These youth have been matched with personal mentors who act as role models and engage kids in meaningful, fun activities. In addition to one-on-one mentoring outings, the program has also orchestrated several group events for program enrollees. These events have included picnics, kickball games, bowling, and trips to the zoo. When reflecting on the past year of programming, it's easy to see the positive benefits that both youth and mentors have received from their participation.

As a result of positive program outcomes as well as the addition of a secondary funding source, Catholic Charities Mentoring Program will soon be expanding to serve youth not only in Delaware County, but in Otsego and Schoharie counties as well. Catholic Charities will increase their Mentoring Program capacity by implementing a college-based mentoring program. This pilot program plans to partner with local colleges in each of the counties to host mentoring events on campus and also recruit students to serve as volunteer mentors. Through this

initiative, we hope to be able to serve more youth, and continue to provide a much needed service.

In addition to mentoring, Catholic Charities has also been providing some services to youth in the form of weekly conflict resolution classes. With participants referred from the Schoharie County Probation Department, Catholic Charities DRC staff have set out to provide an 8-week program to middle schoolers currently under the supervision of Probation. The class utilizes the Peacemaker curriculum to teach participants basic conflict resolution skills, including positive coping skills, effective communication skills, and a general knowledge of various conflict resolution strategies. The class also utilizes Circles to build a sense of community among participants. The use of Circles not only aids in the presentation of curriculum materials, but also allows group members an appropriate space to discuss real issues they may be facing. We're hopeful that this program will show positive outcomes and that we're able to effectively implement it in other areas in the future.

If you have any questions regarding our current youth initiatives or you're looking to get involved, feel free to reach out to Diana Halstead at 607-604-4071 or dhalstead@charitiesccdo.org.



From the Program Director "On Reactivity" by Tom Pullyblank

I'm sure you've been there. I certainly have. You're in the room with your co-mediator and a pair of arguing parents who can't agree on anything. They fight over who gets the child on weekends. They argue over where the child will spend Christmas Eve. They disagree whether the child should attend church or take swimming lessons on Sunday mornings. They can't even resolve the match-lights-the-tinderbox issue over where to exchange the child, whatever the time-sharing schedule turns out to be. Time and again their argument escalates into a back-and-forth tennis match of reactivity and recrimination. Past hurts are backhanded from one to the other. Neither side gains the least bit of advantage. You wonder how they were ever in love.

You try to reframe. Your co-mediator tries to get the parents to share reasons why their child is so special to them. You try to dig down beneath the positions and find the interests. Nothing works. In your mind, you flip through the pages of your basic mediation training manual searching for the one magic trick that will release these parents from their prison of constant conflict. But you quickly realize that there is no magic trick. The parents are mired in a swamp of resentment and reactivity from which they might never scape, no matter how much rope you offer them.

As mediators in this situation, we are in danger of getting pulled into the swamp. Reactivity is contagious. Without realizing it, we very well might start thinking about how awful one (or both) of these parents is (or are). We might notice an uptick in our heart rate at something a parent says. We might feel our shoulders tighten when we hear an accusation that hits close to home.

Being conscious of what triggers our own reactivity is an important skill for a mediator to have. Equally useful is an understanding that reactivity in the mediation room is often fed by reactivity outside it. We live in an extremely anxious society. In politics, in the entertainment industry, in families and even in churches, our default mode of communication often resembles the angry verbal tennis match between the parents in our not-so-imaginary mediation session. There seems to be less and less common ground on which to stand. There seems to be fewer and fewer public conversations that model mutual respect and strive for mutual understanding. Fortunately, reactivity isn't the only possible behavior in situations of conflict.

In 1997, at the annual World Wide Developer's Conference, Apple CEO Steve Jobs demonstrated an alternative behavior to the usual reactivity. (You can see the video and read a good analysis of it here: "How to Turn Insult to Dialogue," Kraybill Table, <https://www.riverhouseexpress.com/blog/steve-jobs-insult-to-dialogue/>) In a Q and A session a questioner fired an arrow right at the bullseye of what mattered most to Jobs. The question was provocative, critical, insulting even, and it must have hurt when it hit its target. But Jobs did something

extraordinary. He didn't become defensive. He didn't meet one insult with another. He didn't allow himself to fall into the swamp of reactivity. Rather, he paused for about ten seconds, taking time to think. And then he responded in clear, sympathetic language.

Please note the language I just used to describe what Steve Jobs did and did not do. He was not reactive. He was responsive. There is an important distinction between these two ways of communication. Reactivity often indicates a loss of control. The back and forth of a reactive dialogue often overpowers us, weakens us, threatens to overwhelm us. As a reactive dialogue spins out of control, we lose the ability to stop it. Have you ever looked back on an argument and wondered what you said and why exactly you said it? Have you ever regretted not saying something else or, like Steve Jobs, taking the time to breath, to calm down, to think before offering a response? When we pause, when we think, when we carefully consider what we're going to say before offering a response, we maintain control and stay true to ourselves. What Steve Jobs did in that 1997 exchange with the hostile questioner was remarkable and very difficult. If you're like me, you know that there's a wide gap between who we want to be--calm, collected, responding rather than reacting--and who we often are--anxious, absorbed in ourselves, too often reacting in regrettable ways.

Another instructive example of responsive rather than reactive thinking happened very recently at the height of national politics. In a recent Senate debate over ending the government shutdown--a debate characterized by angry back and forth that got neither side anywhere--Susan Collins of Maine called two dozen senators to her office for a conversation. She used a time-tested method in conflict transformation, a talking stick. "As you can imagine, with that many senators in a room, they all want to talk at once. I know that shocks you," said Collins. She said the stick was handed to whichever senator was talking, "and they were allowed to speak, and then I'd take the stick from them, give it to the next person." The talking forced senators to carefully listen to their colleagues. The result, said Collins, was to help bring order out of the chaos. (The CNN report of the meeting can be seen here: <https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/22/politics/susan-collins-bipartisan-talks-congress-shutdown-talking-stick/index.html>)

Whether the room is filled with the sound of arguing parents or arguing senators, calming the reactive storm and taking the time to think before we respond can work wonders to enhance the process of mediation and our own ability to communicate.

I wish you all the best in your continuing mediation work! -Tom Pullyblank



The A.T.I. DISPATCH

October - December 2017

Advantages of This Report

The purpose of this report is to provide more detailed information to the Alternatives to Incarceration Advisory Board regarding the number of hours ordered and completed per quarter. It will also report on the number of successful and unsuccessful completions and give the reasons why. Included in this report will be the referral sources, the defendant's charges and the worksites where the defendant has been assigned. My hope is that this report will be useful to all who serve on the A.T.I. Advisory Board. Thank you for all your support in making this program successful in our county.

Ameen Aswad
A.T.I. Chair

Without community service we would not have a strong quality of life. It's important to the person who serves as well as the recipient. It's the way in which we ourselves grow and develop.
Dr. Dorothy Height

Demographics

In the **second quarter of the 2017-2018** A.T.I. contract the program received:

- ◆ 16 referrals from the court resulting in 598 hours of court ordered community service.
- ◆ 953.75 hours of community service were completed.
- ◆ 22 successful completions.
- ◆ 3 were unsuccessful in completing their hours for the various reasons:
 - 2 were administratively discharged by the Adult Treatment Court.
 - 1 was administratively discharged by the Oneonta City Court.
- ◆ 7 pending cases from Oneonta City Court.

In the **first two quarters of the 2017-2018** A.T.I. contract the program received:

- ◆ 44 referrals from the court resulting in 1,904 hours of court ordered community service.
- ◆ 1,651.75 hours of community service were completed.
- ◆ 31 successful completions.
- ◆ 8 were unsuccessful in completing their hours for the various reasons:
 - 2 were unsuccessful completions from Adult Treatment Court.
 - 2 were administratively discharged from Adult Treatment Court.
 - 2 were administratively discharged from Oneonta City Court.
 - 2 were administratively discharged from Probation.

Referral Sources

- ◆ 1 from Montgomery Town Court
- ◆ 14 from Oneonta City Court
- ◆ 1 from Treatment Court

College Students

- ◆ 1 from Hartwick College
- ◆ 11 from SUNY Oneonta

Worksites Assigned

- ◆ Habitat for Humanity
- ◆ Hartwick College Ministry
- ◆ Lord's Table
- ◆ Nader Towers
- ◆ Oneonta Boys / Girls Club
- ◆ Salvation Army Store

Charges

- 2 Alcohol under 21
- 1 Criminal Poss. Controlled Sub. 7th.
- 1 Criminal Sale Controlled Sub. 3rd.
- 2 Public Fighting
- 8 Public Urination
- 3 Trespass



Save the Date!

*Catholic Charities Dispute Resolution Center
of Delaware, Otsego, and Schoharie Counties
Training Opportunities:*

- **Thurs.-Sun., March 15-18, 2018, 9:00-5:00 PM: Basic Mediation Training**, Calvary Retreat Center, 290 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY. Trainer: Sequoia Stalder. This training will provide you with the skills to understand and de-escalate conflict, actively listen, reflect and reframe a difficult conversation, shift perspective and deepen understanding, and devise creative solutions to problems. *Please note: This is only Basic Mediation Training and does not include Parenting Planning Mediation Training.* Cost: \$250. For more information, please contact Christy Houck at (607) 432-0061, or by email at CHouck@charitiesccdo.org.
- **Sat., April 7 & Sun., April 8, 2018, Parenting Planning Mediation (Custody/ Visitation) Training.** Time and Location: To be announced. Cost \$200. For more information, please contact Christy Houck at (607) 432-0061, or by email at CHouck@charitiesccdo.org.
- **Saturday, March 3, 2018, Advanced Regional Training: "Core Competencies and Values in Mediation,"** Albany, NY; Trainer: Elena Sabora. To register or for more information, contact Brennan Frazier, Mediation Matters, (518) 446-0356, ext. 12.
- **Saturday, March 10, 2018, Advanced Regional Training: "Intense Emotion and Conflict,"** Ithaca, NY; Trainer: Jody Miller, NYS Certified Mediation Trainer. To register or for more information, contact Paula Wright, CDRC, (607) 734-9087.
- **Monday, March 12 and Tuesday, March 13, 9:00-4:30, Special Education Mediation Training for New Special Education Mediators**, ACCESS-VR Manhattan Office, 116 W. 32nd St., New York, NY. There is no fee for this training. To register, please contact: special@nysdra.org
- **Tuesday, March 19, 2018, Advanced Regional Training: "Cultural Humility for Mediators,"** Queens, NY; Trainer: Jasmin Brandow and Rebecca Koch. To register or for more information, contact Leslie Funk, CMS, (718) 523-6868.
- **Wednesday, March 20, 2018, Advanced Regional Training: "Core Competencies in Mediation,"** Buffalo, NY; Trainer: Brad Heckman, NYS Certified Mediation Trainer. To register or for more information, contact Julie Loesch, Center for Resolution and Justice, (585) 546-5110.
- **Thurs., April 19 and Fri., April 20, 2018, 9:00-4:30, Special Education Mediation Training for New Special Education Mediators**, Holiday Inn at Rochester Marketplace, 800 Jefferson St., Rochester, NY. There is no fee for this training. To register, please contact: special@nysdra.org
- **Tues., May 15, 2018, 9:00-4:00, Special Education Mediation Training for Experienced Special Education Mediators**, New York Peace Institute– Manhattan Mediation Center, 111 John St., Suite 600, New York, NY. There is no fee to attend this training. To register, please contact: special@nysdra.org
- **Thurs., June 7 and Fri., June 8, 9:00-4:30, Special Education Mediation Training for New Special Education Mediators**, LIDRC/EAC– Nassau County Office, 175 Fulton Ave., Hempstead, NY. There is no fee for this training. To register, please contact: special@nysdra.org

"Incorporating Circle Components in Multiparty Mediations" by Allison Pierce, DRC Case Manager

On February 17, approximately 30 staff and volunteer mediators from CDRCs all over New York State came together in Oneonta for an all-day training on "Incorporating Circle Components in Multiparty Mediations." The training was led by Kim Reisch and Ingrid Welch from the Center of Dispute Settlement of Ontario and Yates Counties. The goal of this training was to provide experienced mediators with the information and skills to use circle components in multiparty mediations.

Having had no prior experience with circles or multiparty mediations, I found this training to be informative and interesting. A multiparty mediation can consist of four or more people, and can be used for many kinds of mediations, such as a community mediation or a family mediation. The circle format creates a safe space for dialogue, where participants can share ideas and interests, explore options, and reach a consensus. We sat in a circle during the entire training using a talking piece, which was passed around to each person. Whoever had the talking piece spoke, and whoever did not, listened. The circle included a centerpiece. A centerpiece serves as a focal point, something to look at other than the speaker. I found the most useful part of the training was the simulations which gave us some practice and ideas for a basic circle. I look forward to learning more and gaining more experiences with circles in the future.

DRC Volunteer Recruitment– We Need You!
by April Rando, Director of Planning and Outreach

The Dispute Resolution Center is recruiting volunteer mediators, and we need your help!

Our volunteer mediators are an essential part of our program. As the Dispute Resolution Center continues to expand services and meet the needs of our communities, we need volunteers who have diverse backgrounds and experiences, and a desire to help people in conflict. Our volunteers have open hearts and open minds, and recognize people's need to be heard.

What can you do to help? Spread the word about the Dispute Resolution Center programs at work, places of worship, libraries, and with anyone else who might be looking for an opportunity to volunteer.

We will be offering Basic Mediation Training and Parenting Planning Mediation (Custody/ Visitation) Training to people interested in becoming volunteer mediators beginning in March. Both training sessions will be required to become a mediator for our DRC. The cost for training is \$400.

For more information or to register for training, please contact Christy Houck at (607) 432-0061.



Dispute Resolution Center

"Working Towards a Mutual Solution"

Serving Chenango, Delaware, Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Otsego, and Schoharie Counties.

Make a difference in your community– Become a Volunteer Mediator!

Basic Mediation & Parenting Planning Mediation (Custody/ Visitation) Training – Cost \$400

**Basic Mediation Training
March 15-18, 2018**

Time: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**Location: Calvary Retreat Center
290 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY**

Trainer: Sequoia Stalder has dedicated his career to the non-adversarial resolution of conflict and is a recognized expert in the mediation and conflict management field. Sequoia's approach focuses on the interpersonal dimensions of conflict and the key role that communication dynamics and ongoing relationships play in mitigating and resolving disputes.

Parenting Planning Mediation (Custody/ Visitation) Training– April 7 & 8, 2018

Time and Location: To be announced soon!

- **Basic Mediation Training** can help you negotiate your way through the conflicts you face every day. This training will provide you with the skills to understand and de-escalate conflict, actively listen, reflect and reframe a difficult conversation, shift perspective and deepen understanding, and devise creative solutions to problems.
- **Parenting Planning Mediation Training** covers issues specific to child custody and parenting time.

For more information about becoming a volunteer mediator and to register for training, please contact:

Christy Houck

Catholic Charities Dispute Resolution Center

176 Main St., Oneonta, NY 13820; Tel. (607) 432-0061



Each month we feature articles about our staff and volunteer mediators.



Cindy Campbell, Volunteer Mediator:

I've been a volunteer mediator for 25 years. I became interested in mediation standing on the vigil lines during the first gulf war. We were discussing conflicts and how our culture solved them, wondering why we accepted that we needed to go to war to solve a conflict when we expect everyone, even small children to learn to solve conflicts without violence. A friend mentioned there was an article in the paper looking for mediators. It took me a few days to think about it as the program was asking mediators to commit to volunteering for 4-8 hours each month. When I called I discovered that Jack Daniels, the friend who suggested I volunteer, had already signed me up for the first training.

I taught an undergraduate course in conflict resolution at SUNY Cobleskill for 10 years from 2000 to 2010 which was fun and challenging. The course prepared students in the education division to both use the skills in their own lives and teach them to their young students. We also discussed current conflicts and the history of non violent response to conflict. Preparing a 3 hour class and reading 30 student essays each week for the 15 week semester meant that the subject was never far from my mind.

I've been a family nurse practitioner for 36 years and I guess it follows that I like family mediations best. Doing parenting plan mediations is rewarding because you know that if two parents can work better together their children are going to have a better life. I remember reading about transformative mediation and thinking, that's the philosophy of mediation we were trained in, that's really what we do. I've done other types of mediations but mostly over the years, it's been parenting plans and family mediations.

This past year I've been part of a community group working on a broad range of social issues and environmental concerns. When I'm not working I like to hike, cross country ski, and spend as much of my free time outdoors as possible.



Ray Paglieri, Volunteer Mediator:

My name is Ray Paglieri and I have been volunteering as a mediator for the past 14

years, formerly with Tri-County Mediation. I received my basic training from Peter Glassman of Mediation Matters. I originally trained as a mediator, thinking it would something nice to do when I eventually retired. Not long after my initial training, I completed a 9-credit certificate program in conflict management studies through Cornell University.

I was trained by Duke Fisher as a peer mediation trainer. It was very rewarding for me to introduce a peer mediation and a restorative justice conferencing program at the Parsons Child and Family Neil Hellman School for severely emotionally disturbed students. Most of my career has been in special education. I am certified as a special education mediator and look forward to working with April Rando to increase school support of mediation as an option in our service area.

Aside from numerous advanced trainings over the years, I have been trained in Parenting Planning (Custody/Visitation) Mediation (which has been the bulk of my work), Child/Parent Mediation, Elder Caregiver Mediation, Client/Attorney Fee Arbitration and Lemon Law Arbitration. I look forward to the two-day Divorce Mediation Training in March.

Over the years, I have found that my training as a mediator served to improve my communication skills, my ability to resolve employee disputes and to coach others to avoid conflict escalators. As is true with all of us, I can say that my experience has had a profound influence on me personally and professionally.


 Visit the Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego & Schoharie Counties' website and "like us" on Facebook!
<http://www.charitiesccd.org/index.html>
<https://www.facebook.com/CatholicCharitiesDOS/>

 [twitter@CharitiesDOS](https://twitter.com/CharitiesDOS)

 <https://www.instagram.com/charitiesdos/>

WANTED: VOLUNTEERS!

Do you know someone who might be interested in becoming a volunteer mediator or a volunteer translator? Please contact Christy Houck at (607) 432-0061 or by email at chouck@charitiesccd.org.

 If you have something you would like to share for the newsletter, please email your article by Friday, April 20, 2018 to April Rando at arando@charitiesccd.org. Thank you!