



Mission Statement:

The mission of the Washington mediation Association is to advance the use of mediation as an effective form of alternative dispute resolution; to foster high standards of mediator conduct, training, and certification; and to be the voice of mediators in Washington State.

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A Farewell from Kathleen Nichols

Dear Colleagues:

This is my last President's Message, as Darrell Puls took over leadership of the WMA Board earlier this month. Thanks to the Board and the WMA members for all the work that has been done this year to keep the organization going and growing.

My major goal this year was to get people in the WMA to organize some efforts at outreach to the public. Progress has been made on this front in a couple areas of the state, as Region 2 (King County) and Region 5 (Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Pacific, and Wahkiakum Counties) both formed groups of board and non-board members who are focusing on outreach efforts. I am pleased to see more non-board members of WMA getting involved in projects such as this, and encourage more WMA members to get involved as we move forward with the outreach efforts. WMA also participated, along with a number of other King County dispute resolution agencies, in the King County Conflict Resolution Day outreach effort - also an exciting collaborative experience that I hope will continue.

A most encouraging happening this year has been a WMA Board strategic planning process that will allow us to have a more long-range view of WMA's activities. Rather than each new president setting goals for the year, the board has come up with a three-year action plan, to provide more continuity, and an ability to keep focus on long-term projects. The plan is focused around the following goals: (1) Ensure mediation is recognized as a profession; (2) Promote mediation; (3) Provide networking opportunities for mediators; (4) Strengthen board processes. I look forward to helping see these projects to fruition as I continue on the board in the next years.

Have a peaceful summer!

Kathleen Nichols
Past-President, WMA

From the New President

It has been an honor and privilege as President-Elect to work closely for the past year with President Kathleen Nichols and Past President Chris Koser. Kathleen and Chris, and those before them, have blazed a trail that I now seek to push further as we strengthen and grow the Washington Mediation Association. I am blessed to have around me an amazing team of people who

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WMA Vision Statement:

The vision of the Washington Mediation Association is for people to value and utilize collaborative, respectful, and nonadversarial means of dispute resolution, and for these means to be accessible to all. Practitioners will uphold the highest levels of impartiality, integrity, professionalism, and expertise.

serve as members of the WMA Board. Together we will enter and claim new territory.

It may be helpful for you to know a little about me. I have worked in the field of conflict management for 32 years in a variety of roles, including labor negotiator, arbitration advocate, mediator, and trainer. I am self-employed as an organizational and church conflict resolution consultant, facilitator, researcher, and writer, and also a faculty member of Trinity Theological Seminary in Indiana where I teach graduate and post-graduate studies in conflict resolution. I have published several articles on apology in medical malpractice litigation, forgiveness, and reconciliation in interpersonal, group, and organizational conflict, and speak at several conferences every year on effective organizational conflict resolution practices. I am currently co-authoring a textbook on the use of collaborative law practice. On the local front, I serve as a volunteer mediator for the local dispute resolution center, where I also serve on the Board and as a trainer.

I have come to believe that the field of alternative dispute resolution, including mediation, is only in the beginning stages of theoretical knowledge and practical application. As we learn and grow as mediators, I believe that the Washington Mediation Association must take a strong leadership role regarding mediator training standards, mediator credentialing, and the use of mediation, in all of its forms, as a desirable and viable alternative to litigation. To that end, it is my intent to forge strong collaborative bonds with mediators and their umbrella organizations from every community, including lawyers, independent mediators, and dispute resolution centers. Independently we see only part of the problems before us, and can find only limited solutions, but together we can forge ahead in mutually beneficial ways where the ultimate benefit is to those we serve.

Darrell Puls, President

WMA Strategic Planning: A Focus on the Future

The WMA Board spent two days in a guided strategic planning process designed to create goals, objectives, and timelines to grow and strengthen the organization. We cannot achieve success without the help of our members, and so we call upon you to join us! Please contact WMA President Darrell Puls if you would like to be a part of taking WMA from where it is to where it CAN BE!

Goal: Ensure that mediation is recognized as a profession.

Objective 1: Advance credentialing in Washington. There currently are no mandated mediator certification standards in Washington – anyone can claim to be a mediator, regardless of level of training or expertise. The Credentialing Team investigated mediator credentialing requirements in all 50 states. We have compiled that information and are now ready to work with all stakeholder organizations in creating unified recommendations for possible adoption of minimum statewide credentialing standards for mediators.

Objective 2: Strengthen the WMA certification process. WMA currently offers certification in up to 14 different types of mediation. We are streamlining the process for the benefit of our members.

Objective 3: Support professional development. We will continue our quarterly newsletter and also continue to co-sponsor various events

Mediation Links:

Resolution Washington, Dispute Resolution Centers

Mediate.Com, news and mediation services

Association for Conflict Resolution

Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service

Mediation Training Institute International

Alternative Dispute Resolution Resources

Conflict Resolution Information Resources

such as the Northwest Alternative Dispute Resolution Conference and partnerships such as that with Antioch University.

Objective 4: Demonstrate output of members. We are gathering data to show the impact mediation (and mediators) have in settling conflicts, both litigated and non-litigated.

Goal: Promote mediation.

Objective 1: Promote mediation in a variety of ways. Mediators are very aware of the importance of mediation, but the general public is not. We will approach this problem through a variety of ways: regional outreach, brochures, expanding the capacity of the WMA website, coordinating mediation promotion with dispute resolution centers, public service announcements, and so on.

Goal: provide networking opportunities.

Objective 1: Support external networking. WMA will become a regular presence through liaisons with independent mediators, DRC's, the Association for Conflict Resolution, Oregon Mediation Association, WSBA Dispute Resolution section, law schools, and so on.

Objective 2: Support internal networking. Website expansion, online discussion groups, social events.

Goal: Strengthen Board processes.

Objective 1: Improve meeting effectiveness. Though WMA has tried to save money by meeting primarily through conferences calls, it has become apparent that we also need to meet face to face more often to promote dialogue.

Objective 2: New Board members will receive an orientation to the Board. This will include orientation to current issues, positions, and challenges. This will become an institutionalized and expected part of bringing on board all new board members.

Objective 3: Board development a priority. We will do a skills and interests assessment of all board members so as to best utilize the talents and abilities within the Board to further the WMA mission.

Get Involved!

Do you want to help shape the future of mediators and the profession of mediation on Washington State? Then get involved! Otherwise, someone else will do it for us!

WMA has a number of teams that you can serve on from right where you are. Thanks to the Internet, we can send documents, proposals, ideas, artwork back and forth in real time, no matter where you are. Too, membership on the WMA leadership teams is not limited to Board members – we need you!

We are looking for people to work with us on the following WMA leadership teams:

1. **Qualifications:** The WMA Qualifications Committee is looking for experienced mediators to help us reach our goal of improving continuity of service and quality control in four areas of

Conflict Quotes: Anger

He who angers you
conquers you.
~Elizabeth Kenny

For every minute you
are angry, you lose
sixty seconds of
happiness. ~Author
Unknown

Anger is one letter
short of danger.
~Author Unknown

People who fly into a
rage always make a
bad landing. ~Will
Rogers

Resentment is like
taking poison and
waiting for the other
person to die.
~Malachy McCourt

Anger blows out the
lamp of the mind.
~Robert G. Ingersoll

I don't have to attend
every argument I'm

responsibility:

- a. mediator certification,
- b. continuing education,
- c. practicum/mentor approval, and
- d. responding to mediator and public inquiries about the certification process

If you would like to become involved in the future of mediator qualifications and credentialing, this is your opportunity to have an impact. For more information contact MJ Redman at (253) 863-4722 or kredman1@comcast.net

2. **Outreach:** This team works with the various outreach functions of WMA.
3. **Newsletter:** The newsletter is published quarterly. We are always looking for articles and stories about mediation and our members.
4. **Bylaws Review:** WMA periodically goes through its bylaws to edit and update.
5. **Website:** Do you have website experience and expertise? We can use your help in expanding the capacities of the WMA website.

Do any of these interest you? Contact [Darrell Puls](#) if they do!

Elder Mediation: A Community Resource

By Andrea Vallee, Director of Mediation and Facilitation Services, Dispute Resolution Center of Skagit County



When communication is difficult and critical decisions are put on hold, families may need a neutral third party to help get them "unstuck" in their decision making. Elder Mediation is one solution to help families address major life transitions of the elderly and provides a forum for family centered decision-making.

Family issues that are appropriate for Elder Mediation include residence decisions, distribution of care giving responsibilities, safety and health concerns, wills and estates, and major life transitions that can result in painful and unrelenting conflict.

Like all mediation practices, Elder Mediation is private, confidential and completely voluntary. Mediation sessions can take place in senior living facilities if needed. Elder Mediation is a cooperative rather than adversarial process, so families are often able to repair their strained relationships. Because family members develop their own solutions, the satisfaction with the outcome is high and the resolutions tend to be workable and long lasting.

The goals of Elder Mediation are to allow families to create workable and mutually acceptable solutions to their difficult and oftentimes emotional disputes, and to develop communication strategies to enable families to successfully work together to make important decisions in the future. By participating in the mediation process, family members are able to control the outcome of their meeting. All family members, including elders, have an opportunity to be heard.

Mediators are skilled conflict resolution experts trained to listen actively, remain neutral, identify and separate issues, understand and redress power

invited to. ~Author
Unknown

Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned. ~Buddha

Malice drinks one-half of its own poison.
~Seneca

Consider how much more you often suffer from your anger and grief, than from those very things for which you are angry and grieved. ~Marcus Antonius

Contact Us

Editor: Darrell Puls

imbalances and identify when expert outside information is needed. Elder Mediation sessions often involve not just the family members, but appropriate allied professionals such as lawyers, geriatric care managers, healthcare providers, and financial planners.

Ideally, early intervention is the best approach to resolving family conflicts involving elder care and estate issues, before the family is in crisis and entrenched in conflict. When issues are avoided, disagreed upon, and ignored, they can result in fewer choices, financial loss, and emotional turmoil for the family. Working through these challenges in the mediation process can be an opportunity to preserve financial and familial well being.

To find Elder Mediation service providers in your area, visit the Resolution Washington website <http://www.resolutionwa.org/> and the Washington Mediation Association website <http://www.washingtonmediation.org/>.

New Mediator Certifications

Congratulations to the following 16 mediators who have recently been awarded WMA certification:

Region 1: Angela Montgomery

Region 2: Vivian Scott, Darcia Tudor, Debra Synovec, Jeffrey Bean, Patricia Colson, Joann Bromberg, Gary Steeves, John Schaffer, Rhonda Younker, Colleen McAuliffe, Gary Nacht, Steve Dennis

Region 5: Alex Case, Shelly Morford, Candace Sanders

WMA is pleased to announce that yet another mediation training provider has been pre-approved as meeting WMA training standards:

Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center
13 Prospect St.
Bellingham, WA 98225
Telephone: (360) 676-0122
Fax: (360) 676-0783
Email: Director@whatcomdrc.org

Vancouver Mediators Coming Together

By Dana Grayson

The Clark County Association of Mediators (CCAM), in WMA Region 5, is a newly-formed group of aspiring mediators, who, recognizing that the lack of awareness, not competition, is our greatest challenge, have concluded that we're far more likely to achieve success working together. Too new to even have a website or phone number (that will change soon!), for the moment goals include:

- Resource sharing:
 - local and toll-free phone line;
 - a non-government "go-to voice" for mediation services;
 - information-gathering, including statistics and reviewing other mediation models; and
 - networking, including connecting with the attorney community.
- Establishing a roster for Clark County family Superior Court:

- approaching the court as a group;
- recommending professional standards for providers (WMA-certified is the likely initial minimum);
- collaborating on developing joint processes, including consent to mediate/confidentiality agreement, domestic violence screening; and
- development of reporting consistency (including what will remain confidential).
- Investigating family mediation as a new offering for the Juvenile Justice System (which already provides a restorative justice program).
- Peer support:
 - sharing best-practices;
 - mentoring; and
 - training.
- Outreach:
 - advertising and public relations;
 - website and Association business cards ; and
 - presenting the benefits of mediation and conflict resolution skills to the local community, school and business organizations.

We view our efforts as complimentary to Vancouver Community Mediation Services, and even to our individual practices. Additionally, we embrace those who are volunteer professional mediators. Resurrecting the popular but now 3-year-old Southwest Washington Conflict Resolution Guide jointly with CMS is expected to be one of the first of many examples of how we will work together cooperatively in and for the community.

This is just the start. Expect to hear more from us soon!

We welcome the wisdom of our fellow WMA members who've established local mediation communities. For now, contact Geniece Brown via email at gensbrown@comcast.net or call (360) 892-2992.

2008-2009 WMA Board Members

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