

THE MIDDLE GROUND

WASHINGTON MEDIATION ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER Winter 2004

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WMA Welcomes ILCRG

WMA encourages organizations that provide mediation and alternative dispute resolution services to seek WMA practicum pre-approval.

We are pleased to tell you about the InterLocal Conflict Resolution Group (ILCRG), a WMA pre-approved practicum provider.

The ILCRG is a consortium of government agencies, labor unions and volunteer professionals that provide mediation and alternative dispute resolution services to its member organizations in western Washington at no cost.

King County and the King County Labor Council jointly formed the ILCRG in 1998. It is composed of nearly 70 governmental agencies and labor organizations

representing federal, state, county, municipal and educational employees from Vancouver to Bellingham. The ILCRG has over 100 member mediators.

The ILCRG offers its member organizations mediation, facilitation, group multi-party facilitation, collective bargaining impasse mediation, mediation-arbitration, and customized dispute resolution services.



Become a WMA Sponsor

Want to support WMA and advertise your business? Then consider becoming a WMA Sponsor. WMA sponsors are listed on WMA's website and in the Middle Ground, WMA's newsletter published electronically four times per year and in hard copy once per year.

Sponsor listings include the sponsor's name, type of product or service provided, and contact information (email or web site address). Cost for a one-year sponsorship is \$100. For more information, contact washingtonmediationassociation@comcast.net.

President's Letter

As we review this newsletter prior to going to press, we can't help but be struck by the number and variety of activities WMA members are involved in. Our members are active, dedicated and enthusiastic professionals who have made WMA a leader in Washington State in promoting mediation as a sane and sensible way to resolve disputes.

It's a very exciting time for mediation in Washington. Everywhere we look, organizations are turning toward mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution to address community, employment and personal conflicts. We're pleased to be supporting an organization whose members strive for positive change.

WMA will continue to provide its members with opportunities to get involved in the business of promoting mediation as an effective form of alternative dispute resolution in our State. We encourage you to continue your efforts on behalf of mediation.

About WMA

The Washington Mediation Association (WMA) is a non-profit organization of mediators and people interested in promoting mediation as a dispute resolution process in the State of Washington. WMA was founded in 1982 and works to define, develop and promote mediation as an effective process for resolving disputes in Washington State.

WMA actively promotes professional standards of practice, certifies members' qualifications and approves member organizations' practicum training programs. WMA promotes regional and statewide forums for professional dialogue, training and continuing mediator education, and facilitates research and evaluation in the theory and practice of mediation.

Benefits of WMA membership include: mediator certification and the marketplace credibility that it provides; the visibility of inclusion in WMA's web site mediator directory, Find a Mediator; reduced rates on professional liability insurance provided through WMA; five issues of WMA's newsletter, The Middle Ground containing information on issues critical to the practice of mediation in Washington State; participation in WMA's Mediator/Mentor program with its network of professional mediator mentors; and much more.

Membership dues are \$50 per year. For additional information on WMA membership go to <http://www.washingtonmediation.org>.

Membership Challenge

Spurred on by Membership Chair Madeline Kardong, WMA's Board has committed to increasing membership by 50% in two years. The Board has adopted a four-point plan to promote membership that encourages working with groups such as Resolution Washington and the ILCRG to promote the advantages of WMA membership.

What can you do to help? Share your energy, enthusiasm and passion. Network. Start a dialog. Contact potential members in your community. Share your ideas. Write an article for our e-Newsletter or website. Attend regional meetings. Donate your home or office space for a regional meeting/event. Hold fund-raisers. We can reach this goal if we work together. Are you up to the challenge?



Web Site Redesigned

Have you seen WMA's web site? If not, check it out at <http://www.washingtonmediation.org>. You'll immediately notice its crisp personable look. And you're sure to enjoy the navigation and features, including WMA Newsletter download and eNewsletter sign-up capabilities.



eNewsletter a Success!

WMA's Middle Ground is also electronic! Why electronic? We can get more information to you, quicker and more cost effectively than with a hard copy newsletter. Members love the eNewsletter and really like the choice of reading an entire article or just its summary, reports Newsletter editor Sue Pivetta. To receive a printed or electronic copy of the eNewsletter, contact Kari Jacobson at PMB #1095, 1122 E. Pike Street, Seattle, WA 98122-3934.

Education Committee to Support CME

The Education Committee, under the leadership of Rebecca Daniels, is developing, evaluating and promoting continuing mediator education (CME) and training. Currently each region is talking the lead in providing no cost CME opportunities to its members. Rebecca's committee would like to combine education and outreach advocacy while supporting regional initiatives. If you are interested in participating in this exciting project, please contact Rebecca at larsonconsults@aol.com.

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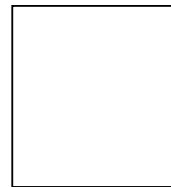
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WMA Asked to Lobby

WMA has been asked by the City of Seattle to support their effort to build a coalition to amend the State's Public Disclosure Act to exempt government mediation — intake, the mediation process and all mediation records except the final settlement agreement — from the disclosure provisions of that statute. Seattle is currently researching the issue with an eye toward proposing an amendment during the 2005 legislative session. Your comments are welcome.

Certification Process Streamlined

WMA's Certification Committee reports that the certification process has become easier and faster for those wishing to obtain or renew their certification. "Now members can count on having their applications turned around within 30 days provided they submit all required documentation," reports Qualifications Chair Laura Pierson.

WMA Board actions allow members to move between active and inactive status easily. As reported in November's e-Newsletter, the Board has removed the liability insurance requirement for certification, although it encourages all WMA mediators to have liability insurance coverage. WMA has arranged affordable liability insurance coverage for its members through Complete Equity Markets. For information contact bthomas@cemins.com.

Regional Opportunities

Do you want to get more actively involved in WMA activities? WMA's Regional network is busy sharing best practices, partnering with community and professional organizations, sponsoring educational workshops and forums, lobbying legislators, mentoring new mediators practitioner, and having fun. For more information, contact your regional representative. Regional representatives are listed at <http://www.washingtonmediation.org/board.html>.