



The Mediator

February 2006

PARENT-TEEN PROGRAM OPENS DOORS TO SCHOOL COLLABORATIONS

Good things are happening as we explore ways to develop our Parent-Teen Mediation Program. In promoting the program to area schools, we found that several are interested in reviving or starting peer mediation programs. Staff and volunteer meetings with faculty have resulted in CMS involvement with three schools:

Thurston High

CMS is scheduled to present two "intro to mediation" classes this month. Faculty wants to implement a peer mediation program by next year. Our classes are designed to give students a basic understanding of mediation and, hopefully, get them excited about it. If response is positive, CMS may conduct a retreat this spring or summer to train several students as mediators for their in-school program and, hopefully, as volunteers at CMS.

Jefferson Middle

Miriam is doing a 2-day, 8-hour training for 30-40 students. We plan to follow up with weekly debriefing meetings for the students and set up a program with CMS mediators acting as on-going coaches and mentors for the students as they develop their peer mediation program.

The Village School (grades 1-8)

We are collaborating and providing information and training for a new peer mediation program. Miriam is scheduled to do a presentation to the staff this month.

We are excited about these pilot programs. Staff is spending time and energy to develop relationships with faculty, as well as develop or find existing curricula appropriate for the various grade levels. We are hoping that these collaborations lead to more in-school training opportunities. Also, by establishing credibility and recognition with schools, we hope they will refer clients to our Parent-Teen Mediation services. Our contact with students will also be valuable in recruiting teens to volunteer as CMS mediators.

This program is just getting off the ground; we will need more volunteers to co-teach and coach in the schools. We will be holding meetings of interested volunteers soon. **If you want to get involved, call Miriam at 344-5366.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Restorative Justice and Victim Offender Mediation Training

April 22 and 23, 2006
8:30 am – 5 pm

The training is designed for people volunteering as mediators through CMS, but it is open to anyone wanting to learn more about restorative justice practices and conflict resolution for harm related cases.

Mediator's Roundtable

Fourth Monday each month,
4:30 – 6 pm

We are proud to make available the CMS conference room for this monthly gathering of mediators in the community. Come share stories, ask questions, offer insights, and be inspired by colleagues from various realms. Snacks often provided.

769 Monroe Street
Eugene, OR 97402
541.344.5366
Fax 541.687.8392
mediate@efn.org

RIDING OFF INTO THE SUNSET

I have informed the Board that I will be resigning from my position as Executive Director at CMS as of July 2006.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with everyone at CMS. I learned a great deal about how a non-profit operates, how staff performs wondrous amounts of work on a limited budget, and how volunteers always come through when you ask them.

Just as vital to me has been my education about mediation and communication. The training and workshops I attended taught me much about how to deal with people more effectively. How to listen, how to be heard, how to be nonjudgmental and more patient are lessons that will go with me through life. I thank the staff and volunteer mediators for their patience in teaching me some of the nuances of the craft of conflict resolution.

The next chapter of my life will be spent mostly remodeling a house on the Umpqua River. Watching wildlife, walking dogs, counting fish and turkeys and deer. And using my newfound skills to coordinate and encourage a group of folks to turn a really funky abode into something that feels like home.

I'm going to be around for the short term, and the staff and I will be working on a couple of great projects through this winter and spring. We'll be asking for your support on these. Also the Board is beginning their search for my replacement, so please pass the word on if you know of anyone who would be interested.

Warm regards,
Betsy Ford

What ever happened to the Motto Contest?

"... and the winner is -- nobody yet"

Last fall, several volunteers and staff submitted creative mottos. At the November Board retreat about 15 entries were viewed, critiqued, edited and debated. The final decision? There was no consensus, no overwhelming majority, no inspired unified agreement, no 'aha!' moment.

And just so everyone who entered knows . . . we are still working on it.

STAFF

Betsy Ford

Executive Director

Ted Lewis

*Manager of both the
Restorative Justice Program
and Human Rights Program*

Donna Goswick

*Community Dispute Program
Co-Manager and
Restorative Justice Specialist*

Miriam Edell

*Community Dispute Program
Co-Manager,
UO Student Mediator
Supervisor, and
Parent-Teen Coordinator*

PRAISE FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS

Betsy & CMS Staff,

I want to share with you a wonderful experience I had at a recent mediation held at CMS. I had the good fortune to be an observer of a mediation that was co-mediated by Pat Vallerand & Carolyn Goss. What an exemplary job they did during those two hours! Adhering to my agreement of confidentiality, I am limited to say that they modeled the co-mediation paradigm as well as I've ever observed.

If this is any indication of the quality of mediators coming out of your trainings, then keep on doing the good work!

With appreciation,

David Gubernick

CMS Mediator '97 – present
CMS Board Member '98-'99

MENTORS ARE READY TO GO

by Keli Osborn

A mentorship program pairing CMS mediators with one another is ready to launch. Established to facilitate training of new volunteer mediators and help assure quality and consistency of mediation services, the mentorship program also will provide an opportunity for all CMS volunteer mediators to improve skills.

As described in an earlier CMS newsletter, a committee of staff and volunteers, including CMS Board representation, has created a framework for this new, exciting effort. The program's foundation includes draft standards for CMS volunteer mediators, which still must be adopted by the CMS Board of Directors. The guidelines describe the CMS mediation approach as facilitative and emphasize that our mediation services are voluntary and that mediators remain neutral. One of several key concepts, the committee recommends, is that CMS mediators are committed to helping create and maintain an atmosphere that is respectful, courteous, safe and comfortable for all participants.

As this program gets off the ground, more experienced CMS mediators will be matched with newer mediators. The commitment mentors make is to observe "protégés" in mediation and provide feedback, and to be available before and after mediation sessions for consultation, as well. Like other kinds of mentors, the CMS version takes on the role of supporter and coach -- someone in the newer mediator's corner.

Committee members helping staff (primarily program Coordinator, Miriam Edell) develop this program have included: Eric Watkins, River Kennedy, Carolyn Goss, Keli Osborn, Tim Brewer, Allen Kluber and David Gubernick. For more information, contact any one of these colleagues. To be paired with a mentor, contact Miriam or Donna at 344-5366.

Volunteers – Share your stories

If you have a mediation-related story you would like to share via our newsletter, give us a call. Or just send it to us for inclusion in an upcoming issue. Of course, we'll honor the issues of confidentiality about all we print.

LOOK THAT UP IN YOUR FUNK & WAGNALLS!

by Miriam Edell

Most of you reading this newsletter have a clear understanding of why we call ourselves mediators. For those of you who may be new to this idea, here is a brief explanation of various types of conflict resolution.

LITIGATION is a 'rights based' form of conflict resolution involving lawyers and a judge to make the final decision based on the law. In this type system the participants may never speak directly to each other regarding the issue. However, in litigation the decision may be overturned or sent to another court.

ARBITRATION is also a 'rights based' method of solving problems where participants agree to abide by the decision of a third party who makes decisions based on the law. The participants tell their story to the arbitrator. The decision of the arbitrator is legally binding and does not go back to court to be decided. Arbitration may or may not include lawyers.

NEGOTIATION is an 'interest based' process of conflict resolution where tactics used by the negotiators intend to convince and sway the other side to see and respond to the interests of their parties. The participants do not, necessarily, speak to each other.

MEDIATION is an 'interest based' form of conflict resolution where the participants are encouraged and helped to speak directly to each other with the aid of one or more mediators. In the mediation, participants are encouraged to listen and understand the perspective of the other person. Mediated agreements may be made into legally binding documents.

In RJP, Meaningful Accountability Is Based On Learning

By Ted Lewis

A recent vandalism case involving stolen road signs and mail theft showed how an offender's accountability must start with a true understanding of impacts. In the resolution meeting, the victim party from the City of Eugene described the risks caused by the removal of certain road signs. The mail theft victim submitted a letter explaining the hassles she had experienced. In reply the youth wrote:

"When the ordeal with the police happened, I still was not thinking I had done anything wrong. It wasn't until I got in [RJP] and started to talk about it and get info I had never even contemplated over what I had done. I had not thought of the stress that I put upon you. I now fully realize that such crimes have not only had consequences on me, but on you and others as well."

A graffiti case showed how a restorative process aims to reconnect offenders to their own communities. One teen, after meeting with the security manager of a local business, wrote this in an apology letter:

"You, as the victim, must have felt confused as to why someone would [spray words] and must have been upset that your building was vandalized. In the future, I plan to think about something before doing it, and to never take feelings out on a person or on things that don't belong to me ... I want to set things right and have learned that stupid acts have consequences."

The hope is that as both of these offenders continue to make amends through community service and restitution payments, their motivation will involve a mindfulness of the victims. At the same time, their agreements reconnect them to the community in positive ways.

One way RJP helped with this reconnection was to invite a college-aged artist to be a community member in a graffiti case. At a final meeting, a top supervisor from Eugene Public Works was also present. Two hours of conversation led to a full time of both sides trying to understand where the other side was coming from.

The youth described his clandestine activities with his "crew" and explained how getting caught was part of the cycle of things he was willing to bear. For the most part he held his ground, justifying his activity. But as the two community members spoke about the differences between expressing yourself in ways that either harmonize or put you at odds with the community, the youth slowly took in new perspectives to consider.

In the end he determined his willingness to do 100 hours of service work to offset the cleaning costs for his own tagging. More importantly, the artist was open to helping the youth connect with some art-making opportunities, so that he could do his work "100%" without having to look over his shoulder. Since then, another local artist has offered the youth studio space and a chance to do some theatrical set painting for pay.

Once again, it is vital to allow offenders, victims and community members to have full conversation about an offense and its resolution. Resulting from this is relationship-motivated accountability for offenders, healing and closure for victims, and the rebuilding of trust within the community. And helping to make these encounters happen in good ways is a team of great CMS volunteers: the vertebrae of this agency's backbone.

POLICE PROCEDURAL

On January 11th, CMS volunteers spoke to officers of the Eugene Police Department at each of their shift briefings about what mediation is and how they might utilize CMS as a resource.

The five volunteers (Alan Kluber, David Gubernick, Phil Moses, Eric Watkins, and Jane Yates) met with CMS staff prior to the briefings to develop materials for a 5-10 minute presentation. The goal was to remind officers to refer cases for mediation and to clarify for them what is appropriate to refer, as well as to answer any questions they had.

All the presenters had very positive feedback on their experiences as well as great ideas for improving future briefings. We will do this 3-4 times a year to keep EPD officers up-to-date.

One of the ideas a presenter had was to go back and speak to the EPD dispatchers and call-takers, as well. That plan is currently in progress, and we are planning to act on it in March. Let us know if you want to be among the presenters then or in the future.

We are also trying to get permission to present to Springfield Police and Lane County Sheriff's Department (without a lot of response from either). If you have a contact there and are willing to help get us in the door, let Retsv know

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are the backbone of CMS. In many service agencies, volunteers are support people — helping staff with chores like stuffing envelopes, answering phones, and providing services to clients.

At CMS the staff supports the volunteers — providing the needed scheduling and administrative work to our mediators who are the front line in providing mediation services to our community.

We thank you and want you to know that we work to increase the opportunities for you to mediate and educate the public about dispute resolution. We are working for you, and we appreciate your feedback, ideas and support. We want you to participate in running this agency and making it work.

Alan Leiman	David Green	Keith Semple	Pat Vallerand
Alison Lewis	David Thompson	Keli Osborn	Phil Moses
Allan Kluber	David Gubernick	Ken Durrell	River Kennedy
Bernie Murphy	Doug Hennessy	Kirsten Gregg	Robert O'Connor
Beth Little	Elaine Phillips	Kristen Welborn	Rosie Finklestein
Bob Friedman	Elaine Williams	Laura Yergan	Sara Wasserman
Bobbie Cirel	Eric Swallow	Libby Brady	Serena DeVos
Breyer Patterson	Eric Watkins	Lou Favreau	Shelby Davis-Cooper
Caitlan Hendrickson	Eve Terran	Lyn Cordell	Sherisa Aguirre
Carole Stiles	Frank Wiley	Maggie Sjostrom	Sondra Zemansky
Carolyn Goss	Jada Prane	Marilyn Nelson	Sue Ewers
Charlie Larson	Jane Yates	Marilyn Olson	Suzan Dawe
Chere Pray	Janese Olalde	Maya Balenz	Teresa Adams
Cheryl Roffe	Jeff Faust	Megan Argo	Terry Leary
Chuck Tilby	Jerry Casby	Melissa Crabbe	Tim Brewer
Connie Burden	John Bergland	Mickael Mann	Tom Turner
Dan Stein	Kathryn Mogstad	Pablo Valentine	Tristan Smith

Did You Know ...

- Historically some cultures regarded the mediator as a sacred figure for their knowledge in peaceful resolutions.
- Confucius believed that the best way to resolve a dispute was through moral persuasion and agreement rather than coercion.
- In Africa any disputant may call for an informal neighborhood assembly called a moot. A respected member of the community serves as a mediator to help parties resolve conflicts cooperatively.

Please join us in our commitment to create a more peaceful community.

**Yes! I would like to tangibly support conflict resolution in my community,
and enclosed is my gift to Community Mediation Services toward that end.**

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$20 Other: \$ _____

All donations are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to:
"Community Mediation Services"
and send to: 769 Monroe Eugene, OR 97402

Did you know that you can also contribute to CMS through United Way by designating your contribution?

WHO'S ON BOARD?

The CMS Board of Directors provides direction and inspiration to the agency. They spend a lot of time on the nitty-gritty nuts and bolts—and tackle the practical challenges that face any non-profit agency. They are often behind the scenes—here's who they are and the roles they play in our community.

TIM BREWER, Chair

Attorney, Legal Adoption Services

MELISSA CRABBE, Vice Chair

Inside Out Prison Exchange Program
*(establishes partnerships between colleges
and correctional systems)*

BERNIE MURPHY, Treasurer

CPA and corporate financial officer

MARILYN NELSON, Secretary

Administrator, Eugene Municipal Court

PHIL MOSES - CADRE *(mediates and offers technical assistance to
special education mediation systems throughout the country)*

RIVER KENNEDY - Owner, Terra Firma Botanicals

CHUCK TILBY - Captain, Eugene Police Dept.

BETH LITTLE - Gen. Manager, Saturday Market

CAROLE STILES - VP, Programs and Services Holt International

ALAN LEIMAN - Attorney and Eugene Municipal Court Judge

Community Mediation Services

769 Monroe
Eugene, OR 97402

Check out our new website! www.communitymediationservices.com

Please call 344-5366 or email mediate@efn.org to let us know if...

- You want to be taken off the CMS mailing list or
- You have a preference of receiving newsletters via e-mail.