

CONNECTING THE VIRGINIA MEDIATION COMMUNITY

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY MONE' ARDURA

Dear Virginia Mediation Network Members:

As we move into 2015, I wanted to share with you some administrative changes within the organization and to remind you to renew your 2015 VMN membership.



If you have visited the VMN website recently you may have noticed that we have a new phone number and email and mailing addresses. This is part of an administrative shift that the organization is undergoing that I and the Board of Directors anticipate will serve our membership better.

VMN's new phone number: 571-399-8660

VMN's new e-mail address: virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com

VMN's New Address: Virginia Mediation Network
P.O. Box 29007
Richmond, Virginia 23242

You also should have received an email in your "in box" and a postcard in your mail box about **renewing your VMN membership**. You can go to our website, vamediation.org, and renew online or you can renew by mail. If you did not receive the email, please check your "Spam" folder as it might have ended up there. If not, please contact us so we can get your membership renewal information to you.

Our **Spring Conference** will have a new look as we move to a **series of regional meetings** at eight locations around the state between March 1 and March 31, 2015. There will be a 2-hour DVD/live workshop entitled "*Challenges in Running a Mediation Practice: Logistics, Ethics & Getting Down to Business*". The workshop has been approved by DRS for 2 Hours of Ethics CMEs. There will also be an opportunity to network with your colleagues. The workshop will only be \$10 for VMN members (\$60 for non-members) so make sure you have renewed your VMN membership.

**Shop to
Benefit VMN!**
Shop Amazon.com
this year and benefit
VMN!

[Click HERE](#) and start
[shopping!](#)

4% of your sales will
go back to VMN at
no additional
cost to you.

You can even shop
at Target through
Amazon!!

The VMN conference committee is still planning a 2 to 3-day conference for fall 2015 and we'll have more information on that program as it becomes available.

You might notice that we are trying something new with the newsletter. While the newsletter itself is the same format, we are introducing a "Newsletter Highlights" which allows you to read a bit about each story and then click on a link for the full story. You still can download the full newsletter to read at your leisure. Let us know what you think.

Thank you for being a part of the Virginia Mediation Network and we hope to see you soon.

Mone' Ardura

VMN President



DON'T BREAK OUR HEART!!!!

Please give yourself a Valentine's Day treat and renew your VMN annual membership for 2015.

In return for satisfying your sweet tooth, you will receive delicious training opportunities, yummy representation to the legislature and luscious networking opportunities. Join NOW!

Membership categories are:

Enhanced \$175.00

Basic \$125.00

Student \$50.00

[Click here to renew your Membership](#) online or go to www.vamediation.org to print your Membership Application and mail to:

Virginia Mediation Network

P.O. Box 29007

Henrico, VA 23242

VMN Launching Regional Mini-Conferences this Spring at a Special Member Cost

The Virginia Mediation Network is rolling out a new idea this spring. Instead of a day-long conference, VMN will be hosting two “mini-conferences” which will be held throughout the state. And the pre-registration cost for VMN members will be only \$10 (\$60 for non-members).

The first set of meetings will launch this March at eight locations around the state with a program entitled “Challenges in Running a Mediation Practice: Logistics, Ethics and Getting Down to Business”. The 2-hour workshop has been approved by Dispute Resolution Services for 2.0 Hours of Ethics Continuing Mediator Education credits.

According to Brenda Waugh, VMN Board member and Program Chair, “the session will involve a 90-minute video of a panel of presenters from across the state followed by a 30-minute live discussion led by the site host. “ She adds that there will be social/networking opportunities at each site.

Marshall Yoder, a Harrisonburg Collaborative Lawyer/Mediator, will facilitate the discussion along with panelists and VMN members Robert Carpenter, Karen Richards, and Brenda Waugh who will discuss business planning, finances and marketing issues and how to “grow” a business while complying with the ethical requirements for mediators. VMN President Mone’ Ardura will provide the opening remarks.

Here are the locations for the March regional “mini-conferences”:

- **Warrenton – March 12, 2015** – 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm at the Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center – Host: Lawrie Parker
- **Fairfax – March 23, 2015** – 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm at Northern Virginia Mediation Center – Host: Mone' Ardura
- **Harrisonburg – March 24, 2015** – 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at Eastern Mennonite University—Host: Brenda Waugh
- **Virginia Beach – March 25, 2015** – 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the M.E. Oberndorf Central Library – Host: Karen Richards
- **Richmond – March 27, 2015** – 11:30 am to 3:00 pm at the Oliver Hill Courts Building – Host: Jennifer Phillips, **Note:** No Onsite Registration for this location.
- **Winchester – March 27, 2015** – 9:00 am to 11:30 am at Winchester Medical Center— Host: Theresa Merkel
- **Roanoke – March 30, 2015** - 11:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Hollins Branch Library – Host: Brenda Waugh

Pre-registration is required by **March 6, 2015**. After that time, onsite registration will be \$20 for VMN members and \$80 for non-members. The second series of “mini-conferences” will be held mid-June to mid-July with a general/family-based topic. More information on these meetings will be available in March.



REGISTER NOW

A Look Back at the VMN 2014 Fall Conference

Nearly 100 people gathered at the beautiful Wyndham Virginia Crossings Hotel and Conference Center in Glen Allen, Va. for the Virginia Mediation Network's 2014 Fall Conference and Annual Meeting.

Plenary speaker Robert Rhudy, J.D., opened the weekend with an interesting presentation and panel discussion on "Engaging Conflict for Fun and Profit: Current and Emerging Career Trends in Conflict Resolution" which was based on research and interviews he has conducted with mediators around the country. Joining him for the panel discussion were Juliana Birkhoff, Ph.D., a long-time mediator, facilitator and trainer in the public and private sector, and Jayne Docherty, Ph.D., Eastern Mennonite University Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution Professor.



VMN was honored to have Professor Robert O'Neill, LL.B., as the keynote speaker, who spoke about his years of experience with alternative dispute resolution (ADR) from his initial encounter with Roger Fisher and Frank Sander as a Harvard Law student to exploring ADR as chair of Virginia's "Future's Commission," the first state commission on the future of its judicial system. He has also been the director of the Ford Foundation's Difficult Dialogues as an application of new approaches to meeting campus tensions over issues such as race, religion, sexual orientation, and immigration.

The final plenary speaker on Sunday morning was Margaret Kimbrell of the organization "No Labels" which has been working with government leaders on the national and state level, encouraging them to "work across the aisle".



Participants also experienced a variety of workshops from learning about elder mediation and employment law mediations to gaining greater self-awareness through the use of the Enneagram and learning about powerful listening techniques and the importance of interest-based mediation.



During the Annual Meeting for members Jeannette Twomey was awarded the Distinguished Mediator Award. Members also voted on changes to the organization's By-Laws and heard a report from the Mediator Compensation Task Force.



Jeannette Twomey Receives Distinguished Mediator Award

Congratulations to Jeannette Twomey who received the Distinguished Mediator Award at the Virginia Mediation Network (VMN)'s 2014 Annual Fall Training Conference held in the Glen Allen/Richmond area September 27-28, 2014.

Jeannette Twomey, J.D., is a mediator, consultant and conflict resolution trainer and is a principal in the firm, MediationWorks, located in Vienna, Virginia. She has provided alternative dispute resolution services since 1992 and has pioneered the use of elder mediation in Northern Virginia, advocating its use before the Fairfax and Loudoun County Agencies on Aging, the ProAging Network, the Mid-Atlantic Association of Geriatric Care Managers, the Fairfax County Trust and Estates and Elder Law Bar, Sunrise Senior Living, Inova Health Source, the Virginia Chapter of Social Workers in Aging, Northern Virginia Long-term Care Ombudsmen, and Virginia Elder Rights and Guardianship Conference. She has been instrumental in developing the concept of telephone and online family conferencing for the non-profit organization, Caring From a Distance.



Past president of Northern Virginia Mediation Service's Board of Directors, she is member of the Virginia State Bar, the Virginia Mediation Network, ACR's Section on Elder Mediation, and the National Eldercare Mediator Network. Jeannette is certified by the Judicial Council of Virginia to mediate court cases and train apprentice mediators. She regularly teaches courses in basic mediation skills, conflict resolution, and mediator ethics. Jeannette also has been the facilitator of the popular VMN "Book Zone" programs. She is a member of the Virginia Supreme Court's Advisory Committee for Dispute Resolution Services and an Adjunct Professor at American University's Washington College of Law.

VMN's Distinguished Mediator Award recognizes a prominent member of the mediation community in Virginia who demonstrates personal and professional commitment to advancing peaceful conflict resolution. VMN recognizes recipients for one or more of the following qualities:

- leadership in promoting and advancing the field of mediation;
- innovation in the development of mediation programs or creative applications of mediation;
- significant published writings on the subject of mediation;
- exemplary pro bono mediation service;
- cutting-edge advanced mediation training; or problem solving.

Recipients must exemplify personal and professional integrity and respect for others, as well as demonstrated commitment to continuing growth of high quality mediation in the Commonwealth of Virginia.



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Results & Recommendations from the Mediator Compensation Task Force

The Mediator Compensation Task Force (MCTF) presented its final report at the 2014 Virginia Mediation Network (VMN) Annual Meeting on the feasibility of advocating the Virginia General Assembly for an increase in mediator compensation for court-referred cases. Subsequently, the MCTF was asked by the VMN Board of Directors for a recommendation for the organization's next steps.



The MCTF has recommended that the Virginia Mediation Network (VMN) and its Board of Directors move forward in pursuing with the General Assembly an increase in mediator compensation for court-referred mediations.

However, the MCTF recognizes that the current legislative climate and state budget shortfalls would make a request for increased compensation a “difficult sell” at this time and suggests that, to be successful, this effort will need to wait for at least a year or two until the climate is “right”.

The MCTF also sees the collaborative effort between VMN, the Virginia Association of Community Conflict Resolution (VACCR) and Mark Rubin of Virginia Commonwealth University's Virginia Center for Consensus Building to train state legislators in facilitating conflict discussions as an important step in setting the stage for VMN's future engagement with the legislature on the compensation issue.

The Task Force is also supportive of a survey being implemented by Dispute Resolution Services that could provide important data to support the total services and efforts expended by mediators for the Commonwealth's courts.

In its September 27, 2014 report to the VMN membership, the MCTF reported that it met via phone conference call five times from March – September 2014 and has:

- Researched and written a summary of how the present system of mediator compensation in Virginia came into being.
- Developed a 9-page questionnaire for use during phone interviews with the southeastern State ADR Court Coordinators about how their court mediation programs are structured and how mediator compensation is handled. MCTF members contacted ADR court coordinators and judges in seven southeastern states including Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. The information from those surveys was then compiled into a synopsis report for each state.
- Created and conducted a survey sent to all Virginia Certified Mediators regarding the issue of mediator compensation.

In the report conclusions, the MCTF believes that advocating with the General Assembly for an increase in mediator compensation will be a multi-year, multi-prong process and require significant effort by the VMN membership. This process will include:

- Developing a strategy and timeline for approaching the General Assembly, taking into consideration the state budget cycle as well as the current budgetary challenges facing Virginia;
- Coalition building with other organizations with similar interests;

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- Relationship Building and Education of state legislators about the importance and value of mediation in Virginia, and;
- Determining any financial and personnel costs associated with pursuing this process.

The VMN Board of Directors wishes to thank Task Force members for their hard work in 2014 and willingness to continue their discussions in 2015 on this important issue.

2014 Task Force Members

Co-Chairs:

Lawrie Parker, VMN Board and Legislative Committee Chair

Karen Richards, VMN Board and Communications Committee Chair

VMN Membership:

Kathy Burns

Bob Carpenter

Charles Osterhoudt

Andrea Young

Vickie Williams

VMN Board:

Past President Jennifer Phillips

President Mone Rowan-Ardura

Treasurer Skip Mertz

Secretary Galloway Beck

Conference Co-Chair Karen Asaro

Dispute Resolution Services, Supreme Court of Virginia:

Sally Campbell

Mandy Sarkissian

Virginia Association for Community Conflict Resolution:

Christine Poulson

Passings.....

It is with great sadness that the mediation community mourns the passing of John Curry, VMN member, who died suddenly on February 1, 2015 in Waynesboro.

John served as a Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Judge for 23 years. He has been described as a compassionate judge who was a tireless advocate for young people. He worked to promote restorative justice practices in his court room - wanting to help solve problems rather than simply meting out harsh sentences.

After retiring from the bench in 2003, John founded Blue Ridge Mediation where he provided mediation services to the community until his death. During his tenure on VMN's Board, John served as chair of the Legislative Committee. He was encouraged by the recent work of the Mediator Compensation Task Force because of his deeply held beliefs in the value mediators add to Virginia's Court System.

John is survived by his wife, Theresa, three daughters, and four grandchildren. As John's daughter Rachael has said, John "would want everyone to celebrate his life ...and what a life he led!

Karen Asaro, VMN Board of Directors



Members Approve By-Laws Changes at Annual Meeting

Virginia Mediation Network members at the September 27, 2014 Annual Meeting approved three changes to the organization's by-laws:

- The President and President-Elect now may hold those offices no more than two consecutive terms. Previously the President and President-Elect could only hold those offices for one consecutive term. (Article VI, Section 4)
- The President-Elect now is not required to also hold the office of Conference Chair and will handle other appropriate duties as assigned by the President and/or Board. (Article VII, Section 2)
- The Chair of the Conference Planning Committee will be elected from the organization's Board of Directors. (Article VIII, Section 1a)

The Board's reasoning for these changes was to provide continuity in key leadership positions and to separate the dual "hats" of President-Elect and Conference Planning Chair because of the time-consuming nature of conference planning followed immediately by taking on the Presidency of the organization.

All VMN members received notice of the By-Laws changes 30 days prior to the September 27, 2014 meeting.

If you would like a full copy of the organization's By-Laws go to www.vamediation.org to download a copy.

Free Virginia Child Support Calculator and Apps Available

VMN Member Danny Burk has developed a free, online website for child support calculations and he demonstrated it at the VMN Fall Conference. The site, www.VaSupportCalc.com, uses the up-to-date Virginia Child Support Guideline Statute (§20-108.2) as amended by the Virginia General Assembly effective July 1, 2014.

It works with any browser so Windows PCs, Android phones and tablets, Chromebooks, Macintoshes, iPhones and iPads can access it. Mediators can run “what if” scenarios and can encourage their clients to use it (once the mediator has taught them how to use it, Danny says).

Since the fall there have been several improvements to the website in response to input from VMN members. The website requires Internet access which can be a problem in some courts/buildings. So in response to VMN member suggestions, he has developed an app for Android phones and an app for iPhones and iPads. These apps are available in the respective app stores.

These applications do not require any Internet access (either WiFi or phone data) once downloaded. The apps allow mediators to email the calculation results (but that email would, of course, require Internet access). According to Danny, the two phone applications have a price tag (\$3.99) because of the cost of providing them in the app stores. (The website is free to the public, although donations are requested so the site and technology can be maintained.)

If you have any questions about any of these three resources, please contact Danny Burk at dan@resolutionpoint.com or 703-668-0344.



It's time to renew your Virginia Mediation Network Membership.

VMN, as the largest statewide mediation organization, is the voice for professional mediators in Virginia. VMN membership can significantly enhance your marketability as a mediator.

Choose the Basic, Enhanced, or Student Membership and see how VMN can benefit your practice today.

[Click here to Renew your Membership Today!](#)