

CONNECTING THE VIRGINIA MEDIATION COMMUNITY

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY MONÉ ARDURA

As I look and see the changing colors of the leaves, I think about all the changes at VMN over the year and how VMN is leading the way in making positive changes in our community.



- **Mini-conferences:** This new format has received great feedback. The membership has enjoyed the ability to network locally with fellow professionals while also continuing to improve skills and obtaining necessary continuing education credits. Thank you to all those involved in making the two mini-conferences successful! We are planning on continuing and expanding this format. Anyone interested in getting involved, please let us know.
- **Going green** with the conference materials, newsletter, and membership information: This continues to not only help the environment, but has saved VMN both time and money. The membership has been very receptive to these changes.
- **New faces:** Over the past year, board member Paula Young got an opportunity to spread her wings over to Qatar, so she stepped down from the board, and VMN got the opportunity to have Izabela Solosi join the VMN board (see page 5). We are excited to have her in a leadership position and look forward to having you all meet and work with her in the coming year.
- **The Mediator Compensation Task Force:** This group continues the quest to increase mediator compensation in court-referred cases. Check out their latest news on page 4.
- **The website:** The board continues to look at ways to improve the VMN website and make it user-friendly, accessible and current for the members. If you have any interest or thoughts about how to improve the website, please let us know.
- **Administrative Changes:** VMN has entered into a new administrative relationship with Jeanne Mann. Over this past year, Jeanne has helped VMN streamline many of our programs and continues to assist the board in helping to make VMN work efficiently and effectively for the membership.

It is has been my pleasure to serve such a group of hard-working, thoughtful and experienced professionals who are committed to peaceful conflict resolution.

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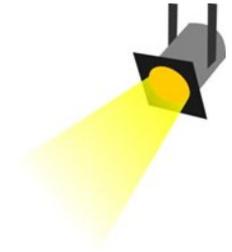


Moné Ardura, Virginia Mediation Network President

Don't Forget to Register for VMN's Fall Conference
"Creativity in Mediation"
October 16-18, 2015

University of Richmond School of Law

All workshops approved for Continuing Mediator Education (CME credits)



VMN Fall Conference Spotlight:

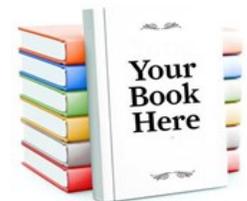
UVA Law Professor Greg Mitchell and his Plenary Workshop

University of Virginia Law Professor Greg Mitchell will be the Saturday morning plenary speaker. His two-hour presentation, "The Danger of Closed Minds, and How to Avoid Them," will look at how to avoid common biases that might arise during mediation. It has been approved for 2.0 hours of General/Family CME credits.

Professor Mitchell has both a law degree and a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of California, Berkeley, and taught at Florida State University before joining the UVA Law faculty in 2006. The University of Virginia recognized Professor Mitchell's classroom efforts with an All-University Teaching Award in 2014.

The Joseph Weintraub-Bank of America Distinguished Professor of Law, Professor Mitchell teaches advanced seminars in law and psychology, as well as complex civil litigation and other topics. His scholarship focuses on legal judgment and decision-making, the psychology of justice, and the application of social science to legal theory and policy.

Check out the [conference brochure](#) for many other creative and topical workshops available at the conference.



New Feature: Join Us for the Book Swap

This year we are excited to announce an Annual Book Exchange. Please bring some of your gently used Mediation titles to exchange with other members and take home a few different ones for your enjoyment. There will be a cash bar and light hors d'oeuvres served from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. in the Atrium of the T.C. Williams School of Law at the University of Richmond.

Early registration will be available at that time.



Mark Your Calendars:

VMN Annual Member Meeting – Saturday, October 17 – 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

The Virginia Mediation Network will hold its annual membership/business meeting during the VMN Fall Conference. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 17, 2015, from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m.

The VMN Board of Directors has approved and will present the following slate of candidates for the VMN Board to the membership at the annual meeting. Biographical information on the candidates will be available at the meeting. The candidates are:

New Members

- Patricia C. Anderson, Vienna, VA
- Sue Faulkner, Chesapeake, VA

Re-Election of Current Board Members

- Moné Ardura, Loudoun County, VA
- Walter “Skip” Mertz, Fort Valley, VA
- Lawrie Parker, Sumerduck, VA
- Brenda Waugh, Charles Town, W.VA,



Also on the meeting agenda will be:

- ◇ Reports on the organization
- ◇ Announcement of the Distinguished Mediator Award recipient
- ◇ Update on the efforts to increase mediator compensation
- ◇ Opportunity for members to share suggestions/concerns and get involved
- ◇ Door Prize

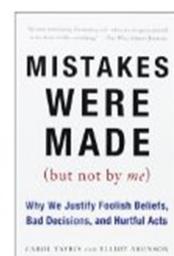
VMN’s BookZone Takes a Look at Human Nature . . .

Why do people dodge responsibility when things fall apart? What is the impact on attempts at conflict resolution? The book, *Mistakes Were Made (But Not By Me)* by Carol Tavris and Elliott Arnsion, examines the human need to justify past actions.

Backed by years of research and delivered in lively, energetic prose, this book offers a fascinating explanation of self-deception – how it works the harm it can cause and how it can be overcome. The book is available on Amazon for \$9.98.

Here’s the link to order your copy:

[**Mistakes Were Made \(But Not By Me\) on Amazon**](#)





An Update: Efforts to Increase Mediator Compensation Continue

In the June issue of the Virginia Mediation Network's newsletter, "The VMN Link", the Mediator Compensation Task Force (MCTF) reported that it had partnered with the Virginia Association for Community Conflict Resolution (VACCR) to ask selected juvenile court judges to propose, to their Law Revision Committee, changes in the compensation rate and method for court-referred child custody, visitation and support cases.

The MCTF learned in early July that the Law Revision Committee had decided not to include the request for an increase in mediator compensation in the Judiciary's legislative package and declined to send the request to the full Judge's conference for a vote. While committee members praised the work mediators did in the court, the committee felt that the request for a mediator fee increase was more of a "policy" issue and the request should be addressed to the General Assembly directly.

At the MCTF's July meeting, the group decided to ask the Virginia Bar Association's (VBA) to include a request for increased mediator compensation in its 2016 Legislative Agenda. The MCTF has begun working with the Joint ADR Committee on the specific proposal to the VBA which will be discussed at the VBA Board of Governor's Legislative Day on September 25, 2015.

The MCTF hopes to have word on approval of this proposal at the VMN annual member meeting on October 17, 2015 at the VMN Fall Conference. Stay tuned!

June Regional Meetings Another Success!

The Virginia Mediation Network held its second, successful "mini-conference" from June 15 to July 10 at seven locations around the state. Ninety-one (91) VMN members and non-members met for the original video and live discussion on "Unbelievable Stories about Avoiding, Breaking and Surviving Impasse." Facilitated by VMN Past President Jennifer Phillips, panel members Walter "Skip" Mertz, Paula Young, Esq., and Jeff Molenda, Esq., shared their thoughts and techniques for working with impasse situations in mediation. The workshop was approved for two hours of general/family Continuing Mediator Education credits.

**Unbelievable Stories about
Avoiding, Breaking & Surviving
Impasse**

According to participants' feedback, many liked the format and the opportunity to have the program in their geographic areas. While there are still technology/quality issues to be addressed, it appears people would like VMN to continue this type of presentation.

VMN would like to give a huge "thank you" to Board member Brenda Waugh who spent countless hours developing the March and June mini-conferences, coordinating and managing the "taping" of the original videos, then editing the final product which included integrating March conference member feedback into the June conference format.

If you would like to help VMN's continue the journey into the digital world, please contact Brenda Waugh at virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com.

Board News – Welcome Izabela Solosi

The Virginia Mediation Network would like to welcome Izabela Solosi to the VMN Board of Directors. Izabela is serving out the unexpired term of former Board member Paula Young, who resigned this summer.



Izabela is the Training Program Manager at Northern Virginia Mediation Service (NVMS). In this capacity, she manages a roster of over 35 practitioners, designs and delivers skill-based training on a variety of conflict resolution topics, and provides conflict assessment, facilitation, and mediation services.

She is a General District Court Certified Mediator through the Supreme Court of Virginia and a certified Strength Deployment Inventory trainer. She has presented at a number of national conferences on conflict resolution topics, including the Federal Dispute Resolution Conference.

Izabela received her degree in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University.



Help Needed for Insurance Policy Consultation

The VMN Board would like some assistance with evaluating its liability insurance needs and the organization's current General Liability and Directors & Officers insurance policies at renewal time.

Anyone with insurance experience and knowledge who is willing to consult, please call or email Skip Mertz, VMN Treasurer, at 540-758-1737 or wdmertz@aol.com.