

## CONNECTING THE VIRGINIA MEDIATION COMMUNITY

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY MONE' ARDURA



Spring time is a time for change and reflection as we watch the new flowers bloom, the birds return and the washing away of all that sand from the snowfalls this past winter. But this spring, along with the beauty of the new buds we see, we are faced the ugliness of conflict. Although conflict is not in and of itself bad, when people don't know how to handle and resolve conflict, it can turn ugly, as was recently seen in Baltimore. As conflict resolution practitioners, I wonder what we can do as a community to help those around us see that peaceful solutions can be found.

The first step, I think, is to let people know there are options. But how do we do that? One way is to promote mediation, restorative justice, and collaborative thinking to the people we meet each day. Knowing how passionate each of you are about positive conflict resolution, I'm sure you are already doing this. So please keep that work up! Each client we help, reinforces how powerful mediation, restorative justice and other Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods are to building peace. However, if we only can share our powerful message client by client, it will be a very long time before our society can see the benefit of ADR.

VMN is in a unique position to reach a large audience and spread the word. VMN has been working with the Virginia Association for Community Conflict Resolution (VACCR) and Virginia Commonwealth University's Virginia Center for Consensus Building to develop a program that will educate our legislators about consensus building and engaging stakeholders in positive dialogue. This is a very long process, but it is moving forward. We are hopeful that if our legislators see the benefit of mediation and the like, there will be less grid-lock at the state level and they will be in a better position to support other initiatives needed to bring more productive resolutions of conflict.

VMN is constantly looking for ways to support positive conflict resolution and the practitioner. Again, this comes down to education. Many people view the ADR practitioner as a lessor (because we tend to be cheaper) alternative to the more traditional methods of resolving conflict, that of the litigator. This is also VMN is working to change. We are hoping in the future that Mediators and all ADR practitioners are seen as professionals. This will also take time. One step toward this is having the Courts recognize our value. The VMN Mediator Compensation Task Force is exploring ways to increase the compensation mediators receive for court-referred mediations. Again this will be a long process, but one that is very important to continue.

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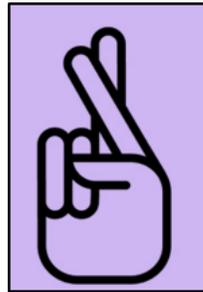


Positive change tends to happen slowly. With your continued support VMN is here for the long haul. We want to continue to support each of you so that we can bring about positive change, rebuild those things that conflict has torn down, and ultimately provide our community with effective and productive resolution to conflict.

Peace,

*Mone' Ardura*

VMN President



## Effort to Increase JDR Mediator Compensation Underway

Members of VMN's Mediator Compensation Task Force (MCTF) partnered with the Virginia Association for Community Conflict Resolution (VACCR) in May asking selected juvenile court judges to propose changes in the compensation rate and method for court-referred child custody, visitation and support cases.

Currently, the \$100 compensation for JDR court referrals is specified in Section 20-124.4 of the Code of Virginia. In order to increase mediator compensation in JDR cases, this statute needs to be changed.

Under the MCTF/VACCR proposal, compensation would increase to \$150 per referral and child support would become a separate referral.

The deadline for submitting a legislative proposal to an internal committee at the Supreme Court of Virginia was May 22. The MCTF and VACCR know that the mediator compensation proposal was proposed by JDR judges from around the state.

If the proposal makes it out of committee, the MCTF will broaden its efforts and solicit assistance from VMN members who serve juvenile courts.

Keep your fingers crossed for success!

## Next Series of Regional Meetings Set: Register Now to Receive Special Member Price

The “camera” is rolling and locations are getting ready for the next set of the Virginia Mediation Network’s regional meetings/workshops. This 2-hour training is entitled “Unbelievable Stories about Avoiding, Breaking and Surviving Impasse”. Like the March regional meetings, the session will involve a 90-minute original video of presenters. And, based on feedback from the March meetings, the live discussion with the site host will be interspersed throughout the video presentation. There will also be social/networking time at each site.

VMN Past President Jennifer Phillips will facilitate the discussion along with panelists and VMN members Walter (Skip) Mertz and Paula Young, Esq. and attorney Jeffrey Molenda, Esq. Panel members will examine ways to avoid impasse and look at techniques to break impasse when it does occur. There will also be a discussion about how to survive impasse looking at what happens from a court/litigation perspective when participants remain in impasse. VMN President Mone’ Ardura will again provide the opening remarks.

The workshop has been approved by Dispute Resolution Services for 2.0 hours of General/Family Continuing Mediator Education credits.

Pre-registration is required and the registration deadline is **June 9, 2015**. The cost of the workshop will be \$10 for VMN members and \$60 for non-members prior to the June 9 registration deadline. After that time the cost will be \$20 for VMN members and \$80 for non-members.

### Here are the locations for the June/July regional “mini-conferences”:

**Richmond** – June 15, 2015 – 11:30 am to 3:00 pm at the Oliver Hill Courts Building –  
Host: Jennifer Phillips/Carol McCue – **Note: No Onsite Registration for this location.**

**Winchester** - June 16, 2015 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Winchester Medical Center, Building #2,  
Third Floor Conference Room - Hosts: Theresa Merkel / Brenda Waugh

**Virginia Beach** – June 22, 2015 – 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the M.E. Oberndorf Central Library –  
Hosts: Betty Russo/Karen Richards

**Harrisonburg** – June 23, 2015 – 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm at EMU Library, Room 121–  
Host: Jennifer Orenic

**Fairfax** –June 24, 2015– 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at Northern Virginia Mediation Service -  
Host: Mone' Ardura

**Roanoke** – June 25, 2015– 11 am to 1:30 pm at St. John Lutheran Church Community Room –  
Host: Tom Walk

**Fredericksburg** – July 8, 2015– 6 pm to 8 pm at the Central Rappahannock Regional Library, England  
Run Branch – Host: Lawrie Parker

**Charlottesville** –July 10, 2015 – 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm at the Parks and Recreation Conference Room –  
Host: Galloway Beck



## Save the Date: VMN Fall Conference Set for October 16-18, 2015

The Virginia Mediation Networks' Fall Conference will be held October 16-18, 2015 at the University of Richmond's School of Law. The conference theme is "Creativity in Mediation".

We are also pleased to announce that our Plenary Speaker will be Everett Worthington, Ph.D., who will present material on "How Mediators Can Benefit from the Research on Forgiveness".



Mediators often deal with parties whose anger has become a force more powerful than self-interest. In these situations, the mediator must find ways of helping the parties let go of vengeful behavior by creating opportunities for forgiveness and reconciliation.

Dr. Worthington has spent his career studying forgiveness and has focused his research on forgiveness and reconciliation in couples and families. In the last ten years he has studied how forgiveness and justice work together and can oppose each other. From 1998 to 2005, he directed *A Campaign for Forgiveness Research*, a non-profit organization that supports research into forgiveness.

A Professor of Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University and a licensed Clinical Psychologist, Dr. Worthington has published over 20 books and 200 articles and scholarly chapters on forgiveness.

### **Call for Speakers for the Fall Conference**

If you have a "creative" idea for a workshop at the fall conference, we would like to hear from you. Fill out the "Call for Speakers 2015" form which you can find at [vamediation.org](http://vamediation.org). Submit it along with all of your workshop materials and Continuing Mediator Education application to Karen Asaro, VMN Conference Chair, at [Karen.asaro@gmail.com](mailto:Karen.asaro@gmail.com). The deadline is June 15, 2015.

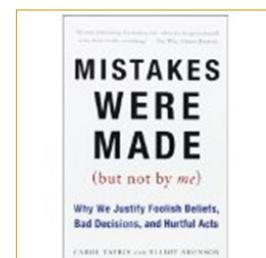
## **VMN's BookZone Takes a Look at Human Nature . . .**

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 Aronson, 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](#)



## Do You Remember....?

1. ... When you were newly certified as a mediator and were unsure how you were going to resolve a case?
2. ... Not knowing anything about VMN even though you joined because you wanted to belong to THE professional organization for mediators in Virginia?
3. ... Being excited when an experienced mediator ...
  - congratulated you on your certification,
  - offered to answer your professional questions, and
  - made you aware of all the benefits of VMN and encouraged you to attend a regional meeting or the fall workshop?

Below is a list of the most recent mediators to join VMN. There are many new faces but also some old friends who have come back to the organization. For our returning members, give them a big hello. For our new members, recall how you felt about Nos. 1 and 2 and take the initiative to welcome them. Then implement step No. 3 for those newly certified mediators in your area.

Be sure to give them a great big ....

### *New & Returning VMN Members:*

Evelyn Agustin

Patricia "Pat" Anderson

Caroline Bergeron

Bonnie Brewer

Ronald Burton

Tracey Cairnie

Giovanna Carney

Donald "Don" Caruthers

Virginia Colin

Demetrice Davis

Ashley Dobbin

Sue Faulkner

B. Diane Dukes Ferguson

Suzanne Fulton

Wendy Gayle

Kim Graham

Linda Hall

Ellice "Lisa" Halpern

Sabrina Harrison

Virginia Whitner Hoptman

Otis Jarvis

Kathryn "Kathy" Kadilak

Robert "Bob" Klima

Kimberly LaFave

Robert "Bob" Malkowski

Adrienne McKenna

Freda Pickle

Diane Poljacik

Renee Reynolds

Chriss Davies-Ross

Joel "Rick" Schapira

M. Kathy Serrano

Charis Sherman

Diane Shook

William "Bill" Smothers

Dorothy Douglas Taft



Thomas "Tom" Walk

Kevin Weldon

Patricia "Patti" Willis

## VMN Accepting Nominations for Distinguished Mediator Award



This award is presented annually to a prominent member of the mediation community in Virginia who demonstrates personal and professional commitment to advancing peaceful conflict resolution. Candidates should be recognized 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 dedication of time and energy to an active mediation practice that supports collaborative problem solving.

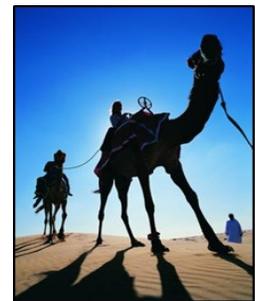
Candidates must exemplify personal and professional integrity and respect for others, as well as demonstrated commitment to continuing growth of high quality mediation in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Candidates must be members of VMN in good standing.

If you are interested in submitting a nomination, please forward the name to VMN Past President Jennifer Phillips at [JPmediation@gmail.com](mailto:JPmediation@gmail.com) no later than June 30, 2015.

## Board News – Farewell, Paula

The Virginia Mediation Network Board would like to thank Board member Paula Young for her service to the organization and the mediation community. Paula is stepping down from the Board as she starts an exciting new chapter in her life this summer – teaching at Qatar University College of Law.



Paula has served on the VMN Board since 2010 and was President from 2012-2013. During her time on the Board, Paula has brought exciting conferences to members and worked to implement a strategic planning process for the organization. This year, Paula has helped lay the groundwork for VMN's Fall Conference. Paula, a professor of law at Appalachian School of Law, was the first person honored with VMN's Distinguished Mediator Award.

Thank you, Paula, for all you have done for mediation in Virginia and good luck on your new adventure!

## Challenges to Running a Mediation Practice



## March Spring Regional Meetings a Big Success

The Virginia Mediation Network's first foray into video production was a resounding success with 92 people attending the March offering of the VMN Spring Regional Meetings. Between March 12 and March 30, 2015, mediators met at 8 locations around the state for the 2-hour video/live workshop entitled, "Challenges in Running a Mediation Practice: Logistics, Ethics, and Getting Down to Business".

Events were held morning, noon or night, depending on the location, and participants had the chance to network with colleagues and share snacks or a meal.

The workshop was approved for 2.0 hours of Ethics Continuing Mediator Education credits and cost \$10 for VMN members and \$60 for non-members. Workshop materials were provided electronically to participants.

Workshop evaluations were very positive and attendees liked the topic, the format and the opportunity to network. The main suggestions focused on timing of the video and the live discussion as well as improving the video quality. But support was strong among attendees to keep refining this digital option

## Member News

VMN member Virginia L. Colin has a popular internet radio program on VoiceAmerica. She wanted to share links to interviews she conducted with some of the leading lights in the field of mediation including Bob Rhudy, VMN's 2014 Fall Conference Plenary Speaker. Enjoy!

- *Elder Care Decision and Mediation* – Bob Rhudy – <http://www.voiceamerica.com/episode/83318/elder-care-decisions-and-mediation>
- *Family Mediation* – Forrest “Woody” Mosten – <http://www.voiceamerica.com/episode/82134/family-mediation>
- *Marriage Mediation* – John Fiske – <http://www.voiceamerica.com/episode/81818/marriage-mediation>

