

Update

Fall 2014

Anti-Harassment Mediation

By Andrew Kidde

Anti-harassment is a big part of the case load in King County district court. Out of approximately 4200 district court filings in 2013, about 2700 were anti-harassment cases. These cases arise from conflicts between neighbors, blended family members, and employees. Many judges dislike these cases, because the default legal remedy is to issue a restraining order, which merely puts a band-aid on the situation. Judges cannot generally address the underlying issues causing the conflict, so they are unable to provide more enduring and satisfying solutions. More information about King County District Court's anti-harassment case process can be found here:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/DistrictCourt/Protection%20Order/Anti-Harassment.aspx>

This summer, King County DRC began a pilot program to offer mediation for anti-harassment cases. As of early October the DRC had completed 28 mediations, and had reached settlement in 26 of them, an impressive 93% settlement rate. Settlement is defined as no one going back to the judge for an order after the mediation.

The DRC adapted its usual mediation model for these cases. These cases are usually mediated by a solo mediator who calls each party separately prior to the first joint mediation session. During this call the mediator conducts an in-depth interview in order to understand the party's perspective of the conflict and what they hope to achieve in the mediation



session. The coaching is particularly helpful because the mediator can emphasize the importance of future focused, interest based negotiation.

The pre-mediation telephone sessions also mean that each party does not have to explain their story in full at the first joint session. The opening statement is instead a relatively simple explanation of what each party is seeking from the mediation. This can reduce the tendency for these opening statements to further entrench the speaker and alienate the other party.

Another feature that distinguishes these cases from much of the DRC caseload is the referral from court. Some mediators may well be concerned that the voluntary nature of the participation may be compromised when Judges refer parties to mediation. The high rate of settlement may reflect a fear on the part of participants that the judges will not be happy if they fail to settle, and require the judge's further intervention. However, the King County DRC has a long history of mediating small claims court cases with similar constraints, and with great success.

King County DRC plans to incrementally expand this program, and eventually they intend to provide mediation services at all of the anti-harassment calendars in King County. They have reached out to BNMP to see if some of our experienced mediators are interested in working in this area. If you want to get involved, please be sure to sign up for the two-hour training session on Dec. 10th.

Congratulations To Our New Conciliators



Pictured from Left to Right: Peggy Jurcisin, Ann Wojtacha, Ajit Sukesan, Sam Terpstra, Juan Pont, Glen Youngblood, John Barnett, Lisa Snyder-Stone, Jay Shukla, Cynthia Klein, Sean Bratner, Kathryn Vargo.

So Long Julia 😞 And Hello Ivy 😊

By Cheryl Cohen

We sadly say good bye to Julia Devin, our foreclosure mediation case manager for the past year and a half. Julia is certified with the Dept. of Commerce as a Foreclosure Mediator and mediates with our program as well as King County DRC. Julia is leaving to take the next step in her mediation practice. She will be focusing on elder mediation and addressing the issues and needs that arise with aging, as well as continuing her work in community and foreclosure mediations. She will also be working to integrate into her mediation practice her expertise in global health, care giving and international humanitarian assistance. In addition to mediation, Julia will be working part time at the UW, providing immigration services to international scholars and faculty. Julia has shared that one of the best parts of working here is the staff teamwork and meeting such a wonderful group of volunteers. We wish Julia the best.



We welcome Ivy—Back! Ivy Roberts was a volunteer conciliator with the BNMP in 2011, and took the mediation training as well as the parent teen training. She left to develop her own private mediation practice in family and foreclosure mediations. In addition to having her own mediation practice, Ivy was a foreclosure mediation case manager with the DRC of King County, and now works part-time with their anti-harassment program. She is a certified foreclosure mediator. Ivy was motivated to take on the job because “the Foreclosure Fairness Act is a great opportunity for homeowners who face hardship to find a resolution, there is some finality.” One of the more challenging aspects to this work is “remaining neutral and staying true to the mediation values.” She is excited to work with us once again and re-connect with our volunteers. We are happy to have her back.

Parent—Teen Update

By Galit Arad-Trutner and Pam Orbach



After completing a wonderful Parent-Teen Mediation Program training we have a great new group of volunteer mediators. Welcome to the program new mediators! Many of you are waiting to observe mediations and we will be emailing you those opportunities as they come up, as well as invitations for In-Services. Many thanks as well to all of you who have been with us for a while and are still involved, doing amazing work!

You all have additional volunteer opportunities through the School Engagement Workshops. These workshops are an opportunity to apply our mediation skills to help students and families dealing with truancy issues in a unique way.

We are also looking for volunteers to take part in the November 13th resource fair at Highland Middle School, where you could either spend time at our booth, telling people about the program, and/or team up with us to lead a parent or student short workshop about communication.

Finally, please stay tuned for information about the first ever Bellevue Youth Organizing Summit, set for January 14th of next year. This will be a unique networking opportunity to meet with other Bellevue Youth volunteers and learn about the programs available.

I'm sure more opportunities will arise and you will get a chance to participate if you so choose. Looking forward to seeing you in mediations and in-Services!

BNMP Training Opportunities For Mediators and Conciliators

2015 40-hour Basic Mediation Training:

Wed. Feb. 25 5-9p.m.
Fri. Feb. 27 9a.m. — 5p.m.
Sat. Feb. 28 9a.m. — 5p.m.
Wed. Mar. 4 5 — 9p.m.
Fri. Mar. 6 9a.m. — 5p.m.
Sat. Mar. 7 9a.m. — 5p.m.

*Attendance at all sessions is required.
Fee: \$350.00*

2015 Conflict Coaching with Robin Amadei

Wed., Mar. 25—Fri., Mar. 27 8:30a.m.—4:30p.m.

More information about the skills developed in this training may be found at:

http://www.commongroundmediation.com/article%20-%20conflict_coaching.php or you may call for more details.

Attendance at all sessions is required.

Fee: \$595.00 if you register by March 1.

Neighborhood In-Service Training:

Anti-Harassment Orientation

Wed., Dec. 10, 2014 6-8p.m.

Room 1E-112

Must be a skilled mediator to attend.

RSVP by email: mediation_info@bellevuewa.gov or call 425-452-4091

Program Staff:

Program Co-Manager:	Cheryl Cohen.....452-5222
Program Co-Manager:	Andrew Kidde452-5288
Program Assistant	Natalie Daniels.....452-2897
Foreclosure Case Manager	Ivy Roberts.....452-4118
Parent-Teen Co-Coordinator	Pam Orbach.....452-4109
Parent-Teen Co-Coordinator	Galit Arad-Trutner.....452-4115

City of Bellevue website: <http://www.bellevuewa.gov>
(Look for the Mediation Program under “Neighborhood Information”)

Volunteer Profile:

Jude Mercer



Jude Mercer is a recent Exec MPA graduate from the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington. Her background is in technology with a BS in Computer Science from Duke University and extensive experience in Program Management and Marketing at Microsoft. She is currently transitioning from the private sector to the public or non-profit sector and actively looking for the right opportunity. Her expertise is in strategic and financial decision making and process evaluation and improvement. She is a data geek who loves spreadsheets and can even explain them in easy to understand words for the benefit of those who don't. She volunteers her time at the Bellevue Neighborhood Mediation Program, is active with the PTSA and serves on the board of the Bellevue Girlchoir Foundation. She is the proud parent of two wonderful children and is devoted to her dog, Willow.

**BELLEVUE
NEIGHBORHOOD MEDIATION PROGRAM**

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