

Empowering people and organizations with alternative methods for resolving disputes.

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New NMC Executive Director

Claudia Wahl has been named the new Executive Director for Neighborhood Mediation Center, replacing outgoing Director Lance Allen. Claudia has extensive experience in mediation and conflict resolution as the former Director of Mediation Services of Maui. Claudia holds an MA degree in Negotiation and Conflict Resolution and is currently working on her doctorate in psychology with an emphasis on mediation and conflict resolution. Although new to Reno, Claudia has family in the area and has visited many times over the years.



Please welcome Claudia Wahl and give a warm thank you to Lance Allen for his years of ongoing service to NMC and the community.

Lance has been the director of NMC for five years and the program director for the center prior to being named director. Lance intends to continue his volunteer work with NMC and will stay on in a transition capacity until December. Lance thanks everyone who has collaborated with him for helping him make the NMC successful over the past 5 years. In addition to helping the center transition over the next few months Lance (and Kris) will be parenting two yellow lab pups with the hopes of making them successful members of dog and human societies. An Elk hunt comes in October and hopefully a few good bird hunts as well to give the dogs a taste of their upcoming responsibilities.



Tambo, Cocha, and Pacha. Cocha has joined his new family in Ketchikan, Alaska.

NMC Beginning Mediation Training



A BIG congratulations to NMC's 2013 Beginning Mediation Training Participants! This comprehensive 40 hour training was sponsored by the University of Nevada Reno in collaboration with NMC. The 32 participants (not all in photo) came from an array of backgrounds to include military, legal, education, and human resources. The highly experienced, capable, and hard-working trainers were Margaret Crowley (third row far left), Jeanette Belz, (second row far left), and Betsy Kosier (first row second from right). NMC Executive Director Claudia Wahl (first row third from right), and former Director Lance Allen (third row far right)

Comments from participants:

"The articulate, intelligent, energetic, passionate, positive, effective instructors! All three instructors were absolutely top notch."

"I enjoyed the entire process, but most of all the way the instructors kept things moving, the interaction of the instructors and the students."

"Class participation was amazing!"

"I loved the hands-on role play components."

"The ability to practice the principles taught."

"It was on time, explicit about requirements and moved smoothly through the material."

"The three instructors were well organized and synchronized. They worked well together."

"This course exceeded my expectations. Every professional, neighbor, parent—heck—everybody should take this training!"

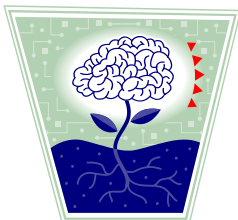
Course Content

- Conflict & negotiation
- theory
- Models of intervention
- Mediation theory & practice
- Self-awareness & cultural considerations
- Mediation processes & techniques
- Communication & facilitation strategies
- Ethics & standards of practice

Stay tuned for information on the next beginning mediation training class as well as other trainings.

Upcoming

Trainings



An eight-hour Adult Guardianship Mediation training is scheduled for November 22. The training is offered to NMC volunteers who have completed 40 hours of beginning training. The training is free of charge to NMC volunteers and will be held in the District Court Building in Judge Frances M. Doherty's courtroom. Training times and signup information will be available shortly.

Nevada Dispute Resolution Coalition (NDRC) will offer an advanced training, Tips from an Experienced Mediator, on March 14, 2014. Trainer Jim Melamed founded the Oregon Mediation Center and is currently the CEO of Mediate.com. More details will become available at the NDRC website as the training date approaches <http://www.nvdrc.org/>

Where NMC began and where it is now...

In 1997 Nevada legislation allowed court filing fees to fund a required community mediation program in Washoe county. The YWCA, the original contract recipient, opened the Neighborhood Mediation Center led by Trip Barthel and the program was initiated on March 1, 1999. The YWCA closed due to financial difficulty and the contract was transferred on March 1, 2000 to the Neighborhood Mediation Center, a newly formed Nevada non-profit and 501(c)3 organization founded by Trip Barthel. In 2009, Lance Allen, the former Program Director for the YWCA and for NMC became the Executive Director. After five years as Director, Lance has resigned, and the new Executive Director is Claudia Wahl. NMC is currently working on its Peer Mediation program and expanding into new areas to better meet the needs of the community.

What NMC has accomplished since its inception

Trained over 500 mediators

Performed 1721 mediations

Resolved 82.2% of the mediations held

Provided over 33,000 student-classroom hours of training

Conducted over 110 trainings

Conducted 40 large group facilitations

Conducted over 25 conference presentations

NMC Mediator Profile: Ken has lived in Reno for 33 years and has been a volunteer mediator for NMC for 5 years. He is a store manager for CVS pharmacy, and he and wife, Pam have been married for 27 years. Ken and Pam have a son Derek, 23 and a daughter Marissa, 19, and both attend UNR. Ken has a BA in Econ, and when not working or mediating, he enjoys golf, tennis, skiing, and watching baseball & football.



“I enjoy mediation because oftentimes people who walk into the courtroom as adversaries can walk out of the mediation conference room shaking hands; everyone benefits from those outcomes.”

Tools of the Trade



Summary

Summary is an important tool in the mediator's tool box because it serves a number of critical functions during the mediation process. First of all it lets the party know they've been heard, and it gives the party the opportunity to correct anything the mediator may have misheard. The other **really** important aspect of summary is that it lets parties hear what's been said in neutral language.

When parties speak from negative emotion as they tell their story, they often use inflammatory language that does nothing to decrease the animosity between the parties. Through summary the mediator uses neutral language so parties are able to hear the content of what is being said. Content without toxic language helps a party understand the situation from the perspective of the other party.

Never under-estimate the power of summary. It should be used to reflect the parties opening statements, to frame the parties' issues and interests, and to capture the details of the parties' agreement.

When in doubt summarize...

NEIGHBORHOOD
MEDIATION
CENTER

Phone: 775-788-2127
Fax: 775-322-5404
www.mediatenmc.org
E-mail:
mediatenmc_claudia@yahoo.com

NMC is primarily funded by Washoe County from court filing fees.

From the Program Director's Corner ...

Small Claims Court Refreshers - 'The Presentation'

After handing out the NMC information form, give parties a few moments to read them. In Reno, hand out the forms before the video begins and do the presentation after the video ends. In Sparks, there is no video.

Introduce yourself as a volunteer mediator with the NMC. Inform parties that mediation is a voluntary, confidential process offered free of charge and that the NMC is funded by Washoe County court filing fees. Explain that mediators are neutral third parties that help people in conflict by facilitating conversations that often lead to mutually satisfying agreements. Briefly help parties understand that mediation offers them the opportunity to form their own resolution. The judge awards money damages and doesn't generally order the return or repair of property and doesn't renegotiate contracts or negotiate installment payment plans.

Include the three outcomes of using mediation at court today: 1) Mediation results in a written agreement that is filed with the court. Once the agreement is honored, the case can be dismissed with no judgment against the defendant. 2) Mediation results in an agreement that is filed with the court but is not honored, in which case the plaintiff can file for automatic judgment against the defendant without serving the defendant again and without incurring further court costs. 3) Mediation does not end in agreement in which case the judge will try the case today.

Ask if anyone is interested in using mediation today. If so, be sure to ask the counter party if they would be willing to mediate. If they are not willing, there can be no mediation. If parties are willing to mediate, let the clerk or bailiff know that you are taking them to the mediation room.

SEEKING NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

If you would like to contribute to the NMC newsletter, we welcome articles, and information on upcoming trainings and conferences, as well as other events and information related to mediation and conflict resolution. Please send us your ideas for review.

Would you like to be added to our newsletter mailing list?

Please email NMC to let us know if you would like to be added to the NMC Newsletter mailing list. Specify whether you would like to receive an electronic or hard copy version. For a hard copy version please include your mailing address.

Peer Mediation Resolves Student Conflict

NMC is looking for volunteers to spread the word to teachers, parents, students, counselors, and others involved in our schools about the benefits of peer mediation.



To become an active member of NMC's youth program committee, please email Claudia at mediatenmc_claudia@yahoo.com.

Did you know...

- Peer Mediation empowers students to resolve their own conflicts
- Peer Mediation improves school climate
- Peer Mediation creates more time for learning
- Peer Mediation is preventive leading to fewer suspensions
- Peer Mediation meets the needs of students and educators
- Peer Mediation engages all students, even those considered "At-Risk"
- Peer Mediation increases self-esteem
- Peer Mediation increases critical thinking skills
- Peer Mediation offers students the ability to gain necessary life skills
- Peer Mediation programs can work in grade, middle, & high schools, and even college