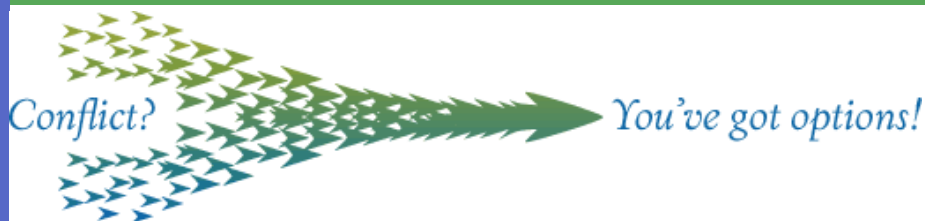


September 2011

Volume IX, Issue V



Professionals Committed to Cooperative Conflict Resolution

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Our Mission

The Maine Association of Mediators is a nonprofit organization of diverse professional interests seeking to broaden public understanding and acceptance of alternative forms of dispute resolution. The Association strives to enhance professional skills and qualifications of mediators, arbitrators, and other neutrals through training, educational development and promotion of standards of professional conduct.

Submission deadline for
November issue:
October 19, 2011

FMI: bulletin@mainemediators.org

The President's Message

By Peter J. Malia, Jr.

For those of you who have not yet heard the news, MAM Administrator, Tracy Quadro, has accepted a position with the Maine Attorney General's Office which began in September. Tracy is an Assistant Attorney General in the Office of Family Independence with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (formerly called the Office of Integrated Access and Support). This office deals with general assistance programs such as MaineCare, Aspire, TANF, and JET.

Tracy has been a valuable member of Maine Association of Mediators for over a decade. She has served as a member of the Board of Governors as well as Board Secretary. For the past three years, she has served as the organization's Administrator, collecting and handling phone calls and emails, managing website changes and announcements, updating the membership database, including renewals, and assisting with event management and the registration. Tracy's professionalism and attention to detail will be sorely missed, but we wish her the best of luck with the Maine Attorney General's Office.

The new MAM Administrator is Lisa Fourré Flaim and you may read more about her in this issue. Please introduce yourself as a MAM member and join us in welcoming Lisa at the MAM October program, also described elsewhere in this issue of the Bulletin.

On the horizon as well is the MAM annual meeting, scheduled for November 3, 2011. Details will be forthcoming as far as location, speaker, and so forth, but please save the date.

It is hard to believe that summer is over and school well underway. After our annual meeting, we will be holding an annual board retreat in December to plan for next year. We do anticipate having a couple of vacancies on the Board of Governors. If you are interested in learning more about joining the Board, please give me a call or send me an email. I hope to see you at an upcoming program.

School Recollections

By Deborah Belanger, Ed etc

The 4th graders all line up for recess at the classroom door in a matter of seconds a ruckus breaks out between two boys. "I was first" insists one as he tries to shove his larger classmate over. "No way! I was! You always go first!" counters the other. The teacher calmly walks over to the distressed boys. "You both learned win-win negotiation this week. I want you to use the steps to work this out." The boys consider this for a quick moment, each disappointed the teacher didn't take his side, before one simply says "Oh forget it" and steps back.

These ten year olds made a quick assessment of the nature of the conflict, the time it would take to resolve it and the idea that recess was pending. If the teacher wasn't going to resolve it for them, it simply wasn't worth the effort.

This story was relayed to me in a grocery aisle a few weeks after I finished up a win-win negotiation program in their classroom. The story highlights an aspect of conflict resolution we mediators cherish - that people (of all ages) can take responsibility to resolve their own conflict. Another belief we share is that when people do take responsibility, it is empowering and generally more satisfying for them. Another illustration:

I am high-fiving the youngsters on my way out the door. I have just finished working with a classroom of English as a Second Language Kindergarten through second grade children for five sessions on win-win negotiation. A tiny Vietnamese girl looks up at me with the most beautiful dark eyes and says

"My Mom says this is good."

I pause, smile and nod my head in agreement.

She continues " Boy on playground, pushed me, beat me."

My expression changes, I am no longer smiling. I am thinking how inadequate expressing ones feelings would be in a situation like this. I have done an injustice here if her mother thinks this is the answer. I realize she is continuing to talk.

.."Yesterday he takes my swing, hits me." She makes a very determined face and continues "I say , How you feel? He says , 'Dunno' and runs away! "

She grins from ear to ear proud of her newfound skill. The confidence she felt enabled her to attempt to work this out - even though she confused the process.

In 1976 , Joe Folger, co-author of The Promise of Mediation spoke at an event hosted by the predecessor organization for Maine Association of Mediators. He was asked by an attorney in attendance "How can we get people to **ask** for mediation?" Folger's response was not to network, or put on seminars, or develop a business plan for your practice. He responded that the future of mediation is in the hands of the young people. If, as children, we learn mediation and negotiation as techniques to resolve our conflicts, then as adults faced with conflict we will look for mediation if our attempts at negotiation don't pan out.

This type of generational change is slow but enduring. It made sense to me then and does still. If we learn to go to parents or teachers (authority) to resolve our conflicts as children we will continue that practice as adults (judges).

At the time Joe Folger spoke to us, I had worked with a couple schools. With other colleagues, I now have spent these last fifteen years doing school mediation training work at varying levels. I have

School Recollections (cont.)

By Deborah Belanger, Ed etc

been blessed to work with some great folks at EXCEL program at the University of Maine School of Law, Youth Alternatives and Peace Studies at the University of Maine-Orono. We have traveled around the perimeter of the state, Fort Kent, Caribou, Camden, Trenton, Brunswick, Kennebunk, Kittery, Waterboro, Stratton, Farmington and right up the I-95 corridor from Biddeford-Saco to South Portland-Portland, to Gray, Lewiston- Auburn, Augusta, Gardiner, Winslow, Fairfield and Orono. And this is not an inclusive list! We worked with both staff and students to develop awareness' of the styles of conflict resolution and practicing healthy ways to consider and resolve conflict.

Formal peer mediation training is happening less today in our schools for a variety of reasons. It is hard to institutionalize within a school community as it requires dedicated staff to maintain and the players are always changing. As I reflect on this change, I wonder if MAM could develop a 'cadre' of folks to renew and continue this effort. It is truly work where you get back more than you give.

Save the Date!

Calling all MAM members to the
MAM Annual Meeting

DATE: Thursday, November 3, 2010

TIME: 8-9 breakfast, 9-9:30 business meeting,
9:45 to 10:30 program: Peace building in Maine

PLACE: Klahr Center, University of Maine-Augusta

Details and directions provided closer to date

MAM hires new Administrator!

New to mediation but a veteran at events, membership support and organizational management, Lisa Fourré Flaim joins the Maine Association of Mediators as its third part-time professional administrator. Since moving to Maine from Pennsylvania in 2006, Lisa has worked part time for the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust, where she continues to support that organization's office, and formerly for Greater Portland Landmarks. At Landmarks, one of greater Portland area's longtime staffed nonprofits, Lisa performed duties to support that organizations membership and capital campaign programs. Welcome, Lisa!

The Maine Association of Mediators Live Skill-Builder Series Presents:

MASTERING AND EMPLOYING THE SKILL OF SUMMARY IN MEDIATION

Date: Friday, October 21

Time: 8:30 a.m. registration

9am - 11:30 a.m. program

Cost: The program is free for MAM members; \$45 for non-members. CLE available.

Preregistration for members is encouraged due to limited space.

Registration day of event taken on first come, first served basis. Register at

www.mainemediators.org

Location: Opportunity Alliance, (formerly Youth Alternatives Ingraham)

50 Lydia Lane

South Portland, ME 04106

207-874-1175 for Karen Groat concerning presentation

What's Ahead, MAM?

October 13–14, Thursday–Friday; in *Topsham, ME*

Training for Mediation with VOANNE certificate (40 hours)

Sponsored by Volunteers of America Northern New England (VOANNE)

FMI: *Nancy Markowitz, 207-373-1140, ext. 229; mediate@voanne.org; 207-441-3076*

October 25–28, Tuesday–Friday, in *Topsham, ME*

Training: Family Law for Maine Mediations; Domestic Violence Issues for Family Matters;
Consumer Law for Small Claims Court mediations

Sponsored by Volunteers of America Northern New England (VOANNE)

FMI: *Nancy Markowitz, 207-373-1140, ext. 229; mediate@voanne.org; 207-441-3076*

Contact MAM

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~
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