

The Conflict Resolution Report

Newsletter of the Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County

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Portrait of a CRCMC Donor

By Liz Phillips



Takoma Park resident **John Urciolo** is a dedicated CRCMC donor. As an original Board Member of Takoma Park's Community Mediation Center, his attention turned to CRCMC when Takoma Park's Mediation Center merged with CRCMC. John is not only a committed donor, he's also committed to Takoma Park, to Montgomery County and to the mission of Mediation. He has seen Mediation work well in the court system and has experienced the "pleasant and beneficial" way that Mediation can address family disputes. Its "important to get people talking—at home and around the world" he says.

John's philosophy of giving is two fold: he gives where his "donation will be beneficial" and where he "believes in" the organization's work.

To become more visible in Montgomery County, John feels that CRCMC is doing all the right things: ensuring that Mediation services

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Latin American Conflict Resolution Specialists Visit CRCMC

By Alicia Pfund

On June 14th, 2008 a group of Latin American conflict resolution specialists visited the CRCMC office. They were attending an intensive two-week seminar at the Institute of Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) at the George Mason University in Arlington, Virginia. The seminar – in its sixth year-- is co-sponsored every summer by the Organization of American States (OAS), to allow a select group of Latin American professionals in conflict resolution exchange experiences and learn from each other.



Sitting left to right are: Celia Maria Passos-Brazil, Claudia Velazquez-Paraguay, Alicia Pfund-CRCMC, Cristina Cavalli-Argentina and Maria del Carmen Galicia-Guatemala

This year's group was made up of 14 professionals from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela. Some were senior academicians, others practitioners. Cases varied from new approaches to address social conflicts about resource distribution, conflicts involving indigenous people and other minorities, responses to school violence, juvenile restorative justice, etc. They also interacted with conflict resolution professors and gained access to state of the art practices. The seminar participants visited local organizations, which in various ways

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~**John Urciolo** from page 1

are available at court and encouraging judges to refer cases to Mediation; attending county police briefings to explain our services; and making sure CRCMC is present at community events and festivals—especially in communities that need our services most. He thinks our presence in the Montgomery County Public School System and our special training of mediators to work in the ever-contentious world of Homeowner Associations are important because of their direct service to county residents.

When asked about ways CRCMC could encourage more donations, John's feelings were strong: when residents walk away from a successful mediation they're walking away from a helpful, and sometimes transformational, experience and, for that reason, they should always be asked for donations. For that reason, he suggests that client names could be added to CRCMC's donor list. CRCMC provides a local service which deserves local support. We shared a few ideas about the adage, "think globally, act locally". John feels that, in a perfect world, CRCMC's offering of free Conflict Resolution services to Montgomery County would be rewarded with commensurate levels of donation from Montgomery County residents.

We appreciate John's generosity and hope his thoughts will inspire you to become a CRCMC donor.

Donations – To Give or Not to Give?

By Wolfgang J. Mergner

The government knows it; yet, many donors do not realize how important donations are to our country's ability to deliver public services through nonprofit organizations. The government knows this and therefore allows tax deductions for donations. These tax deductions are actually grants to nonprofits—they are democratic grants. The donor decides what to support. Eighty-nine percent of households make charitable contributions in the United States for an average annual contribution of \$1,620/person. American giving reached a record high in 2006, with donations totaling \$295-billion

according to *Giving USA*. So donors become key players in the success of nonprofits. Donation constitutes about 26 % of CRCMC's income.

What induces a donor to give? There are three reasons: (1) People like to help people: supporting training in "how to handle conflicts" is one way of serving people; helping delinquent juveniles find a path of restitution and avoiding jail is personal help; helping divorced parents find a good parenting plan free of heartache and acrimony is such personal support. (2) Donors have to believe in or be convinced of the importance of a cause: helping seniors find peace with their families and mutually beneficial living arrangements through senior mediation or helping to unite an embattled neighborhood through facilitation may be causes some donors find important. (3) Donors give if they trust the organization to use the money wisely: giving to local organizations where the donor knows the neighborhoods or the people of the organization and their work most easily rewards the donor's trust.

Nonprofit organizations receive their basic support from donations and those donations help to open the doors of service. Donations support CRCMC's intake services. The intake process screens incoming cases and secures volunteer mediators for those clients seeking help through mediation. CRCMC estimates that the volunteer effort of its mediators is valued at more than \$480,000 per year for more than 600 mediations. Donations fuel CRCMC's volunteer effort. While grants are commonly given for specific projects and can be one-time deals, (such as CRCMC's grant for outreach to Hispanic communities), donations, in contrast, actually sustain us. The Donor List is the treasure of a nonprofit service organization and donors, themselves, are deeply appreciated as the valued foundation of nonprofit activity.

Conflict Resolution Day October 16, 2008 by Terry Vann

Conflict Resolution Day is an international celebration held annually on the third Thursday in October. The date for Conflict Resolution Day 2008 is October 16. In CRCMC's first Conflict Resolution Day celebration, held at the County Office Building, we featured our involvement in the community and invited the public. Last year's celebration, held at the offices of the Montgomery County Education

Association, highlighted our involvement with Montgomery County Public Schools. This year's celebration will be held at our new offices at Montgomery Works in Wheaton, and will focus on our volunteers and our partners, such as Montgomery Works, Legal Aid, Commission on Common Ownership Communities, MCPS, Montgomery College and its Hispanic Business Institute, the District Court and the State Attorney's Office. Unlike our earlier celebrations, we will not be receiving and reading proclamations nor will we be giving out awards. Instead, this celebration will give our volunteers and partners an opportunity to meet one another, our new Director of Intake and Case Management and our Board of Directors and Advisors. We want to answer donor and partner questions about CRCMC's activities and we want our volunteers to tell us what training they need to sharpen their skills. We hope to see most of our volunteers and supporters on October 16, 2008.

The Maryland Program for Mediator Excellence

By Judi Becker

Over the next eighteen months CRCMC is seeking to have all its mediators participate in the Maryland Program for Mediator Excellence. The MPME is coordinated by the Maryland Judiciary's Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office (MACRO) and sprang from the collaborative efforts of many of the organizations and government agencies that are involved in alternative dispute resolution within the State of Maryland. At its core the Maryland Program for Mediator Excellence seeks to improve the quality of mediation services that are available in Maryland while respecting the diversity inherent in mediators who come to dispute resolution from a variety of backgrounds.

Joining MPME requires:

- Completion of 40 Hours of Mediation Skills Training
- Compliance with the Maryland Standards of Conduct for Mediators
- Good Faith Cooperation with the Mediation Ombuds Program
- Commitment to Participate in 4 Continuing Skills Activities Each Year
- Commitment to Participate in 2 Hours of Ethics Training Each Year

For more information go to:

<http://www.courts.state.md.us/macro>

~Latin American Conflict Resolution Specialists from page 1

address conflict, such as the U. S. Institute of Peace, the Inter-American Foundation, and the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy. In addition to the official visits, four participants used their free time on a Saturday morning to visit our office and find out how a community mediation center functions in this society. One participant shared with the group the frustrations of trying to get a community mediation center started, with very little success. Since the governments usually run their centers, the visitors were interested in learning how a bottom-up organization can get started and grow successfully. We explained the key role of volunteers, first to get the organization set up and operations started and then the importance of continuous support from professionals who are happy to contribute their time, knowing that they are helping to build a culture of peace. The visitors asked many questions about finding sources of funding, how we were organized, and which procedures we used. They took samples of our forms and brochures in Spanish, to see if a similar model could be used in their countries. The visitors were very impressed with CRCMC's rate of growth and the expansion of our services over a relatively short period of time.

Fourth Annual Rockville Salute

By Tim Stranges

CRCMC will have a table at the **4th Annual Rockville Salute to Nonprofits** being held on **Saturday, October 4**, from 9:00 to 1:00 in the Juror's Parking Lot at the corner of E. Jefferson (Rte. 28) and Monroe Streets in downtown Rockville. This year the salute will be held at the site of the Saturday Farmers' Market, which usually attracts between 2,000 and 2,500 people. CRCMC needs four volunteers to staff the table, two from 9:00 to 11:00 and two from 11:00 to 1:00.

Senior Mediation Offered

Senior mediation will be offered to trained mediators on October 24 and October 25 in Montgomery County. The Trainers are Robert J. Rhudi, J.D. and Carolyn J. Rodis, J.D., M.A. Senior mediation is a specialized Mediation field. Apply to CRCMC, 2424 Reddie Drive, Wheaton MD 20902, or online, Keyword: Senior Mediation.

Announcing

Intake and **Case Management** for CRCMC have moved to Montgomery Works at 11002 Veirs Mill Road, 1st Floor, Wheaton, MD 20902. The telephone number for Intake remains the same (301-942-7700). The new office location is attractive because of its proximity to the Reddie Drive office. Our new location is just across from Bally Fitness Center and next to the former cinema. Come visit us! Perhaps you will want to volunteer. (Parking is free.)

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