

# THE CENTER LETTER

Volume 10

April 2022

Spring is far more than just a changing of seasons;  
it's a rebirth of the spirit.

- Toni Sorenson



With the easing of the pandemic restrictions, decreasing infections, and in-person events once again in full swing, Spring 2022 is truly a time for a rebirth of the spirit. At The Mediation Center of the Pacific (MCP), the MCP Team is excited to welcome back mediators to the building as more in-person mediations are requested and conducted. And while we continue to provide a high volume of mediations via Zoom, seeing everyone's beautiful face again is truly uplifting! Very much like seeing a new flower bloom in the Spring.

To add to the excitement of Spring, thanks to MCP's generous supporters, the April virtual fundraiser was a success. Mahalo to everyone for your donations and silent auction purchases. A special mahalo to Walter Dods for his extremely generous \$25,000 challenge match that laid the foundation for a successful event. We are so very grateful to everyone!

The funds generated from the Spring event will ensure that MCP's services are accessible for all despite that fact that the high volume of requests for mediation experienced last year, has continued into 2022. In the first three months of 2022, 1,281 cases were opened, and 747 mediations conducted (508 more mediations than the same period last year) involving 2,234 mediator hours (766 more hours than last year), with 68% of the mediations resulting in agreements. We couldn't accomplish this without everyone's support.

Yoko Ono said, *"Spring passes and one remembers one's innocence. Summer passes and one remembers one's exuberance. Autumn passes and one remembers one's reverence. Winter passes and one remembers one's perseverance."* Perseverance was unquestionably required on everyone's part last winter and over the past two years. It is only through the perseverance of the MCP Board of Directors, Board of Advisors, mediators, funders, partners, and staff, that MCP was able to address the huge wave of need generated by the pandemic. And while it will require continued perseverance to maintain the consistent high level of services, it is time to welcome Spring, renew our spirit, and celebrate together!



The MCP Team dresses up for a Decades Day, showcasing fashion from the 70s, 80s, and 90s.

## Mahalo for Making the 2022 Fundraiser a Success!

### Peacemaker \$25,000

Walter Dods

### Collaborators \$4,000 - \$5,000

Ekimoto and Morris  
Susan Hurd *for Charles H. Hurd  
Memorial Fund for Kupuna  
Pono*  
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Kona Brewing Company  
Kumu Kahua Theater  
Ashley Lumauag  
Mid Pacific Country Club  
Sea Life Park  
Roy Sakuma Ukulele Studios

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## Strengthening Programs Through Valuable Partnerships

MCP is so very fortunate to work with many valuable partners who help us better serve our clients and the community. From the District and Family Courts to our sister centers on the neighbor islands, Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, Catholic Charities, and many more. Working together, members of the most vulnerable populations are encouraged and assisted in accessing mediation and negotiating agreements that save time and money and eliminate the stress of fighting. Over the past eight months with the development of the eviction mediation program, MCP has formed new partnerships which have helped to make the program a success, including the Windward Community Action Team and Koolau Housing Hui (CAT), and more recently, Susannah Wesley Community Center and Kokua Kalihi Valley (KKV).

Because many people view mediation as part of the courts, and/or are intimidated due to power imbalances inherent in the relationship with the person they need to mediate with, such as a tenant and landlord, they are reluctant to participate. Thanks to the “navigators” from organizations like CAT, Susannah Wesley, and KKV, and others who provide extra support, encouragement, and handholding when needed, more tenants have participated in mediation. As a result of their good work and partnerships, between August 7, 2021, and April 8, 2022, MCP mediated 909 eviction cases, with 86% resulting in agreements. Equally important, 94% of the participants reported satisfaction with the process and 93% reported that they would use mediation again. And finally, one tenant wrote:

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*This is the first mediation experience we ever had so we didn't know what to expect leaving us just a tad on edge. Thanks to the mediator and his excellent communication skills, patience, and calm professional manner along with his positive suggestions and explanations, we were able to come to an arrangement that all parties agreed to. We have a greater appreciation for mediators and this mediation process and the positive effects and benefits it has on unfortunate and unforeseen situations and circumstances that cause anxiety and stress in one's life. Thank you for all you do!*

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## Eugene Villaluz Custody Mediation Fund

### Focusing on the Needs of the Children



In grateful appreciation of a generous donation from the estate of Eugene Villaluz and in recognition of his dedication to helping unmarried and divorcing couples negotiate the best possible agreements to meet the needs of their children, the Eugene Villaluz Custody Mediation Fund: Focusing on the Needs of the Children, has been established.

An insurance agent by profession, Eugene quickly immersed himself in the world of mediation after becoming accepted as an MCP volunteer mediator on April 29, 2004. He energetically participated in every training and accepted every opportunity to hone his mediation skills. As in every project or activity that he undertook, Eugene was determined to be the very best mediator that he could be. The many co-mediators that he worked with, and Apprentice mediators that he trained, will attest that he truly achieved his goal. Not surprisingly, he was recognized as “Mediator of the Year” on two different occasions by MCP.

And while he was eligible to mediate a broad variety of cases, Eugene’s passion was helping couples create good co-parenting plans for their children. Ensuring that the needs of the children were supported when their parents were no longer a couple, was important to Eugene. He knew that when parents stop fighting and work together to co-parent, children thrive. Thanks to his dedication to supporting children in this fashion, he mediated 285 cases totaling 2,138 hours over the years. The new fund established in his memory, will support the continued training of mediators and strengthening of the custody mediation program, and keep Eugene’s passion for supporting the needs of the children a primary focus of MCP’s custody mediations.

# MAHALO FOR YOUR SUPPORT

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## Expanding the Power of Mediation Through Training

MCP strives to build healthy communities by increasing the use of mediation as the first step in the prevention and resolution of conflicts within families, schools, and businesses. To attain this vision, in addition to conducting thousands of hours of mediation annually, MCP also provides quality trainings and workshops that build the capacity of the mediator pool, as well as enable people from businesses, government agencies, healthcare facilities, schools, and more, to learn and incorporate mediation skills into their workplaces and communities.

In keeping with these goals, in February MCP held the twenty-four-hour Divorce Mediation Training for 21 mediators, and in March MCP conducted a one-day Mediation Skills for Managers Training for 20 employees with the VA Pacific Islands Health Care System

In addition to providing 2 family law attorneys with core mediation skills, the Divorce Mediation Training provided MCP with 17 additional domestic mediators, including 7 students from the William S. Richardson School of Law who completed the Family Law course, and 2 current domestic mediators who completed the training as a refresher to strengthen their skills.

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*Loved the course. Very informative.*

*I though all of the material covered was valuable. The guest coaches and speakers are SO generous with their time and mana'o.*

---



A big mahalo to William “Bill” Darrah for conducting the legal portion of the training and to Katie Bennett for conducting the custody and the children portion of the training. MCP is also grateful to Lisa Jacobs, Annabel Murray, and Tom Stirling for sharing their expertise during the luncheon panel, and to the mediation simulation trainers, Mimi Beams, Kristin Bryant, Chuck Buckla, Denise George, Erika Ireland, Sam Kasnetz, Bruce McEwan, and Tom Mitrano. Together, they provided an excellent experience for the participants!

The Mediation Skills for Managers Training provided the 20 VA Pacific Islands Health Care System employees ranging from EEO Specialists to Social Workers, Nurses, Program Managers, and Acquisition Specialists, with informal mediator skills and a process to integrate into every aspect of their work. MCP was honored to work them and be a part of helping them build a culture of peaceful problem-solving in their workplace.

Mahalo to mediators Denise George, Sandi Jordan, Bruce McEwan, Tom Mitrano, and Clyde Namuo for their expert assistance with the training.

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*Thank you. This was a great training! I really appreciated and enjoyed everything taught and learned.*

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*This was a good course regardless of your position. There are always different personalities. The instructor and the syllabus were very pertinent to our facility.*

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*The instructor, mentors, and tech support were all great. I felt the program was well-organized.*

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# Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming Trainings

## Advanced Mediation Training

Online via Zoom

\$600 per person

**April 28 - April 30, 2022**

**Thursday and Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. & Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

Register here: <https://mcp808wufoo.com/forms/advanced-mediation-training/>

*Build on basic mediation skills and learn how to modify the process to work with attorneys, challenging personalities, multiple participants, cultural differences and more.*

## Basic Mediation Training

*The Clarence T. C. Ching Mediation Training Institute*

*1301 Young Street*

\$650 per person

**October 20 - October 22, 2022**

**Thursday and Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. & Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

Register here: <https://mcp808wufoo.com/forms/basic-mediation-training/>

*The Basic Mediation Training offers an introduction to mediation basics and the core skills of effective listening, asking powerful questions, maintaining neutrality, interest identification, negotiation, agreement writing, ethical considerations, and managing challenges. The training is interactive and provides individualized coaching during simulated mediation practice. All materials are emailed and mailed to the participants in advance of the training.*

## Mediation Skills for Managers

*A customized one-day training for businesses. Managers learn an 8-step informal mediation process to empower employees to resolve their own disputes.*

Contact [katie@mediatehawaii.org](mailto:katie@mediatehawaii.org) to schedule

### Our Contact Information

The Mediation Center of the Pacific, Inc.

1301 Young Street

Honolulu, HI 96814

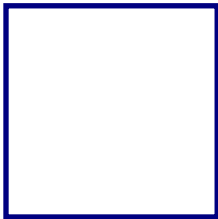
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