

THE CENTER LETTER

Volume 10 Issue 3

August 2022

“May August wind blow you in the right direction.”

- De philosopher DJ Kyos



The surf is up on Oahu's south shore, and the days are long and sunny. It's summertime in Hawaii. And while it's wonderful to enjoy lighter traffic and a slightly less frantic pace as many people take time off to travel and gather with family, the month of August marks the end of summer. The changing of seasons is often considered a metaphor for big transitions in life. Thanks to a dedicated Board of Directors, staff, mediators, and generous supporters, The Mediation Center of the Pacific (MCP) is prepared for transition.

The end of Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (FY2122) found MCP managing the highest number of cases ever in its 43-year history. 5,544 cases were opened, an increase of 2,573 cases from the prior fiscal year, and an increase of 3,778 cases from calendar year 2019 (before the pandemic). Act 57, the law that requires landlords to offer mediation to tenants before filing an eviction action, will end on August 6, simultaneously ending the State Eviction Mediation Program (SEMP) that enabled MCP to conduct mediations for over 2,640 landlords and tenants this past year, with 87% of the mediations resulting in agreements. Although the Program will end, MCP will continue offering mediation to landlords and tenants prior to the filing of an eviction, as well after an eviction action is filed in court. MCP will also apply the many lessons learned from running the SEMP to strengthen other areas of mediation and programs.

To prepare for the new fiscal year and the coming months, the MCP Board proudly welcomed new Directors Joanna Amberger, Sheri-Ann Lau-Clark, Jessica Morikone, and Susan Murray. The Board of Directors also recently completed a strategic planning session that will culminate in a new plan that will guide MCP's work over the coming years. And finally, with loosened restrictions and more in-person gatherings, the number of mediations conducted at MCP's building are steadily increasing, as are in-person trainings. To support these changes and transition, policies, procedures, and staffing are being reviewed and revised.

Jenny Han said, "Everything good, everything magical happens between the months of June and August." For MCP, with the generous support of donors, mediators, partners, the Board of Directors, and staff, the magic of mediation continues throughout the year. Ensuring MCP's services are available for everyone to resolve conflicts of all types and to strengthen families, workplaces, and Oahu's communities. We are grateful to all for helping to achieve these important outcomes and hope you have a wonderful rest of the summer!

2022-2023 Board of Directors

MCP is pleased to announce the 2022-2023 Board of Directors who will be guided under the continued leadership of President David Simons, Vice-President/President Elect John Morris, Treasurer Jason Graves, and Secretary Emily Marr.

New directors include: Joanna Amberger, Sheri-Ann Lau-Clark, Jessica Morikone, and Susan Murray, and returning directors include: Justice Simeon Acoba (Ret.), Sidney Ayabe, Judge Rebecca Copeland, Mike Cruise, William Darrah, Kale Feldman, Signe Godfrey, Susan Ichinose, Bruce McEwan, and Sharon On Leng. MCP is fortunate to be led by such a strong, dedicated Board of Directors!



Joanna Amberger



Sheri-Ann Lau Clark



Jessica Morikone



Susan Murray

Planning for the Future

The MCP Board of Directors engaged in a stimulating first-time ever, hybrid strategic planning session on Saturday, July 23rd at The Earl M. Chapman Mediation Center of the Pacific building. The Clarence T. C. Ching Training Institute served as the main room for group discussions, and the mediation rooms provided the small groups with ample space for brainstorming, with the remote participants actively contributing from the big screens in each room.

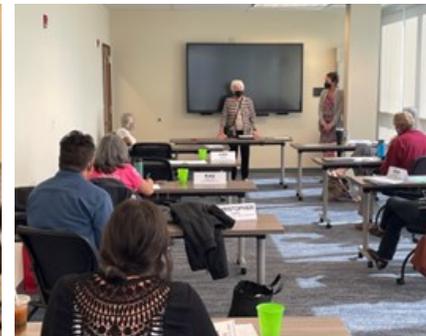
Lively conversations focused on the key issues identified through the surveys that were completed by more than 87 stakeholders earlier this year. Topics included program development, mediator recruitment, and revenue generation. MCP is grateful to everyone who completed the survey that was sent out to gather information and input on what MCP is doing well, the challenges, and other areas of community need to address. The feedback from the surveys was used to design the agenda for the day.

While there is still work to be done to finalize the details of the plan, everyone agreed the session was productive and laid the foundation for next steps.



Mediation Trainings: In-Person and Remotely

Conducting mediation training for the public, as well as other organizations and businesses, has been a core value of MCP over the years, to promote the broad use of mediation and to provide more people with the skills to prevent and resolve conflict before it escalates. In keeping with this value, MCP conducted several trainings over the past few months. The annual Advanced Mediation Training was conducted remotely in April. MCP developed and conducted a remote Advanced Mediation Training for the Hawaii State Judiciary's Appellate Mediation Program in June. MCP was also honored to be contracted by the Hawaii State Teachers Association in May to conduct the first in-person three-day mediation training in the Clarence T. C. Ching Mediation Training Institute. The participants from all of the trainings provided high praise for the experience.



“Excellent program. Speakers were highly accomplished, topics relevant, lots of opportunities for interaction, raising questions, and sharing suggestions.” Appellate Mediation Training Participant

“The training was/is exceptional! I have already recommended it to people and sang its/your praises.”
Advanced Mediation Training Participant

Working Together to Increase Access to Justice

MCP is fortunate to work with many partners to promote mediation, increase access to justice, and strengthen Oahu's communities. Over the past three months, MCP worked with Hawaii Appleseed and Susannah Wesley Community Center to evaluate the Eviction Mediation Program. Through interviews of tenants, landlords, attorneys, and mediators, it was learned that most of the tenants participated in mediation for the first time, and found it to be a valuable process. They also responded they felt safer mediating via Zoom. The final outcomes from the study will be used to promote the use of early mediation for landlords and tenants.



HAWAII APPLESEED
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In April, MCP's Executive Director Tracey Wiltgen participated in a panel presentation coordinated by the Dispute Resolution Section of the American Bar Association with representatives from various states that provided eviction mediation programs. MCP's eviction mediation program was one of the most successful with the highest number of cases mediated and consistently high rate of agreement.



Finally, MCP staff once again participated in the annual Hawaii Access to Justice Conference including coordinating the “Resolving Community Conflict” presentation and participating on the “Thinking Forward for Access to Justice” panel.

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Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming Trainings and Events

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.

Advanced Mediation Training

The Clarence T. C. Ching Mediation Training Institute, 1301 Young Street

\$650 per person

November 3 - November 5, 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.

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 to schedule

Annual Volunteer Recognition and Holiday Event

Save the Date: December 12th, Café Julia, YWCA

Details to follow

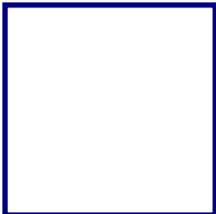
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