

# THE CENTER LETTER

Volume 16 Issue 1

January 2022



## THE MEDIATION CENTER OF THE PACIFIC

*“Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”*

— Desmond Tutu -

Happy New Year! While we were all happy to say aloha to 2021 with its nonstop challenges, thanks to many generous donors, friends, and volunteers, The Mediation Center of the Pacific (MCP) successfully continued to meet the growing needs of Oahu's communities last year. In fact, MCP served more people than any prior time in its 43-year history. Together, every donation and volunteer hour made a huge difference in enabling MCP to:

- ◆ Open 4,064 cases (an increase of 2,298 cases from calendar year 2019, prior to COVID)
- ◆ Conduct 1,642 mediations (an increase of 383 mediations from 2019) with 56% resulting in agreements
- ◆ Invest 7,347 mediator hours (an increase of 2,826 hours from 2019)
- ◆ Serve 13,509 people through mediation, dispute resolution, & training (an increase of 5,008 people from 2019)



And thanks to the continued generosity of so many, MCP met its end-of-year fundraising goals. A big mahalo to all!

Thus, a difficult year ended with many positive outcomes. Even the lovely orchid plant given to the MCP Team by mediator Tom Mitrano in March 2020, suddenly burst into flowers in December, after nearly 18 months without a single bud. Another sign that the combined compassion, hard work, and good energy of mediators, staff, board, and supporters, generated the right environment for success, growth, and new opportunities in the new year.

With a positive ending to 2021 and your continued support in 2022, the Board of Directors and staff are excited and prepared to tackle another busy year.

*“Approach the new year with resolve to find the opportunities hidden in each new day.”*

- Michael Josephson -

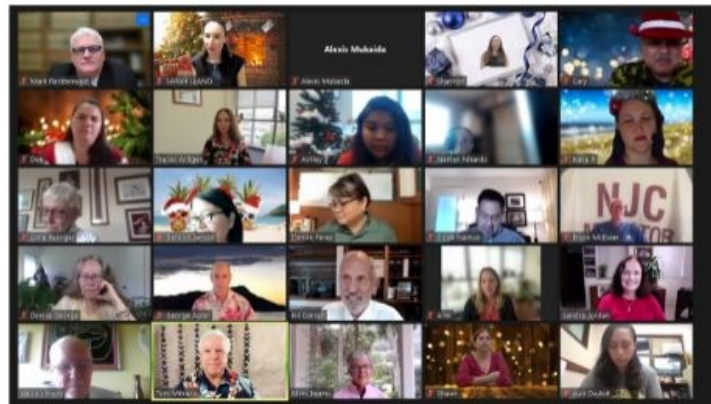
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*Bringing people together to talk,  
negotiate, and  
resolve conflict creatively.*



## Annual Recognition



## and Holiday Gathering



Once again MCP's annual recognition and holiday gathering was held via Zoom. Despite not being able to share food and provide lei and hugs to the outstanding honorees, 77 people attended the annual event to share their aloha and mahalo for the honorees and volunteer mediators who helped to make 2021 a successful year. The event commenced with opening remarks by Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald, followed by Judge Melanie May, both of whom highlighted the important role of mediation in addressing critical community needs and the value of MCP's mediators who so generously provided the services to meet those needs. Congratulations to the honorees for your valuable work in 2021!

**Tom Mitrano**, Mediator of the Year; **George Apter**, Apprentice Mediator of the Year;  
**Clyde Namuo**, District Court Mediator of the Year;  
**Mimi Beams**, Above and Beyond Mediator Award;  
**Denise George**, Special Mediator Recognition;  
**Judge Darolyn Lendio Heim**, Lawyer as Problem-Solver;  
**Moanike'ala Crowell**, Effective Advocacy in Mediation;  
**David Chee, Jillian Okamoto, and Dan O'Meara**, Conch Shell Award;  
**Windward Community Action Team and Ko'olau Housing Hui**, Community Peace Award;  
**Kenna StormoGipson**, Friend of the Center Award; and  
**Representatives Nadine Nakamura and Troy Hashimoto**, Peacemaker Award.

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## GROWING PROGRAMS

### DISTRICT COURT MEDIATIONS

With COVID restrictions still in place, District Court mediations continued to be conducted via Zoom or in-person at MCP. Last year, 782 cases from District Court were opened (an increase of 59 cases from calendar year 2019), with 475 mediations conducted. Because the mediations weren't conducted at the courthouse, the cases were scheduled for 1.5-hour sessions (instead of the 20-minute sessions conducted on-site at court prior to the pandemic). The longer sessions provided the parties with more time to share their stories and negotiate agreements.



MCP is grateful to the District Court mediators who quickly adjusted to the new process, frequently mediating two cases back to back. They include: Mimi Beams, George Clifford, Clyde Namuo, Poranee Natadecha-Sponsel, Jo Ann Kocher, Teena Urban, Hope Bennett, Dion Dizon, Reed Dasenbrock, Giuseppe Leone, Ken Goldblatt, Bob Hines, Signe Godfrey, George Apter, and Chuck Buckla.

MCP is also grateful to Judge Darolyn Lendio Heim for including MCP in regular brainstorming sessions with a broad variety of stakeholders involved with District Court, and for presenting to the mediators to keep them up to date on current court policies.

### DOMESTIC MEDIATIONS

Domestic mediations continued to be a key area of need addressed by MCP in 2021. In addition to the many referrals from Family Court, a large volume of self-referrals from couples in conflict regarding time-sharing and co-parenting during the pandemic, were also managed. A total of 903 domestic cases, involving divorcing, unmarried, and divorced couples, were opened for mediation (an increase of 165 cases from calendar year 2019). Of those cases, 565 were mediated (an increase of 106 mediations from 2019), many requiring multiple sessions. Despite high levels of emotion and contention, the mediators patiently worked with the hundreds of couples, helping them engage in difficult conversations and negotiate agreements to support their children. Feedback from the participants included:

*"Thank you so much for everything. I finally got a good night's sleep."*

*"[Mediation] has helped keep the peace between Joseph and I, so we don't get heated when discussing these important issues, especially our daughter's custody and care."*

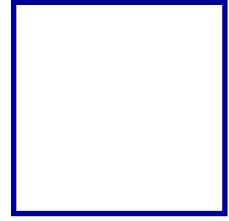
### EVICITION MEDIATION PROGRAM

MCP's eviction mediation program created in response to Act 57 and the ending of the moratorium on evictions, has continued to produce positive results helping landlords secure rent owed, keeping tenants housed, and preventing a flood of evictions in District Court. Between August 7th when the program commenced, and January 8, 2022, 1,290 cases were opened and 483 cases were mediated with 88% resulting in agreements (425 cases).

MCP is grateful to the mediators who have done amazing work with the Program. We also appreciate the wonderful partnerships with Legal Society of Hawaii, Catholic Charities, and the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement. Working closely with these organizations has enabled the mediators to quickly connect tenants with rental assistance and thereby, secure payment for the landlords. It has been an invaluable partnership. Together we have successfully assisted hundreds of landlords and tenants!



**The Mediation Center of the Pacific, Inc.**  
**1301 Young Street**  
**Honolulu, HI 96814**



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

**Accelerated Divorce Mediation Training**

*(Online via Zoom)*

\$600 per person

**Friday, Feb. 4, 1:00 - 6:00 p.m. & Saturday, Feb. 11, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**Friday, Feb. 11, 1:00 - 6:00 p.m. & Saturday, Feb. 12, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

Register here: <https://mcp808wufoo.com/forms/accelerated-divorce-mediation/>

**Basic Mediation Training**

*(Online via Zoom)*

\$600 per person

**Thursday March 3, Friday March 4, and Saturday March 5**

**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/>

**Advanced Mediation Training**

*(Online via Zoom)*

\$600 per person

**Thursday April 28, Friday April 29, and Saturday April 30**

**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/>

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