

THE CENTER LETTER

Volume 15, Issue 2

MAY 2021



THE MEDIATION CENTER OF THE PACIFIC

**SPRING IS HERE! PROVIDING RAYS OF HOPE AND PROMISE
FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE ... AND A STEADY GROWTH IN
MEDIATIONS AND TRAININGS FOR MCP!**

2021 has already been a busy year for MCP. Between January and April, in addition to receiving steady referrals of domestic, consumer-merchant, and landlord-tenant mediations from the Family and District Courts, and condominium, civil rights, and workplace mediations from self-referrals and other sources, MCP partnered with Catholic Charities on the Rental Assistance and Mediation Program, joined the collaborative initiative of the Harold K. Castle Foundation and other Windward Oahu organizations to prevent evictions, re-started the monthly Divorce Law in Hawaii Program for the public, and conducted four multi-day mediation trainings.

In the first three months of the year, 1,101 new cases were opened, and 239 cases were mediated, involving 319 mediation sessions. This means that more than 26 mediation sessions were conducted each week., or 5 - 6 sessions a day. Prior to moving to Hale O Pono and integrating online mediation into its regular services, MCP conducted 2 - 3 mediations a day, or 10 - 15 sessions a week. Thus, despite the pandemic, over the past year MCP has nearly doubled its capacity to provide mediation services. The volunteer mediators who have tirelessly mediated regularly in-person at the building, as well as via telephone, videoconference, and MCP's online chat-based program, deserve a huge shout-out for their valuable work. Without their dedication and willingness to mediate and donate thousands of hours of their time (1,468 hours were invested in the first three months of 2021), MCP would not be able to assist so many people.

A big mahalo to all of the generous donors whose gifts and financial support provided MCP with the flexibility and needed resources to make changes when and where they were needed to accommodate the growing caseload. One of the many important lessons learned during the pandemic is that it is imperative to be prepared to continually adapt, transition, and change. Thanks to MCP's many supporters and friends, MCP continues to successfully adapt and provide quality dispute resolution services for Oahu's communities! What a great way to enter the Spring season. Here's to Spring, new growth, and new beginnings!

"Spring adds new life and new joy to all that is."

- Jessica Harrelson -



In This Issue:

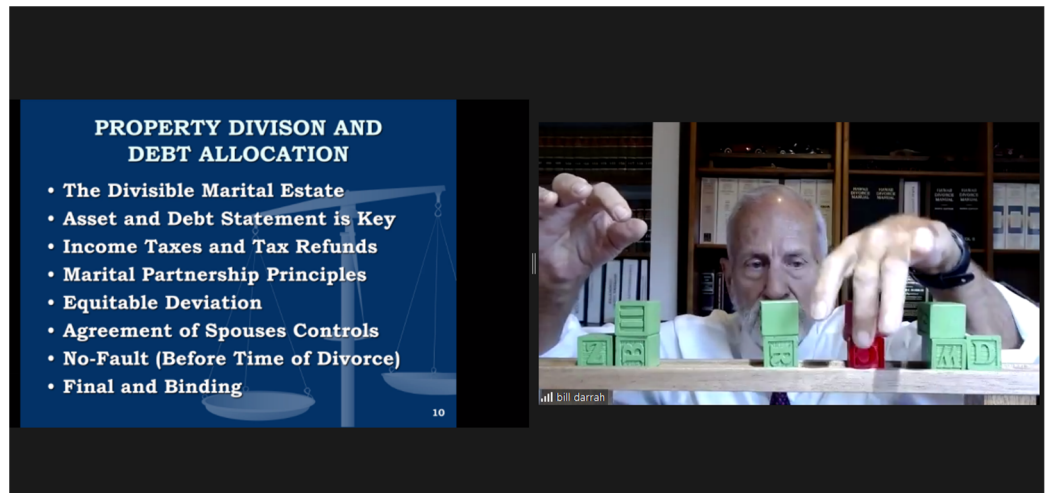
Accelerated Divorce & Basis Mediation Training	P. 2
Mahalo	P. 3-5
Peer Mediation Conference & Divorce Law in HI	P. 6
Advanced Mediation Training & Partnerships	P. 7
Mark Your Calendars	P. 8

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

ACCELERATED DIVORCE MEDIATION TRAINING

In February, MCP held its annual Accelerated Divorce Mediation Training. This three-day training helps to expand the pool of domestic mediators as well as provide a refresher for the current domestic mediators. Domestic mediations, including divorce, custody, and post-divorce, are the most requested types of mediations. Cases are referred from family court, attorneys, legal service providers, and more. Between July 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021, 561 domestic mediations were opened.

The training attendees included experienced mediators seeking to expand their range of skills and their knowledge of divorce law and issues in the domestic arena, family law attorneys, and students from the William S. Richardson School of Law who completed or were currently enrolled in the Family Law course. Upon completion of the training, the students and experienced mediators were immediately assigned to co-mediate domestic cases with mentor mediators. In addition to applying their newly learned mediation skills to help divorcing and unmarried couples work through time-sharing and co-parenting agreements, the students also completed their pro bono hours required for graduation.

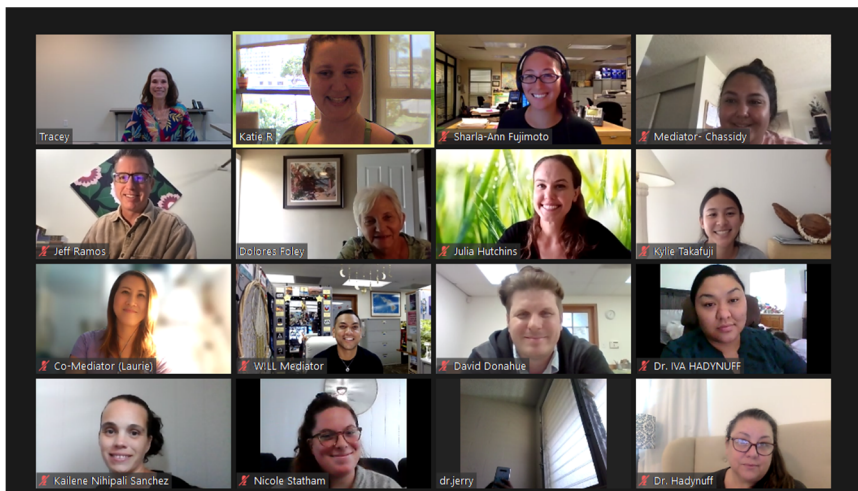


BASIC MEDIATION TRAINING

After working diligently to transition MCP's mediation services to online, MCP staff focused on the other service MCP provides to the public: mediation training. After conducting a successful first online training in December, and building on the feedback from those trainees, Basic Mediation Training was

held again in March 2021. The Zoom environment means more breaks, creative teamwork from the training team, and unfortunately, less snacks. Despite the challenges of a virtual world, the class was engaged and interested.

From the two trainings, MCP welcomed new volunteers and apprentices: Lisa Lofland, Debra Allen, George Apter, Charles Reppun, Ken Nakasone, Adam Tenouri, Dolores Foley, and Sara Aouni!



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ANNUAL STATEWIDE PEER MEDIATION CONFERENCE GOES VIRTUAL!

The Annual Statewide Peer Mediation Conference had a new format this year! Instead of the usual 1-day in-person conference, the event was divided into several workshops held on Zoom throughout April. Called “*Adventures in Peer Mediation*,” the conference-month invited students, administrators, teachers, and community members to learn about peer mediation programs, and the processes used by peer mediators to resolve conflict in their schools.

The conference workshops were short and planned during times when students could easily participate. Some of the workshops were led by Kailua High School peer mediators who explained the mediation skills they have successfully put into practice in their school. In addition to skills-building, there were also workshops on how to create and grow a peer mediation program. While the online format was a big change from previous years, it allowed people from all islands to easily participate.



Former peer mediators (left to right) Stephanie Sang, Fuatino Manu, Masa Sakaio, and Randall Machado share how peer mediation enriched their lives.

MCP has been a long-time partner in creating and putting on the Annual Peer Mediation Conference and will continue to support the conference irrespective of the format. MCP believes that teaching and encouraging youth to engage with conflict in a productive and peaceful way inspires them to be effective peacebuilding, conflict-resolving adults.

The long-term value of creating and maintaining peer mediation programs in Hawaii’s schools was reinforced by the speakers in the closing panel, moderated by MCP’s Special Programs Coordinator. Four former peer mediators shared how being a peer mediator made them more inclined to listen, to be curious, and to find solutions that actually work for everyone involved. And isn’t that our hope for every adult?

DIVORCE LAW IN HAWAII IS BACK!

Following a short hiatus in 2020 due to the pandemic, MCP decided it was time to restore the monthly Divorce Law in Hawaii program. Created by Family Law attorney William “Bill” Darrah in partnership with the Hawaii State Judiciary in 2002, the free one-hour program covers custody, property division, child support, and alimony, the difference between a contested divorce and uncontested divorce, all the ways to settle a divorce, and additional resources available to divorcing spouses. MCP was invited to join the program in 2011 to provide the public with information about the value of mediation, how it works, and how to access it. Since that time, Bill Darrah and Tracey Wiltgen, MCP’s Executive Director, have been presenting the program every month at the Hawaii Supreme Court and in 2019, also at the Family Court in Kapolei.

On February 14, 2021, MCP moved the program to the Zoom platform. Since that time, between 30 - 35 people have attended the virtual program each month. The June 15, 2021 Divorce Law in Hawaii presentation will be the 250th session!



ADVANCED MEDIATION TRAINING

MCP's annual Advanced Mediation Training was in early April this year, due to the cancellation of the 2020 November training. The 24-hour training was conducted remotely and attended by volunteer mediators as part of completing their Apprenticeship



requirements, as well as members of the public interested in developing their mediation skills to integrate into their professions. The training covered a broad variety of topics from working with attorneys, overcoming impasse, working with multiple parties, culture, accommodating persons with disabilities, and much more. MCP is grateful to the excellent trainers who shared their expertise and conducted the various training modules over the three days including: Peter Adler, Aphirak Bamrungruan, John Barkai, Lou Chang, Linda Colburn, Sharon Ferguson-Quick, David Franzel, Susan Kroe-Unabia, and Laurie Tochiki.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII PARTNERSHIP. Beyond direct mediation services, MCP offers training to community partners to strengthen the skills of their employees so they can better serve their target populations. At the end of March, MCP provided the Housing Specialists, Case Managers, and Intake Specialists of Catholic Charities Hawaii, with a two-day training on mediation skills for interactions between landlords and tenants. Held on Zoom, the training allowed the participants to learn fundamental mediation skills and how to apply them in simulated practices based on situations they have experienced while helping tenants with their housing.



MCP will follow up with the participants after they have had the opportunity to apply their newly learned skills. Continued partnerships like this help to ensure that the most vulnerable in our communities receive comprehensive services that best support their needs.



WINDWARD OAHU EVICTION PREVENTION PROGRAM. MCP is excited to be partnering with the Windward Oahu Eviction Prevention Program created by the Harold K. Castle Foundation. Through the Program, Community Action Teams are connecting tenants with needed services such as mediation, legal support, childcare, and more,

in addition to helping them to apply for rental assistance. It is a unique, collaborative program that MCP is proud to be a part of!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Basic Mediation Training

The Clarence T. C. Ching Training Institute
2nd Floor, 1301 Young Street

\$600 per person

Thursday October 21, Friday October 22, and Saturday October 23
Thursday and Friday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. & Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Basic Mediation 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 practices.

Basic Mediation Training

(Online via Zoom)

\$600 per person

Thursday December 2, 12:00 - 5:00 p.m., Friday December 3, 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday December 4, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Sunday December 5,
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

The online 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. Tips on managing mediations via Zoom are provided throughout the training. 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.

[Note: All participants must have a computer with camera, microphone, and internet access. Basic knowledge of participating in the Zoom platform is required].

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

Go to www.mediatehawaii.org to register for trainings or
contact mcpadmin@mediatehawaii.org for additional information
*Seating in trainings is limited. Early registration is encouraged.