

New Jersey Mediators Conference, October 21, 2000 Focuses on the Third Side through the Politics of Mediation and a Youth Violence Initiative

Cranbury, NJ (October 18, 2000) With trouble spots heating up world wide and with the need for seeing the third side of an issue, the Seventh Annual Conference of the New Jersey Association of Professional Mediators (NJAPM) covering the Politics of Mediation comes at a critical time. The event, which also features a special Youth Violence Initiative, is open to professionals and the lay public, is scheduled for Saturday, October 21st from 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the JFK Conference Center, 70 James Street, Edison, NJ.

In his opening remarks, Hanan M. Isaacs, Esq., President of NJAPM, will set the tone for the Conference by focusing on what Bill Ury, internationally known mediation expert and author of *Getting to Peace*, calls the third side--or how the mediation community can move from peace keeping, to peace making to peace building in every area of life--home, school, work and the community.

In the Conference keynote address, "The Role of ADR and Making the Law Work", Robert Hirshon, President-Elect of the American Bar Association, will discuss the interdisciplinary role of mediators and the legal system. NJAPM's members currently cover the fields of law, mental health, accounting, engineering, and business. Mr. Hirshon will address how those disciplines can and do interact to bring the best of the marketplace to individuals and groups in conflict, whether they seek resolution in court-based mediation programs or in the private sector.

Mr. Hirshon, a litigator who practices in Maine in both state and federal courts, has special experience in the insurance industry. Mr. Hirshon, who holds degrees from the University of Michigan, is widely published, has lectured throughout the country, and has been active at all levels of the American Bar Association.

The New Jersey ADR community is looking at creating a statewide Dispute Resolution Center. Another special feature of this Conference will be finding out more about the experience of two states that already have programs in place in the session called, "Creating a State Dispute Resolution Center: Lessons from Florida and Maryland." The session will be presented by Sharon Press, Director of the Florida Dispute Resolution Center and Immediate Past President of Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution (SPIDR) and Rachel A. Wohl, Executive Director of the Maryland Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Commission.

Gale Wachs, a lawyer, professional mediator and the Conference organizer said, "This year's Conference reflects NJAPM's assumption of a leadership role in the new millennium. NJAPM's membership has elected to assume responsibility individually and collectively for not only educating the public, but leading the public in peace keeping and peace making efforts."

NJAPM's Conference is proud to sponsor New Jersey's first statewide initiative on youth violence. NJAPM's President, Hanan Isaacs, moderator of the Youth Violence Initiative, has invited top experts in the country to teach and learn what can be done in New Jersey. The Youth Violence Initiative will feature Louise M. Peloquin, Ph.D., Communications Director, US Department of Health and Human Services National School Violence Initiative, and Professor David Trevaskis of Temple University Law School, representing the American Bar Association Dispute Resolution Section. It will be a working session of representatives from statewide and national organizations interested in pooling knowledge and experience.

According to Mr. Isaacs, "We are living in an increasingly complex and conflict-based society. We need to strengthen our community's immune system when it comes to youth violence prevention, early detection, and containment. It is more than having student peer mediators and peacekeepers in the schools, although those are important to the process. It is literally about changing the way people see and treat one another. We need to focus on our children's communication and life skills as never before. They are our future. What could be more important to our society and our world?"

The Youth Violence Initiative is envisioned as a coordinated group identifying the causes of youth violence, methods for mitigating it, creating cultural exchange, and utilizing mediation as a method for children and

young adults to resolve disputes before they turn violent. The participants and contributors include: New Jersey Association of School Psychologists; SPIDR; Center for Youth Policy and Programs; New Jersey Department of State; ABA Dispute Resolution Section; School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University; YOUTH M-POWER; Prudential Insurance Co.; Countess, Kingett & Associates; and Market Entry, Inc.

The following workshops, which run concurrently from 2:00PM to 3:30PM, are designed to educate and update those who practice mediation as well as those who are considering entering this growing field or working with professional mediators to solve business or personal disputes. Participants and presenters are attorneys, accountants, mental health professionals, human resource people and others with special training and experience in the practice of mediation.

Workshop 1 - Basics: Constructing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), presented by George and Beverly Hays will explain constructing a MOU consistent with NJAPM's guidelines for accreditation. George Hays is a PE and President- Elect of NJAPM. Beverly Hays is a therapist and past NJAPM Board Member.

Workshop 2 - Reading Tax Returns and Financial Statements will highlight and explain significant items contained in tax returns and financial statements by Kalman A. Barson, a CPA and mediator. According to Barson, "Mediation is not an audit. This workshop will help the professional mediator understand the key points when looking at financial statements."

Workshop 3 - Political Action Forum is presented by Ed Peloquin, a professional mediator. Peloquin will lead a discussion on three topics of concern to mediators: changing the three hour free rule; is the divorce process too fast in New Jersey for the effective use of mediation, and should there be uniform qualifications for mediators in all government sponsored dispute resolution programs.

The Conference workshops are designed to educate and update those who practice mediation as well as those who are considering entering this growing field or working with professional mediators to solve business or personal disputes. Participants and presenters are attorneys, accountants, mental health professionals, human resource people and others with special training and experience in the practice of mediation.

The cost of the full day Conference, including continental breakfast, lunch and Conference materials, is \$99 for members of NJAPM, \$129 for non-members. This Conference satisfies 6 hours of continuing education. The credits are also recognized by the Academy of Family Mediators. All NJAPM accredited members are required to have 20 hours of continuing education every two years for reaccreditation. For more information and to register, contact Shawna Wilker at 800-981-4800.

Since the field of mediation is growing and changing at a rapid pace, this annual conference is an opportunity to update participants on the newest research and legislation, to improve their skills and to network and brainstorm with other professional mediators.

The New Jersey Association of Professional Mediators is a statewide, non-profit professional organization dedicated to fostering excellence in the field of mediation; promoting mediation as the preferred method of dispute resolution; encouraging and providing mediation education to the public, the government and the professions; training and accrediting professional mediators; and protecting the public through a Code of Ethics and Standards for Mediators. NJAPM distributes to the public two lists of those accredited mediators for divorce and family matters and for business and commercial matters. The Association can be reached at 1-800-981-4800.