



talk  
works.

annual report, 2014-15

*Over 30 years  
of community  
service!*



## Dear Supporters of CDRC,

All of you share with me the privilege of being part of the Community Dispute Resolution Center. I have never been associated with a not-for-profit that had such a positive impact on the lives of individuals and families as ours does.

There is something about the collaboration and presence in our three county region, Chemung, Tompkins and Schuyler that is energizing and exciting. Very few, if any, of the social services agencies in our region encompass these counties. There is probably a reason that is true. I think the reason is because they are very 'different' counties for any number of quantifiers.

Yet, we have volunteer mediators in each of the counties who regularly mediate disputes for their county's residents. And, we have staff in each of the counties that coordinate with their Small Claims and Family Courts to offer our mediation services. It is amazing really. Mediation centers throughout New York State that are much larger than we are in terms of staff and budgets regularly look to us for 'how we do things' and 'what works for us'. Increasingly our Executive Director is involved in statewide networks to share our successes. As a small agency it is quite remarkable.

2016 will be an important year for CDRC as various funders and long-time supporters of CDRC, refocus their respective fund-raising efforts. The United Way of the Southern Tier has already indicated that they will be ending their support of CDRC over the next three years. It gives us a little time to plan, but an urgent need to increase our annual fund-raising efforts. Many of you have already heard from Jeff Shepardson about your direct financial support of CDRC and responded positively. Thank you. Funding is always a challenge and it doesn't seem to get any easier.

Efforts to strengthen the Board of Directors have been very successful. New board members from all three counties have joined us representing important institutions and agencies. Among them are Ithaca College, Cornell University, Scheinman Institute for Conflict Resolution at Cornell, and SCOPED of Schuyler County. The board currently is developing a strategic plan that will carry us through 2019.

So, it is a wonderful time – and a challenging time – to be a part of the CDRC family. As you read this Annual Report you will learn of the accomplishments we have had this year. And I hope that you will share my enthusiasm for CDRC's work and join me with your financial support of the work we do.

—Michael Hartney, President, Board of Directors

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# Facilitating Effective Participation In The Heated Public Meeting

It started with “going for the heat” in the communities served by CDRC in Ithaca, Elmira, and Watkins Glen, NY. In looking around, it was evident that often the heat was emanating from our local municipal boards (town, school, zoning, planning, etc.). Our local communities have flared up along the fault lines of sustainability, race relations and racism, sharing of services, police-civilian tensions, bullying and many others.

Often times, when these topics made their way onto a local board meeting agenda, the result was a chaotic process that only heightened tensions and diminished trust; all of which eroded community. Believing that conflict holds a wealth of opportunity for individuals and their communities, CDRC started working to articulate a process formula that would incorporate Transformative Conflict Theory and

Transformative Mediation Practice into the sphere of public facilitation.

We reached out to the Tompkins County Council of Governments, who embraced the idea of an elected officials training that would foster not only greater meeting efficiency, but more effective and productive conversation. Jeff Shepardson collaborated with two veteran local town-supervisors; Don Barber (Town of Caroline)

and Richard Driscoll (Town of Newfield) and gradually developed a training agenda that we call; “Facilitating Effective Participation in the Heated Public Meeting.” We have since provided the training to nearly 100 elected and appointed officials in Tompkins County alone. The training was also presented at the Genesee Regional Planning Council annual conference to over 90 attendees and to 15 members of the City of

**“Exactly what I needed; exceeded my expectations!”** –Board

**“I have a public meeting coming up that will be run differently based on what I learned today.”**

–Municipal

Rochester's City council and planning departments. Recently NYSRA hosted a spotlight workshop on the training at their annual conference in Saratoga Springs. Another unanticipated benefit is that CDRC is now being called to facilitate some of our communities' more heated public meetings; including a spring town hall meeting in Danby, NY and a town hall meeting just this month in Enfield, NY. It is certainly good visibility for the center as we broaden our community-building work through mediated / facilitated conversations.

Looking ahead, Jeff Shepardson will be convening a roundtable of practitioners to consider a strategy for further development of this project both in terms of depth and breadth as we explore possibilities for a research component, along with continued sharpening

and refining of the material, and establishing regional partnerships for delivery of the training product. If, as you read this spotlight article, you have any further thoughts for potential points

of delivery for the training, especially in Chemung or Schuyler Counties, please be in touch with Jeff Shepardson in the Ithaca office at 607-273-9347 or email at shepardson@cdrc.org.

***"This is a very needed training."***

***—Village Mayor***

***"I will definitely communicate and listen differently with people."*** —Board Member

***"I definitely feel more prepared for future board meetings!"*** —Board Member

***"I will use rules and process more frequently now"*** —Board Member

***"I plan on being more proactive and work to set up a firmer framework"*** —Supervisor

***"This training needs to be presented to the U.S. Congress!"*** —Non-Profit E.D.

# PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING...

## DONORS SUPPORTING CDRC'S MISSION

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United Methodist Church of Mecklenburg  
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Chester Williams  
Patricia Woodworth  
Richard & Cheryl Young  
Gail Zussman & John Dobbins

## CDRC MEDIATORS

### MEDIATORS WITH CDRC FOR 30+ YEARS

Kirby Edmonds  
Judy Saul

### MEDIATORS WITH CDRC 20+ YEARS

Laura Branca  
Peggy Walbridge  
Leslyn McBean-Clairborne

### MEDIATORS WITH CDRC 15+ YEARS

Dorothy Caldwell  
Satomi Hill  
Jürgen Kerber  
Sandy Rhodes

### MEDIATORS WITH CDRC 5+ YEARS

Darlene Barela  
Sharron Beckworth  
Sherron Brown

Judy Burrill  
Kathy Carpenter  
Troy Council  
Raymond Gozzi  
David Kay  
Jim Ketcham  
Tim Logue  
Ann Martin  
Cili Phillips  
Mike Wald  
Brian Williams

### MEDIATORS WITH CDRC 5 YEARS OR LESS

Shirley Brown  
Tammy Brown  
Jana Bugliosi  
JR Clairborne  
Beth Cohen  
Sherry Colb  
Cindy Emmer  
LJ Freitag  
Michael Hartney

Srivalli Indrani  
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Erica Marx  
John McNeill  
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Jim O'Brien  
Moira Osorio  
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Kimberly Anderson  
Lydia Dempsey  
Sue-Je Gage  
Laurel Kiorpes-Parker  
Sarah Rubenstein-Gills  
Laura Ward

# PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING THESE ORGANIZATIONS...

CDRC wishes to express our deepest appreciation to organizations who provided funding through Grants and Service Fees.

Cayuga Heights Community Nursery School

Cornell University Government & Community Relations

Cornell University Law School

GST Boces

Ithaca College Office of Human Resources

Montgomery County Mediation Center

New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets

New York State Dispute Resolution Association

New York State Unified Court System

Newfield Central School District

Scheinman Institute

Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and  
Development

SUNY Cortland

Tompkins County

Tompkins Community Action-Head Start

Town of Danby

United Way of Schuyler County

United Way of the Southern Tier

United Way of Tompkins County

Village at Ithaca

# 2014-2015 Finances

## INCOME

Contributions, Grants, Gifts	8,092
NY State Unified Court System	209,196
Case Fees	5,470
United Ways*	55,076
Tompkins County	40,125
Training Income	18,610
Other	390

*\*Chemung, Schuyler & Tompkins Counties*

## EXPENSES

Program Services*	291,155
Administration	41,106
Development	10,275

*\*Mediation, Facilitation & Training*

[www.cdrc.org](http://www.cdrc.org)

### [www.cdrc.org](http://www.cdrc.org)

Were you one of the 7,244 visits to CDRC's Website this past year? 85% of those visits were from new visitors. Our website reached visitors from around the world including; Brazil, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom and India.

Did you visit our website this past year? If so, we hope you enjoyed your visit, please come back again soon.

If not, please plan your visit soon to [www.cdrc.org](http://www.cdrc.org)



### Facebook

Were you one of the 1,101 who viewed our posts on our Facebook Page? If so, thanks for viewing. If not, please visit our page, like us and check out our posts.

<https://facebook.com/CDRCtalkworks>

The GoodSearch logo, featuring the word "GoodSearch" in a blue sans-serif font with a yellow arc above the letter "o".

### GoodSearch

Were you one of the 122 supporters who raised \$178.63 for CDRC through Goodsearch and Goodshop? Thank you for your support. If you'd like to support CDRC when you search the internet or shop online visit <http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/community-dispute-resolution-center-cdrc>

# PEACEMAKER AWARD: Cornell University's Office of Community Relations

In Partnership with GIAC, CDRC selected Cornell University's Office of Community Relations for the 2015 Martin Luther King, Jr. Peacemaker Award.

The mission of the Office of Community Relations is to connect the campus and the local community and support proactive, equitable ideas about shared challenges and opportunities in one of America's greatest college towns. Our goals revolve around timely sharing of information and a daily focus on accessibility, transparency, and hospitality. Cornell is proud that Ithaca is its home community. Community Relations staff works with community and campus leaders on matters of mutual interest on a number of issues tied to Tompkins County's quality of life—including area infrastructure, sustainability, public schools, economic development, transportation, and planning.

In an excerpt from this year's nominations: "Over several years, Cornell University's Office of Community Relations has quietly led with the bedrock principles of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Peacemaker Award by developing collaborative and progressive initiatives for the common good, under a broad and inclusive umbrella. Its efforts have revolved around creative and consistent media, and proactive meetings, neither one of them one-offs in response to a crisis, but tools that are used for work and connectivity on a daily basis.

Last year's winner, Dr. Baruch Whitehead presented the award to Community Relations Director Gary Stewart as part of the GIAC annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Community Breakfast.



*"Almost always, the creative dedicated minority has made the world better."*

*—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

# SPECIAL EVENT

In April of this year, CDRC hosted a visit by Dr. Joe Folger (co-founder and president of the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation [www.transformativemediation.org](http://www.transformativemediation.org)), to Ithaca and the Scheinman Institute, School of ILR, Cornell. Folger had a full schedule that included a student / faculty luncheon, a keynote at an evening reception hosted by CDRC and Scheinman, and an all-day workshop to a full room entitled "Responding, not Reacting to Conflict in the Workplace." Joe was right at home and greatly enjoyed both days. We were excited about this step between Scheinman and the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation and look forward to further collaborations between the two Institutes. A special thanks to David Lipsky (Director, Scheinman Institute) and Katrina Nobles (title, Scheinman & CDRC Board Member) for going the extra mile to make it all happen!



# This past year our volunteer mediators:

- 1 mediated 137 cases
- 2 invested an impressive 391 hours facilitating conversations about people's differences, and another 1281 hours of training and continuing education
- 3 contributed professional services easily valued at \$125,400\*

*\*NYS Office of ADR/CIP Alternative Dispute Resolution Court Improvement Programs sets rates for value of volunteer time*

## JUST THIS PAST YEAR...

- 1 CDRC talked with 1577 people about conflicts or difficult situations they face
- 2 737 individuals chose mediation/conciliation to work through their conflict
- 3 593 minor children benefitted when their parents or caregivers attempted to cooperatively resolve their differences.
- 4 Provided training and facilitation to over 15 local businesses, organizations and educational institutions, totaling 304 individuals.

## "Home Away From Home"

CDRC was contacted by out-of-state parents whose 18-year-old daughter had run-away from home with no indication as to where she had gone. With the help of a Private Investigator, the parents located their child here in Ithaca, NY. A local school counselor suggested the family consider using CDRC mediation as a way of meeting with their daughter to discuss their situation. Everyone agreed and scheduled a mediation that included the parents, daughter, and school counselor.

Two CDRC mediators facilitated the mediation. It was a difficult and poignant conversation. Issues were discussed in the safety of the mediation room that had yet to fully surface. The family was able to speak with more honesty and candor, helping to create greater understanding. There were no easy answers, but plans were made for creating a better support network for the daughter, who chose to remain in New York, while agreeing to regular contact moving forward. CDRC mediators reminded the family that CDRC also provides phone mediations for those times when everyone cannot be physically present.

Later, CDRC received a very generous donation from the parents, who had since returned home, and a brief note of thanks: "We sincerely appreciate your help with our daughter; we are grateful!" Later, one of the mediators commented; "This note reminds me that one never knows what helps and what doesn't, which speaks brilliantly to the true effectiveness of Transformative Mediation; it allows space for parties to speak their own truth, in whatever language, in whatever form. It is an honor to be part of CDRC."



## **CDRC BOARD MEMBERS**

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