



annual report
2020-21

*Conflict Happens
and Mediation
Can Help!!*



Dear Supporters of CDRC,

Sometimes in a mediation you wonder if a shift will ever happen between the parties. 2021 has been like that. Early on we had great hopes that vaccinations would bring an end to the pandemic early in the year. We all got our vaccinations. Then a new issue arose, a variant. Eventually we have been able to get a booster – but vaccinations for infants, children and teenagers lag far behind. We are still in the midst of it. As I said, sometimes in a mediation you wonder if a shift will ever happen between the parties.

But you know what? It does. Transformative Mediation, or practice, works. And despite all of the pressure to “fix” things and suggest “better” strategies, parties actually can make their own choices. They just need a mediator willing to listen, support and stay with them through their dispute. This I know from experience.

2021 has not been like 2020. Then we scrambled to learn about conducting mediations on Zoom. Staff had to learn to work remotely without personal interaction. The CDRC Board had to shift completely to remote committee and board meetings. But 2021 has been different. True, we don’t know how much longer we will have to operate this way. But at least we have become successful in managing the challenges.

Mediations are happening – every week. Staff have trained mediators to use Zoom effectively. Parties still need CDRC to work through their disputes: parenting plans, Covid precautions, landlord issues, and family disagreements. The court system has made filing petitions easier for parties and CDRC staff. To say that CDRC has found a way to be successful in these uncharted waters is an understatement. Great credit is due to our Executive Director and Staff who have kept CDRC going through it all.

When will we be back to “normal”? “Normal”? We are probably forever changed in the way that we do things – but that is good. What has not changed is that we need your financial support to continue to do what we do. Board members are financially committed to CDRC and we need you, too. These Covid times are financially challenging for non-profits like CDRC. Your continued financial support is particularly essential.

On to 2022! Stay safe.

Michael Hartney
President, CDRC Board

CHEMUNG COUNTY
215 East Church Street
Elmira, NY 14901
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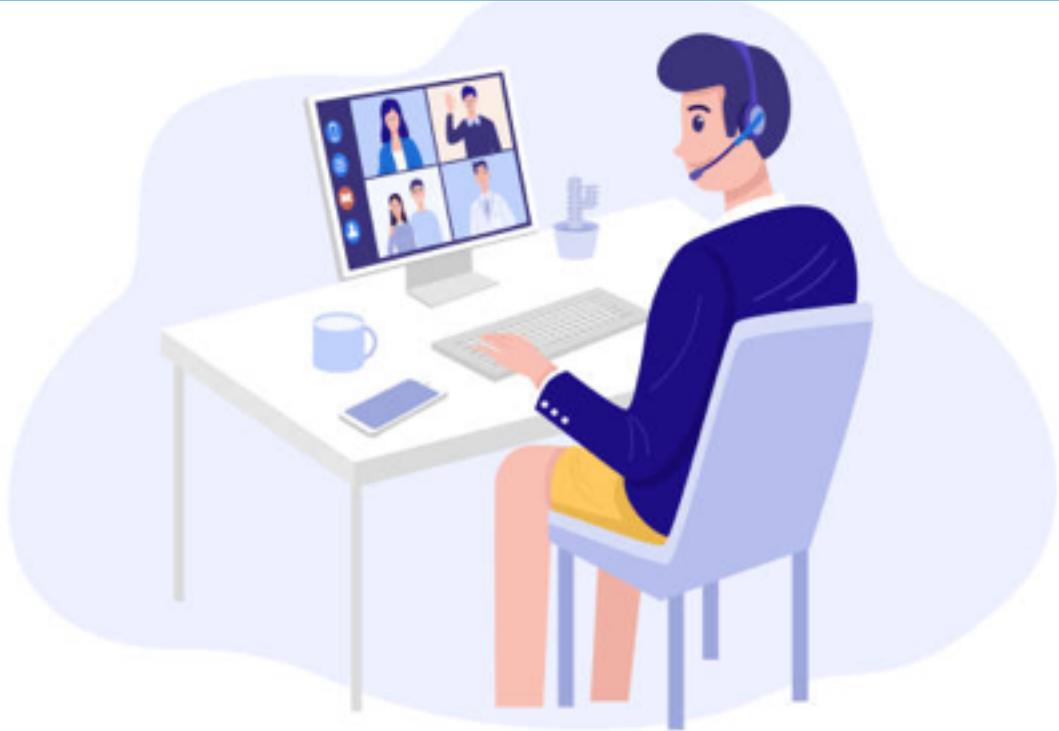
SCHUYLER COUNTY
105 9th St. Unit15
Watkins Glen, NY 14891
Tel. 607.535.6860
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TOMPKINS COUNTY
171 East MLK, Jr./State Street
Center Ithaca Box 111
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MARCH 20, 2020
Albany, NY

Governor Cuomo Signs the 'New York State on PAUSE' Executive Order

CORONAVIRUS
HEALTH PUBLIC SAFETY

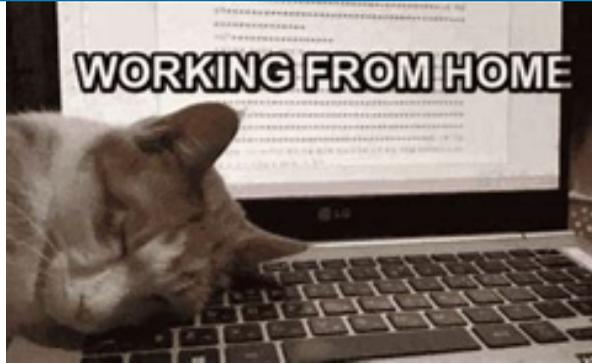


CDRC's Remote Services Are Now Available!!

For the safety of our staff, volunteers and clients, CDRC is following the directives of the **New York State on PAUSE** policy. Although the directives have caused us to temporarily close our offices in Ithaca, Elmira and Watkins Glen, and we are not able to meet with you in-person, **we are happy to announce that our staff has developed some excellent REMOTE SERVICE skills!!**

All of the CDRC services you've come to rely on, including intake services, mediation, conciliation and conflict coaching and much more are still available but you won't need to travel to our office. You can access them from the safety and comfort of your home.

Here is a list of our services that are currently available using our Remote Services options:



Intake

Intake services consist of gathering information, discussing the conflict and CDRC's services that can be helpful in the situation. This service can be done via zoom, email, phone or text.



Mediation

Mediation provides the opportunity to present your views, discuss and explore concerns, improve communication, work toward mutual understanding, define next steps, and if you choose, resolve your conflict. This service can be done via zoom or phone.



Conciliation

Conciliation is a process that works for parties who have worked out the terms of a solution and need a third party (usually staff) to act as a go-between, assisting parties in creating appropriate documentation as needed. Although courts are currently closed, CDRC staff can help create court documents to submit to the court. This service can be done via phone or email.



Conflict Coaching

Conflict Coaching Conflict coaching consists of a one-on-one private and confidential process with a trained coach to help discuss a difficult situation. It's an opportunity to talk about and examine a conflict situation and make clear and informed decisions in a neutral space. This service can be done via zoom or phone.

**PLEASE CONTACT CDRC TO LEARN ABOUT THE MANY WAYS
WE CAN CONTINUE TO PROVE THAT TALK WORKS!!!**

607-273-9347 • 607-734-9087

cdrc@cdrc.org • www.cdrc.org

PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING...

DONORS SUPPORTING CDRC'S MISSION, 2020-21

Jacqueline Acome
Leisa Alger
Theresa Alt
Anonymous
Legrace Benson
Mitchell Bobrow
Rebecca Bonsignore
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Kathleen Carpenter
Daniel Clay
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Community Foundation
of Elmira
Karen Comstock
Elizabeth Demarest
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Stephen Penningroth
Sam Pinkleton
Judy Saul & Regi Teasely
Susan Robinson
David Ronen
Gili Ronen
Mihal Ronen
Kathryn Russell
Dennis Scheck
Kathleen Schlather
Steve Family Group
Margaret Walbridge
Charles Walcott
Patricia Woodworth
Joel & Cathy Zumoff

The importance of our volunteers!

VOLUNTEERS AT CDRC come from a variety of backgrounds, including education, business, legal, social work, and a variety of other. Volunteers...

- support the empowerment of others.
- give back to the community and develop valuable communication and transformative conflict resolution skills.
- are professionally trained community volunteers that have met the requirements established by the New York State Unified Court System & trained in Transformative Mediation.

Harnessing the Value of Volunteers

Some things in life are hard to value — love, passion, dedication, selflessness. These are all attributes that the CDRC volunteer mediators embody. With their busy lives, they have found time to volunteer continuously at CDRC.

Our mediators have been the backbone for our program delivery thru transformative mediation for Tompkins, Chemung, and Schuyler Counties.

It is essential to calculate the value of the time and commitment by each of our volunteers. It is a great way to showcase that volunteering may be priceless, but it isn't free. Our volunteers contribute real value, and make tangible contributions to serving, continued training to advance their skills for transformative mediation where we see real change happens for the clients we serve.

Thanks to their support in 2021, the volunteer mediators at CDRC provided virtual mediation, so we could continue to serve all three counties in Tompkins, Chemung, and Schuyler. We are humbled by the strength and their endless commitment demonstrated by our volunteers, and proud to highlight the important role volunteers play in our community.

With great appreciation,
CDRC STAFF

“*The best way
to find yourself
is to lose yourself
in the service of
others.*”

—Gandhi

CDRC's Mediators

Mediators with CDRC for 30+ years

Judy Saul
Peggy Walbridge

Mediators with CDRC for 20+ years

Dorothy Caldwell
Leslyn McBean-Clairborne
Ray Gozzi

Mediators with CDRC for 15+ years

Sandy Rhodes

Mediator with CDRC for 10+ years

Judy Burrill
Sherron Brown
Troy Council
David Kay
Ann Martin

Mediators with CDRC for 5+ years

Tammy Brown
Cindy Emmer
LJ Freitag
Michael Hartney
Emily Karr-Cook
Jane Murphy
Mary Newhart
Sidney Whitfield

Mediators with CDRC for 5 years or less

LeGrace Benson
Timothy Blandford
Richard Biesanz
Sherry Colb
Daniel Clay
Vincent Ciampolillo
Lydia Dempsey
Linda Falkson
Charles Lyles
Michael Nyre
Moira Osorio
Kim Pesenti
Kristin Schamel
Diane Withiam

Lemon Law Arbitrators

Daniel Clay
L. J. Freitag
Cynthia Lion
Kristin Schamel
David Stotz

Mediating helps me become a better listener.

And I would like to think that my co-mediators and I show others the value of active listening.

Mediating also makes me less self-centered since a good listener empathizes with the feelings of others. More accurately, it expands my sense of self, as one's relationships, even fleeting ones, are an essential part of one's identity."

—Rick Biesanz,
a CDRC mediator

Client's Testimonials

Very helpful in breaking through a fear of communicating.

Mediation is always helpful.

It's important that I didn't sense any gender preferences.

Was extremely helpful, I think some progress was made and that is very important considering the other person and I were not able to talk at all.

Very kind and gentle.

I was nervous about the mediation at first but that quickly went away the mediators were professional and explained everything it was a good experience and a much better solution than court.

Very appreciated for enabling us to communicate.

Because less conflict came up this session, we made more progress toward a parenting plan for court and a communication plan generally. Mediators (as witnesses, clarifiers, recorders) are invaluable! Much appreciated.

I so appreciate the support in communicating in a safe situation. I have been yelled at in the past and was not comfortable speaking.

I never would have thought that the other person whom I was in mediation with had already worked out getting a rebate so he would get paid and baited me.

I think it was reasonably helpful. They were very empathetic and helped clarify what we were feeling and thinking.

During a ten-month period between November 2020 and September 2021, the NYS Unified Court System administered a standardized post-mediation survey to study how clients experience the mediation process. Clients who participated in court-referred mediation at a Community Dispute Resolution Center (CDRC) were given a survey to complete after their mediation session. Paper surveys were administered for in-person mediations, and an online survey was utilized for cases mediated online. Cases included a variety of matters referred by Family Courts, City Courts, Town and Village Courts, Supreme Courts, and Surrogates Courts.



of CDRC mediation clients were satisfied with their mediation experience and **WOULD RECOMMEND MEDIATION TO OTHERS.**

CDRC mediation clients also reported that they agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements. These high levels of CDRC client satisfaction are particularly notable because they align closely with the CDRC's commitment to the principles of client self-determination, procedural justice, and trauma-informed services.

-  **94%** The mediation process was clearly explained to me.
-  **93%** The mediator(s) were neutral and fair.
-  **92%** The mediator(s) listened to me and understood my concerns.
-  **91%** I was able to explain my point of view and how I felt.



CDRC clients indicated high levels of satisfaction with mediators and the mediation process, regardless of whether they participated online or in-person. However, survey responses indicate that participating in online services, as opposed to in-person services, has a small, but statistically significant, negative effect on client's perception of the mediator and the process. While online services can provide a convenient option for CDRC clients, in-person sessions were rated more highly across all questions on the survey.



CDRC clients indicated high levels of satisfaction with mediators and the mediation process, regardless of the type of dispute being mediated. We analyzed client surveys in Financial Disputes, compared them to Custody, Parenting Plan, and Child Support cases, and found that there was no statistically significant effect on the clients' perception of the process based on the type of dispute addressed in mediation.



Established in 1981, the Community Dispute Resolution Centers Program (CDRCP) is an initiative of the New York State Unified Court System (UCS) in collaboration with independent not-for-profit organizations. This statewide network of CDRCs provides mediation, conciliation, facilitation, arbitration and other forms of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) to help individuals, families, and communities constructively respond to conflict. The CDRCP is internationally recognized as a model of providing free and low-cost access to high quality ADR services for residents in New York's 62 counties.

About the Mediation Exit Survey Data

A total of 1,038 surveys were submitted between November 2020 and September 2021 with 927 of them included in the final analysis; surveys that did not include complete data were eliminated from the sample.

Notable features of the sample of surveys include:

- 88.5% of surveys submitted were for cases involving Financial Disputes or Custody, Parenting Plan, and Child Support cases. The remaining cases were split among housing, divorce, and other cases.
- Clients from 54 of New York's 62 counties are included in the sample, including surveys from every CDRC.
- 93.5% of surveys collected were completed by parties to the conflict, 5.0% were completed by attorneys representing parties, and 1.5% were completed by other supporting participants.
- The sample is slightly skewed to clients who filed the initial petition in court, making up 56% of the total collected surveys.
- Surveys were split relatively evenly for mediations conducted in-person cases (52.8%) and those cases mediated online (47.2%).
- The percentage of mediated cases that resulted in an agreement (79.8%) was slightly greater than the total CDRC mediated caseload for the same period (75.2%).

"I truly appreciated the fact I could avoid going down to the court. It saved me a lot of time."

–Financial Mediation client
from Dispute Resolution Center

"I genuinely had a great experience and am very grateful for the opportunity to work with a mediator."

–Financial Mediation client
from New York Peace Institute

"I absolutely love the mediation center and the mediators. They are extremely professional, but also very kind and gentle. I finally feel heard for the first time ever and I have the mediation center to thank for that."

–Custody and Parenting Plan client
from Mediation Center of Dutchess County

"I especially appreciated this. My experiences with court have been relatively traumatic and I don't enjoy going to the courthouse. This was so comfortable, effective and healing. Very grateful for this experience."

–Custody and Parenting Plan client
from the Center for Dispute Settlement

"I am very glad that I asked for mediation. I am glad I was able to use a process that was less contentious, less expensive, and highly successful."

–Financial Mediation client
from Mediation Matters

"Very helpful. Mediators were kind, insightful and fair."

–Custody and Parenting Plan client
from Resolution Center

About CDRC Mediators

CDRC mediations are facilitated by expert CDRC staff members as well as over 750 professionally trained and supervised volunteer mediators who donate their time and expertise to serve their communities. Each year, volunteer mediators donated more than 18,000 hours of service. While there is no minimum educational degree or professional experience needed to volunteer with a CDRC, volunteer mediators complete a rigorous certification process, which involves:

- At least thirty hours of an initial professional mediation training provided by a UCS ADR Office-certified trainer (advanced training in specific case matters is also required),
- Experiential apprenticeship in which the trainees mediate alongside experienced mediators, and
- Performance-based assessment by a CDRC staff who observes each apprentice, assesses their abilities as a mediator, and determines whether they can be awarded CDRC certification.

CDRC volunteers come from all walks of life with a variety of life experiences and professional backgrounds. Their diverse professional backgrounds, and personal life experiences, contribute to the quality and efficacy of their services. CDRC volunteers are a dedicated group, with 250 volunteers serving more than 10 years.



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PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING THESE ORGANIZATIONS...

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

AIM

EAC Montessori School

Elmira City School District

Groundswell Center

New York State Agricultural Mediation Program

New York State Dispute Resolution Association

New York State Unified Court System

OAR of Tompkins County

PFC Consulting

Quill & Dagger Alumni Association

The Learning Web

Tompkins County

United Way of Schuyler County

United Way of Tompkins County

2020-2021 Finances

PLEASE NOTE:
Review is not yet
complete.
Please check back
frequently for the
updated finances)

INCOME

Contributions, Grants, Gifts	8,260
NY State Unified Court System	258,079
Case Fees	5,095
United Ways*	12,943
Tompkins County	38,323
Training Income	31,300
Other	4,307
PPP Loan	46,102

**Schuyler and Tompkins Counties*

EXPENSES

Program Services*	302,858
Administration	42,757
Development	10,689

**Mediation, Facilitation and Training*

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Were you one of the over 1,502 visitors 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>

Amazon

Help make a difference. Shop AmazonSmile Charity Lists at smile.amazon.com/gp/ch/list/22-3093783 to support our mission.





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Savannah Thomas, Youth Services Coordinator

Gina Tinker-Williams, Director of CDRC Programs

Melissa Hollister, WebSite Manager Volunteer

