



2018-2019
ANNUAL REPORT

# CCR MISSION STATEMENT

CCR works with individuals. communities, courts and other institutions to manage and resolve conflict.

# **CCR CORE VALUES**

### Core Value #1: Commitment to Serving the Community

- Apply consistency and clarity in message and practice
- Be responsive
- Exhibit flexibility and resiliency

### **Core Value #2: Collaborative Spirit**

- Engage and involve one another
- Celebrate each others' successes
- Pitch in and find ways to contribute
- Give and receive constructive feedback

### Core Value #3: Inclusivity

- Value individual differences
- Create space for new and different ideas
- Exhibit transparent communication and understanding

#### Core Value #4: Strive for Personal Best

- Continuously learn and improve
- Take responsibility
- Think outside the box

### **Core Value #5: Inspire Growth and Success**

- Support and encourage each other
- Embrace and learn from challenges

# WHAT ARE CORE VALUES?

Core values are a set of beliefs that enable an organization to function at its highest level, and are shown through behaviors that members are expected to exhibit and practice.

Core values apply internally to staff and volunteers, and externally to client and stakeholder relationships.

# Core Values guide an organization and its members when:

- Clarifying the organization's identity and supporting its strategic plan.
- Leading meetings and projects.
- Making decisions or resolving disputes.
- Educating the public about the organization.

#### **DEAR CCR FAMILY,**

For over 40 years, CCR has provided free mediation services to parents, families, youth, landlords and tenants, roommates, small business owners and consumers, schools, religious institutions and community organizations. These services help build strong communities and families, and they preserve and strengthen relationships.

In the past two years, CCR has provided free mediation services to more than 10,000 community members and has trained more than 1,200 individuals in mediation and conflict management. Our volunteers and staff have worked with clients in some of the most difficult moments of their lives. helping them navigate through disputes that are often sources of great distress. Because of you - the CCR community - we have been able to expand our services to help even more Chicagoland area residents. CCR now partners with the Better Business Bureau and the Illinois Department of Labor, provides training and mediation services at the Cook County Juvenile

Temporary Detention Center, offers expanded large-group facilitation services and has enhanced its Mediator Mentorship Program. A team of dedicated CCR volunteers and staff outlined CCR's Core Values and is working to embed them deeply within all aspects of our organization.

This work would not be possible without YOU!

Each of you – volunteer mediators and trainers, Volunteer Council members, Board and Auxiliary Board members, past Presidents, funders, community partners and staff members – have a key role to play in helping CCR move forward. Each new program we begin and each new volunteer we train contributes to strengthening our community and preserving relationships. We extend our thanks for all you have done and all you continue to do for CCR, and look forward to all we can accomplish in the next 40 years and beyond.

Sincerely,



Gene Cahill
President, Board of Directors





Cassandra Lively, Ph.D. Executive Director

# JUVENILE-FAMILY MEDIATION PROGRAM

Since 1992, CCR has provided restorative justice-based Victim-Offender Mediation in partnership with the Cook County Juvenile Court. In many of these cases, as mediators met with youth and victims, they discovered additional conflict between youth and their family members. This underlying family conflict often made it difficult for the youth to move forward. To address family conflict, CCR now provides an opportunity for youth and their parents, guardians, siblings and other family members to sit down with a mediator Referrals to this program come from juvenile court and also through a partnership with the Chicago Police Department's Juvenile



Intervention and Support Center (JISC). Through this partnership, probation officers, JISC partner agencies and detectives refer youth to mediation at CCR. CCR mediates 150 Juvenile-Family cases each year. The Juvenile-Family program, in conjunction with other probationary and community service requirements, provides an alternative to incarceration for arrested

juveniles, and helps create positive communication between youth and their families.



# STALKING/NO CONTACT MEDIATION PROGRAM

In 2017, CCR began accepting referrals to a new mediation program for non-intimate parties' **Stalking No Contact** Order cases. This program was developed with the assistance of the Circuit Court of Cook County's Domestic Violence Division. In recent years, the number of civil Stalking/No Contact Order cases has diverted some of the resources of this specialized domestic violence courthouse. Parties in these cases are strong candidates for successful mediation due to the nature of their

relationships. Examples of the types of cases referred to CCR through this program include cases involving neighbors, landlords/tenants. co-workers, students at the same school. members of the same faith institutions, and/ or social acquaintances. CCR's Stalking/No Contact Mediation program assists the court and parties by offering mediation and a chance for the parties to reach a mutually-agreeable resolution outside of the court process.



# BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU MEDIATION PROGRAM

CCR's partnership with the Better Business Bureau (BBB) of Chicago and Northern Illinois allows CCR volunteers to provide mediation services to consumers and merchants involved in BBB complaints. CCR's Programs Department worked closely with BBB staff to develop a referral program that would work well for both agencies and the parties. The cases are referred to CCR by BBB staff members and are mediated at CCR. In most instances, the parties have made an attempt to resolve the case in the past. CCR is able to provide them the opportunity to discuss the matter with a neutral mediator. These cases are similar in nature to the small claims work CCR has done for more than 40 years, and can involve complaints regarding home repair, automotive services, dry cleaning and other business-related issues



of clients felt the mediator understood what was most important to them.

## **DEBORAH B. COLE**



Deborah B. Cole has been a practicing attorney, her third career, for 23 years, but it was in law school at Chicago-Kent where she first became interested in mediation. She took an ADR class with Pam Kentra, who encouraged her to get certified with CCR. After graduating, she continued to be interested in mediation, but it became difficult to keep up her certification while getting her Hyde Park practice off the ground.

A good part of Deborah's law practice has been in the guardianship/probate area. In this arena, disputes are very costly and commonly involve emotions and unresolved family drama. Often these cases are ostensibly about money, but really revolve around siblings who feel slighted, or who feel another sibling was always the favorite of their parent. These are precisely the kinds of disputes where mediation can make a huge difference.

Once her practice became established and she re-located her office downtown, Deborah reached out to CCR to see what she could do to update her skills and resume mediating. She went through the Mediator Mentorship Program (MMP), certified, and has been mediating for more than 10 years. Deborah has mediated many different case types from parenting to small claims to guardianship cases. She has also volunteered on CCR's core values committee and has been involved several times in reviewing applications and interviewing candidates for the MMP.

#### Deborah's memorable mediation:

A mediation that really sticks in Deborah's mind is one where seven siblings (5 in the room and 2 over the phone) were disputing guardianship of their mother. Her first task was to figure out what the needs and interests were for all these individuals. The parties were not forthcoming initially. There was a lot of posturing and anger, but it eventually came out that five of the siblings were angry at

the brother who was providing care for their mother. They were not unhappy about the care being provided, but angry with him for other reasons. Meanwhile, the brother who was the caregiver was angry because he hadn't gotten any gratitude for all the work he and his wife had been doing to take care of their mother. These issues had to be aired out before they could agree on how to move forward. At the end of the mediation, they were close to agreement, but couldn't sign.

Deborah later found out that the next day they did come to essentially the agreement that was discussed in the mediation. She felt really good about the mediation because the siblings had been close prior to this dispute over their mother's care. She felt the mediation set the framework for the brothers to come back together and resume, to some degree, the relationship they had before.

# DIMITRIE UMBRARESCU



Dimitrie Umbrarescu emigrated from Romania to the United States with his parents in 1995. He finished his undergraduate degree at Loyola University Chicago and went on to earn his J.D. from DePaul University. After graduating, he started his own law practice. Dimitrie's main area of practice is real estate closings, but he also has experience litigating real estate issues, including foreclosure defense and some tenant-side evictions litigation. Dimitrie has also done bankruptcy, business litigation, and family law work.

It was in the family law arena that he most saw a need for an alternative to litigation. Dimitrie noticed that judges were biased in some cases and did not always make what he considered the right decisions. In addition, parties were often very emotional and unable to see what was best for them. "I was wondering if there was some kind

of alternative to that and when I came across mediation, I wanted to explore it." He became very interested in how mediation could be an alternative to, and work in conjunction with, traditional court to get a better result for the parties involved.

He was especially interested in raising awareness of mediation in the Romanian-American community in which he works. After taking a 40-hour mediation training, he started a free mediation program through his church and mediated a few cases. This was good experience, but he realized he wanted more opportunities to mediate. He decided to pursue becoming a volunteer with CCR.

Dimitrie finished CCR's Mediator Mentorship Program and became certified in the spring of 2019. He volunteers regularly at the Bridgeview courthouse.

#### Dimitrie's memorable mediation:

My first mediation was an eviction case in which the landlord and tenant were a mother and her adult son. It wasn't a matter of unpaid rent. It was a matter of relationships, feelings, and mixed emotions. It was more complicated than I expected. It was not easy for the parties to talk about the issues confronting them, but gradually the channels of communication began to open.

The mother perceived the son as "disobedient" and not responsible enough to carry out his duties. She was also upset about the son's language and attitude. She was proud of his achievements and the school he attended, but she felt that it was time for him to move out of her house and start his own life.

The son perceived his mother as "controlling". He was raised without a father and felt that the lack of paternal authority had an impact on his life.

He also felt that his mother filed this case just to cause him emotional distress. He was ready to move out, but he was not able to set a date for this.

In the end, they didn't reach an agreement and returned to court. But I was glad mediation provided them with an opportunity to discuss sensitive topics in a different environment. For me, it was an experience in exploring strong emotions and their impact on the persons involved, a skill that I am continuing to develop.

### LISA SANDLOW



Lisa Sandlow's professional experience is as an attorney, having practiced commercial real estate law for 25 years. She has been involved with CCR for the last five years, juggling both her legal career and her growing interest in mediation. "In the last year or so, I've realized that my heart has moved too far over toward mediation. I'm always wanting to find common ground, which is not what my legal clients want from me. I realize I can't straddle both worlds." Recently, Lisa has been doing a lot of coaching with CCR, which is definitely her favorite part. She's also been helping out with the conflict resolution trainings that CCR offers and has taught an advanced mediation class through Roosevelt University's Master's in Conflict and Mediation program.

Lisa's initial interest in mediation was a happy accident. She was really feeling burned out with her legal career and searching for what her next life might be. A close friend said she was going to take a mediation training and

invited her to take it with her. Lisa laughs as she shares her thoughts from that time: "That sounds great! I can listen to people's stories and tell them what to do!" She ended up not taking the training with her friend because of scheduling issues and instead took a training with CCR. "I can really relate to the students who come through and have a hard time with the facilitative versus the directive impulse."

Lisa certified through CCR's MMP program and has been mediating for five years. She has mediated nearly every type of case CCR handles, including a lot of court work, fee cases, juvenile, housing, and parenting. She's certified in Elder Law mediation through the AAM and has taken a 40-hour divorce training through Northwestern. In addition to mediating and coaching, Lisa was on CCR's Volunteer Council for two years and serves on the Continuing Education Committee.

### Lisa's memorable mediation:

Lisa remembers one of her first mediations at the Skokie courthouse. One woman was suing another for an unpaid loan. She remembers the woman suing had a promissory note, which they don't usually have. It was pretty clear the money was owed. Lisa asked them for their initial statements and both were really reticent. As a brand new mediator, Lisa had CCR Training Director Pari Karim's advice fresh in her mind, and asked, "How do you know one another?" Suddenly, all hell broke loose.

It turned out the two women had been very close, like sisters. In fact, one woman, who was not a US citizen, had a boyfriend who was undocumented

and she asked the other woman, who was a US citizen, to marry him to keep him in the country. She did. It was supposed to be a green-card marriage, but the two ended up falling in love. At that point it became very clear to Lisa that this mediation had nothing to do with an \$8,000 loan. As a new mediator, she felt it was such a perfect example of how it's never really about the money.

## HOUSING ACTION ILLINOIS



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I've consistently been impressed with the CCR facilitators' hard and soft skills in running the workshops.



Housing Action Illinois is a statewide coalition of nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and financial institutions formed to protect, expand, and ensure availability of safe, decent, accessible housing in Illinois.

Part of their work is to place AmeriCorps VISTA members with non-profit housing organizations throughout the state.

Willie Heineke first trained with CCR in a half-day workshop on conflict resolution and professional communication offered during a fall retreat when he was an AmeriCorps VISTA Leader with Housing Action Illinois. AmeriCorps VISTA Leaders take on a quasi-supervisory role during their placements, reviewing and discussing monthly progress reports with VISTAs. In those conversations, VISTA Leaders celebrate victories, ensure professional development goals are being achieved,

and troubleshoot with the VISTAs any difficulties they're encountering at their host organizations. "The CCR training proved invaluable in terms of building confidence in guiding those conversations."

After finishing his AmeriCorps service, Housing Action Illinois offered Willie a full-time position. In his current role as National Service Program Manager, Willie continues to work with CCR to provide each new class of AmeriCorps VISTAs with an updated version of the half-day workshop he had as an AmeriCorps VISTA. The training consists of a small bit of lecture, then a breakout session with small groups to read a scenario and talk about how they would handle it, and, finally, the facilitator fields questions from the VISTAs regarding difficulties they may already be facing in their placements. Feedback from VISTAs on

this training has always been overwhelmingly positive. "I think they walk away with a bit more confidence in providing critical feedback and trying to provide accountability in their work," Heineke says.

Willie emphasizes that their intention in bringing CCR on each year to train their VISTAs is to increase their retention rates and build rapport with their VISTA members. The CCR training provides a framework and legitimacy if the VISTAs contact them to talk through or do some role-playing around a specific conflict.



# SIDLEY AUSTIN

Over the course of five days in May 2019, ten attorneys from Sidley Austin participated in CCR's 40-hour mediation training course. A combination of lecture and immersion, the training introduced attorneys to the facilitative model of mediation practiced

at CCR. Experienced mediator coaches supervised and conducted simulations based on actual cases with the attorneys acting as mediators.

It is the simulations that Elizabeth Cibula, Director of Training & Development at

Sidley Austin, thinks are the greatest strength of CCR's training. "It gives you real hands-on experience," Cibula says. "The sims are a chance to put the new mediation skills to immediate use. The opportunity to have expert coaches provide real-time feedback and individualized instruction and guidance is unique and really accelerates skill development."

One Sidley Austin attorney who went through the training and certified to be a volunteer mediator with CCR is Michaela Kabat. Michaela is a second-year associate who, having observed both court and long model mediations, began volunteering with CCR at Daley courthouse in July 2019.

Michaela recently mediated a landlord-tenant dispute in which the tenant was a mother of three: two infant twins and an older child who

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Regularly practicing this skillset helps us be more thoughtful with colleagues and clients," she says. "I'm very much at the beginning of my legal career. Practicing these skills is something that will help me be a more effective attorney and a more thoughtful person overall.

- MICHAELA KABA

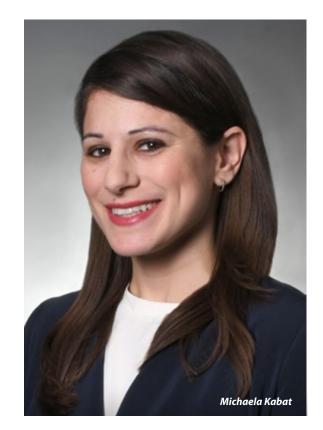
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was struggling healthwise. The tenant could not afford to keep her apartment, but was concerned about having an eviction on her record and also wanted as much time as possible in the apartment. The landlord was very sympathetic to the tenant, but could not continue to have her in his apartment without rent and needed a firm move-out date. Both parties were highly emotional throughout the mediation.

Drawing on her training, Michaela read the parties' emotions as signposts pointing to their underlying needs and interests. She encouraged the parties to continue discussing even when, at one point, the landlord threatened to call off any deal after the tenant began crying in

response to an offer the landlord felt was generous. In the end, the parties were able to come to an agreement on a move-out date that was satisfactory to the landlord and kept the tenant from having an eviction on her record.

Michaela appreciates her experiences in the mediation room, and also believes the CCR training benefits her and other attorneys outside the mediation context. "Regularly practicing this skillset helps us be more thoughtful with colleagues and clients," she says. "I'm very much at the beginning of my legal career. Practicing these skills is something that will help me be a more effective attorney and a more thoughtful person overall."





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CCR continues to thrive thanks to the generosity of so many organizations and individuals. To all of our contributors, we extend our most sincere gratitude.

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# Statement of Activities: 2018

(for year ended May 31, 2018)  SUPPORT AND REVENUE	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Dispute Resolution Center Act grant - Note 8	\$175,583	, , , , , , ,	\$175,583
Training fees	\$192,616		\$192,616
Donated services, Circuit Court of Cook County - Notes 5 and 8	\$113,977		\$113,977
Special event revenue - Note 8	\$161,757		\$161,757
Less: Costs of direct benefits to donors - Note 8	\$(17,612)		\$(17,612)
Rental income - Note 3	\$22,394		\$22,394
Other revenue			
Interest income	\$59		\$59
Net support and revenue	\$939,448	\$91,000	\$1,030,448
Net assets released from restrictions - Note 4	\$25,500	\$(25,500)	
Total Support and Revenue	\$964,948	\$65,500	\$1,030,448
EXPENSES			
Program services			
Mediation services	\$587,265		\$587,265
Training	\$250,682		\$250,682
Total Program Services	\$837,947		\$837,947
SUPPORTING SERVICES			
Management and general	\$99,059		\$99,059
Fundraising	\$77,391		\$77,391
Total Supporting Services	\$176,450		\$176,450
Total Expenses	\$1,014,397		\$1,014,397
Change in Net Assets	\$(49,449)	\$65,500	\$16,051
NET ASSETS			
Beginning of year	\$258,594	\$25,500	\$284,094
End of Year	\$209,145	\$91,000	\$300,145

# Statement of Activities: 2019

(for year ended May 31, 2019)		With Donor Restrictions	Total
	Without Donor Restrictions		
SUPPORT AND REVENUE			
Grants and contributions - Note 8	\$218,505	\$130,372	\$348,877
Dispute Resolution Center Act grant - Note 8	\$181,308		\$181,308
Training fees	\$230,765		\$230,765
Donated services, Circuit Court of Cook County - Notes 5 and 8	\$124,626		\$124,626
Special event revenue - Note 8	\$216,672		\$216,672
Less: Costs of direct benefits to donors - Note 8	\$(29,050)		\$(29,050)
Rental income - Note 3	\$23,031		\$23,031
Other revenue	\$1,100		\$1,100
Interest income	\$49		\$49
Net support and revenue	\$967,006	\$130,372	\$1,097,378
Net assets released from restrictions - Note 4	\$91,000	\$(91,000)	
Total Support and Revenue	\$1,058,006	\$39,372	\$1,097,378
EXPENSES			
Program services			
Mediation services	\$577,410		\$577,410
Training	\$268,380		\$268,380
Total Program Services	\$845,790		\$845,790
Supporting services			
Management and general	\$98,457		\$98,457
Fundraising	\$71,516		\$71,516
Total Supporting Services	\$169,973		\$169,973
Total Expenses	\$1,015,762		\$1,015,762
Change in Net Assets	\$42,244	\$39,372	\$81,616
NET ASSETS			
Beginning of year	\$209,145	\$91,000	\$300,145
End of Year	\$251,389	\$130,372	\$381,761



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Association for Conflict Resolution.

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