



CCR

CENTER FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Annual Report
2011-2013



BUILDING COMMUNITY & Strengthening the Justice System Through Mediation

More than 30 years ago, a young lawyer in Uptown was reading a political cartoon—a picture of a sharecropper standing across the desk from an attorney. The caption read “Yes. I can get your horse back. My fee will be your horse plus 35%.”

That young lawyer envisioned a future in Cook County where hard-working people would be able to resolve their conflicts without exhausting all of their resources in the process. To do this, he realized that some cases might be best resolved outside of litigation, and that free mediation services provided in and out of the court system would help improve access to justice in our community.

On that premise, that young lawyer—Jack Bierig—went on to found the agency that is today the Center for Conflict Resolution (CCR). Today, CCR’s vision remains very much the same;

It is our goal to give each resident of our community the tools to manage and resolve their conflicts in accordance with their own needs and interests.

We work to provide people in conflict with options other than litigation to resolve their differences – options that are easier to access and that better address their real needs.

DEAR CCR FAMILY,

As CCR enters its 35th year of providing mediation services, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to you for your role in helping CCR fulfill its mission. Your generous contribution of time, talent, funds and support allows us to make a difference in people's lives every day as we provide pro bono mediation and training services in Cook County.

In the past three years, CCR has provided mediation services to over 12,000 of your fellow community members. All of our mediations are provided at no cost to clients – a key part of CCR's mission since our doors opened in the Uptown neighborhood in 1979. About one half of our cases benefit homeowners facing foreclosure through the Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program, administered in partnership with the Circuit Court of Cook County. We at CCR are excited about our non-foreclosure work as well, which includes cases involving juveniles, families, neighbors, landlords and tenants, small claims court litigants, religious institutions, business owners and community organizations.

Training highly-skilled mediators is central to our mission. CCR maintains its status as the premier mediation training organization in Chicago, having trained over 700 people in mediation and conflict resolution skills in the past three years.

We are proud of everyone who keeps CCR thriving, including our volunteer mediators and trainers, Volunteer Council members, the dedicated CCR staff and members of the Board of Directors.

We are delighted to announce that, with your help, we raised over \$100,000 at our 12th Annual Gala! We were also honored in 2013 to receive the JAMS Foundation Warren E. Knight Award, along with a gift of \$25,000. The JAMS Foundation joins The Chicago Bar Foundation, the Illinois Equal Justice Foundation, the Circuit Court of Cook County Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program and many others as longtime friends and supporters.

Together, you have all helped shape CCR's mission to promote and provide peaceful resolutions to conflict. We are very excited that this year we are celebrating CCR's 35th year of providing dispute resolution services.

We are truly grateful for your support!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Lustig'.

Jacqueline Stanley Lustig, Esq.
President, Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Lively'.

Cassandra Lively, Ph.D.
Executive Director

VOLUNTEERS & PARTNERS

CCR's continued success and prosperity is only possible as a result of the hard work and dedication of the countless volunteers who work diligently to help CCR fulfill its mission each and every day.



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(Left to Right): Eric Gortner, Ceylan Eatherton, Rick Berman, Robert Perkovich, Lori Lightfoot, Arthur Gold, Jackie Lustig, Anthony Anscombe, Ed Shapiro, Leanne Levy, Pam Kentra and Carolyn Amadon

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“The mediator helped us come to an agreement that we couldn’t come to on our own. The feelings were too emotional for us to talk about it by ourselves.”

—anonymous

MAKING AN IMPACT:

CCR Helps Those Who Need it Most



LOSS OF HOME WOULD HAVE MEANT LOSS OF MUCH MORE

Charlie lost his job. He received unemployment payments that covered food and utilities but not the mortgage.

Times were tough – but Charlie and his family got through.

When Charlie landed a new job, his family was one year in arrears on their mortgage and facing foreclosure.

The family was worried about losing their house and more importantly an excellent special education program for their child. The family faced serious special educa-

tion needs and financial problems and moving would exacerbate both. They didn't know what to do or where to turn.

Thankfully, CCR was there.

During their three sessions of mediation, their pro bono lawyer and the lawyer for the servicer worked creatively and cooperatively to keep Charlie and his family in their home. When the homeowners got the home loan modification there were tears of joy and an overall sense of satisfaction on everyone's part.¹

¹ All names changed to protect privacy



FINDING A MENTOR IN THE MOST UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCE

Josh, age 14, spent a lot of time alone while his mom worked long hours to make ends meet. Josh wasn't a bad kid—but he was no angel either. One afternoon, Josh and two friends broke into a neighbor's garage to steal a motorcycle. The boys' attempts came to an abrupt halt when the homeowner, a law enforcement officer, caught them in the act. The homeowner gave Josh a second chance.

CCR's volunteer mediator helped Josh, his mom and the homeowner to communicate with each other. Josh explained that he was just going along with the crowd and didn't mean any harm. The homeowner explained that in his work as a law enforcement officer he sees good kids get into trouble for just "going along with the crowd" all too often.

The mediation illustrated to Josh that his neighbor cared about him. Josh's mom was touched that someone else was concerned about her son's well-being. The homeowner felt that he had been able to make something good come out of something bad—a stark contrast to his every day job.

The agreement reached resulted in the homeowner introducing Josh and his mom to a local community youth leader who ran programs where Josh could spend his free time after school with positive peers.



THE POWER OF AN APOLOGY

She came to mediation expecting a check but she got an apology that made time stand still.

Sandra found a lump in her breast during a routine self-exam. Her physician referred her to a respected radiologist who told her she needn't worry – the lump was benign.

Relieved – Sandra continued her life; married her fiancé Ralph and looked forward to a happy life with him.

Then over time she got sick.

By the time Sandra walked into CCR's mediation room two years later, she had stage IV breast cancer.

Sitting at the table was the radiologist who had reviewed her films.

Against the advice of his insurance company and business partners, the doctor met with Sandra and Ralph in mediation because he believed it was part of his professional obligation, and something he personally needed to do; to look his former patient in the eye, listen to her and say, "I'm very sorry this has happened to you. I did my best."¹

¹ All names changed to protect privacy



PRESERVING FRIENDSHIP

Charles and Joyce were friends and neighbors living in the same senior living facility on Chicago's North side. They often shared a pot of coffee in the morning, spent afternoons working on crossword puzzles and even shared dinner.

One morning, Charles asked Joyce if he could borrow \$500. He promised to pay her back right away, and she wrote the check that day without hesitation.

Time passed and repayment never came. To make matters worse, Charles started avoiding Joyce. Joyce felt taken advantage of—victimized by her closest friend. She didn't know what to think but she knew she needed a resolution.

That's how CCR helped.

During mediation, CCR's volunteer mediator helped Charles feel comfortable explaining, through embarrassment so deep that he couldn't look Joyce in the eye, that he had been avoiding her because he could not afford to pay back the \$500 all at once. He had been too ashamed to admit that to her, so instead he avoided her altogether. Charles felt horrible.

Joyce explained that her friendship with Charles was as solid as ever and that she had been hurt more by his ignoring her than by his failure to promptly repay the loan. Once that had been said, the feeling of relief filled the room as the two old friends again looked each other in the eyes and smiled.

The agreement included a realistic long-term payment plan that Charles could afford and take pride in paying, and the agreement that the pair would have supper together the next evening.



IMPACT STATEMENTS FROM OUR CLIENTS

"CCR made court feel human."

"Calm, constructive, and very informal as opposed to being in front of a judge."

"Less stress than court."

"The time-effectiveness was great. I'm glad I had a chance to make an agreement."

"I liked being able to talk about the situation outside of the courtroom. It made things much simpler with much less pressure."

"We got more accomplished in mediation than we had in two years because we were finally able to talk with the bank."

"Everyone got to speak and to listen to each other."

"This process helped resolve misunderstandings."

"Mediation gave me the chance to sit and talk calmly without screaming and yelling."

"It was quick and straight to the point. I was able to understand step by step the whole process."

“MAKING CHANGE - MEDIATOR STORIES”

CLAUDIA - INSPIRED BY HER PROFESSION

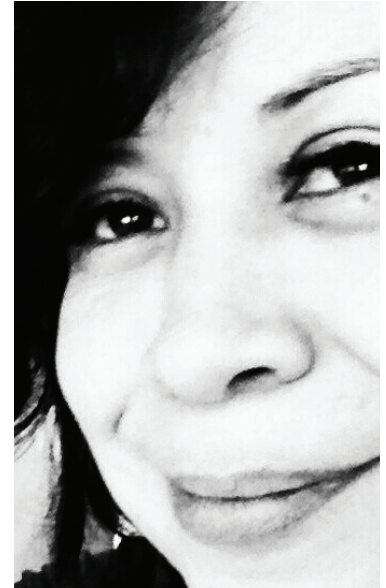
For the past 20 years, Claudia M. Estrada worked for various agencies and firms providing support services including translation, counseling, interpretation, training, advocacy and crisis intervention. As a social service provider working in parallel with law enforcement, attorneys and the justice system, she became intrigued with the law. With a desire to expand her ability to help clients, Claudia registered for CCR's 40-hour mediation training.

In 2012, Claudia volunteered as a Spanish interpreter in the foreclosure program. “I was grateful for the opportunity to both interpret and observe mediations. With an understanding of mediation, I could better assist in my role as an interpreter. Observing skilled mediators helped me improve my skills tremendously. That experience inspired me to do more.”

Claudia also applied to CCR's Mediator Mentorship Program. The application process is highly competitive, and Claudia felt fortunate for the opportunity.

Claudia's description of foreclosure mediation session:

About two months ago, I served as an interpreter for a foreclosure mediation session. A family of three had lived in their home for over 15 years. With my help, they explained their story. Sadly, the family could not avoid losing their home. Emotions were running high—the father of the family was clearly devastated. The case had been postponed multiple times because of a difficulty in finding an interpreter, and he and his family were weary from the stress. He was nearly brought to tears as he expressed his gratitude for our help.





MARC – THE MODEL VOLUNTEER

Marc Jones came to CCR with a military background, having served as a lawyer in the Judge Advocate General's Department of the Air Force from 1995 to 2004. Marc now works as a trial attorney in Immigration Court for the Department of Homeland Security. CCR was lucky to engage someone like Marc in our volunteer training program—the Mediator Mentorship Program. With a rich professional background and sincere dedication to public service, Marc is a model volunteer.

Marc mediates at CCR's Bridgeview courthouse location, where volunteers handle cases ranging from landlord-tenant disputes to lawsuits involving major corporations. Marc feels fortunate to have received a scholarship to Howard University Law School. He has chosen to express his appreciation for that opportunity by giving back to his community as a CCR volunteer. He is thankful to be in a position to help his community and is proud to be able to make a difference in people's lives.

Marc's description of a recent mediation:

I conducted a mediation recently that really seemed to impact the clients. It involved a consumer loan where a friend borrowed money to purchase a truck, but then lost his job and was unable to repay the loan. Following the mediation, both parties shared that they were glad I was able to help them resolve the case and preserve their friendship while avoiding court.

“The mediator’s assistance was crucial to help us resolve our dispute.”
—anonymous

LIZ – STRENGTHENING HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Elizabeth “Liz” Gould is a licensed clinical social worker with more than 20 years of experience working with older adults. She holds a master’s degree in social work with a concentration in gerontology. Liz is a CCR certified mediator, a trainer/coach for CCR and a member of the Volunteer Council.

Her interest in mediation started while Liz was working for the Veterans Health Administration. She wanted to find an effective approach for involving a person with a cognitive impairment in making decisions about their lives. Through mediation, Liz has been able to promote the right of clients to self-determination, uphold the dignity and worth of individuals and strengthen human relationships.

Liz has applied her interest in working with families in transition by mediating child custody cases, parenting agreements and guardian ad litem cases.

Liz’s account of a recent mediation:

I recently mediated a parenting agreement between a divorced couple in their 50s who were co-parents of two daughters. The mother had initiated the mediation, requesting more visitation with the girls and better communication with her ex-husband.

In caucus, a private session with each party, the mother shared that her current husband had become physically abusive and that her safety was at serious risk. She explained that she planned to check into a women’s shelter immediately following the mediation session.

Later in the mediation, the parties were alone in the room, and the mother took the opportunity to tell her ex-husband about the abuse. As they signed the agreement, they both talked about their decision to see a counselor together, and both expressed relief and hope for a more positive future as co-parents.

Witnessing the two people recognizing each other’s needs and caring for one another moved me, and it seemed like they were both deeply touched by their experience in mediation. We also provided resources on domestic violence to the mother.



2011-2013 DONORS

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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Erin Kelly

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 2011

(With Comparative Totals for 2010)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	2011	2010
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:				
Grants and contributions	\$161,508	\$613,133	\$774,641	\$706,711
Dispute Resolution Center Act	\$200,000	0	\$200,000	\$200,000
Donated services	\$100,802	0	\$100,802	\$99,179
Training fees	\$165,493	0	\$165,493	\$156,706
Consulting fees		0	0	\$350
Rental income	\$5,850	0	\$5,850	\$4,500
Interest income	\$2,109	0	\$2,109	\$4,059
Total support and revenue	\$635,763	\$613,133	\$1,248,895	\$1,171,505
Net assets released from restrictions	\$820,405	\$(802,405)	0	0
Total support and revenue and reclassifications	\$1,456,167	\$(207,272)	\$1,248,895	\$1,171,505
EXPENSES:				
Program services	\$1,145,150	0	\$1,145,150	\$921,773
Management and general	\$268,030	0	\$268,030	\$229,982
Fundraising	\$55,283	0	\$55,283	\$52,317
Total expenses	\$1,468,463	0	\$1,468,463	\$1,204,072
Increase (decrease) in net assets	\$(12,296)	\$(207,272)	\$(219,568)	\$(32,567)
NET ASSETS:				
Beginning of year	\$563,618	\$211,557	\$775,175	\$807,742
End of year	\$551,322	\$4,285	\$555,607	\$775,175

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 2012

(With Comparative Totals for 2011)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	2012	2011
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:				
Grants and contributions	\$888,919	\$105,000	\$993,919	\$774,641
Dispute Resolution Center Act	\$200,000	0	\$200,000	\$200,000
Donated services	\$99,510	0	\$99,510	\$100,802
Training fees	\$157,584	0	\$157,584	\$165,493
Rental income	\$1,650	0	\$1,650	\$5,850
Interest income	\$328	0	\$328	\$2,109
Total support and revenue	\$1,347,991	\$105,000	\$1,452,991	\$1,248,895
Net assets released from restrictions	\$44,284	\$(44,824)	0	0
Total support and revenue and reclassifications	\$1,392,815	\$60,176	\$1,452,991	\$1,248,895
EXPENSES:				
Program services	\$1,190,825	0	\$1,190,825	\$1,145,150
Management and general	\$261,539	0	\$261,539	\$268,030
Fundraising	\$94,097	0	\$94,097	\$55,283
Total expenses	\$1,546,461	0	\$1,546,461	\$1,468,463
Increase (decrease) in net assets	\$(153,646)	\$60,176	\$(93,470)	\$(219,568)
NET ASSETS:				
Beginning of year	\$551,322	\$4,285	\$555,607	\$775,175
End of year	\$397,676	\$64,461	\$462,137	\$555,607

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

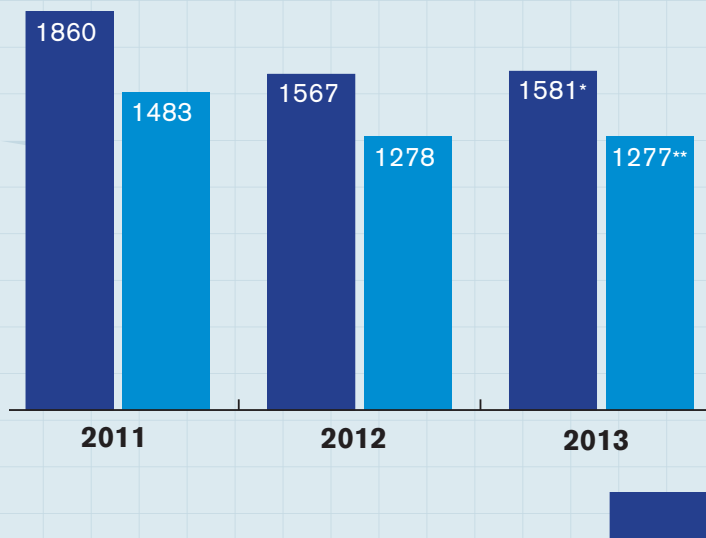
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 2013

(With Comparative Totals for 2012)

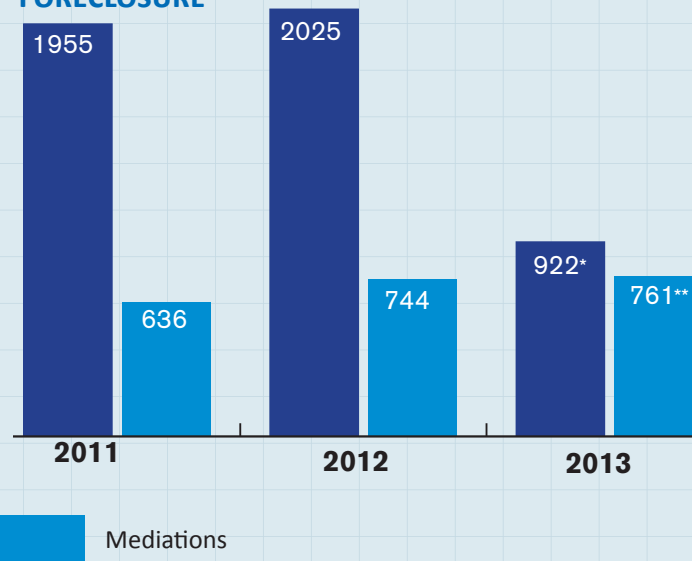
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	2013	2012
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:				
Grants and contributions	\$566,994	\$424,677	\$991,671	\$993,919
Dispute Resolution Center Act	\$200,000	0	\$200,000	\$200,000
Donated services	\$102,661	0	\$102,661	\$99,510
Training fees	\$149,556	0	\$149,556	\$157,584
Rental income	\$4,640	0	\$4,640	\$1,650
Interest income	\$544	0	\$544	\$328
Total support and revenue	\$1,024,395	\$424,677	\$1,449,072	\$1,452,991
Net assets released from restrictions	\$457,482	\$(457,482)	0	0
Total support and revenue and reclassifications	\$1,481,877	\$(32,805)	\$1,449,072	\$1,452,991
EXPENSES:				
Program services	\$1,253,103	0	\$1,253,103	\$1,190,825
Management and general	\$157,826	0	\$157,826	\$261,539
Fundraising	\$62,844	0	\$62,844	\$94,097
Total expenses	\$1,473,773	0	\$1,473,773	\$1,546,461
Increase (decrease) in net assets	\$8,104	\$(32,805)	\$(24,701)	\$(93,470)
NET ASSETS:				
Beginning of year	\$397,676	\$64,461	\$462,137	\$555,607
End of year	\$405,780	\$31,656	\$437,436	\$462,137

BY THE NUMBERS...

NON-FORECLOSURE



FORECLOSURE



**We saw a sharp reduction in the number of cases being referred to the Foreclosure Mediation Program in FY13 as a result of programmatic changes implemented at the county level to ensure that only cases that are most appropriate for mediation are being referred from the courts.*

***The number of mediation sessions for 2013 remained relatively consistent with FY12 despite a reduction in referrals because the cases that were referred were the most appropriate for mediation.*

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AUXILIARY BOARD AND BENEFIT COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

Ceylan A. Eatherton
Bradley S. Fiorito
Joe Holtgrieve
Sarah Reynolds
Catherine Spector

AUXILIARY BOARD AND BENEFIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Jillian Radke
Becky Ray
Allison Rosenberg
Adrienne Walker Porter
Dorothy Ward
Lisa G. Williams
Hon. E. Kenneth Wright, Jr.

CCR STAFF

Cassandra Lively
Executive Director

Carolyn Agee
Administrative Assistant

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*Case Manager, Cook County Mortgage
Foreclosure Mediation Program*

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Mediation Services Manager

Pari Karim
Training Director

Laurie Koel
Mediation Services Manager, Bridgeview

Rae Kyritsi
Mediation Services Director

Nina Leung
Finance and Operations Director

Lynn Murphy
Mediation Services Manager, Rolling Meadows

Leandra Ramos
Bilingual Mediation Services Manager

Alexandra Schwartzman
Training Assistant

Katie Schwer
Mediation Services Manager

Mac Steele
*Volunteer Director and Associate
Development Director*

Colleen Stevenson
*Director, Circuit Court of Cook County
Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program*

Whitney Trumble
*Supervisor of Case Management, Cook County
Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program*

FORMER CCR STAFF (2011 – 2013)

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Seemi Choudry
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