



CCR

CENTER FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

2014-2015
ANNUAL
REPORT

More than 35 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. 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.



I Anscombe
Anthony Anscombe, Esq.
President, Board of Directors



Cassandra Lively, Ph.D.
Executive Director

DEAR CCR FAMILY,

Over the past 37 years, so many people and organizations have contributed to our mission of delivering high quality mediation services and training to individuals, communities and courts. Your generous contributions of time, expertise and financial support have made CCR the vital, growing organization it is today. Thank you!

In the past two years alone, CCR has provided free mediation services to more than 10,000 community members and has trained more than 1,000 individuals in mediation and conflict management. Our volunteers and staff have worked with children, families, neighbors, landlords and tenants, business owners and community organizations – helping clients through disputes that are often sources of great distress.

In 2014, CCR completed a new strategic plan. This plan puts us on sound footing to achieve our overarching goal of helping Chicagoans find solutions to conflict. We will help the community understand the value of mediation and how to

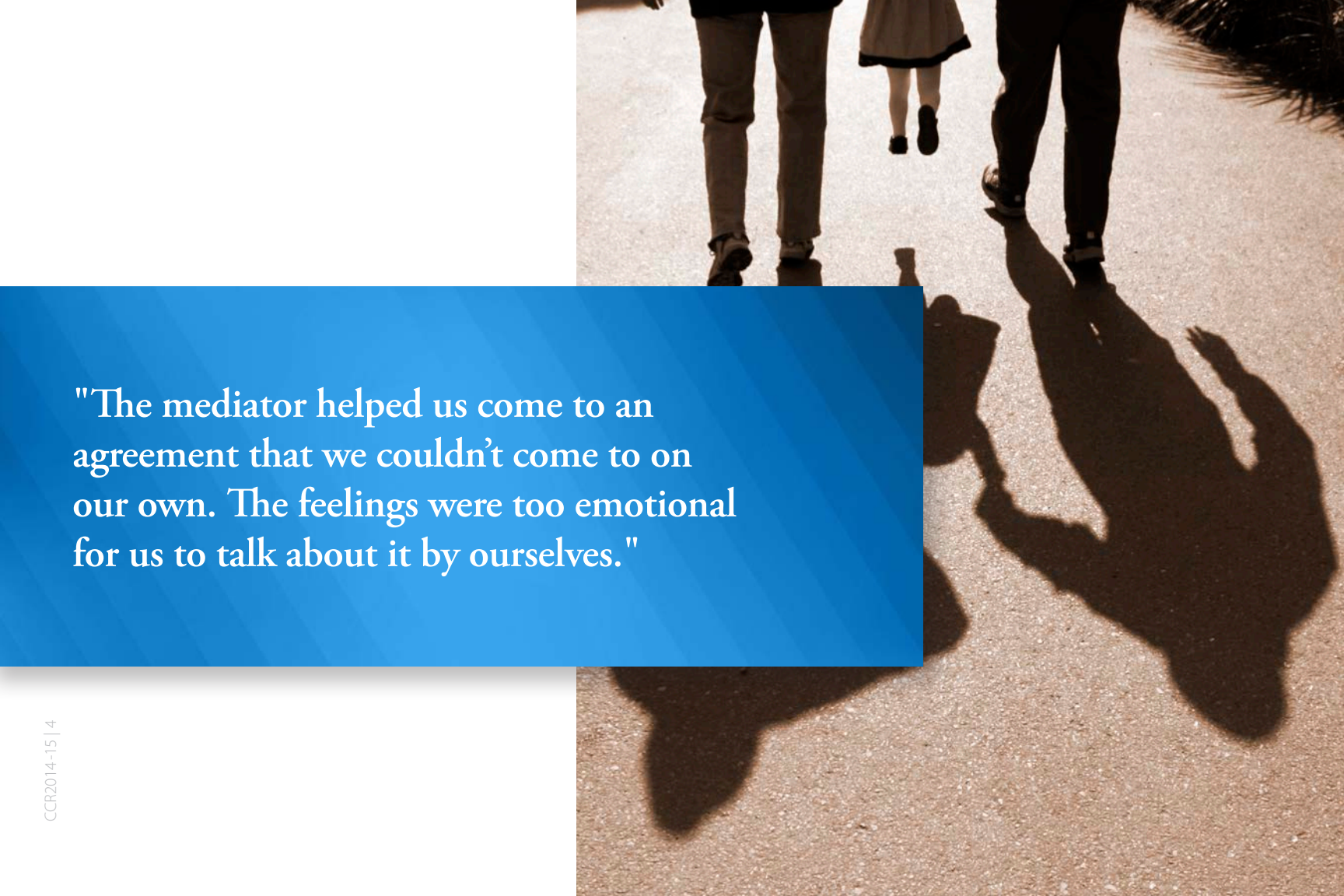
access our services. Our plan calls for us to improve and expand our existing programs, especially those serving the Circuit Court of Cook County. We will also target development of new programs to address community needs. In order to carry out these activities, our plan addresses ways that we will leverage and grow our human resources and also improve our use of technology and expand our funding base.

Each of you – volunteer mediators and trainers, Volunteer Council members, Board and Auxiliary Board members, Past Presidents, funders, community partners and staff members – has a key role to play in this plan. We extend our thanks for all you have done and all you continue to do for CCR, for the next 37 years and beyond.

Sincerely,

Anthony Anscombe, Esq.
President,
Board of Directors

Cassandra Lively, Ph.D.
Executive Director

A photograph showing the lower legs and feet of three people walking away from the camera on a light-colored paved path. The person on the left is wearing khaki pants and dark shoes. The person in the middle is wearing a light-colored skirt and dark shoes. The person on the right is wearing dark pants and dark shoes. Long, dark shadows are cast on the path, indicating it is either early morning or late afternoon. The shadows are cast to the right of the people.

"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."

Volunteers and 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.



FY15 Executive Committee members Ceylan Eatherton,
Leanne Levy, Anthony Anscombe and Gene Cahill

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 Association for Conflict Resolution, Chicago Chapter
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 Become, Inc.
 Center on Halsted
 Chicago Bar Association
 Chicago Bar Foundation
 Chicago Commission on Human Relations
 Chicago Department of Public Health
 Chicago-Kent College of Law
 Chicago Theological Seminary
 Chicago Volunteer Legal Services (CVLS)

Circuit Court of Cook County
 Circuit Court of Cook County Family Mediation Services
 City of Chicago
 City Lights Church
 Community Justice for Youth Institute
 Cook County Commission on Human Rights
 Cook County Justice Advisory Council/
 Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle
 Cook County Juvenile Court and Juvenile Temporary Detention Center
 Cook County Public Defender
 Cook County Sheriff's Office
 Cook County State's Attorney

Coordinated Advice and Referral Program for Legal Services (CARPLS)
 DePaul University College of Law
 Forest Preserves of Cook County
 Habitat for Humanity Housing Action Illinois
 Illinois Attorney General's Office
 Illinois Balanced and Restorative Justice (IBARJ)
 Illinois Equal Justice Foundation (IEJF)
 Illinois JusticeCorps
 Illinois Legal Aid Online (ILAO)
 Illinois State Bar Association
 John Marshall Law School
 Legal Aid Society of Metropolitan Family Services

Legal Assistance Foundation (LAF)
 Loyola University School of Law
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 Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center (MATEC)
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 Northwest Municipal Conference
 Northwestern University School of Law
 Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago (PHIMC)
 Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI)
 Single Room Housing Assistance Corporation (SRHAC)
 Women's Bar Association of Illinois
 Zakat Foundation



MAKING AN IMPACT: Helping those who need it most

Life brings conflicts, and the residents of Cook County know no matter what their financial situation, they can rely on CCR to help them reach resolutions that will improve the quality of their lives.

93%

Percentage of CCR's clients who felt their mediator understood what was important to them.

PAJAMA PARTY

Denise and her mother, Nancy, hadn't been speaking much.

Nancy figured it was commonplace between mothers and teenage daughters. But when Denise was arrested for shoplifting, her mother was horrified. Nancy had raised her daughter on her own and although things had changed since Denise started high school, Nancy had assumed that everything with her daughter was going well. The call from the police station changed that.

After her arrest, Denise was put on probation and her case was sent for mediation at CCR. Representatives from the store where Denise shoplifted were unable to attend a mediation, so Family Mediation was offered to Nancy. Family Mediation provides an opportunity

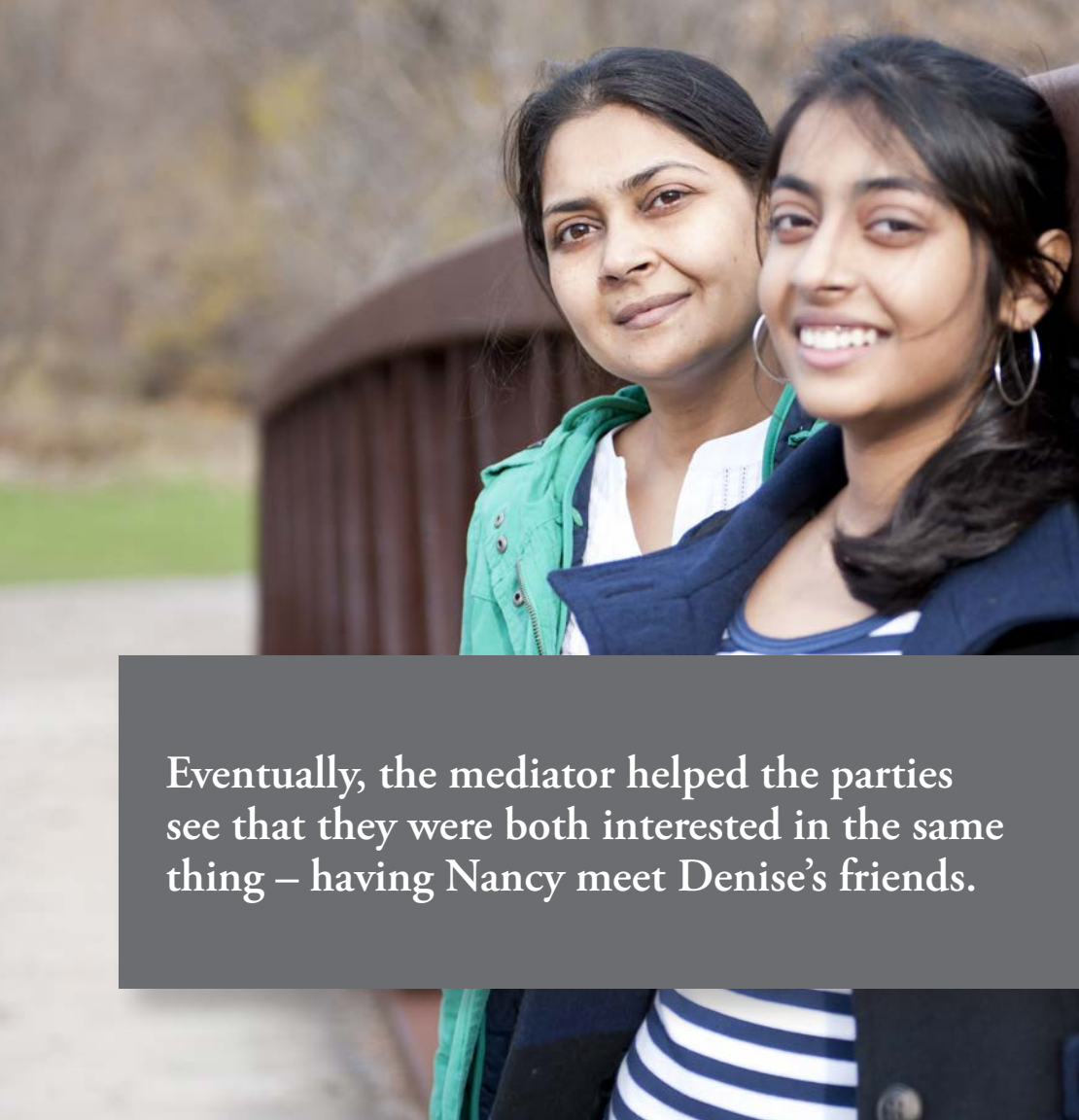
for a juvenile offender and anyone in their home or family to participate in a mediation to discuss the impact of the incident and any surrounding issues or concerns. Whenever a victim is unwilling or unable to participate in mediation, CCR offers Family Mediation to the juvenile's parents.

Nancy was happy to take the opportunity to sit down with her daughter. In mediation, mother and daughter discussed the shoplifting and the arrest. Nancy was embarrassed and angry with her daughter for stealing. Denise was ashamed she had been arrested and resented being grounded.

During the mediation it became clear to the mediator that Nancy blamed her daughter's

new friends for the shoplifting. Denise disagreed, stating that her friends were good people and that her motivation for stealing had been her own curiosity. The two argued about the nature of Denise's friends for a while. Eventually, the mediator began to ask questions of the two women and learned that Nancy had never really met her daughter's friends, because Denise didn't feel like she could bring people over to the house. This was new information for Nancy, who had thought of her home as an open and inviting place for guests. Denise explained that since she and her mother hadn't been getting along very well, she didn't invite friends over because she didn't want them to see her fighting with her mother.

Eventually, the mediator helped the parties see that they were both interested in the same thing – having Nancy meet Denise’s friends. Then they talked about how to make that happen. In the end, they agreed on a classic teenage event. Nancy agreed to allow Denise to have a pajama party at their home. Denise agreed to help clean before and after the party. Nancy also agreed to order pizza in the evening and to make breakfast in the morning. Both mother and daughter left confident that the pajama party would be a step towards a stronger dynamic between the two of them.

A photograph of two young women with dark hair, smiling and looking towards the camera. They are outdoors, with a blurred background of trees and a brown structure. The woman on the left is wearing a green jacket over a white shirt. The woman on the right is wearing a dark blue jacket over a blue and white striped shirt and large hoop earrings.

Eventually, the mediator helped the parties see that they were both interested in the same thing – having Nancy meet Denise’s friends.



DIVORCE STORY

For decades, judges have had the authority to order parties in a parentage or divorce case to mediation in regards to their parenting agreement. In March of 2014, a new rule passed in Cook County that allows Domestic Relations judges to order parties to mediation for financial issues as well. As a result, CCR developed a new Financial Mediation program serving pro-bono eligible clients and has begun mediating issues of maintenance, child support, and division of assets and debts. While this new court-referred program is still growing, the creation of the Financial Mediation program has resulted in additional services that CCR can provide to parties who are separated parents.

Maryam and Anton had known each other for over 20 years. They spent 15 of those years married and 5 of them divorced. Although their marriage had ended years before, the two were in regular contact, co-parenting their two daughters. Maryam and Anton created a parenting plan as part of their divorce, but a few years later, when Maryam remarried and moved to a different part of the city, the plan they had in place no longer made sense. The parents came to CCR to try to mediate a new plan. Mediation gave them an opportunity to discuss the practical elements of a plan, such as who would pick up their daughter from swim practice, as well as their communication style.

A few years later, Maryam and Anton found themselves in conflict again. Although the

71%

Percentage of CCR's clients who felt they could not have settled their case without the mediator's help.

schedule was working out for the parties and they were able to communicate about their daughters, they were having a lot of disagreements about money. Anton had lost his job and had not paid child support for 6 months. When he got a new job he began paying again, but the new job paid less, so Anton paid less in child support. Anton assumed that since his job had changed his child support obligation was different, but he had never discussed any of these changes with Maryam. From Maryam's perspective, Anton had simply stopped paying. Maryam assumed that when Anton got a new job he would continue paying the same amount and would start paying her back for the 6 months. Once they realized that they were not going to be able to resolve things on their own, they called CCR to schedule another mediation.

CCR's experienced mediator, trained to mediate financial disputes between parents, was able to facilitate a productive conversation between Anton and Maryam. Although their long and complicated relationship left Maryam and Anton with a lot of things they might argue about, the mediator was able to help keep the conversation focused on the issues surrounding child support. Maryam and Anton had always argued about money, even in the best years of their marriage, and it was a particularly sensitive subject for them. With the mediator's help, they were able to discuss their experiences, concerns, expectations, and disappointments in a productive way.

Maryam and Anton left with an agreement about what Anton would pay for child support moving forward, a plan for how to separate

expenses around their daughters' sports, and a structure for Anton to repay some portion of his missed child support payments. The parties agreed that if the plan did not work for them, they would return to CCR for a follow-up mediation session, continuing to rely on CCR's expertise. At CCR, the staff and mediators encourage parents to return to CCR in the future if their circumstances change and parents who continue to trust in mediation at CCR, like Maryam and Anton, come to agreements that better their entire family.

Number of homeowners who have been able to keep their homes since the inception of the Cook County Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program.



MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE

With support and a grant from the Chicago Bar Foundation, CCR has provided mortgage foreclosure mediation services as a program partner in the Circuit Court of Cook County's Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program since July 2010.

The benefits of mortgage foreclosure mediation are many, but in particular, foreclosure mediators speak to the importance and difference that communication has made in bringing the parties together to talk, sort through the issues, and try and resolve the foreclosure amicably.

In one recent mediation, the homeowner, Lori, had a handicapped son, Eric. Lori had converted their home with ramp, lifts, chairs, etc. to accommodate Eric and said it would be nearly impossible for her to do that work again at another home. The bank representative, Alex, initially argued that Lori had not complied with the terms of an earlier trial payment plan, and thus the bank

was prepared to discuss a dignified exit from the property. Lori said the bank had sent her two letters notifying her that she had been accepted for a trial payment plan, but that each letter had different information about when and where payment was to be made. She had sought clarification for several months, to no avail. Alex was able to research this claim and found Lori had, in fact, made many attempts to contact the bank. Alex was able to again make Lori an offer that would allow Lori and Eric to stay in their home. Lori was relieved and made clear that she had always stood ready to accept the offer, but that she needed to make sure that she was sending the payments to the right place. Without the chance to meet face-to-face regarding complications with past communication, Lori would not have been able complete arrangements for a workable trial payment plan with the bank, and may have ended up losing the home she shared with her son.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Volunteer stories

Volunteers are the heart of our organization. CCR could not exist without the talent and dedication of skilled individuals working to ensure everyone in our community has access to quality mediation services.

Yvette

Yvette Meltzer has been a part of CCR's volunteer community for over 15 years.

Throughout her professional career as an educator and conflict resolution specialist, Yvette has volunteered as both a mediator and a coach, training individuals in CCR's Mediation Skills Trainings for many years. As a bilingual mediator, fluent in Spanish, Yvette has been able to work with the Spanish-speaking population CCR serves. For Yvette, volunteering at CCR gives her an opportunity to make a difference with a diverse population of parties and trainees.

Yvette had this to say about being a volunteer at CCR:

“The on-going professional development CCR offers to volunteers continues to enrich my growth as a mediator. Along the way I have enjoyed and been inspired by a rich cadre of other volunteer mediators as well as the staff at CCR who have helped me to grow deeper both as a person and in my role as a mediator.”

Yvette now works as a photographic artist and sees many parallels between being a photographer and being a mediator. She has observed, “Just as our focus, our lens, and our depth of field will determine our outcome in a photograph, they may also impact the outcome of a mediation.”



Jennifer

Jennifer LaDuke came to mediation at CCR after working as an attorney for over a decade.

Feeling burnt out from litigation, Jennifer sought a more constructive avenue for her legal instincts. In 2013, Jennifer was accepted as a volunteer at CCR through the Mediator Mentorship Program. Jennifer took CCR's 40-Hour Mediation Skills Training and was then partnered with an experienced mediator for a three-month training mentorship.

Jennifer had this to say about the impact of mediation:

“Mediating for CCR has been one of the most rewarding experiences I have had in my legal career. I have learned a lot about relating to people from drastically different circumstances and also about myself. The biggest lesson I have learned in my legal career from both litigation and mediation is that most people just want to be heard. When parties are able to talk through their issues during mediation, there is often a noticeable change that comes over the room.”

In the spring of 2015 Jennifer was invited to become a coach at CCR and now works to help train individuals in the 40-Hour Mediation Skills Training.



Joe

Joe Gosselin has been volunteering at CCR since 2005. As a volunteer, Joe mediates cases, coaches mediators in training, sits on CCR's Volunteer Council, and mentors future volunteers through CCR's Mediator Mentorship Program. Joe spent a number of years working in Labor Relations before taking the 40-Hour Mediation Skills Training. For Joe, the Mediation Skills Training confirmed his thoughts about how best to manage conflict, but it also opened the door to more interests and to volunteering at CCR. He believes the services CCR provides are life-changing for both the parties served and the mediators alike and credits his mediation work at CCR as being a great influence on his career.

Joe sees CCR's volunteer community as incredibly talented and wildly diverse and is proud to count himself one of us. As a mentor at CCR, Joe works with individuals for three months in order to assist them in becoming certified in the CCR mediation model and had this to say about it:

“Working with a new/aspiring mediator over the course of a couple of months to hone their skills in an intensive training program has been incredibly rewarding. CCR has a history of putting quality mediators, practiced in the CCR model, in front of the public for years and it is an honor to play a role in that effort into the future.”



“CCR
is a place
where
you learn,
grow, and
become
part of a
family.”

Claudia Morales

"Volunteering at CCR has been one of the highlights of my professional career. I not only learned a new skill but I have been introduced to a diversity of people and situations and thinking in a different way. "

Leon Fox

"I love volunteering for CCR. It is one path in which I can contribute to peaceful resolution in a meaningful, informed and committed way. This is important to me. CCR appreciates the contribution and I am regarded as a member of a team that makes a difference."

Deirdre Schlunegger

"Volunteering for CCR gives me more than the opportunity to pay it forward. It allows me to be a peacemaker."

David Steiner

"I have volunteered for many organizations throughout my adult life and CCR is the icing on the cake. The organization appreciates its volunteers in ways I have never experienced before. As a volunteer, I feel that I am part of a diverse community of loving, caring, and generous people. In addition to the positive community feeling, I experience tremendous satisfaction knowing I am helping people in conflict find some resolution to their pain. Whether parties walk away with a formal agreement or not, I know that I have helped them move forward in a significant way. There is nothing comparable to the hands-on volunteer work at CCR; you realize that the results of your efforts are having an immediate impact on people's lives."

Tina Cooper



2014-2015 DONORS: Making it happen

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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Mon Ami Jewelry	Oceanique Restaurant	Ruth & Phils Ice Cream	Tasting deVine Cellars, Naperville	
	Pasadena Playhouse	Salon Buzz	Trek Bicycle Shop	

Statement of Activities: 2014

(for year ended May 31, 2014)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	TOTAL 2014	TOTAL 2013
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:				
Grants and contributions	\$288,487	\$472,098	\$760,585	\$991,671
Dispute Resolution Center Act	\$195,511	0	\$195,511	\$200,000
Donated services	\$100,374	0	\$100,374	\$102,661
Training fees	\$159,825	0	\$159,825	\$149,556
Consulting fees	\$2,444	0	\$2,444	0
Rental income	\$21,083	0	\$21,083	\$4,640
Interest income	\$343	0	\$343	\$544
Total support and revenue	\$768,067	\$472,098	\$1,240,165	\$1,449,072
Net assets released from restrictions	\$411,319	(\$411,319)	0	0
Total support and revenue and reclassifications	\$1,179,386	\$60,779	\$1,240,165	\$1,449,072
EXPENSES:				
Program services	\$876,323	0	\$876,323	\$1,253,103
Management and general	\$209,697	0	\$209,697	\$157,826
Fundraising	\$68,544	0	\$68,544	\$62,844
Total expenses	\$1,154,564	0	\$1,154,564	\$1,473,773
Increase (decrease) in net assets	\$24,822	\$60,779	\$85,601	(\$24,701)
NET ASSETS:				
Beginning of year	\$405,780	\$31,656	\$437,436	\$462,137
Transferred to CADRS	(\$220,814)	0	(\$220,814)	0
End of year	\$209,788	\$92,435	\$302,223	\$437,436

Statement of Activities: 2015

(for year ended May 31, 2015)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	TOTAL 2015	TOTAL 2014
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:				
Grants and contributions	\$197,602	\$381,835	\$579,437	\$760,585
Dispute Resolution Center Act	\$177,074	0	\$177,074	\$195,511
Donated services	\$102,729	0	\$102,729	\$100,374
Training fees	\$187,965	0	\$187,965	\$159,825
Consulting fees	0	0	0	\$2,444
Rental income	\$21,747	0	\$21,747	\$21,083
Interest income	\$71	0	\$71	\$343
Total support and revenue	\$687,188	\$381,835	\$1,069,023	\$1,240,165
Net assets released from restrictions	\$324,351	(\$324,351)	0	0
Total support and revenue	\$1,011,539	\$57,484	\$1,069,023	\$1,240,165
EXPENSES:				
Program services	\$831,359	0	\$831,359	\$876,323
Management and general	\$127,831	0	\$127,831	\$209,697
Fund raising	\$68,369	0	\$68,369	\$68,544
Total expenses	\$1,027,559		\$1,027,559	\$1,154,564
Increase (decrease) in net assets	(\$16,020)	\$57,484	\$41,464	\$85,601
NET ASSETS:				
Beginning of year	\$209,788	\$92,435	\$302,223	\$437,436
Transferred to CADRS	0	0	0	(\$220,814)
End of year	\$193,768	\$149,919	\$343,687	\$302,223



“The mediator was able to keep the conversation focused and precise, but also presented a friendly, compassionate demeanor which put us at ease and helped lead to a fair settlement.”

CCR Client

CCR BY THE NUMBERS



1,506

Number of cases mediated by CCR in FY2015.

5,000+

Number of clients and trainees served by CCR in FY2015.

500+

Number of individuals served through CCR's Training Programs in FY2015.

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“In the middle of every difficulty

lies opportunity.” – Albert Einstein

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