

Find Your



Solution.

Volume 7, Issue 1

Newsletter

Spring 2008

Our Mission

Resolutions Northwest is committed to strengthening personal and community responsibility by providing constructive conflict resolution services and education.

Our Services

Mediation
Family, Workplace, Neighborhood & Victim Offender
Professionally trained mediators resolve disputes ranging from barking dogs to graffiti, improving relationships and reducing crime.

Education
Violence Prevention Conflict Resolution, & Mediator Training
We teach students, professionals, and community members skills to reduce violence and solve conflicts in all environments.

Facilitation
Facilitation of large group and neighborhood issues, meetings and assistance with designing effective large group processes.

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New Additions to the RNW Family



Resolutions Northwest recently welcomed 22 new enthusiastic volunteers to our year-long mediation training program. After a thorough selection process, the new volunteers participated in an intensive 35-hour training on conflict resolution theory, mediation techniques and skills practice. Within a couple weeks of their training, the new volunteers began serving Portland communities by getting on the phones and offering empathy, support, clarity, encouragement and coaching for Portland area neighbors, landlords, tenants, roommates and family members who were experiencing conflict under the watchful eye of their staff mentor.

Now in its sixth year, the mediation training program is one of the most extensive of any community dispute resolution center in the country. In addition to the initial training, each volunteer commits to a two and a half hour weekly volunteer shift for an entire year, during which they receive ongoing training,

mentorship and real practice mediating and assisting Portland residents with real conflicts.

The last year of the volunteer program saw many improvements, including reorganizing the volunteer room, the development of several learning tools, and most importantly, the development and adoption of RNW Volunteer Standards. The Standards outline the steps, activities and skills that volunteers must accomplish to become RNW mediators and to progress in mediator experience levels. Program structures such as this will bolster the learning process for our volunteers and result in improved service to Portland residents.

We proudly welcome the 2008 volunteer class, which is wonderfully diverse in regards to age, profession and ethnicity, and is nearly 30% bilingual in Spanish! On behalf of Resolutions Northwest's board and staff and the hundred of Portland residents you will have served, THANK YOU in advance for your service to our community!

RNW Hires New Staff



Christina Albo

RNW's Director of Mediation Services, Christina Albo, began working with us on Monday, October 1, jumping in feet first with a team building afternoon with our organization's staff and board. What a way to get to know one another!

Christina comes to RNW with a strong background in family mediation, facilitation, mediation and conflict resolution training and in particular, school peer mediation program training and consultation. Her prior position was the Coordinator of the Youth and Family Mediation

Program within Clackamas County Family Court Services. She is a graduate of the PSU Masters in Conflict Resolution Program and wrote her thesis on "What Can the Field of Restorative Justice Learn from Guatemalan Mayan Law without Appropriating Indigenous Knowledge?"

Christina speaks Spanish fluently and is committed to providing services that are both culturally appropriate and inclusive of the field's best practices.

Loyal readers will recall our reporting of Christina's superb trainer skills at OMA-sponsored state-wide training on "Mediation and Latinos" offered in Spanish and English in the fall and winter of 2007.

Christina has managed a non-profit organization dedicated to community organizing and human rights advocacy, done quantitative and qualitative research on welfare reform under an NIH grant, and worked as coordinator/editor in the Guatemala News and Information Bureau in San Francisco. Christina is well respected for her thoughtful decision making, problem solving, creativity and leadership within the Oregon mediation community (and beyond); she is truly an asset to the work of Resolutions Northwest.

(Clockwise from top left) Amber Boydston, Youth Mediation Specialist; Christina Albo, Director of Mediation Services; Daniel Garcia, Restorative Justice School Mediation Specialist; and Teri Pierson, Facilitation Program Coordinator have a meeting of the minds.

Amber Boydston

Amber Boydston wowed the interview team in November and joined the RNW team as the Youth Mediation Specialist in December 2007. How can someone in her early 20s have so much experience with mediation and conflict resolution? Well, she came to us from Clackamas County Family Court Services, where she began volunteering as a youth mediator at age 14, later moving into various paid positions facilitating conflict resolution groups, peer mediation trainings, and theater and conflict resolution workshops. So that is about 10 years of experience right there. In addition, Amber has served on the Peacemakers planning committee for over four years and has taken on the opening emcee role for the past two years. Amber has a passion for many things, including diversity, empowering youth, allowing space for youth to be who they are, and supporting youth to take on new challenges and contribute to our world in new ways. Amber is bright, dynamic, full of energy and enthusiasm and will be an incredible addition to RNW and our youth mediation program. Keep your eyes peeled for a new Youth Program that will showcase creative ways to engage youth in making a positive difference in our world.

RNW Hires New Staff (continued)

Daniel Garcia

Rumor has it that we've hired Daniel Garcia to fill the RJ School Mediation Specialist position. Daniel joined us in early February 2008 and has managed to generate an enormous amount of energy and support for our incipient RJ program in the schools in only a few months. Daniel will finish his MA in Conflict Resolution at PSU by writing his thesis on RNW's new RJ pilot school. He did his practicum hours at Clark County's Restorative Community Program, where he quickly connected with the youth, Clark County staff and partner community service agencies, and moved from an unpaid mentor to paid lead mentor in this program. Daniel also interned for Christopher Sheesley in 2005. He has mediation, negotiation and facilitation training through PSU and from Mary Forst, Confluence. While at PSU, he facilitated dialogues on socially sensitive topics between students from different cultures, socio-economic backgrounds, and religious beliefs. He is deeply committed to RJ and has a firm grasp of the principles and values around RJ youth work. He has strong connections in the Portland school district and is skilled at forging new relationships and partnerships. Daniel brings enormous energy, commitment and creativity to this position and we are all having great fun working with him!

Teri Pierson

Teri Pierson joined the RNW team in late February 2008 with a bang. On her first day of work as the Facilitation Program Coordinator she attended an introductory meeting for a Good Neighbor Agreement for the new Day Labor Hire Site (more specifics on that later). Teri completed our volunteer mediator training and mentor program this past year and we are delighted she is now with us as staff. Teri will be finishing her MA in conflict resolution at PSU this year as a Phi Kappa Phi. She comes to us from Volunteers of America Integrated Family Services with experience as lead worker and trainer and most recently as the meeting facilitation program coordinator where she was responsible for hiring, training and supervising facilitators as well as program development. She has been a domestic violence consultant, children's program coordinator and has extensive experience in a variety of facilitation, mediation and training arenas. She has facilitated anti-oppression workshops for teens, strategic planning retreats for non-profits, siting of a farmer's market and has taught classes in cultural competency in conflict. Teri is talented and skilled, positive, and brings with her breadth of knowledge and experience around conflict resolution, facilitation and cultural competency.

Fond Farewells and Enthusiastic Hellos!

Resolution Northwest's Board of Directors has had to say goodbye to two of its hardest working members this quarter. Both **Sara Daley** and **Michele Reeves** moved on at the end of their terms in February. Michele is embarking on a new life journey with her family in Argentina and Sara will be refocusing her attention on her burgeoning commercial real estate business. Both Sara and Michele shared their many talents with RNW over the years, in marketing and fundraising as well as in the arenas of human resource and management. Sara, as Interim Chair of the Board, skillfully led the organization to a new level during many months of difficult transition last year. Michele worked tirelessly on putting together solid marketing materials and a great new board member recruitment process. We wish them both well in their new endeavors and thank them profusely for their dedicated and loyal service to RNW.

As we say goodbye to Sara and Michele, we are also excited to welcome **Karen Hannan**, **Bernie Casey** and **Joice Taylor** as new RNW Board Members. **Karen Hannan** is well known and respected in the mediation field. She has her own practice, Collaboration Works, Inc. and focuses on collaborative conversations for planning and problem solving.

She is a Past President of the Oregon Mediation Association (OMA) board and brings her many years of nonprofit board experience to RNW.

Bernie Casey is an attorney and mediator. He recently moved to Portland from the Bay Area where he served as a litigation partner with the international law firm of Reed Smith LLP. He recently represented several detainees at Guantanamo. He has served on a number of high profile boards and has received several awards for his pro bono legal work.

Finally, **Joice Taylor**, consultant with Multnomah County's Healthy Homes Environmental Project, just joined the board this past month. Joice has deep roots in the Portland community through her business and consulting work. She's currently CEO/President of Global Management Strategies and is a project member of the Rural and Urban Development League. She has been involved in organizational and social justice issues and activities since 1994 and became involved in mediation through the former City Neighborhood Mediation Program. Welcome Karen, Bernie and Joice!

Consideraciones para hacer mediación comunitaria con latinos en los EE.UU.

Escrito por Sandy Bacharach

Durante el tiempo que he trabajado con Resolutions Northwest (y llevo más de 4 años y medio), he tratado de asegurar que Resolutions Northwest sea un lugar donde la comunidad latina se sienta cómoda y atraída en utilizarnos para solucionar sus conflictos a través de la mediación.

Durante mi tiempo aquí y con el apoyo de la agencia y de becas, hemos logrado hacer

- ◇ Un reviso de los documentos en español que usamos en nuestro trabajo
- ◇ Diseños y distribución carteles profesionales
- ◇ Entrenamiento de mediación básico y bilingüe (en español e inglés)
- ◇ Entrenamientos especializados sobre mediación con comunidades latinas en inglés y español
- ◇ Anuncios y extensión por la televisión y por la radio sobre mediación, resolución de conflictos, y los servicios ofrecidos
- ◇ Un manual sobre cómo hacer educación pública en la comunidad latina

Durante estos años, han surgido varios desafíos. Por ejemplo, nuestro programa depende del apoyo de voluntarios de la comunidad para trabajar con los casos y hacer las mediaciones. Nosotros proveemos mediación para vecinos, familias, jóvenes en la escuela y los que son involucrados en el sistema de Justicia Juvenil. Aunque tenemos bastantes voluntarios bilingües, hemos visto menos voluntarios biculturales con más llamadas telefónicas en español. Hasta ahora, no hemos podido utilizar la asistencia de voluntarios monolingües en español.

Entre todos nuestros servicios, a veces pienso que la mediación familiar es la menos utilizada. Me pregunto si esto tiene que ver simplemente con diferencias culturales y/o si tiene que ver con el hecho de que yo no soy latina y quizás eso ha sido problemático en cuanto a inspirar confianza de que el servicio es sensible y apropiado para las familias latinas.

Durante estos años también hemos visto éxitos. Por

un lado, parece que hay más aceptación por nuestros servicios de mediar por vecinos. Mientras que en el pasado, los latinos involucrados en mediación vecinal eran los que respondían a pedidos de otros vecinos no-latinos, ahora recibo más llamadas en donde la persona que llama para pedir servicio de mediación es latino/a. Esto me dice que los latinos reconocen el valor de la mediación, nuestros servicios, y confían que vamos a poder ayudar.

Una cosa que yo he notado es que en casi todos los casos de mediación vecinal, los latinos nombran al racismo como una parte del problema. Aquí en Portland, han venido refugiados de Somalia y he visto conflictos entre los somalíes y los latinos. Aunque antes tuvimos que enfocarnos en educar a la comunidad latina de qué es la mediación y cómo esta les puede servir, ahora vemos, como mencioné anteriormente, que los latinos mismos están tomando la iniciativa en llamar para discutir y resolver sus situaciones a través de la mediación. Miembros de la comunidad latina están introduciéndonos a nuevas comunidades inmigratorias. Somos optimistas y creemos que el multiculturalismo nos ofrece oportunidades y recursos poderosos para poder crecer y responder a esta diversidad de comunidades en cambio constante.

To see the complete article on Considerations in Providing Community Mediation in Spanish, go to our website and look under "Our Services".

Can We Live Without Our Youth?

NO! And that's why I'm here, because I believe in the incredible power of youth; whether it is their voice, actions or pure existence, youth give testament to the incredible possibilities of our future. Since its official inception last fall, the youth program continues to grow. We've provided two successful 16 hour Peer Mediation Trainings; one at Jefferson High School during the latter part of December and the other more recently at Roosevelt High School. In both trainings there were between 25 and 30 students who were trained to be mediators for their school and out of that a handful of youth joined Resolutions Northwest's Youth Program. While the Youth Program is still in its developmental stages, there are quite a few exciting upcoming events for the youth to participate in over the summer. For instance, we plan to work with KBOO's youth program to produce a radio segment around conflict resolution and we also plan to offer conflict resolution theatre workshops through Portland Parks and Recreation.

On another note, for this years Peacemakers Conference, which is set to take place on Wednesday November 5, 2008, RNW is working on a special Disability Video Project. This DVD focuses exclusively on three youth with different levels and kinds of disabilities. The goal of this project is to create an edu-

DVD for middle and high school youth to raise their awareness around a variety of disabilities and differences. We have almost completed the DVD and are excited about making it available to schools that attend the Peacemakers Conference this year!

Although we've done a few youth and family mediations over the last couple of months, we are looking to increase that number over the next year. To expand our volunteer pool, we plan to hold a Youth and Family Mediation Training this fall and will train both youth and adults to conduct family mediations.

Lastly, the Youth Program is proud to introduce Life in Motion: Voices through Theatre, a unique blend of theatre and conflict resolution. Our first appearance will be at Matt Dishman with Portland Parks and Recreation this summer during their Summer Camp workshops. We will also be offering this program to schools and organizations this fall.

For information about this project, please contact Amber Boydston, Youth Mediation Specialist, at (503)595-4890.

Restorative Justice in Schools Pilot Project

In an effort to tackle the pressing disciplinary issues facing schools today, Resolutions Northwest is teaming up with Multnomah County's District Attorney's Office and Juvenile Services Division to develop a pilot project that integrates Restorative Justice and Conflict Resolution practices into school discipline. Peer Mediation and Victim Offender Meeting programs will be key components in this endeavor.

The specific goals of the pilot project include reducing the number of referrals from schools to the Juvenile Services Division; reducing the numbers of in-school disciplinary referrals, suspensions and expulsions; reducing over-representation of

minorities in disciplinary and Juvenile Services Division referrals; and repairing the harm done by the behaviors that lead to disciplinary action.

Currently we are in the final stages of identifying our partner high school and middle school. We plan to launch the program this coming fall. The prospect of taking Restorative Justice out of the courthouse and into the classroom is very exciting and I look forward to updating everyone along the way!

For information about this project, please contact Daniel Garcia, RJ School Mediation Specialist at (503) 988-5610.



1827 NE 44TH AVE, STE 300
 PORTLAND, OR 97213
 503-595-4890
www.resolutionsnorthwest.org

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Upcoming Events

- June 26-27 Northwest Justice Forum
Vancouver
- Aug 7-8 Oregon Association of
Dispute Resolution Centers
Meeting, Hood River
- Aug 11-15 Summer Camp Theatre
Program ages 13-16
- Aug 18-20 Summer Camp Theatre
Program ages 10-12
- Oct 2 Metro Collaborative Group
Meeting, Gresham
- Oct 13 Coalition Victim Offender
Mediation Programs Meet-
ing, Eugene
- Nov 5 Peacemakers Conference
Portland
- Nov 7-8 OMA Conference
Portland

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Co-Coordinator
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Co-Coordinator

DONATIONS MATTER

Resolutions Northwest would not be able to do what we do without the help of our many volunteers and supporters. Our ability to provide quality community dispute resolution services is made possible by – and is increasingly dependant upon – the financial support of community members who are committed to our mission. Donations allow us to cover our costs and offer our services to those most in need. Please consider making a donation to RNW by mail or by visiting our website at:

www.resolutionsnorthwest.org

Every single contribution, no matter what the amount, helps keep our services available to the entire community.

Thank you!