Greetings,

February has been a month of challenges for the great state of Virginia. Admissions and allegations of egregious behavior has placed the Commonwealth in the eye of a media storm. Clandestine activities, secrets and failure to communicate have caused conflict amongst the leaders of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Difficult conversations have been had. Conflict has erupted. Having a difficult conversation is tricky at best. Moving a heated argument to productive discourse is challenging. We as mediators and alternative dispute resolution (ADR) professionals must continue to enhance our skills as so that we can be of service to our clients, our peers and our families.

VMN is honored to provide our members with an opportunity to just that. Our 2019 Spring Conference features Cinnie Noble and Dale B. Robinson. Cinnie and Dale will introduce our audiences to Conflict Management Coaching and how the participants can effectively utilize this new tool.

Cinnie Noble is certified professional coach, qualified mediator and the visionary behind CINERGY© conflict coaching model. Cinnie will present an interactive workshop on The Nexus of Conflict Coaching and Mediation which will provide the participant with an overview of Conflict Coaching its many applications.

Dale B. Robinson is a seasoned conflict resolution practitioner. He is a Virginia Certified mediator. He was instrumental in establishing mediation programs at several universities, as well as the Tennessee Human Rights Commission.

Continued on page 2
Dale will present a workshop on Growing Your CR Services: Mediation, Conflict Coaching and Professional Development. Designed for human resource professionals, mediators, employee relationship consultants and others who desire to build or enhance their conflict resolutions services.

I am excited to share that we have chosen David J. Smith Consultant to serve as our facilitator of our strategic planning session to formulate a plan for the organization’s future viability and growth.

Lastly, I would like to remind you that March is mediation month. We are currently waiting for the Governor to issue an official proclamation in recognition of this. During March, I want to charge each of you to boldly serve as mediation awareness ambassadors in your daily interaction with your family, business colleagues and government officials.

Virginia Mediation Network is moving into new and exciting territory and we are thrilled to have you along for the ride.

Peace,

Vickie R. Wms-Cullins, MPA

Did you know the Virginia Mediation Network has Facebook & LinkedIn pages? Join us today!
March is Mediation Month

2019 Proclamation

WHEREAS, 2019 marks the 26th anniversary of the passage of the dispute resolution proceedings statutes in Virginia, legislation that continues to play an important role in institutionalizing the use of mediation in the courts; and

WHEREAS, with continued adherence to the 2002 Virginia Administrative Dispute Resolution Act, numerous governmental entities in the Commonwealth are demonstrating a commitment to the application of creative problem-solving when faced with complex issues and disputes; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia court system continues to administer the mediator certification program and provides a way for the public to locate a mediator for individual services; and

WHEREAS, mediators and other dispute resolution practitioners, through their significant expertise in helping stakeholders find durable solutions to important issues, have demonstrated the value of the field of alternative dispute resolution and the value of mediation as a tool for peacemaking between and among individuals, groups, units, neighborhoods, or countries; and

WHEREAS, many of Virginia’s universities, colleges and law schools incorporate mediation into their curricula and programs; leaders, managers, and supervisors apply mediation practices and skills in the workplace; and not-for-profit community-based dispute resolution centers provide opportunities to resolve issues effectively and affordably in communities; and

WHEREAS, an increasing number of professional entities in Virginia contribute to and provide quality dispute resolution services; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia continues to be a leader in promoting the use of such principles and practices;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ralph S. Northam, do hereby recognize March 2019 as MARCH IS MEDIATION MONTH in our COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.
VMN Membership 2019 Registration Now Open!

The Virginia Mediation Network (VMN) is an association of professional mediators in the Commonwealth of Virginia whose mission is:

- To provide an interdisciplinary forum for the exchange of ideas and the development of solutions to all forms of dispute.
- To enhance the professional skills of mediators by promoting educational development in conflict resolution.
- To increase the public understanding and acceptance of the role of mediators in dispute resolution.
- To act as resource to organizations and institutions through which mediation services are provided.
- To promote professional interests and skills of mediators at the local and state level.

Click here to renew your VMN Membership Today!

**Basic Membership: $125.00**

VMN Basic Membership offers reduced rates for conferences, free or reduced cost teleseminars, informative newsletters throughout the year and the “Find a Mediator - Basic” page listing which includes your name, phone number and email address in a searchable database. Your information will be included in VMN’s internet accessible database AND in Google and other search engines.

**Enhanced Membership: $175.00**

VMN Enhanced Membership includes all the benefits of “Basic Membership” PLUS the “Find a Mediator - Enhanced page listing which includes your name, address, phone number, email address AND your photo, a link to your website, and a descriptive paragraph about your business and services. This additional information should be emailed to VMN at virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com. Your information will be included in VMN's internet accessible database and in Google’s index AND the link to your website will elevate your placement in Google and other internet searches.

**Student Membership: $50.00**

Student Membership is open to full time, higher education students and newly trained mediators interested in getting a head start in the professional mediation community. To qualify for this category, please submit proof that either you are a full time student (copy of a current student ID card) or that you completed basic 20-hour mediation training within the last three months (training certificate signed and dated by your trainer). This membership includes all of the benefits of the Basic Membership but does not include the Find a Mediator page.

VMN Membership is based on a calendar year, January 1st through December 31st.
Last Name: _____________________________________________________

First Name: _______________________ Middle Name OR Nickname : ________________________________

Email: _______________________________________________________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________________________________

City: __________________________________ State: ___________ Zip: ___________________

Phone: ___________________________________ Website: _____________________________________________

Are you interested in serving on a VMN Committee(s)?

Please check which Committee(s) you are interested in:

☐ Conference / Education Committee  ☐ Membership Committee

☐ Communications Committee  ☐ Legislative Committee

VMN MEMBERSHIP Levels 2019

1 Year Membership Levels (Membership is January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019)

_____ Enhanced Membership $175.00

_____ Basic Membership $125.00

_____ Student Membership $50.00

_____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

Payments Accepted: ☐ VISA  ☐ MASTERCARD  ☐ DISCOVER  ☐ CHECK

CREDIT CARD NUMBER __________________________________________________________

EXPIRATION DATE ________________ 3 DIGIT CODE (on back of card) ______________

SIGNATURE _______________________________________________________________________

Save time and register online!

Go to www.vamediation.org and go to Membership Tab for online registration.

Mail this printed application and payment to:

VMN, P.O. Box 29007, Henrico, Virginia 23242

Phone: 571-399-8660 or 804-316-5271
Conflict management coaching (also known as conflict coaching) has increasingly found its way into many mediators’, facilitators’ and coaches’ toolboxes. It is a process that can be used in tandem with mediation or other ADR processes or independent of it. There are multiple applications of conflict management coaching, and mediators and disputants alike are finding that the benefits, among other things, improve the conflict experience. This interactive session provides an overview of what conflict management coaching is and its many applications. The focus will be primarily on the use of pre-mediation coaching to prepare parties to participate in the mediation process relating to their interpersonal disputes.

Participants will learn:
- what conflict management coaching is, its applications and how practitioners are expanding their businesses with the range of uses
- how neuroscience principles figure into coaching and pre-mediation coaching
- the whys, whats and hows of pre-mediation coaching
- several resources to enhance a pre-mediation coaching practice

About the Presenter – Cinnie Noble
Cinnie Noble is a professional certified coach (PCC), qualified mediator and former lawyer. She is a pioneer of conflict management coaching, having developed the CINERGY® model in 1999. She coaches worldwide and trains mediators, coaches and others around the world in the use of this process. Cinnie is author of six books, two of which are on coaching - *Conflict Management Coaching: The CINERGY™ Model* (2011) and *Conflict Mastery: Questions to Guide You* (2014). www.cinergycoaching.com

Continued on page 7
Growing Your CR Services: Mediation, Conflict Coaching, and Professional Development

1.5 hours CME Non Ethics Approved

Designed for human resource professionals, mediators, employee relations consultants and others who desire to build or enhance their conflict resolution services. The conflict resolution program that was created for faculty and staff at Virginia Tech will serve as a model for developing and integrating mediation, conflict management coaching and professional development workshops. The facilitator will describe how to: assess the need for program strategies; gain support for the program; promote program services; and create alliances and boundaries with management and program partners. Participants will be provided with an outline of the curriculum developed for the workshops offered to faculty and staff; learn about the Conflict Dynamics Profile assessment and how to integrate it into workshops and conflict coaching; learn about the Social Justice Mediation concept; and consider which components of an integrated program may be the most appropriate for the parties involved.

About the Presenter – Dale B. Robinson
Dale Robinson served as the Assistant Director for Education, Outreach and Conflict Resolution at Virginia Tech. From 2007 to 2017, he managed the Virginia Tech Conflict Resolution Program. He retired in 2017. Prior to Virginia Tech, Dale established the internal mediation program at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston in 1993 and established the mediation program utilized by the Tennessee Human Rights Commission to address both equal employment opportunity complaints and fair housing complaints filed with the Commission. He assisted the Virginia Department of Employment Dispute Resolution, EDR, with the design of a workplace conflict resolution professional development program. Dale is a Virginia certified mediator and a member of the Board of Directors of VMN.

*There will be a small break between workshops with light snacks and drinks provided by VMN. Cancellation must be received in writing to virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com one week prior to the event (4/5/2019) for partial refund of registrations fees. A $50 fee will be deducted from registration fees to cover expenses incurred by Virginia Mediation Network.
At Harrisonburg’s FairField Center, we like to say that bringing people together is our specialty. FairField Center began in 1982 as the Community Mediation Center and was the first mediation center in Virginia. Since its inception, FairField Center has demonstrated that when individuals and groups improve their ability to listen, understand, and communicate effectively and fairly, everyone in the community benefits.

The FairField Center uses innovative programs to help meet the unique dispute resolution needs of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County’s culturally-diverse population. Not only did the accomplished mediation team serve 1,667 mediation clients, opening 773 and mediating 555 cases in 2018, but they also provided restorative justice practices to schools, police, prisons, and the courts, and offered a full slate of training and professional development classes for mediators, businesses, government agencies, and parents navigating co-parenting after divorce. Additionally, FairField Center’s trainers and one-on-one coaches conducted prevention and intervention services for area companies to help address issues such as workplace disputes, EEO complaints, and harassment issues.

With the FairField Center’s service area seeing an international population growth rate of 73.2% between 2011 and 2016, the organization has become a key facilitator for cultivating understanding and acceptance of diversity throughout the community, and for building capacity from within the international population to solve conflicts and facilitate restoration. By developing partnerships and conducting community outreach, FairField Center has been able to assist government agencies, businesses, and organizations in managing language, cultural, and workplace issues in a more effective and meaningful way.

**RECENT PROGRAMS OF NOTE:**

Continued on page 9
Coming to America Forum. FairField Center, NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center, and the United Way of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County will host an active, participant-driven conversation on immigration on Tuesday, March 5, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm and Saturday, March 9, 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm at the Asbury United Methodist Church, 205 South Main Street, Harrisonburg, VA. This event is modeled after National Issues Forum guide “Coming to America, Who Should We Welcome, What Should We Do?” and aims to create a deliberative space with trained facilitators to help the community engage this topic at the local level.

InterMediators. For the past four years the FairField Staff has conducted a program in partnership with NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center called InterMediators. InterMediators trains members of the local Hispanic community in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) skills including conflict negotiation, communication, and mediation.

Harrisonburg International Festival. Partnering with the community to create meaningful interactions is also a big part of the FairField Center mission, and the annual Harrisonburg International Festival serves as the centerpiece of the organization’s Civic Engagement division. Now in its 22nd year, the festival drew more than 10,000 attendees, 25 food vendors, 20+ artisan vendors, 46 business networking participants, 30+ nonprofits/social services agencies, and 20+ entertainment and international groups in 2018. More information on the festival can be found at [www.harrisonburg-international-festival.org](http://www.harrisonburg-international-festival.org).

FEMA Support. Tim Ruebke, Executive Director of Harrisonburg’s FairField Center recently returned from a 38-day stint as a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Specialist assisting relief efforts in North Carolina in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence. ADR Specialists are used to implement mediation and other conflict resolution techniques (e.g., individual and leadership coaching, group facilitation, and communication training) in emergency and disaster-stricken areas.
VMN Annual Training Conference
September 28-29, 2019

Call for Speakers

Deadline for submission June 1, 2019

Speaking at Conferences is a great way to present new ideas, increase name recognition, and gain credibility, both within your community and with potential clients. The Virginia Mediation Network is always looking for presentations that are thought provoking and learning opportunities for mediators in Virginia.

VMN is hosting the annual Fall Training Conference September 28-29, 2019 and is looking for presentations that would be of interest to conference participants. The conference will be held at the University of Richmond Jepson Alumni Center in Richmond, Virginia. VMN is seeking proposals for concurrent workshops (1.5 hours in length) which will be scheduled for either September 28th or 29th. All conference presentation ideas are welcome for review. To assist in thinking about topic areas, past participants have identified various topics of interest listed below. It is offered to spark thought and creativity.

Possible Session Ideas:

- Spousal and child support, equitable distribution, 401(k) issues, tax issues, and other financial matters in mediation
- ‘Silver Divorce’ issues
- Public Conflict and Solving Public Problems
- Future of Mediation in Academia
- Panel Discussion(s)
- Cultural differences and/or religious differences in mediation
- Focused exploration on a part of the mediation process
- Restorative Justice
- Child issues in mediation
- Employment Law mediation
- Personality types, personality disorders, and other mental health issues and how they impact the mediation process
- Conflict coaching seminar

Speaker proposals are being accepted until June 1, 2019. All handouts are required when submitting the program proposal as these materials are needed for both the CME and CLE application process. When submitting a program proposal, all attachments plus a brief, personal bio, must be included for consideration. For your convenience, the checklist for submitting proposals is outlined on the following page.
1. “Call for Speakers” Program Checklist located at vamediation.org click on Conferences Tab

2. ADR CME Application signed by all speakers in program, download a copy at vamediation.org

This form must be completed and returned with all other information so that continuing mediator credits can be applied for from Dispute Resolution Services at the Supreme Court of Virginia. Please note your signature is required on this form. If you do not have a way to electronically sign the form, you can mail this particular form to the address below.

3. A brief bio (no more than one paragraph) for the conference program.

4. **Handouts, worksheets, role plays, power point presentations, etc. that you will include in your presentation.** Please review the CME application guidelines as specificity is required on this form. Handouts that you want participants to have during the session (that are included in the training manual that each conference participant receives) will need to be included.

All materials can be returned to the Virginia Mediation Network at virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com. Please scan in a signature copy of your CME application if emailing your application to the VMN office.

Our mailing address:

VMN
P.O. Box 29007
Henrico, VA 23242

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact VMN at virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com or (804) 316-5271.

Best Regards,

VMN Fall 2019 Conference Committee

Daniel Hand, VMN Board Member, Conference Committee Chair

Brenda Booth Lowry, VMN Board Member

Karen Richards, VMN Member

Dale Robinson, VMN Board Member
March  Mediation Month
April 10-13  ABA DR Spring Conference
April 13   Spring Conference
Sept. 18-21 ACR Conference
Sept. 28 –29 Fall Conference
The Harm in Parents Disparaging One Another to the Child: A Frank Conversation to have with Family Mediation Clients.

By Kristen Kalina

One of the most disturbing things I find in my family mediation practice and private family law practice is the all too common instance of one parent disparaging the other parent in front of the children, especially as a pattern of intentional behavior designed to diminish the relationship between and/or alienate the other parent from the child.

I am not a psychologist, but I have deposed a lot of psychologists in private practice, read a lot of session notes and had plenty of private discussions with parent-clients that have been the subject of or who are actively engaging is such behavior. I have had long discussions with parent-coordinators about this topic over the years in order to better understand its effects. One particular professional I have used often in private practice, who has a PhD in Psychology, described the body of research in this area to me and I was astounded at the well-documented negative long-term effects of this behavior on the child. Now, I make a point of imparting this information on mediation clients, if I detect even a hint of active disparagement or parental alienation going on in the family.

From an article I read recently on this topic, “[t]here is now scholarly consensus that severe alienation is abusive to children and is a largely overlooked form of child abuse, as child welfare and divorce practitioners are often unaware of or minimize its extent.”

The body of research is well summarized in a Psychology Today article by Edward Kruk, PhD, as follows:

“As reported by adult children of divorce, the tactics of alienating parents are tantamount to extreme psychological maltreatment [of children].” Children get much of their confidence from the manner in which they are nurtured, how they are raised and how they feel about their own self-worth and that of their family. “For the child, parental alienation is a serious mental condition, based on a false belief that the alienated parent is dangerous and unworthy.”

Having a parent(s) who is “unworthy,” makes the child feel unworthy him/herself, is what my psychologist colleague had also explained to me. As such, the body of literature indicates that a child who hears constant disparaging remarks or worse is totally alienated from one parent, believing that one parent is a “bad person,” is likely to have low self-esteem in his/her own interactions with peers, at school, etc. Dr. Kruk also explains in his article that these children are often said to experience self-hatred and lack of trust, leading to depression and substance abuse.

What surprises people most is Dr. Kruk’s conclusion that these children typically end up having conflicted or distant relationships with the offending parent as well! In other words, the parent who is disparaging and alienating the other parent is likely to ultimately end up being alienated themself by the child, later in life. Further, these children “are at high risk of becoming distant from their own children,” having had trouble in their own childhood with those bonds. The more you read about this topic the more disturbing it becomes.

Continued on page 14
A frank conversation with mediation clients:

When I suspect such a scenario in a mediation that I am conducting, even if mild, I generally pause and with my most concerned face I say something like the following: “By what’s been said today, would you like to consider some non-disparagement language in your agreement… I detect that one or both of you may be disparaging the other in front of the children or even perhaps trying to alienate the other from the children…. I want to make sure we come up with a parenting plan that works in the children’s best interest… We all know the two of you have issues or we wouldn’t be here today, I’m not a psychologist, but what I have learned over the years is that imparting negative comments on the children about the other party [and/or alienating the child from the other parent] doesn’t hurt the other one of you nearly as much as it hurts your child. Do you know that studies show that children get their own self-worth and self-confidence from how they feel about their parents and family? Do you know that studies show that if a child feels like his parents are unworthy or “bad people” then he/she may have low self-esteem at school, they may have low self-confidence in dealing with other children in their own social circles, which directly effects their ability to make friends and be confident…. I only mention this because if a parent is telling their kid that their mom or dad is a piece of crap, they should think about the child on the playground at school thinking that they themselves are also a piece of crap, because that’s how studies show that this behavior will manifest itself… and just as concerning, the research also shows that the child will often alienate themselves from the offending parent and perhaps even their own children… it can be really saddening overall… I suggest you google it if you want more information.” Reading their faces after this discussion is so revealing and I’ve had people cry after we’ve talked about it. And that was my soft version.

Some reading this may think this line of discussion isn’t appropriate or is too aggressive or too imposing for a mediator to use in divorce or custody mediation. But from my own experience, people in mediation respond well to it. Overall, I am convinced that a very frank discussion about parental disparagement and parental alienation puts the “best interest of the child” at the forefront of the conversation and helps the parties get to an agreement that will work for them and the mental health of their children longterm.

January 17, 2019 marked our 3rd Annual Mediation Day on the Hill. The purpose for our Annual Mediation Day was to visit the offices of the Delegates and State Senators on the Courts of Justice, Finance and Appropriations Committees. A highlight of our visit was when Senator Marsden, a long-time supporter of mediation, introduced VMN and Resolution Virginia during the regular session and spoke about the importance of mediation. The individuals present for the introduction by Senator Marsden included Vickie Williams-Cullins, President of VMN, Christine Paulson, Director of Resolution Virginia, Monica Archer, Pamela Struss, Karen Richards, Lawrie Parker and Betty Russo. We appreciate that Sally P. Campbell, Mandy R. Sarkissian, Jon Lamp and Lerence Lubigan from the Dispute Resolution Services of the Supreme Court of Virginia were there to support the mediation community.

As there has been a turnover in the House of Delegates and the State Senate, the Legislative Committee is working on an updated information sheet which explains mediation and the role of the mediator to these newly elected legislators. Our VMN members can show the Delegates and State Senators that mediation is important to them by stopping by their district offices after the session ends and having a conversation about mediation and how mediation could help their constituents. To find your Delegate or State Senator, please click on the link below:

virginiageneralassembly.gov

To increase awareness of mediation and provide new opportunities for mediators on a local government level, there is the possibility of VMN participating as an exhibitor at the 2019 Virginia Municipal League (“VML”) Annual Conference to be held in Roanoke, Virginia in October. If VMN decides to participate as an exhibitor, an inquiry will be made to Resolution Virginia to see if there is an interest in jointly registering with us for an exhibitor booth for the VML Conference.

Those VMN members who are interested in participating in legislative activities, please email VMN Administrator, Jeanne Mann at virginiamediationnetwork@gmail.com or Betty Russo, Legislative Committee Chair, at russo.betty@gmail.com.

Pictured at right:

Vickie Williams-Cullins, VMN President
Monica Archer
Betty Russo, VMN Board Member
Karen Richards, VMN Member
Pamela Struss, VMN Board Member
Lawrie Parker, VMN Member
MASTERY OF MEDIATION SKILLS
Training and Conferences *(not an exhaustive list)*

SPRING 2019

Please review all the opportunities to take your mediation practice to a new level!

March

16th A CSW63 Workshop on Women and Mediation by MBBI, New York

19th Neuroscience in Mediation and Negotiation, New York City Bar Association, for more information: https://services.nycbar.org/EventDetail?EventKey= MED031919&mcode=MEDIATE&WebsiteKey=f71e12f3-524e-4f8c-a5f7-0d16ce7b3314

26th Non-Violent Communication, NVMS, Fairfax, VA, for more information: https://events.eventzilla.net/e/nonviolent-communication-2138708799

April

10-13th ABA’s Dispute Resolution Conference, Minneapolis, MN, for more information: https://www.americanbar.org/groups/dispute_resolution/events_cle/annual/


13th VMN Spring Conference, Saturday, April 13 from 8:30am to 1 pm featuring Cinnie Noble and Dale Robinson

May

13-17th “Mediation from a Social Justice Perspective” offered by Social Justice Mediation Institute, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, 01002, USA, for more information: http://www.sjmediation.org

29-June 1 AFCC 56th Annual Conference, Toronto, ON Canada, for more information: https://www.afccnet.org

30th-June1 International Academy of Mediators: Banff, Canada, for more information: https://book.passkey.com/event/49597528/owner/56367/home

Continued on page 17
Training and Conferences (continued)

June

13-16\textsuperscript{th} International Mediation Symposium, Salzburg, Austria, for more information: http://cils.org/conference.php?Start=2019-06-13

July

10-13\textsuperscript{th} International Association for Conflict Management, Dublin, Ireland, for more information: https://iafcm.org/index.php/annual-conference/

August

15-17 Florida’s Dispute Resolution Center’s Annual Conference, Orlando, FL, for more information: https://www.flcourts.org/Resources-Services/Alternative-Dispute-Resolution/Annual-Conference

September

18-21 ACR’s Conference “Heal the Divide” Tucson, AZ, for more information: https://acrnet.org

28 –29 Virginia Mediation Network Annual Fall Conference 2019, University of Richmond Jepson Alumni Center, Call for Speakers now open at www.vamediation.org