

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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## GEORGIAN TEAM PERSISTS IN ESTABLISHING MEDIATION CLINIC

Amidst supply shutdowns and communications blockades, grave reports of civilian casualties and severe damage in nearby regions, and fears of a possible Russian invasion of their own city, our Georgian partners at Tbilisi State University wrote to reassure us that they were alright. However, things are anything but normal now in Tbilisi after the recent war between Georgia and Russia. Land mines remain in conflict areas, and 120,000 internal refugees (IDPs) who fled to Tbilisi stress its services and infrastructure (See “What You Can Do” on p. 2).

A team from the DU’s Conflict Resolution Institute had just been to Georgia earlier this summer in order to complete the last stages of certification of Tbilisi State University’s new cadre of mediators. TSU faculty and DU faculty partnered to provide the components of a standard 40 hour mediation training plus advanced topics to supplement the Georgian students’ university courses. Then on June 17, 2008, 28 new Georgian mediators were made official, accompanied by champagne and cake. These graduates will be the pioneers of mediation in their country, as they go out into the community and help identify avenues for the creation of mediation and conflict resolution services. In addition they will become the staff for the Mediation Center being established at Tbilisi State University.

In addition to receiving instruction in mediation principles typically covered in basic 40-hour trainings, time was also spent on advanced skill building, cultural variations in disputing, as well as advanced training in mediating business, organizational, and family disputes. These areas had earlier been identified through a needs assessment study done by TSU’s Conflictology Center faculty as the areas of Georgian society best fit for the new use of mediation. One other area



Nine of 28 new Georgian Mediators

identified as important for further expansion of mediation and conflict resolution training is that of primary and secondary education, and plans were further elaborated during the June visit for a follow-up project. In a parallel meeting with TSU top administrators, it was suggested to the DU/TSU team that a linkage be formed between an expansive data collection project currently being initiated in their public schools, and the study of traditional conflict resolution practices in the

# JUNE MEDIATION TRAINING IN TBILISI

communities in the Republic of Georgia.

Joining TSU faculty trainers Guguli Magradze, Medea Despotashvili, and Revaz Jorbenadze, were DU trainers Robin Amadei, Cynthia Savage, Ruth Parsons, and Tamra Pearson d'Estrée. Also, DU team members joined Prof. Magradze on a public panel to discuss resolving organizational disputes before a large audience of faculty, students, governmental representatives and community members. In separate meetings, TSU team faculty also updated the DU team on progress in establishing their university-based mediation clinic, and consulted with the team regarding remaining issues such as best practices in establishing referral systems.

Legendary Georgian hospitality provided breaks to the hardworking team. DU visitors were invited to a traditional extended Georgian feast for a Magradze family birthday, as well as treated to a visit to Turtle Lake, a popular park above Tbilisi with joggers and strollers of all ages, and to Mtskheta, an ancient town not far from the city where Georgian kings were crowned and buried. Though historically subject to invasion, the Georgian people have continued to retain their strength, identity and charm throughout their tumultuous



Ruth Parsons, Cynthia Savage, Tamra Pearson d'Estree, Guguli Madradze, ??????????????????, Robin Amadei at Public Panel in Tbilisi

history. We find it a privilege to work with the Georgians as they infuse peace-building strategies into the development of this fledgling democracy.

DU's CRI continues to work with TSU to investigate the best avenues for increasing the use of mediation in Georgia and fostering a culture of collaboration and conflict resolution. For example, CRI MA student Christina Farnsworth has completed a working paper *The Georgian Republic: An Overview of the Education, Business and Political Sectors* that is available through our CRI Working Paper Series (see newsletter insert).

– Tamra Pearson d'Estrée, Robin Amadei and Ruth Parsons

## WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- Assist refugees in Georgia by donating to humanitarian assistance organizations operating in Georgia
  1. Georgian Women Initiatives Support Movement (co-founded by our partner Guguli Magradze) via Wire Transfer:  
Intermediary: CITIBANK N.A. 111 Wall St, NY, NY 10043  
Swift: CITIUS33; ABA: 021000089;  
Correspondent Account: 36127097  
Beneficiary Bank: HEAD OFFICE Swift: TBCBGE22, VAKE BRANCH OF JSC TBC BANK  
11, Chavchavadze Ave, Tbilisi, Georgia  
Swift: TBCBGE22830; Account #: 96436180100003  
Name: Women Initiatives Support Movement
  2. International Organization for Migration's Emergency Relief Fund for Georgia. <http://iondonations.kintera.org/>
- Write to the following and make your concerns for Georgia known:
  - Your local Representative or State Senator
  - The Secretary General of the United Nations and other international organizations
  - The Russian Embassy
- Stay Informed
- Talk -- Spread the word by speaking about the situation to your friends and colleagues.

## FROM GEORGIAN COLLEAGUES

Here are portions from Prof. Magradze's mid-August letter:

Thank you for your support. We are very happy that you take our tragedy so close to your heart. ...Russian air and army forces have attacked not only the population of conflict zones but also citizens of Georgia living in villages and cities around the conflict zone. As a result, a large number of people were killed, wounded, left without shelter and food. The Russian army has destroyed both military and civil buildings and infrastructure...

The population of villages and cities occupied by the Russian army has fled to the capital city of Georgia - Tbilisi. Tbilisi is filled with over 120,000 refugees from the conflict zone and its surrounding cities and villages. The Western countries have planned and are currently implementing humanitarian assistance programs but the loss is huge and Georgia needs any kind of assistance ... moral and material ...

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT – DENISE PEARSON



*Denise Pearson, Ph.D. Marquette University is the Assistant Dean of Academics and Director of Professional Studies at University College, which includes the programs in Alternative Dispute Resolution and Applied Communication. She worked on the three-year CRI project with the University of the West Indies to increase community mediation capacity and assist in the development of master's and certificate programs.*

*Autumn Gorman spoke with her on September 19th to learn more about her and her involvement in the Conflict Resolution Institute.*

*AG: How did you become involved with Conflict Resolution – both the field and this program?*

DP: I came to the University of Denver 5 years ago and because the history was already there, I was automatically assigned to the role of Core Faculty in the Conflict Resolution program and the Alternative Dispute Resolution program.

I have a doctorate in education administration with an emphasis in higher

education, where conflict is inevitable. I took courses in community relations, dealing with faculty and parents and various other stakeholders, but I never really took a body of courses that dealt specifically with conflict resolution. Directing the program in ADR provided me the opportunity to expand on my doctoral studies by taking courses at the Conflict Resolution Institute, where I furthered my skills in mediation, conflict resolution and assessment.

*What are your interests, activities and/or research topics?*

My interests are in organization conflict management and leadership development. I recently completed reviewing a book on conflict in medical paradigms in Sub-Saharan Africa. And I will be presenting her paper on Building Capacity Thru Evaluation of Our Conflict at the Gandhi/King Peace-Building Conference next month in Memphis, Tennessee.

*What courses to you teach? What unique perspectives do conflict resolution students bring to them?*

I have developed several courses, such as ADR in Education and Managing Organizational Conflict, but I do not get to teach much due to my administrative responsibilities. I do occasionally teach these courses and sometimes fill in for Professor Ruth Parsons with her course, Conflict Resolution for Social Work.

Conflict Resolution students consistently bring to the classroom a desire to find alternative means to find resolutions to conflicts. They are bright, determined and inquisitive, and set

high standards not only for themselves, but for the program.

*What do you think the future hold for the field of Conflict Resolution?*

The opportunities are limitless. Conflict and its resolution are part of the human experience. It affects everything: healthcare, families – elderly, teenagers, faculty and students, etc.

*What career opportunities do you see for current and/or prospective students?*

Everyone can benefit from some training in conflict resolution/alternative dispute resolution. The ADR program, which offers a 40-hour certificate in mediation, has a very diverse student base (human resources, organization effectiveness, doctors, psychologists, etc.) . In fact, practicing mediators are a minority.

What is most important is how the knowledge and training are applied. I have found it has made me a more affective Assistant Dean and a better parent.

*What advice would you offer current and/or prospective students?*

Be clear on what you want to achieve professionally and then be strategic about how to apply these skills get there. However, you do not want to put yourself into a box. You may come here with one idea about what you would like to do with your degree, but you may find other interests.

Professor Denise Pearson can be reached at [Denise.Pearson@du.edu](mailto:Denise.Pearson@du.edu).

## ALUMNI IN THE FIELD

### Brian Manwaring: US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution

Working as a Program Manager at the United States Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution managing the Water Resource Sector, Brian Manwaring coordinates multi-stakeholder planning and conflict resolution processes involving river basin management, riparian ecosystem restoration, wetlands, coastal zones, national marine sanctuaries, and fisheries. He feels working for the institute is very rewarding because he is able to provide services that are beneficial to the public and have national implications. And because his position occupies a very unique niche within the field of environmental conflict resolution, this allows his work with the institute to provide leadership in the field and contribute services in an impartial and independent manner.



Conflict Resolution Graduate Brian Manwaring (on right) with USIECR Predecessor Mike Eng

Brian graduated from the University of Denver in 2006 with a Master of Arts through the Conflict Resolution Institute. He finds that the substantive issues and practical conflict resolution skills that he learned through the program have been instrumental in his work. At the same time, the valuable guidance and professional experience of the DU faculty helped him to clarify and prepare for his career aspirations within the field. His internship with CH2M HILL, a multi-national environmental consulting firm for which he subsequently worked for five years, provided him with the opportunity to begin experimenting with some of the conflict resolution skills that he learned at DU. This experience helped him clarify his goals and validate his desire to pursue a career in the field of environmental conflict resolution.

Taking into consideration the reality that the environmental conflict resolution field has relatively few practitioners and is widely perceived as a difficult market to penetrate, Brian affirms that a strong internship is as essential as a broad education in environmental issues and conflict resolution as applied to environmental disputes. He believes that the maturing and evolving field of environmental conflict resolution will require “new” players who are formally trained through programs such as the Conflict Resolution Institute at the University of Denver. Although a career in this field can be difficult to get started on, he is confident that anyone interested in a career in the field of environmental conflict resolution can achieve their long-term goals through flexibility and reaffirmation of one’s motivations. He has found that individuals

working in the field are more than willing to lend a hand to someone trying to enter the field. And by writing emails, making phone calls, and attending conferences, one can establish networks with professionals in the field who will assist them in their career path.

### Kit Chalberg: USDOJ Community Relations Service



Since December 2006 Kit Chalberg has been employed as a Conciliation Specialist for the Community Relations Service (CRS) of the US Department of Justice. He works out of the Rocky Mountain Regional office in Denver, CO—serving Colorado, Utah, Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Wyoming. CRS is the Department’s “peacemaker” for community conflicts and tensions arising from differences of race, color, and national origin. It also assists communities in developing local mechanisms, conducting training, and other proactive measures to prevent or reduce racial/ethnic tension.

Kit noted, “For the most part, everything that I do is conflict resolution related. As a Conciliation Specialist I provide the four agency services to communities experiencing conflict or perceptions of conflict around issues of race, color and national origin.” These four services include: mediation, conciliation, training, and technical assistance. Generally, CRS mediation and conciliation are both collaborative problem solving processes where the parties identify and resolve issues. Specific to training, the agency provides law enforcement mediation training; hate crimes training; racial profiling training, and human relations commission training. The agency also provides technical assistance in the form of best practices for community and school conflict resolution and police-community relations.

Kit graduated from the Conflict Resolution program in November 2007 and completed his thesis, “Responding to Hate and Bias on Campus: A Campus Response Team Framework,” in October 2007.

He completed his internship at CRS-USDOJ in December 2006, and following the internship he was transitioned into federal service through the Federal Career Intern program.

Kit said the MA program gave him a sound understanding of conflict analysis. Classes requiring the completion of conflict analysis provided him with skills necessary for his current position where he has found that conflict analysis not only requires a complex understanding of the parties, issues, and interests, but it also requires the capacity to truly “hear” personal stories and develop relationships.

The MA degree greatly assisted Kit in skill development necessary for conflict resolution work. Public speaking, graduate level writ-

## ALUMNI IN THE FIELD

ing, and conflict analysis were the most important skills Kit gained from the program, and he believes that it is important for students to be self reflective by identifying their weakest skill area, whether it is writing or public speaking, and challenge themselves through coursework and assignments to become better. In all, the MA program has the potential to assist students in becoming more skillful in the most important areas of the conflict resolution practice.

Kit offered the following advice for current students:

- A) *Use the program's flexibility to your benefit. Take classes and complete projects that are in-line with your interests and career goals.*
- B) *Take classes that require conflict analysis and assessment. These classes provide students with the skills to analyze complex conflicts and recommend potential resolution processes.*
- C) *It is never too early to begin thinking about your thesis. Students should look through old theses, seek advice from former students, and develop relationships with faculty as ways to brainstorm thesis topics and research methods.*
- D) *Secure an internship that will separate you from your peers. Internships that afford students opportunities for conflict resolution skill development can be difficult to find, but are invaluable for professional and personal development.*
- E) *Network, network, network. Attend conflict resolution trainings, internship fairs, and professional organization conferences.*
- F) *Take every opportunity to practice. Volunteer to facilitate dialogue on campus, mediate community disputes at local mediation centers, and intern with practitioners to gain experience.*
- G) *Mediation is not the "end-all-be-all" of conflict resolution. Though mediation is a staple in the field, there are other processes that are important to the future of the field and the expansion of the discipline. Students need to consider exploring other processes, such as consensus building and training as capacity-building efforts towards conflict resolution and conflict prevention.*

### Elizabeth Welty: Starting her Doctorate

After Elizabeth Welty finished her Master's degree at DU, she had the opportunity to work in Northern Ireland, a place she first visited over 10 years ago and interned during summer breaks, and the place she has called home the past five years. "I've always been involved and always been interested in peace building and mediation." So she packed up her bags and started doing training in community groups, schools and churches in topics such as constructive conflict management, how to use meditative communication, how to use different models and methodologies to constructively resolve the inevitable conflicts that we all have. Her focus



has become young people, "Having kids work together in small groups and talk about issues that are affecting them, what it means to live in a post-conflict society is very rewarding." This work has laid the foundation for what will soon become her doctoral research in -- citizenship education in divided societies. Yet, her continuing her education will not be all Elizabeth is doing for the next few years, for she states she is definitely a practitioner at heart.

Elizabeth chose DU very carefully because she was looking for a Masters program that was both theoretical and practical – something outside peace theory and a standard 40-hour mediation course, neither of which captured her true interests. "I wanted to have the background and knowledge of the different models and methodologies of Conflict Resolution, but I also wanted to be learning practical skills of how to deliver them." Her education has helped her in her graduate school internship with Tides Training in Northern Ireland and beyond. She became very interested in how these models and methodologies transferred inter-culturally, which became the topic for her thesis. Elizabeth credits the Conflict Resolution program at DU for developing the research and writing skills necessary in her work, which she expected. What she did not anticipate was how the interdisciplinary nature of the program would provide an invaluable perspective in her work, particularly in schools. "Because I am a practitioner, I look at it from a practitioners point of view, but I really think that [DU] prepares very, very capable practitioners to go out and actually deal with conflicts, with the wealth of knowledge, theory, models, research and strategies" they develop in their students.

Elizabeth's advice for students or those considering entering the field is to get out into the field to observe and learn. As a student or a recent graduate, you feel you have a lot to contribute, but Elizabeth has learned "just to listen and be present and witness what people are going through [conflicts]...is one of the most important things that you can do, especially as a student ...I've spent probably three summers and nearly five years in Northern Ireland and I am still the learner, I am still the student."

– Autumn Gorman, Edwin Rios, Fernando Ospina

## INTERNSHIP JOURNAL – KATHRYN HARSHBARGER

### Court Annexed Mediation Program

*“CAMP educates the public, the legal profession, and the judiciary about the value of mediation and how it effectively, efficiently, and fairly resolves conflict by providing excellent mediation services to litigants and their attorneys in the civil divisions of Denver’s County and Small Claims Courts.”* – CAMP mission statement



Katy Harshbarger

new mediators, advised mediators of things of interest in the conflict resolution field, tracked the number of cases each mediator handled, addressed questions and concerns from current and prospective CAMP volunteers, took and distributed meeting notes, and brainstormed ideas for future CAMP initiatives. My administrative tasks, combined with actual mediation time, provided me with many invaluable lessons about mediation, conflict resolution, and the enormity of running an all-volunteer organization.

From October of 2006 to May of 2007, I interned with the Court Annexed Mediation Program (CAMP), a venture of the Colorado and Denver Bar Association to provide mediation services at low or no cost to persons who are parties to civil lawsuits in the Denver County and Small Claims Courts. Lead by current co-directors Deborah Sperlak, a private practice mediator and attorney, and Patricia Whitehouse, the Director of Human Resources at Channel 9 news and CRI graduate, CAMP has flourished from into a successful reality that continues to attract new and experienced mediators from all over the Denver metro area.

CAMP became an officially sanctioned project on February 13, 2001. Operating with the consent and assistance of Denver County court Judges and Magistrates, CAMP is strictly an all-volunteer organization that receives no financial support from the CBA/DBA, and relies on very nominal fees that are collected in a small percentage of the total mediations it handles.

As only the second intern for CAMP, my responsibilities were varied and challenging. I established contact with other mediation groups, recruited new mediators for CAMP, arranged for experienced mediators to co-mediate with

Overall, I found my experience with CAMP to be very influential and rewarding. I increased my knowledge of ADR and developed conflict resolution skills through hands-on practice with experienced mediators. Though stressful at times, I enjoyed seeing parties walk out of a tough mediation having worked out a solution together. Through the people I met, I learned a lot about the conflict resolution scene in Denver, and consider my time with CAMP a very pivotal part of my education. This internship cemented interests I already had and encouraged the expansion of others. It has helped me to better understand myself, my abilities, and my potential as a professional in the dynamic and ever-changing field of conflict resolution.

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## CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS



- CRI is co-sponsoring of the 2nd Annual Colorado Statewide ADR Conference, which is to be held at the Renaissance Denver Hotel on October 24, 2008. The theme of this year’s conference is *Excellence in Dispute Resolution*. To register or for more information, please go to [www.cobar.org/cle](http://www.cobar.org/cle)
- The Conflict Resolution Institute is also proud to announce it will host the \_\_\_ Annual ACR Environmental Section Conference in June 2009, at the University of Denver. Please stay tuned for more information.

## INTERNSHIP JOURNAL – RENA GARDENSWARTZ

### Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver

My internship was completed during the summer of 2007 at the Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver (BGCMD). I was hired by Tina Martinez, BGCMD's Program Director, and Tonja Mitchell, BGCMD's Character and Leadership Development Director, to facilitate and expand the organization's Words Can Heal program. Words Can Heal is a bullying prevention curriculum for youth ages 6-16 focusing on verbal aggression among youth.



Rena Gardenswartz

Because my internship responsibilities required me to work with children inside several Boys and Girls Club facilities, as well as in the organization's corporate office, I gained valuable insight into several aspects of the bullying prevention field. First, working directly with youth, observing their behavior and attitudes surrounding peer-to-peer conflict, was very useful to my understanding of the daily conflicts that take place among young people. Second, my implementation of the Words Can Heal bullying prevention program allowed me to experience both the power and pitfalls of a course attempting to train young people in positive peer interactions and conflict resolution techniques. Finally, the opportunity to participate in the administrative side of such a program taught me a lot about some of the obstacles faced by adults attempting to implement a successful bullying prevention agenda.

I researched new activities that could be added to the curriculum to improve results, supplement existing lesson plans, and provide alternatives to the program leaders. This experience was extremely rewarding as I became familiar with many organizations and professionals worldwide that work to train young people in bullying prevention and positive verbal interactions. After sifting through the many ideas for new bullying prevention activities posted online by various teachers and school counselors, I discussed options with my

supervisor. Ultimately, we settled on more than 20 activities that would serve as good additions to Words Can Heal. My next task was to write up each new activity in a format similar to the one being used for the curriculum's existing activities. These will be added to the new version of the Words Can Heal booklet that is made available to Boys and Girls Club program leaders across Denver.

During my time at the Clubs, I taught several of the existing Words Can Heal activities to youth on their summer vacations. In addition, I piloted

several of the newly researched activities to assess how successful they were with the youth. Interestingly, some activities were received more positively at particular clubs than others. This time spent working directly with the young people was invaluable. It left me with several important insights into popular youth culture, the types of conflicts had by young people, the strategies youth use to resolve arguments, and an understanding of the general reactions children have to character development curricula such as Words Can Heal.

As a bonus, my supervisor at the Boys and Girls Club invited me to attend and participate in a local conference on bullying prevention and intervention, sponsored by the Colorado Trust. This was a great experience and was a helpful way to network with other local professionals who are active in the field of bullying prevention. I appreciated the opportunity to be involved with this conference, and have attended several other similar events since then on my own.

My internship with the Boys and Girls Club was an extremely positive experience and matched my interests perfectly. As a result of my time there, I made important connections with local, regional, and international experts in the field of bullying and also learned a lot from the youth with which I interacted. I would highly recommend this organization as a place to intern in the future.

## CRGSA STARTS A NEW YEAR

The Conflict Resolution Graduate Student Association has had a busy year and is looking forward to many social and academic events in the coming months. International Conflict Resolution Day is right around the corner [October 16th] and gives us the opportunity to showcase our program. We are also working with faculty to promote a stronger student/faculty community. Check your email for specifics on upcoming events. Have a great quarter!

– CRGSA Officers Sara Noel, Lindsey Sexton, Tabitha Reed, and Holly Guthrey



## CONFLICT RESOLUTION INSTITUTE CORE FACULTY



Karen Feste with Former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at the Renaming Ceremony of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies

Douglas Allen, Associate Professor, Daniels College of Business  
Roberto Corrada, Professor, Sturm College of Law  
Tamra Pearson d'Estrée, Luce Professor of Conflict Resolution & Director, Center for Research and Practice  
Miguel A. De La Torre, Associate Professor of Social Ethics, Illiff School of Theology  
Fran Dickson, Associate Professor, Department of Human Communication Studies  
Karen A. Feste, Founder and Director, Graduate Program & Professor, Josef Korbel School of International Studies  
Judith E. Fox, Clinical Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Professional Psychology & Director, International Disaster Psychology Program  
Cynthia Fukami, Professor, Daniels College of Business  
Alan Gilbert, Professor, Josef Korbel School of International Studies  
Jeffrey Hartje, Associate Professor, Sturm College of Law  
Darrin Hicks, Associate Professor, Sturm College of Law

John (Jack) Jones, Research Professor of Conflict Resolution

Ruth Parsons, Research Professor of Conflict Resolution

Denise Pearson, Assisant Dean, Academic Director of ADR and Applied Communications, University College

Tim Sisk, Associate Professor and Associate Dean, Josef Korbel School of International Studies

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