

CONFLICT RESOLUTION INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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CRI STUDENT LEADERS STARTING ON-CAMPUS DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER AT DU

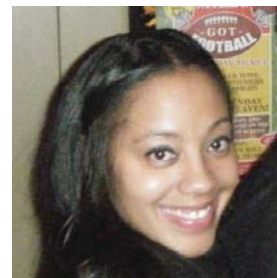
“Why doesn’t DU have this!?” That was the simple question raised by three Conflict Resolution Master’s students and officers in the Conflict Resolution Graduate Student Association (CRGSA) that sparked the idea of developing an on-campus mediation clinic at the University of Denver. Coming from a school that had such a clinic, Brittany Eskridge said that she was surprised at the lack of an alternative dispute resolution center at DU when she began the Conflict Resolution program. As a result, she set out to remedy this vacancy and soon found allies in Adam Brown and Jonathan Howard. The first step in the process to founding the clinic was to start gathering information about what the clinic might look like and how it would practically function within the DU community.

During this explorative research stage, the three discovered an invaluable resource in Kristin Olson, Director of Citizenship and Community Standards (CCS) at DU. “Kristin has been very helpful and supportive from the moment we first approached her with the idea of starting an on-campus mediation clinic,” said Brown. With Kristin’s expert guidance, Eskridge, Brown and Howard gained access to numerous new sources of information. They were able to attend the Gehring Academy for Student Conduct Administration Conference, have access to student life training, observe conduct review board training, and gain insight into how the clinic would fit in with the goals of CCS and the larger DU community. In particular, Howard noted that the Gehring Academy Conference provided some unique new perspectives on conflict resolution approaches pertaining to students at higher education institutions. This was significant because the vision of the clinic they had developed centered on the idea of it being a resource for dispute resolution among students.

Some examples of cases that the clinic might handle include conflicts within fraternities or sororities and roommate disputes. In practice, the CCS office could refer appropriate cases to the clinic that would be conducive to alternative dispute resolution. “We think the principles of conflict resolution, such as separating the people from the problem, could be very effective tools for resolving disputes between students in a way that comes to a fair resolution and better maintains relationships within the DU,” added Brown. Since mediation clinics like the one proposed are relatively new developments in higher educa-

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CRGSA Leadership & CCS Interns Eskridge, Brown and Howard



NEW DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER AT DU

tion, they see a lot of flexibility in drafting a framework that is tailored to fit the needs of DU. Eskridge elaborated that, "Clinics differ greatly from college to college, so there is a great opportunity to mold the DU clinic to fit the goals and needs of CCS, Student Life and DU as a whole." The plan will begin by focusing on undergrad, student-to-student disputes, and then possibly modify the functions of the clinic based on initial results and future needs. Another goal for the clinic is to have a preventative role, in addition to its reactionary role, in dealing with conflicts. They argue that "through conflict coaching and introducing students to basic conflict resolution techniques, we think that the clinic could provide students with an approach that would help them to effectively deal with conflicts in their personal lives."

In addition to the benefits it would offer to all of DU, the clinic would also be a great practical resource for students

within the Conflict Resolution Master's Program in particular. "The clinic could provide a venue for certified students to put conflict resolution theory into practice in a way that benefits them personally and also their fellow students at DU," asserted Brown. Additionally, a strong link between the clinic and the Conflict Resolution Institute could provide greater access to resources and add to its long-term sustainability. Eskridge, Brown and Howard will continue to develop their plans into a more formal proposal over the upcoming weeks. While the mediation clinic is currently still in the drafting stage, its vision and potential are concretely imbedded in the minds of its developers. These industrious students are working hard to make their vision become a reality. They also expressed an interest in encouraging students interested in the clinic to get involved. "We welcome any help that people are willing to offer," stated Brown.

-- *Brandon Rhea*



CCS Director Kristin Olson & Driscoll Student Center

CORRECTION

In the last issue of this newsletter, The Conflict Resolution Institute listed the 2009-2010 academic year graduates. This list did not include Samantha Dauer, who graduated in August 2010. Congratulations Samantha!

CRI Co-SPONSORS FALL 2010 EVENTS

The Conflict Resolution Institute was proud to participate and co-sponsor many events in the region, with the support of the Henry R. Luce Foundation.

September 1 - 4, 2010 -- Association for Conflict Resolution National Conference in Chicago, IL

October 9 - 10, 2010 -- Reinventing Governance Conference. "Breaking Down Silos, Building Up Relations" at the University of Colorado and the Millenium Harvest House in Boulder, CO

October 22, 2010 -- Seeking Common Ground's 5th Annual Circles of Change Awards Breakfast at the Downtown Denver Grand Hyatt

October 22, 2010 -- National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation Regional Networking Luncheon at the Wellshire Inn in Denver, CO

November 4, 2010 -- Colorado Statewide ADR Conference and the Denver Renaissance Hotel

CRI is proud to work with others in the conflict resolution community to create a more peaceful Denver, Colorado, Rocky Mountain Region, USA and world.

GEORGIAN MEDIATION CLINIC AT TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY A SUCCESS

Four years of hard work and an unwavering focus have led to the completion of the USAID Georgia Grant project. Tbilisi State University in the country of Georgia is fully equipped to continue their Mediation Clinic, an important resource for a country that has survived centuries of various invasions and empires. The project and the Clinic have several notable accomplishments.



TSU Professor Guguli Magradze provides training for TSU staff

Four years ago, Professor Guguli Magradze of Tbilisi State University partnered with the Conflict Resolution Institute, headed by Dr. d'Estrée, to begin a project in the Republic of Georgia focused on developing a university-based clinic as a training center and curricular model that would support the growing number of mediators and conflict resolution practitioners in the country. This clinic was needed to address the existing tensions emerging from extensive societal reforms, an ethnically diverse citizenry, economic challenges, and a legacy of uprooting conflict by increasing the capacity of both citizens and specialists to manage conflicts more effectively (for project outline, see CRI Newsletter, Vol. 2, Issue 1). Professor Guguli Magradze of Tbilisi State University chose to

partner with Dr. d'Estrée in order to achieve these objectives.

Through multiple trips by both parties to each other's hosting institutions as well as to our nation's capitol, progress soon became evident. This progress was reported at the faculty's session in the Georgian Parliament attended by members of Georgian Parliament, judges, and the media (see CRI Newsletter, Vol. 2, Issue 2). Here in Colorado, local mediators even got involved in the project, offering their advice and expertise to the TSU faculty upon one of their visits. CRI faculty member and Law professor Jeffrey Hartje also hosted a session for the visitors to discuss the mediation clinic (for more information on each of these interactions, see CRI Newsletter, Vol. 2, Issue; Vol. 3, Issue 1; Vol. 3, Issue 2). These visits reinforced the dedication each side had to this project and the excitement surrounding it. It was through these visits that progress was able to be tracked and adjustments to the original plan were able to be done.

In addition to setting up the clinic in the university, the TSU team members also worked to mediate conflict in the country of Georgia itself. They successfully mediated the long time conflict between the Institute of Cardiology and the Ministry of Health. This conflict concerned a state program announced four years ago that never came to fruition. With the help of the TSU mediators, an alternative decision was reached that left both the Institute of Cardiology as well as the Ministry of Health not only satisfied, but pleased.

The partnering TSU team members also sought to mediate the conflict within the government after the presi-

dential election in January of 2008. The team made a presentation to the Parliament of Georgia and proposed that the parties use their services to resolve the conflict; while the opposition parties agreed, the ruling party declined. This instance can still be considered a success, as their presentation was in all the live television programs as well as the evening television broadcasts; partnering professor Magradze also participated in two popular talk shows to talk about the TSU mediation clinic, which was powerful advertising.

The clinic has also increased its small but steady stream of referred cases by adding a requirement to the mediation training courses that MA students bring in at least two cases of community, neighborhood, or workplace conflicts to the clinic. This requirement enables students to learn to mediate as apprentice mediators alongside faculty mediators.

The war with Russia obviously had an effect on this process. The conflict highlighted the growing need for conflict resolution and mediation more than ever. On the positive side, this development occurred almost simultaneously with the certification of 28 new Georgia mediators through the program at Tbilisi State University (for more information see CRI Newsletter, Vol. 3, Issue 2). The conflict, however, pushed back the deadlines for some aspects of the program; therefore, it was necessary to file an extension for an additional year to ensure the process would be completed. But this development also offered an incredible opportunity for the students and graduates of TSU's Master's Program to apply their skills to the problems surrounding the growing number of Internally Displaced Persons

TSU PROJECT - (CONT.)

(IDPs) to the Georgian capital.

Now, in 2010, the goal has been realized. The clinic, besides training TSU's Conflict Resolution Master's Students, provides free and confidential mediation services to the general public as well as staff, students, and faculty at the University. This project has achieved the objectives of hands-on training and has become the logical institution for providing mediation services. In fact, it has surpassed many expectations to also include a new training process, an expanded curriculum, and institutionalized conflict resolution services. A total of 59 students, 10 men and 49 women, have been awarded degrees since the start of this partnership. Many more, including representatives of nongovernmental organizations, lawyers from private firms, students in the Caucasus School of Business, and new members



Mediation Case
at TSU Mediation
Clinic

of the TSU administration, have been offered certificates and other non-degree training. The effect of this project on the surrounding communities of Georgia should not be minimized as it has developed local expertise, validated local historical wisdom in the conflict resolution process, and developed a Georgian-language training manual and texts.

The success of this partnership has been so great, in fact, that both parties are looking to take their collaboration one step further. They are currently working on a new project designed to bring conflict resolution skills into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Georgia.

-- Brittany Cassell

INTERNSHIPS



Sara Noel

Sara Noel: Critical Mass Leadership Education, Bold Leaders

Sara Noel is a recent alumna of the Conflict Resolution Institute MA program and a former intern at Critical Mass Leadership Education (CMLE). CMLE and the Bold Leaders project runs training and development programs for communities around the world. While Sara was working with CMLE, those communities included Cypriots from the Turkish-speaking and Greek-speaking communities, Roma youth from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, as well as two groups from Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya and South Africa. Teenagers travel to Colorado where they spend a week in the mountains doing peacebuilding and conflict resolution education as well as leadership development. The focus of the program is on building relationships, and civic and personal engagement. After one week in the mountains students spend a few weeks in Denver with their host families where they continue doing work, and visit with community organizations. The program concludes

with a week in Washington, D.C. where the group visits sites and more community and civic organizations. Throughout the program, students work on developing their own projects to be implemented back in their home communities.

Sara contends that the effect on the participants after these programs is remarkable. She states, "I witnessed incredible changes in the teens by the time they completed the Bold Leaders program. They left feeling more confident and empowered and ready to go back to their home communities and implement their projects. The students had amazing ideas and drive. The Bold Leaders program worked to help them find their voice and use it."

(continued on page 6)

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT - ROBERTO CORRADA



Roberto Corrada is a Professor and Chair in Modern Learning at Sturm College of Law, and is a member of CRI's faculty.

Roberto Corrada joined the Conflict Resolution Institute Core Faculty eight years ago. He was recruited by CRI Co-Director Tamra Pearson d'Estrée because Corrada is a labor attorney with a great deal of experience in arbitration, including helping to set up an opt-in arbitration program for General Motors (GM) and its dealerships, redesigning the entire process.

One of the challenges he faced in this role occurred when General Motors faced service and warranty challenges in Puerto Rico. The U.S. territory does not sell vehicles through dealerships, so Corrada needed to obtain the services of a local law firm to resolve conflicts that dealerships typically man-

age for GM. As he reflects on the experience, he realizes the company would have benefited greatly from the services of a conflict resolution professional to set up a dispute resolution process for the company.

His work has since focused on labor then employment arbitration. The *Gilmer v. Interstate/Johnson Lane Corp.* Supreme Court decision in 1991 has resulted in an expansion of arbitration in workplace disputes and employment contracts. Yet, Corrada notes, law schools still tend to focus on adjudication, despite clogged courts and an increasing thrust towards mediation and arbitration, which are not typically required courses in law school.

Since law is all about solving problems and resolving conflicts, Corrada thinks that future growth in the field will be in *efficient* dispute resolution processes. As such, he recommends all law students take courses in mediation and arbitration. Similarly, he advises students in conflict resolution be aware of the law and legal processes.

Over the past eight years, Corrada has worked with several conflict resolution students on theses and other research -- particularly those interested in collective bargaining and/or professional sports, which has some of the most powerful labor unions in the country. Other powerful labor groups include those in the performing arts, film and longshoremen. There have also been a few conflict resolution MA students that have pursued dual

degrees with the Sturm College of Law.

In 2000, Corrada was selected as national Carnegie scholar for his active and collaborative learning efforts in his labor law classroom. In 2002, he was named University of Denver College of Law Donald & Susan Sturm Professor for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Education, in Corrada's view, needs to move more towards processes and away from purely substantive topics. The problems of the world do not reside in boxes, so education needs to have a multi-disciplinary approach as well. The Conflict Resolution Institute brings together many boxes and different ideas for its students.

As he looks to the future, Corrada sees a great deal of potential for conflict resolution practitioners to join law firms, helping them to develop and better utilize arbitration and mediation processes to the benefit of all parties involved in the conflict as well as the firm. Recent developments in this multidisciplinary practice may soon make it possible for non-lawyers to join law firms, opening a new employment venue for graduates from CRI.

Professor Roberto Corrada can be reached at rcorrada@law.du.edu

-- Autumn Gorman

INTERNSHIPS - CMLE (CONT.)

Sara began her internship with CMLE in the summer of 2009 as the host family coordinator for Roma youth from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. She also worked as the alumni coordinator. During her time at CMLE she participated in four Bold Leaders programs, each of which involved working with groups of teenagers from Cyprus, Central Europe and Africa. She “spent three intensive weeks with each group in Colorado, working with them every day, facilitating group discussions and activities and helping to organize program logistics.” She also traveled with two of the groups to Washington, D.C. for the final week of their program. Sara contends that her experience with CMLE was “incredibly valuable”. CMLE is a relatively small organization. So, because of this, she was given the opportunity to be involved in all levels and aspects of each program, giving her a “full picture of the operation of a small non-profit organization.” One of the unexpected benefits of the internship was the opportunity to meet people from around the world with whom Sara still keeps in contact.

When asked about how she became connected to CMLE, she said CRI’s annual “Con-Res Connect” was to thank. Every year, CRI and the Conflict Resolution Graduate Student Association puts together a networking event so that students and alumni can get a chance to mingle with and make connections with practitioners in the field of conflict resolution. Students find internships, jobs, and other projects through this event. For Sara it was a matter of being introduced to Brady Rhodes, CMLE’s Program Director, by Mila Pilz, another CRI student and CMLE intern. For students considering an internship at CMLE, Sara advises that students just “jump right in, be flexible and be ready to do

what needs to be done, making copies and updating Facebook but also coaching kids through rope courses, climbing mountains and organizing fundraising events. Interning with CMLE is truly an example of getting out of it what you put in. You have to be fully involved and fully present.”

There were many benefits to interning at CMLE and being involved in the Bold Leaders Program. Sara’s work gave her many opportunities to put the skills and concepts she learned in her coursework in the Conflict Resolution Program to work. Her work with teenagers gave her the opportunity to use and develop her facilitation skills as well as other conflict resolution skill sets. She found the trainings, workshops and activities to be highly beneficial. In fact, she felt that she got just as much out of them as the participants, even the second and third times around. The most rewarding part of the internship was the hands-on experience that it afforded her in working with the program par-

ticipants. When asked about the worst part of the internship she responded: “I was just sorry I couldn’t do it all the time.”

WHERE IS SARA TODAY?

Sara says that her internship at CMLE and the Bold Leaders project led to her current position at Amizade Global Service-Learning in Pittsburgh, PA., where she is the current Outreach Director. Amizade is a non-profit organization that works to empower individuals and communities through worldwide service and learning. Amizade runs programs in nine different countries in Europe, Africa and the Americas. These programs include courses for credit as well as not-for-credit programs open to students and non-students of all ages. Each of the programs is focused around volunteer and service activities. Amizade works with the organizations and communities in each location on community-driven service projects.



Noel and a group of Bold Leaders from Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya and South Africa celebrating after having faced their fears by walking on high wires, climbing tall structures rappelling down zip-lines on a challenge course in Boulder

INTERNSHIPS

Fernando Ospina The Conflict Center

Since February 2009, Fernando Ospina has been an instructor with The Conflict Center (TCC) here in Denver, teaching Emotional Intelligence and Critical Decision Making (EICDM) courses. Targeted to middle and high school students between the ages of 11 and 18, the EICDM course is an eight-week skill-building program that aims to teach youth the importance of understanding and dealing with their emotions, being aware of their actions, and the consequences that accompany decisions. Last year, more than 600 youth participated in the skill-building course, with evidence indicating positive change with statistical significance for participants in the areas of Critical Decision Making, Interpersonal Peer Violence, and Aggressive Behaviors.

For Fernando, the internship was ideal, addressing his dual interests in anger management counseling and conflict resolution education. Although this was his first formal teaching position, Fernando's stress was significantly lessened since each course's content was essentially pre-planned by TCC. Nonetheless, the position was not without its challenges. In fact, Fernando relates, "My biggest challenge was teaching the material in the allotted time [and also] learning to present material in a way that was interesting to teens." Being sure to present the appropriate demeanor was also difficult, since "with teenagers, you have to be energetic in order to maintain their interest in the lesson topics." Many of the teenagers Fernando taught were referred to TCC's EICDM course either by their respective schools or through court mandates. Thus, Fernando's internship required him to understand the needs of the youth demographic and adjust his teaching style accordingly.

To be certified as an instructor for the EICDM course, Fernando underwent two half-days and one full day of training. "Much of the work I did [at TCC] mirrored the academic work I have done here at the Conflict Resolution Institute. A lot of training was very self-reflective, having us understand our own emotions and anger to help others," Fernando says. Trainees were also required to conduct a class presentation on a topic of their own



Fernando Ospina

choosing or a portion of the curriculum. Trainers would occasionally take on the personas of teens during the presentation. For example, "one trainer pretended to be a resistant teen. The trainee didn't quite respond to the scenario as needed, leading to escalation issues."

With repeated experience, Fernando has learned to alter his teaching techniques, utilizing many of the strategies he learned at the Conflict Resolution Institute. Fernando notes, "I did make use of a number of conflict resolution skills. I refined my active listening and basic communication skills. More importantly, I became more aware of the usefulness of reflective practice. As an instructor, you need to be conscious of what you're doing and why, and understand the connections used to justify what you're doing." Thus, a lot of Fernando's work, aside from reviewing lesson plans, involved reflecting on how he was conducting classes, essentially "thinking about thinking."

Despite the pre-determined curriculum, teachers were allowed some leeway in adjusting their teaching techniques. With the teen demographic in mind, "the idea is to minimize the amount of lecturing done. Since the course is skills-based, there tended to be a lot of activities on how to understand yourself, to engage students more." More than lecturing, lessons emphasized allowing students to draw out their own conclusions. Ranging from one hour to an hour and a half, each class, excepting the first one, begins with reflection and discussion on the week's homework assignment. One example of a homework assignment given to participants was to practice using course skills to respond to authority. After the day's activities are done, each class ends with a group circle to reflect on the lessons learned, as well as a short quiz for evaluation purposes.

Fernando not only found his work at TCC very rewarding, but realized that he truly enjoyed his role as instructor. After interning with TCC, Fernando knows his interests in the conflict resolution field are education-oriented. Fernando states, "My internship gave me confidence about my competence as a teacher, and also gave me an idea on how psycho-educational programs work and how they can be structured." Fernando anticipates

INTERNSHIPS - TCC (CONT.)

he will continue teaching with TCC for the foreseeable future.

For those interested in interning at The Conflict Center, Fernando reassures us that previous experience in anger management or teaching is not a prerequisite to volunteer or intern. TCC accepts volunteers from a variety of backgrounds and provides the training necessary. Fernando further emphasizes that "TCC has more to offer than just teaching positions." TCC was founded more

than twenty years ago in 1987 and is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. TCC achieves its goals through work with a variety of groups, represented by its three distinct programs: Schools, Youth at Risk, and Organizations and Businesses. For Fernando, "TCC is fun place to work. The people there are just great, [and] there is a real feeling of community at work. I recommend anyone who's interested check it out."

-- Ambar Velazquez

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