

ANNUAL REPORT

September 27, 2013

It is my pleasure to provide a summary of the highlights of Mediate BC Society's activities since the last Annual General Meeting. Much was accomplished due to the very dedicated efforts of our Board, Committees, staff and colleagues, including:

- We continued to focus on raising public awareness of collaborative conflict management options including mediation, particularly in the area of family law.
- We identified opportunities to provide the public with conflict resolution skills which will empower them to handle their own conflicts directly and early.
- We collaborated with the Ministry and other agencies to support the new *Family Law Act* which emphasizes out of court options, including mediation, for families experiencing separation and divorce. We offered FLA training, participated in a media campaign to get the word out and enhanced our website to provide easier public access.
- We participated in the Law Week Open House in April and engaged with over 50 high school students in a "Conflict Bingo" game.
- We provided consulting and advice support for the development of the Civil Resolution Tribunal and, in collaboration with the Office of the Chief Judge, the Ministry, CSB and Justice Education Society, are about to launch a pilot project within the Court Mediation Program to test online dispute resolution for court mediation.
- The Distance Mediation Project, funded by the Law Foundation, published its fascinating findings in early 2013 and we are working with Royal Roads to develop a course for conflict resolution practitioners.
- In fiscal 2012/13 the CMP received 1683 referrals, mediated 1142 disputes, achieved an overall settlement rate of over 50% and very high participant satisfaction ratings.
- During fiscal 2012/13 the Roster Program added 38 new mediators, answered 440 inquiries about mediation and how to find a mediator and made 26 Notice to Mediate appointments.
- During 2012/13 the Mediation Advisor in the Vancouver Justice Access Centre received 312 client referrals, referred 17 to civil mediation and assisted others through problem-solving, coaching or referrals services.
- The Roster Committee continued its major review of the Standards of Conduct.
- The Child Support Eligibility Mediation Project, funded by the Law Foundation and DOME, recently produced its final evaluation report filled with innovative findings and recommendations.
- We continued to support the provincial child protection mediation program with innovative educational opportunities for CP mediators
- Our training department developed and implemented innovative training for the public including police supervisors and medical practitioners
- We emphasized collaboration with other agencies particularly for the effective provision of public education about conflict management options (CBA, LSS, JES, PLS, LF, CHLS)

- We provided written submissions to the NAC Family Justice Working Group and to the Prevention, Triage and Referral Working Group and participated in both the CBA 2013 Envisioning Equal Justice Summit and the Dialogue about Self-Represented Litigants organized by Professor Julie Macfarlane
- We worked to provide a strong community of conflict resolution practitioners in the province by providing training and professional development opportunities, local collaboration opportunities, advocacy and public awareness activities, fairly priced services and discounts as available
- We are grateful for rich, collaborative relationships with other training organizations including the Justice Institute of BC, CLEBC, People's Law School, CBABC and Royal Roads University.
- We said a very fond farewell to Board Member and Roster Committee Chair Wayne Stilling QC who passed away in February 2013 – he will be missed.
- We said farewell to a number of key staff: Linda Ross, Angela Mallard, Yuki Matsuno, Rob Finlay, June Brinkman, Julie Geremia, Amanda Wanner, Leah Ranada AND welcomed new members of our team: Monique Steensma, Darrin Hotte, Angie Ayupova, Carol Trinidad, Yannie Tai and Dave Alexander.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the many people who have supported Mediate BC including the outstanding mediators who are members of the Civil, Family and Child Protection Rosters, those who provide services for our programs, those who participate in our practicum and mentoring programs, our supportive funding agencies (most notably the Ministry of Justice, the Law Foundation of BC and DOME), our colleagues with Family Justice Services Division, the Provincial Court Judiciary and Court Services staff, our bankers at VanCity, our lawyers at Bull Houser, our auditors (NTA), our legal professional colleagues (CBABC, LSS, the Law Society of BC, Access Pro Bono, JES, Courthouse Library), our fellow mediation organizations (CoRe, FMC, BCAMI and SIDRC), UBC, UVic, TRU, Royal Roads and a myriad of other wonderful colleagues and supporters.

We are proud of our accomplishments to date and are looking forward to continuing to pursue ways to improve access to justice and effective conflict management for BC citizens.

Sincerely,

Kari D. Boyle
Executive Director, Mediate BC Society