

AFCC NEWSLETTER



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An association of family, court and community professionals

FALL 2000

Divorce, Mediation and Negotiation will Highlight Chicago Annual Conference Agenda

AFCC's 38th Annual Conference, *Conflict Resolution, Children and the Courts*, will feature an all-star cast as AFCC examines mediation, negotiation and the divorce process. The conference will take place May 9-12, 2001 at the Westin Hotel Michigan Avenue in Chicago. Among the highlights:

- **Dr. Judith Wallerstein** will bring the divorce debate front and center as she discusses the results of her 25-year study and her recent book, *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce*.
- Harvard Law School **Professor Robert Mnookin**, author of the new book *Beyond Winning: Negotiating to Create Value in Deals and Disputes* will examine the negotiation process in family law.
- **Dr. Isolina Ricci**, Assistant Director of California's Center for Families, Children and the Courts, and **Dr. Arnold Shienvold**, President of the new Association for Conflict Resolution, will look back on twenty years of mandatory mediation.

The conference will feature seven Pre-Conference Institutes on Wednesday, May 9, 2001 and more than forty plenary and workshop sessions. The institutes include:

1. The ABC's of High Conflict Families and Alienated Children
Philip Stahl, Nancy Olesen and Matthew Sullivan
2. Special Masters and Parenting Coordinators: Tailoring Services for High Conflict Families
Christine A. Coates and Matthew Sullivan
3. Advanced Applications in Mediation: Ethical Decision Making and Mediation Dilemmas
Larry Fong and Arnold Shienvold
4. Ethics and the Cinema: The Public Perception of the Judiciary Through Film
Magistrate Dennis Parrish
5. Lawyers Institute: Communicating with Clients for Effective Results
Sanford M. Portnoy
6. Developing a Profitable Mediation Practice: Making Mediation Your Day Job
Forrest S. Mosten
7. Crafting Developmentally Appropriate Parenting Plans
Risa Garon, Gina DeLeonardis, Hon. Cypert O. Whitfill and Keith Schiszik

Chicago

If you haven't been to Chicago, this is an opportunity you won't want to miss. The conference hotel is the Westin Michigan Avenue, located in the heart of Chicago's Magnificent Mile. Just outside the

hotel's door are attractions including Water Tower Place, the John Hancock Center, Lake Michigan's Oak Street Beach, the Wrigley Building, the Chicago River, Navy Pier, some of the nation's best and most concentrated upscale shopping opportunities, a wide range of blues and jazz clubs and fabulous restaurants.

Also within a very short distance are Chicago's famous Art Institute, the Field Museum of Natural History, Shedd Aquarium, Grant Park, the Goodman Theatre and much, much more.

AFCC has reserved a block of rooms available only to conference registrants at \$159/single and \$174/double. **Please make your reservations early** by contacting Westin central reservations at (800) 937-8461 or the hotel directly at (312) 943-7200.

The full conference brochure will be available in late February. For a copy of the Early Bird brochure or additional information, please check the AFCC web site at www.afccnet.org or contact AFCC directly at (608) 664-3750, e-mail afcc@afccnet.org.

Custody and Parent Education Proceedings and Audiotapes Available

For those who could not attend AFCC's Fourth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations or Fourth International Congress on Parent Education Programs, AFCC makes it possible to hear the outstanding presentations and read the handouts.

A limited number of Symposium and Congress Proceedings Books are available from AFCC on a first come, first serve basis at a price of \$15 each or \$25 for a set of two. Audio tapes for Symposium and Congress plenary sessions, pre-conference institutes and workshops are also available by contacting the Sound of Knowledge (see page 11 for additional information).

If you are interested in obtaining Proceedings Books, please contact:

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.), Boston, MA

The Presidential election saga that gripped the United States has provided us with a more effective civics lesson than any of us ever absorbed during our school years. Not only has everyone finally understood the arcane electoral college, but we have seen how the checks and balances inherent in our separation of powers have allowed us to avoid a serious crisis.

Perhaps it was because the drama began to unfold while AFCC was holding its custody evaluation symposium in Kiawah that I have continued to liken the Presidential contest to a high conflict custody case. The structure of family as a governing unit, after all, may be viewed as a microcosm of a nation at large. In both instances, although the use of the courts should be a last resort, the ultimate authority of the courts is needed to settle the most intractable controversies and preserve the rule of law. The dissatisfaction with the court being the ultimate arbiter of the election is not unlike the dissatisfaction of most custody litigants when the court decides their parenting arrangement. In hindsight, it is possible to identify occasions when a different course of action might have avoided judicial decision making, but during the process people are too caught up with their own interests to consider other options.

It has often been said that the court is not the proper forum for resolving contested family law matters. Although I agree that our system of jurisprudence was not established with family conflicts in mind and that our courts are not structured to serve the best interest of families, when other institutions or professions cannot bring families to agreement, the authority of the court is necessary to bring closure to the immediate contest in order to allow people to move ahead.

When parties cannot come to agreement because neither person is able to see beyond his or her own interest to recognize that there may be other interests at stake, the authority of the court is needed. The well being of children or the need for the family to continue as an ongoing institution, may in fact be more important than the individual's assertion of self interest. There

are other instances, however, when agreement may do nothing more than preserve an inappropriate and destructive power imbalance. In those cases, contested litigation serves the purpose of exposing the facts and establishing legal precedents which may guide us in the future. The latter is the case, for example, when domestic violence, sexual abuse or mental illness are the issues. Hopefully, it will also be the case when the still pending disputes over lack of voter access in Florida reach the courts. When case law is out of touch with mainstream thinking, it can lead to legislative reform.

Although people are often not satisfied with the results, judicial decision making serves the important purpose of bringing an end to endless disputes. In the Presidential election at least half of the electorate was arguably unhappy with the Supreme Court ruling. But everyone accepted it and the Presidential transition could begin. The conflict between the political parties has not been resolved, but it has moved to the next stage. Similarly, when a custody decision is rendered, it is generally accepted by the parties. Although the conflict will often continue, the decision allows the family to move along. In some cases, after a decision is rendered, the parties are able to recognize the limitations of the judiciary as a family decision maker. They can then make use of other professionals such as parent coordinators, therapists and parent educators. But if their conflict boils over again, the judiciary will still serve as the decision maker of last resort. Knowing that the judicial structure is in place can sometimes serve to moderate people's behavior for the better.

It is difficult to consider what might occur if there were no independent judiciary with the authority to resolve conflicts. Just as each branch of government in the political arena has a role to play, so too does each discipline involved in family conflicts. The importance of the judiciary as an authoritative respected institution could not be put into sharper focus than it was during this protracted election season.

As AFCC members committed to the interdisciplinary approach to family conflict, it is important that we not lose sight of the value of the judicial process in containing and resolving family disputes.

MEMBER PROFILE

Hon. Susan Baker, Galveston, Texas



There is no question that AFCC member Hon. Susan Baker is an impressive public figure. She is a District Court Judge, Certified Family Law Specialist, President of AFCC's new provisional Texas Chapter, founder of a Women's Resource and Crisis Center and she serves on countless community boards and committees. Judge Baker is a seasoned veteran in the world of politics, having handed out campaign literature for her father when she was five years old. Her seat on the bench in Texas' 306th Judicial District is the very same one her father occupied before he retired as a judge in 1990. While her legal resume clearly demonstrates a strong commitment to families, to learn about the real Susan Baker, check out her web site at www.reallygoodauthoronline.com/susanbaker.

While Judge Baker is an upstanding member of the legal community, Susan Baker is an accomplished writer. Her dual roles and careers are noted clearly on her business card which identifies her as "Susan Baker, Author/Judge." St. Martin's Press, Inc., published Susan's mystery novel, *My First Murder*, in the summer of 1989, just before she ran for judge. She is also the author of two published short stories and served as Vice President of the Southwest Chapter of Mystery Writers of America.

Susan was born in Houston and raised in Galveston, Texas. She moved to Virginia after three semesters of college in Texas. Within six months she had met and married her first husband, Peter. Eight months later, he received orders for Viet Nam and Susan returned to Texas where their daughter Susan was born. They joined Peter for 14 months while he was stationed in Okinawa, Japan and eventually the family moved back to Texas. Susan returned to school to complete her degree and by 1976 she had a B.S. in Criminal Justice and a second daughter, Tara.

Susan began working as an adult probation officer. However a full time job and raising two daughters apparently left a gap in her schedule. She filled it by enrolling at South Texas College of Law, commuting fifty miles from her home in Galveston. After graduating, she opened a solo practice and became a Board Certified Family Law Specialist five years later.

Having grown up in a political family, Susan never planned on entering the fray. "My father was on the school board and in the state legislature and I had done my share of setting up collapsible chairs and selling hot dogs," she said. "But when my father decided to retire from the bench I realized that I had all these programs for children and families and nobody else was interested. I figured the only way I could get them going was to get elected and start them myself."

Susan folded her law practice and as a political unknown launched her Democratic primary campaign against a 20-year County Commissioner. "Because my opponent held office he couldn't actually declare his candidacy until two months before the primary," she said. "Meanwhile, I went to every parade and other function I could find for four months. I borrowed \$35,000 and ran ads in the newspaper every day. By the time he could announce he was running for office I had been to every precinct in the county."

After winning the primary and final election, Judge Baker literally took her father's former office in 1991 and went right to work. "The first thing I did was make it a standing order that all divorcing parents had to see the videotape *Don't Forget the Children*," she said. That order has evolved into one mandating a four-hour parent education program. In addition, she implemented mediation, started a community service work program for youthful offenders and wrote Children's Justice Act and Court Improvement grants to fund an associate judge to focus on abuse and neglect cases. Because of the success of this initiative, funding for the position was eventually picked up by the county.

Judge Baker first encountered AFCC while attending the Second World Congress on Family Law and the Rights of Children and Youth in 1997. "It occurred to me that Texas needed to be more child-friendly and that an AFCC Chapter might be just the way to help make that happen. I hope that we can develop a statewide organization of professionals who will help one another create programs and provide local assistance. I know that when I started my programs, I could have used the help. There must be others who could use the help as well."

For all of the Judge's accomplishments, Susan Baker, the author, may be even more prolific. She has ten works in progress and is in the process of completing the book *Endangered Species: Murdered Judges in 20th Century America*. She is also taking a screen writing class with an eye toward translating her work to the big screen.

While her activities keep her quite busy, Susan, the mother, grandmother and wife still takes time to be with her daughters, two grandchildren, Drew and Megan, and John, her husband of two and a half years. While Judge Baker hopes to retire from the bench so that Susan can write full time, the AFCC Texas Chapter and the families of Galveston are hoping that the two can co-exist for a little while longer.



AFCC CHAPTER UPDATE

AFCC Chapter Task Force Meets in Madison

by Jan Shaw, Chair, AFCC Chapter Task Force, Orange, CA

The AFCC Chapter Task Force, appointed by AFCC President Arline Rotman, met October 12-14, 2000 at the new AFCC offices in Madison, WI to address a myriad of issues. The Task Force agenda consisted of reviewing existing chapter policies and procedures and proposing changes, exploring options to meet the diverse interests and needs of existing and provisional chapters and drafting new minimum requirements and protocols for becoming a chapter.

Participants included President Arline Rotman, Chapter Task Force members Fred Mitchell, Tucson, AZ; Ruth Whitney, Arlington, MA; Leslye Hunter, New Orleans, LA; Ron Nelson, Overland Park KS; and Jan Shaw, Orange, CA, and AFCC staff

members Ann Milne and Peter Salem. The Task Force concluded its busy weekend with 23 recommendations which were distributed for review and comment to the Presidents of each chapter and were the subject of a conference call before the report and recommendations were submitted to the Board of Directors at their meeting in Kiawah, South Carolina on November 11, 2000. The Board approved all the recommendations and the Executive Committee voted unanimously to adopt.

Key changes include:

- A representative selected by the Chapter Council will represent chapters on the Board of Directors.
- To apply for provisional chapter status, a potential chapter must have 75 members of AFCC and at least one-half or 50 members, whichever is greater, must indicate an interest in joining a state chapter.

- To maintain charter chapter membership at least one-half, but no less than 50 members must be in good standing with their state chapter. Membership Co-Chairs Leslye Hunter and Christie Coates are already working with many AFCC chapters to help recruit new members and retain current ones.

If you are interested in further information on developing an AFCC Chapter, please contact:

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Chair, AFCC Chapter Task Force
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jshaw@superior.co.orange.ca.us

Arizona Chapter Conference

AFCC's Arizona Chapter will feature an all-star line up for its Annual Conference, February 9-11, 2001 in Sedona, AZ. The conference, *Picking Up the Pieces: A Team Approach to Strengthening Families*, will feature Hon. Thomas Zlaket, Chief Justice, Arizona Supreme Court; Dr. Robert Emery, Director of the Center for Children, Families and Law at the University of Virginia; Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.) AFCC President; and Jay Folberg, former Dean of University of San Francisco College of Law.

Conference sessions will examine cutting-edge topics including:

- Enforcement of Teen Visitation Rights
- Marriage Support Programs
- Collaborative Divorce
- Forensic Interviews
- Sexual Abuse Allegations

If you have any questions or would like to receive a conference brochure, please contact Fred Mitchell at (520) 740-5590 or fred_mitchell@sc.co.pima.az.us

Massachusetts Chapter Celebrates

AFCC's Massachusetts Chapter members attended the chapter's Annual Dinner in September and took the opportunity to celebrate the election of its own member, Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.) to the presidency of the international AFCC.

The dinner also included animated table top discussion on the topic "What is a Good Enough Parent?" and a report from Dr. Robin Deutsch on her participation in the American Bar Association Section of Family Law's special conference on high conflict custody cases.

The Massachusetts Chapter has begun planning for its second conference, to be held in the spring of 2001. For additional information on the AFCC Massachusetts Chapter please contact Ruth Whitney (781) 641-3664 or fantundo@aol.com

Do Great Work with AFCC-CAL

AFCC-CAL, AFCC's California Chapter will present its Annual Conference, *Do Great Work, See Great Works*, February 2-4, 2001 at the Doubletree Hotel in Pasadena, California.

The conference will present advanced level interdisciplinary training for professionals who work with family court litigants and

their children. Each presentation will be directed to a multi-disciplinary audience, providing the tools to work with one another to provide the highest level of service to the community.

This year's conference is co-sponsored by the Los Angeles County Superior Court Family Court Services and will include two optional six-hour Special Institutes on Friday, February 2. The Institutes will provide intensive and comprehensive practical skills training in evaluation techniques and children's suggestibility. The conference will also meet the Domestic Violence Update requirements for California custody evaluators. Further information on specific sessions needed to meet this requirement will be available at the conference.

For further information please contact T.L. Kolman at (310) 839-3882 or afccal@aol.com.

AFCC Texas Chapter Hosts Family Violence Seminar

The Domestic Violence Committee of the provisional AFCC Texas Chapter will host a full day seminar on Family Violence, Friday, January 19, 2001 at the University of Houston at Clear Lake.

The seminar will feature an interdisciplinary faculty of judges, counselors, law enforcement officers, physicians, psychologists, lawyers, women's crisis center staff and an anonymous victim. The objective of the seminar is to encourage interdisciplinary networking among the many sectors of the community that must deal with issues related to domestic abuse in the hopes that they will be able to work together.

The Domestic Violence Committee of the Texas Chapter is one of two project committees, the other being the Children's Choice Committee, which was established to examine whether Texas law should place a child in the position of choosing the parent with whom to live.

A third Texas Chapter committee is devoted to Governance and is working to move the organization from provisional to permanent status.

AFCC would like to congratulate Hon. Susan Baker, the first President of the provisional AFCC Texas Chapter. If you would like additional information on the Family Violence Seminar or the Texas Chapter, please contact Judge Baker at bakers@co.galveston.tx.us.

Making Mediation Your Day Job
**Fifteen Tips to Help Make Mediation
Your Career**

by Forrest S. Mosten, President of Mosten Mediation Centers, Los Angeles, CA

1. Don't Reinvent the Wheel

There are many books, tapes and other resources for marketing small businesses and professions. You will need to adapt these resources to mediation.

2. Select a Model of Success

Other mediators have experienced the challenges of building a practice and are generous with their time. Find out what your mentor does well and try to adapt that to your own personality and style.

3. Develop your Mediation Signature

How are you known by your clients and referral sources? What do they say about your style at the table, the services that you offer and the clients you serve?

4. Assess how much you have invested in your Mediation Practice

As with any small business, you cannot expect to have your own profitable practice without significant financial investment.

5. Determine your Return on your Marketing Dollars

Tracking and monitoring your marketing expenditures can mean the difference between success and failure.

6. Create a Capital Budget for the next 12 months

Learn to use Quickbooks or other accounting programs that will help you compare your budget to actual expenditures on a monthly basis.

7. Develop a strategy to communicate your Mediation Signature

Utilize the type of strategic planning that you use in mediation sessions to develop an overall marketing plan.

8. Articulate your Vision for your Practice for: July 1, 2001; July 1, 2002; July 1, 2005

Being able to establish a vision of your values and goals will help you achieve them.

9. Determine your Target Market

Is your market broad or narrow? Is it based on a field of law, demographics, or geographical location?

10. Prepare Client Education Materials for your Office

Build a client library and make sure that client waiting time is client learning time.

11. Train your Staff to Market your Practice

Every staff member should have mediation training to be able to competently assist you.

12. Expand the Mediation Services that you Offer

Understand your inventory of services that go beyond the resolution of current disputes. People need and are willing to pay for mediated management, conflict prevention and mediation coaching.

13. Demonstrate how your Services Differentiate you in the Marketplace

Stress quality in every aspect of your mediation practice and offer intangible benefits to your clients.

14. Calculate the Rate of Conversion for Telephone Calls to Opened Cases

Track every telephone call so that you can properly handle the quality results of your marketing.

15. What you will do differently next Monday?

Put your reflections and tips into action in baby steps.

Forrest S. Mosten is the author of *Making Mediation Your Career*, (Jossy Bass, forthcoming) and will present the Pre-Conference Institute, **Developing a Profitable Mediation Practice: Making Mediation Your Day Job**, at AFCC's 38th Annual Conference, May 9-12, 2001 in Chicago, IL.



Differential Interventions for High Conflict and Access Disputes

by Rachel Birnbaum, M.S.W., and Lorraine Martin, M.S.W., Office of the Children's Lawyer, Ministry of Attorney General, Toronto, ON

Post-separation visitation disputes are often highly contentious. When these disputes are brought before the court for resolution, mental health professionals are typically retained to conduct an assessment. Based on their findings, a report and recommendations are made that provide evidence on which the court may base its decision. While these assessments are used routinely in many jurisdictions, limited research has been conducted and little is known about the process and its outcomes for children and families involved.

STUDY DESCRIPTION

The Office of the Children's Lawyer in Toronto, Canada, undertook a pilot study to examine the process and outcomes of custody and/or access disputes by using two different processes. The "traditional social work evaluation" focused on parental history, child history, parent-child relationship and the allegations of each parent. The "focused social work evaluation" was designed as a solution-oriented approach to the difficulties, with less emphasis on past history and more on future problem solving. Parents who qualified for the study were randomly assigned to either the traditional or focused evaluation intervention. Cases involving child abuse or neglect, severe domestic abuse, significant drug and alcohol abuse, etc. were excluded from the study.

Parents participating in the study completed questionnaires prior to and upon completion of either evaluation intervention. The questionnaires explored four topics: 1) their child's adjustment level; 2) their ability to communicate and cooperate about childcare responsibilities; 3) their satisfaction with either the traditional or focused evaluation intervention; and, 4) settlement of the matter.

To ensure that the intended process (i.e., traditional vs. focused evaluation intervention) was provided, each parent and each social worker completed fidelity checklists which provided information about the degree to which the traditional and focused evaluation interventions were implemented and how the interventions differed from one another.

RESULTS

Overall Results

There were no statistically significant differences found between interventions with respect to settlement, satisfaction, parental level of communication and cooperation and the children's adjustment.

Demographics

The sample was comprised of 94 biological mothers, 94 biological fathers and 94 children. Mothers had sole custody of their child 86 percent of the time, fathers 12 percent of the time and each shared joint custody 2 percent of the time. The mean age of mothers was 33 years and of fathers was 35 years. The sample included 46 boys and 48 girls ranging from 5 to 16 years with a mean age of 8.

The majority of parents (65 percent) were born in Canada, with the other 35 percent coming from various backgrounds including Asian, West Indian and European. The mean income level of mothers was approximately CAN \$23,000 and for fathers was CAN \$27,000. The socioeconomic status of the majority of custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers ranged between machine operators and semi-skilled workers while 21 percent of the parents had either a college or university education. Mothers were represented by a lawyer 88 percent of the time and fathers 90 percent of the time.

Parents were in a relationship for an average of five years. Seventy-seven percent of parents were in a common-law relationship and 23 percent were married. At the time the Children's Lawyer intervened on behalf of the child, parents had been separated from each other for over four years and had been involved in the court system for more than three years.

Fifty-seven percent of parents had one child from their relationship; 32 percent had two children and 11 percent had three children. Eighty-four percent of mothers and 36 percent of fathers reported experiencing violence and/or abuse in the relationship (physical as well as verbal abuse).

• Number of Hours and Cost of Service

Social workers who conducted a focused evaluation spent an average of 15 hours with each family. Those who did a traditional evaluation spent an average of 32 hours with each family.

The average cost of each evaluation was CAN \$525.00 for a focused evaluation and CAN \$1,111.25 for a traditional evaluation.

• Access Arrangements and Satisfaction As Reported By Parents

Both parents report that the two most common visitation arrangements were every other week (48 per cent) and weekly (22 per cent).

Sixty-four percent of the parents reported that access was more regular after the involvement of the Children's Lawyer. Seventy-five percent of mothers and sixty-one percent of fathers rated the focused evaluation intervention as good and 59 percent of mothers and 68 percent of fathers rated the traditional evaluation intervention as good.

DISCUSSION

Parents reported an increase in visitation days between the non-custodial parent (usually the father) and child even though both parents had a number of concerns about one another's understanding of their child's social and emotional needs. Parents also reported that the focused intervention helped to reframe the conflict between them assisting them in solving the problems between them. This might account for the high rate of agreement between parents about the overall satisfaction with the service.

Many of the parents had already been in litigation for three years prior to involvement of the Children's Lawyer. Focusing on helping high conflict parents develop skills for the exchange of child related information is important.

Limitations of the Pilot Study

This study was exploratory in nature and the generalizability of the findings to other settings is limited in several ways:

- 1) These were high conflict parents who had been litigating for over three years prior to receiving service from the Office of the Children's Lawyer. They may have reached a settlement because of the negative experience with the court system and protracted litigation;
- 2) Services were provided in a publicly funded office that enjoys high credibility within the courts of Ontario and the parents may well have felt that they had little choice but to accept the recommendations of the Children's Lawyer's social worker;

Custody

- 3) The sample size was small and based on parents who met a specific criteria for entry thus introducing a sampling bias; and
- 4) The study involved only visitation or access based disputes.

CONCLUSION

This is the first time a group of high conflict parents has been examined using a comparison group that focuses on the efficacy of the two evaluation interventions in access based disputes. This study builds on the limitations of previous studies that examine only retrospective data and contain no comparison groups.

From a resource point of view, the inclusion/exclusion criteria facilitated the identification of children and families who might benefit from a shorter and solution oriented approach in a timely and cost effective manner. This has significant practice and policy implications for future directions with respect to advocating on behalf of children. Being able to capture a larger client pool with a range of services allows for a more active intervention by professionals and a stronger child focused approach to family law.

Rachel Birnbaum and Lorraine Martin presented this study at AFCC's Fourth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations, November 2000 in Kiawah Island, SC. Please see page 11 of this newsletter for information on ordering an audio tape of the presentation.



AFCC Provides Capacity Building Consulting and Training to Courts

AFCC staff members Ann Milne and Peter Salem provided technical assistance to the Connecticut Court Support Services Division, conducting an assessment of the agency's mediation and custody evaluation services in order to assist Connecticut with its capacity building efforts. AFCC's member network provided invaluable assistance in helping to identify best practices of court services as implemented in their agencies.

AFCC would like to thank Aza Butler, Custody and Mediation Division, Circuit Court for Baltimore County, Maryland; Stevie Buck, Family Court Services, Bartow County, Florida; Doneldon Dennis, Hennepin County Family Court Services, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Sharon James, Multnomah County Family Services, Portland, Oregon; Larry Lehner, Alameda County Family and Children's Services Bureau, Oakland, California; Margaret Little, Family Court Services, Los Angeles, California; Lorraine Martin, Office of the Children's Lawyer, Toronto, Ontario; Fred Mitchell, Family Center of the Conciliation Court, Tucson, Arizona; Pat Ross, Family

Court Services, Dallas, Texas; Beth Kerns, St. Joseph County Domestic Relations Counseling Bureau, South Bend, Indiana; Jan Shaw, Mediation and Investigative Services, Orange, California; and Mark Van Der Puy, Administrative Office of the Court, Raleigh, North Carolina.

AFCC also would like to thank Drs. Joan Kelly and Margaret Lee for presenting a two day training in October for the Connecticut Court Support Services Division on high conflict families, the alienated child, relocation issues and infant/toddler visitation.

AFCC staff members Ann Milne and Peter Salem provided training on mediation in cases involving domestic violence in November for the Alaska Court System and the Alaska Dispute Settlement Association in Anchorage, AK.

AFCC's Professional Development and Technical Assistance Division (PD&TA) can design training and consulting programs for courts and related services. To discuss a program for your area please contact Peter Salem, AFCC Associate Director, at (608) 664-3750 or psalem@afccnet.org



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and receive your email at:

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for \$50/year

John Helie and Jim Melamed, Co-Directors

www.mediate.com/services

www.afccnet.org

New AFCC Web Site Set to Launch

A FCC's new and improved web site will be launched in the first quarter of 2001 with updated information, easier navigation, upgraded on-line conference registration and shopping, new resources and a special members-only section designed to enhance

information sharing and networking.

The members-only section will provide AFCC members with the opportunity to join on-line discussion on a variety of subjects. All AFCC members will be able to join any interest group discussion, post questions

and receive e-mail updates from Interest Group Coordinators.

If you are interested in signing up for an AFCC Interest Group, please contact the coordinator at the address below.

Interest Group

Adoption and Permanency Mediation
Alienated Child
Child Protection/Dependency Mediation
Court Services
Custody Evaluations
Domestic Abuse
Fatherhood Issues
Judicial Officers

Language of Custody Law
Lawyers
Mediation
Parent Education

Policy and Legislation
Special Masters/Parenting Coordinators
Redefining Families
Relocation/Move Aways
Unified Family Courts

Visitation Protocols

Coordinator

Mary Ferriter
Janet Johnston
Marilou Giovannucci
David Hodges
Philip Stahl
Hon. Linda Dessau
Sanford Braver
Hon. Linda Dessau &
Hon. Fred Newton
Doneldon Dennis
Rita Pollak
C. Eileen Pruett
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Risa Garon
Kathy Clark
Robin Deutsch
Mary O'Connell
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AFCC Members Lead New Conflict Resolution Organization

A FCC member Arnold Shienvold from Harrisburg, PA, will be the first President of the Association for Conflict Resolution, the new organization formed by the merger of the Academy of Family Mediators (AFM), Conflict Resolution in Education Network (CREnet) and the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution (SPIDR).

AFCC members on the Association for Conflict Resolution Board include Nina Mierding, Larry Fong, Bernie Mayer, Margaret Powers and Sharon Press.

AFCC extends its support and best wishes to the Association for Conflict Resolution and looks forward to continuing the collaborative relationships established with AFM, CREnet and SPIDR.

The Association for Conflict Resolution opened its doors for business January 1, 2001 and may be contacted at:

Association for Conflict Resolution
1527 New Hampshire Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20046
P (202) 667-9700
F (202) 667-1968

Association for Conflict Resolution Board of Directors

Arnie Shienvold, President
Nancy Peace, President Elect
Terry Wheeler, Vice President
Priscilla Prutzman, Secretary
Dan DeStephen, Treasurer
Nina Mierding, Past-President
Kathy Bickmore
Larry Fong
Lynn Hurdle-Price
Marvin Johnson
Bernie Mayer
Margaret Powers
Sharon Press
Rosemary Romero
Dennis Sharp
Paul Wiley



2001 WORLD CONGRESS ON FAMILY LAW AND THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

19–22 September 2001
Bath, England

More than one thousand lawyers, judges and allied professionals from around the world will meet in September 2001 for the third international World Congress on Family Law and the Rights of Children and Young People.

Under the patronage of Her Excellency Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, this high-profile and influential international gathering will review key emerging issues, policies and practices that impact on the administration of justice in the family law area and on the rights of children and young people.

Major themes of the congress include national approaches to the protection of the human dignity of children; the effectiveness of international conventions for cooperation, and family law and its impact on social change in areas such as international maintenance and child support, same-sex and single-parent family structures, pension plans, property division and international family law litigation.

Speakers will include Professor Vitit Muntabhorn, Thailand; William Duncan, Ireland; Professor Michael Freeman, Professor Rebecca Bailey-Harris, UK; Hans van Loon, Secretary General, Hague Conference on Private International Law; Justice Claire L'Heureux-Dube, Supreme Court of Canada and Lady Justice Brenda Hale, Court of Appeal, England.

Issues to be addressed by these and other outstanding speakers from Great Britain, the Americas, Europe, Australasia and Africa include: child labour; child soldiers; child prostitution; the rights of children in criminal

proceedings; the impact of media coverage on children's rights issues; international abduction of children and the Hague Convention; the European Convention on Human Rights and its impact on the family; and children as witnesses.

Media are welcome to cover the Congress. Full details will be available in March 2001.

The Congress is not however all talk and no action.

This Congress will establish a unique program of lawyers and allied professionals to assist pro bono at short notice in landmark cases involving children. The **Children's Protection Network** will be an international network of children's rights advocates ready to travel and assist with court-based and other actions and advocacy for the protection of children and young people.

The Congress is supported by the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund and many governments including those of England, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada and the professions of America, Great Britain, Australia, Canada and Japan among others.

Full details can be found on the website on www.lawrights.asn.au or by contacting the organisers in Sydney:

Capital Conferences Pty Ltd
Christina Johnson, Meeting Manager
Phone: +61 2 9252 3388
Facsimile: + 61 29241 5282
Email: capcon@capcon.com.au

Member News

Christie Coates, former AFCC President from Boulder, CO, was appointed to serve as American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution Liaison to the ABA Section of Family Law. Ms. Coates was also appointed co-chair of the Mediation Committee of the ABA Section of Family Law.

Hon. William Fee, former AFCC Board member from Angola, IN was recently honored with the Outstanding Judge Award by the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The award was presented in recognition of Judge Fee's work with the Steuben County Coalition Against Domestic Violence in helping create its Community Coordinated Response to Domestic Violence initiative.

Hon. William Palmer, of Orlando, FL has been appointed Judge of the District Court of Appeal, Fifth District. The Investiture was held November 3, 2000 at the Orange County Courthouse in Orlando. AFCC sends congratulations and wishes Judge Palmer the best in his new position.

Peter Salem, AFCC Associate Director, received the President's Award from the Wisconsin Association of Mediators at its Awards Luncheon at the Ninth Annual Conference on Emerging Issues in Mediation.

Condolences

AFCC sends condolences to Board Member Michele MacFarlane of Toledo, Ohio on the loss of her husband, Richard Shalvoy, who died of skin cancer on December 5, 2000. The family requests that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to Hospice of Northwest Ohio, Home Care Massage Program, 30000 East River Road, Perrysburg, OH 43551.

AFCC New York Save the Dates!

AFCC's Northeast Regional Conference will take place September 13-15, 2001 at the New Yorker Hotel in New York City. AFCC has secured a room rate of only \$139 per night for a single or double room.

The New Yorker is located at Penn Station, just a few blocks from Times Square and in the middle of the best of everything New York has to offer. Watch future *AFCC Newsletters* for more information on the conference.



Honor a Friend or Colleague with a Commemorative Gift to AFCC's Kids Count Club

Looking for a way to acknowledge a friend or colleague's special accomplishment or commemorate their memory? Consider a tax deductible commemorative gift to the **AFCC Kids Count Club**. A gift to the Kids Count Club helps AFCC expand its

outreach and offer assistance to programs and professionals serving the needs of children and families throughout the world. It is an ideal way to acknowledge someone who supports the mission of AFCC.

Yes I would like to give a commemorative gift to the **AFCC Kids Count Club**

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Gift amount \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$ _____

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Address _____

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Check enclosed (*pay to AFCC in U.S. Funds only, please*)

Please charge my credit card Mastercard Visa

Card number _____ Exp. Date ____/____/____

Signature _____

Send to AFCC, 6515 Grand Teton Plaza, Suite 210, Madison, WI 53719 Fax: 608-664-3751

AFCC Conference Audiotapes Available Special Post-Conference Offers!

Fourth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations

Kiawah Island, SC November 9-11, 2000

Speakers include:

Robin Deutsch, Ph.D.
Philip Stahl, Ph.D.
Jonathan Gould, Ph.D.

Fourth International Congress on Parent Education Programs

Kiawah Island, SC November 12-14, 2000

Speakers include:

Joan B. Kelly, Ph.D.
Kathleen Clark, Ph.D.
Risa Garon, LCSW-C

Purchase an entire set of Symposium or Congress tapes for only \$249 per conference (includes all pre-conference institutes). Or buy both sets for only \$399.

AFCC 37th Annual Conference — *Alienation, Access and Attachment*

New Orleans, LA, May 31- June 3, 2000

Featuring:

U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone
Janet Johnston, Ph.D.
Ronald F. Johnson

The entire set of audio tapes from AFCC's Annual Conference is only \$499. (Includes tapes from 7 pre-conference institutes)

To order tapes of individual sessions or the entire set, go to the Sound of Knowledge web site at www.tsok.net or contact the Sound of Knowledge at 800-683-4305

AFCC Award Nominations

AFCC is seeking nominees for the following awards, to be presented at AFCC's 38th Annual Conference in Chicago, May 9-12, 2001.

Distinguished Service Award: Presented in recognition of outstanding contribution to the field of family and divorce.

Stanley Cohen Research Award: Recognizing innovative and outstanding research in the area of family courts and family law.

Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award: Presented to an innovative program serving the family court community.

If you would like to nominate someone for one of the above awards, send a fax or e-mail of no more than two hundred words

to the AFCC Administrative Office. Please specify the award for which you are submitting a nomination. Include your name, address and telephone number along with the same information for the nominee. Please include a brief statement as to why you believe the nominee to be a good candidate for the award.

The deadline for nomination is April 20, 2000. Please forward your nomination to:

AFCC Awards Nomination
6515 Grand Teton Plaza, Suite 210
Madison, WI 53719
E-mail: afcc@afccnet.org

Board of Directors Nominations

The AFCC Nominating Committee is seeking names of individuals to serve on the AFCC Board of Directors. Recommended individuals must be AFCC members and have an interest and knowledge of AFCC and its work.

Nominations must be received by February 15, 2001 in order to be considered by the committee prior to election at the AFCC Annual Conference in Chicago in May 2001.

If you or another member you know is interested, please forward their name, contact information and resume to:

Robert Tompkins, Chair
AFCC Nominations Committee
Court Support Services Division
106 Elizabeth St.
Derby, CT 06418
E-mail: Robert.Tompkins@jud.state.ct.us



*an association of family, court
and community professionals*

38TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Conflict Resolution, Children and the Courts

Chicago

Westin Hotel, Michigan Avenue

May 9-12, 2001



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Madison, WI 53719-1048

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