



PENNSYLVANIA
COUNCIL OF MEDIATORS

37th Annual Conference - 2025

April 4-5, 2025

Hilton Harrisburg

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12.5 CLEs/CEUs
available for the
entire
conference,
including up to
3.5 Ethics CLEs

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PA Attorney CLE (including Ethics) and Social Worker CE Credits Available

PCM is an accredited provider of continuing legal educational credits to attorneys through The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania Continuing Legal Education Board. Up to 12.5 CLE credits will be awarded for completion of this course. NASW-PA Chapter is a co-sponsor of these workshops. Up to 12.5 CEs will be awarded for completion of this course. NASW has been designated as a pre-approved provider of professional continuing education for social workers (Section 47.36), Marriage and Family Therapist (Section 48.36) and Professional Counselors (Section 49.36) by the PA State Board of Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists and Professional Counselors.

PRE-CONFERENCE TRAINING

FRIDAY, APRIL 4th

8:00 - 8:30 am Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30 - 4:00 pm Pre-Conference Training (Continental Breakfast & Lunch Included)

Mediating Minds: Managing Conflict with Practical Tools for Mental Health and Resilience.

CRYSTAL WILLIAMS



This integrated 6-hour training combines four distinct yet interconnected topics to enhance mediator effectiveness and create transformative outcomes. Through interactive activities and practical exercises, participants will develop a comprehensive skill set to handle challenging situations and support the well-being of all parties involved in mediation. The content is structured as follows: 1. The Psychology of Conflict (1.5 hours): The day will begin with participants exploring the psychological drivers of conflict, including emotional triggers, cognitive biases, and social factors. Participants will gain foundational insights into how these elements influence disputes, equipping them to recognize and address underlying patterns during mediation. 2. Mindfulness in Mediation (1.5 hours): Building on psychological insights, this segment emphasizes the role of mindfulness in fostering emotional regulation and attentiveness. Mediators will learn practical mindfulness techniques, such as guided breathing and mindful listening, to create a calm and empathetic environment for conflict resolution. 3. Navigating Power Imbalances (1.5 hours): Next, the training addresses the critical issue of power dynamics. Through interactive exercises and case studies, participants will learn to identify and balance power disparities, ensuring equitable mediation processes and empowering all parties involved. 4. Conflict Resolution and Mental Health (1.5 hours): The final segment connects conflict resolution skills to improved mental health. Mediators will explore how unresolved conflict impacts well-being and how techniques like empathy, resilience-building, and stress reduction can benefit both mediators and participants. This comprehensive structure provides mediators with a robust toolkit to address the emotional, psychological, and practical dimensions of conflict, fostering healthier resolutions and promoting well-being for all parties.

About the presenter: Crystal Williams is a mediator, educator and nationally recognized trainer and TEDx speaker, who brings a trauma and disability-informed perspective to her work with non-profit organizations, public schools, teachers, parents, mental health professionals and peacemakers. Her expertise encompasses conflict management coaching, professional development, parent engagement, and trauma-informed practices. With a Masters of Dispute Resolution from the University of Southern California's Gould School of Law, Crystal expanded her mediation training through Waymakers Dispute Resolution Services and Mosten Guthrie Academy. She also holds positions as a Board Member for the Southern California Mediation Association, Board Member and Program Advisory Chair for the Western Justice Center, advisor to the Board for Kids Managing Conflict, and coordinator of the Youth Police Dialogue series through the San Pedro Rotary Club. Educationally, Crystal holds a Master of Arts in Teacher Education with dual special education credentials from Claremont Graduate University. With 15 years of K-12 teaching experience, she now serves as a Social Justice Educator at the University of Redlands in their graduate teacher education programs.

(6 Sub. CLE/CE)

NETWORKING COCKTAIL RECEPTION, DINNER

AND MVP AWARD

FRIDAY, APRIL 4th

- 5:30 - 6:30 pm Networking Cocktail Reception with beverages and hors d'oeuvres
- 6:30 - 7:30 pm Dinner
- 7:30 - 8:30 pm 2025 Most Valuable Peacemaker (MVP) Award: Zanita Zacks-Gabriel, Esq.

MVP

Most Valuable Peacemaker 2025 is Zanita Zacks-Gabriel, Esq.- A to Z Law Erie



Zanita Zacks-Gabriel is a luminary in the fields of mediation and collaborative collaborative practice in Pennsylvania. For over 40 years she has dedicated her practice to representing families in conflict or in crisis. She also provides collaborative and mediation services in other civil areas, including labor disputes, employment disputes, estate disputes and the like. She began practicing in 1974 and was the first woman to practice law in Erie. Zanita founded the Collaborative Professionals of Northwest PA and was its President for several years. She is the former chair of the PBA Collaborative Law Committee and the chair of the subcommittee on Legislation, including the Pennsylvania Collaborative Law Act (PCLA). She served a 3-year term on the Board of Directors of the IACP and chaired the Membership & Outreach Committee and formerly chaired the Fundraising Committee for the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals (IACP). She also served for several years on the IACP UCLA Advisory Task Force. Zanita is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association ADR Committee, and she was a drafter of the Pennsylvania Collaborative Law Act. She is the co-founder of A-Z Law, the first mother-daughter law firm in Erie.

(1 Sub. CLE/CE)

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, APRIL 5th

8:00 – 8:45 am Continental Breakfast

8:45 – 9:45 am Plenary Session

Cultural Competence in Mediation: Insights from Queens—America's Most Diverse County

LARA TRAUM, ESQ.



When assisting families in navigating life changes, the cultural factors that shape their parenting, financial choices, and overall post-separation lives are often overlooked. While judges may have limited opportunities to consider these cultural and religious elements when making decisions, mediators in all fields are uniquely positioned to address the full spectrum of each party's reality during negotiations. This session will teach mediators how to conduct a culturally sensitive intake, incorporate third-party cultural decision-makers into the mediation process, engage community leaders and clergy when appropriate, and deepen their understanding of the complex nuances involved in culturally competent mediation.

About the Presenter: Lara Traum, Esq., is a lawyer, mediator, and parenting coordinator with Roytberg Traum Law and Mediation, P.C., offering assistance in prenuptial, postnuptial, matrimonial, and trust and estate matters. She is also an author and frequent lecturer on conflict resolution topics. Lara is the current President of the New York State Council on Divorce Mediation, an officer on the Board of the Zamir Choral Foundation, and a past director of the Boards of COJECO (Council of Jewish Emigre Community Organizations) and the Townsend Harris Alumni Association. Lara is a current member of the NYS Bar Association's Dispute Resolution Section and Publication Review Editorial Team, as well as the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals and Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. She is a past member of the NYC Bar Association's Children and the Law Committee and ADR Committee.

(1 Sub. CLE/CEs)

WORKSHOPS

10:00 – 11:30 am Morning Session

A1 Apology in the Workplace – Mitigating Conflict and Maintaining Trust.

Julie Procopiow Todd, Esq; Former Senior EEOC Administrative Judge – Philadelphia District Office



This country has experienced unprecedented challenges in recent years, as it continues to recover from a crippling worldwide pandemic and confronts the growth of social justice issues and polarization of political views. Inevitably, such challenges creep into the workplace and can exacerbate poor workplace relations and frustrate positive communication. This interactive training will provide the attendees with tools, as mediators, to assist others in using apology to creatively resolve workplace disputes and improve communication, regardless of whether the conflict is based on claims of discrimination, harassment, cultural differences, or differing communication styles.

(1.5 Sub. CLE/CEs)

A2 Mastering the Recipe: Reframing Court Ordered Mediation Programs For All Involved Stakeholders.

Maribeth Blessing, Esq., Law Offices of Maribeth Blessing LLC and Greg Gilston, Esq.



Learn how mandated – Maribeth help you shifting the involved (1.5 Sub.



to implement a magic recipe for successful court-orientations and court-ordered mediations. Presenters Blessing, Esquire and Gregory Gilston, Esquire – will become creative chefs in your mediation practice by paradigm to incentivize optimal outcomes for all stakeholders. CLE/CEs)

A3 Ethics, Compliance, and Combating Workplace Discrimination: Racism. Ebony Dendy, CEO and Managing Director of INTEG SOLUTIONS, LLC



This workshop provides a comprehensive overview of workplace racism, discrimination, and bullying while addressing the critical role of ethics and compliance in creating inclusive and fair work environments. Participants will explore the history and systemic nature of racism, its impact on workplace dynamics, and practice strategies for self-advocacy and organizational accountability. Key components: Understanding systemic racism and its historical context in workplaces; Exploring ethical and compliance frameworks to address

workplace discrimination; Recognizing and overcoming barriers to speaking up; Strategies to combat retaliation and promote equity; and practical tools for individuals to protect themselves and advocate for change.

(1.5 Ethics CLE/CEs)

A4 Using AI in Mediation.

Josh Kershenbaum, Esq. and Karen Salib, Esq. – New Hope Divorce Mediation



What put the latest engaging

mediation practice and doubts and out!



happens when two mediation pros - and AI skeptics – AI tech to the test live on stage? Find out in this session packed with real-world tips for how to work harmoniously (and ethically!) with AI to enhance any practice. Mediators of all styles, professions, areas of years of experience are encouraged to bring their curiosity. Did ChatGPT write this blurb? Come find

(1.0 Sub and 0.5 Ethics CLE/CEs)

11:30 am -12:30 pm Lunch (Included in Registration Fee)

12:45 - 2:15 pm Afternoon Sessions

B1 Pre-Mediation Coaching – What to Do and Why it Works.

Tara Eisenhard, Divorce Coach and Family Mediator. (Parenting Mediator at Main Line Family Law Center and Client Coach at Atticus Family Law)



1. We will focus on expanding the understanding of the benefits of pre-mediation coaching and adoption of client-centered practices. Beginning with a discussion of the challenges participants bring to mediation (emotional outbursts, folders of “evidence,” misunderstanding of process, refusal/reluctance to participate, etc.). The conversation will focus on an introduction to pre-mediation coaching, what it is and if anyone uses it. We will continue the discussion with the benefits of pre-mediation coaching such as having the parties in a calm, confident, collaborative, and focused mindset. They look good, feel good, and can stay on track.

Decreased risk of emotional outburst. Faster, more appropriate resolutions, and peace of mind for mediators and assisting attorneys. Coaching is an opportunity to check in with the client’s mindset and encourage productive shifts in perspective. Through this process, clients gain clarity about what they’re truly trying to achieve, an understanding of the impacts of their thoughts, feelings, and actions, and a sense of confidence to face the event with dignity. The session will end with a group brainstorm and exploration of opportunities for individual practices or organizations.

(1 Sub. 0.5 Ethics CLE/CEs)

B2 Mediation Beyond Words- Nonverbal Communication.

Deborah Brand, Esq. and Gwen Lentine, Esq.



Participants will explore the little-recognized fact that what is seen and felt in mediation can be just as important as what is said. Human beings react not only to what they hear, but also to what they see and feel. A power point presentation will focus on nonverbal communication, the power of the pause/silence and bias of the parties as well as that of the mediator. Mediator awareness of body language and expressions can promote a comfort level among the parties, allowing them to better focus on the issues and listen to

each other.

(1.5 Ethics CLE/CEs)

B3 Fundamentals of One-to-One Conflict Work: Applying Restorative, Trauma-Informed, and

Neurosequential Method to Your “Mediation Madness.”

Christopher Fitz – Advoz Mediation and Restorative Practices



The mediation field has developed robust structure for joint-sessions, but the method before and after these sessions is often messier, under-researched and ultimately un-

mediation-like. This experiential workshop introduces the Neurosequential Model of Dr. Bruce Perry and applies it specifically to the context of mediation and restorative practices, particularly in one-to-one contexts common around mediation –case intake calls, preparatory meetings, caucuses, shuttle mediation and coaching conversations. Using a series of playful, interactive exercises, this session provides methodical structure and skill building for approaching and

developing your own one-to-one conflict engagement practices, both professionally and personally.

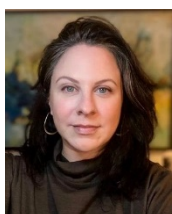
The

model takes into account recent neuroscience and trauma/stress research that can help you as a mediator/facilitator develop the fundamentals of your craft – and a method for what’s often the most maddening part of our practice.

(1.5 Sub. CLE/CEs)

B4 Ground, Connect, Shift the Culture: Mindfulness for Mediators.

Amy Sadao and Beth Jellinek, LPC



This
discussing

moments
and trauma
and impact
program



program will involve defining mindfulness and why it is beneficial for a healthy mediation and work environment. We will be practicing mindfulness with time to reflect, as well as discussing how stress (individual and systemic) impact the work environment navigating conflict resolution. Also, a part of the will be teaching the neuroscience of trauma,

mindfulness, neuroplasticity, and mirror neurons (attunement). There will be a discussion of practical tools to use with staff and clients to help them “shift gears” along with deepening the understanding of body-mind connection, connect to emotion regulation, and discussing/brainstorming around attendees’ challenges bringing mindfulness to the workplace.

(1.5 Sub. CLE/CEs)

B5 Can This Mediation Be Saved? Interesting disputes in search of happy endings.

Jessica Lynch, Esq.



What do Taylor Swift, Ben Affleck, Tiger Woods, and countless regular people have in common? Legal problems! And how do they solve their legal problems? In Mediation! But what happens when the Mediation does not go as planned? This will be an interactive problem-solving discussion covering multiple principles and ethical obligations. This workshop will contain numerous scenarios for the group to discuss and problem-solve to help develop and improve mediation skills, in a fun and interactive session.

(1.5 Sub. CLE/CEs)

2:15 – 2:30 pm Break

2:30 – 4:00 pm Afternoon Session

C1 Raising the “BARN.”

Jonathan Hunter - MA, MEd.



It has often been said bars are recession-proof. People go out to drink to celebrate. People go out to drink to drown their sorrows. Even during prohibition, people managed to find a way to imbibe. Like it or not, alcohol is here to stay. For those that don’t partake, living near a noisy bar with intoxicated patrons can be a nuisance. For bar owners, scrutinizing every sip of every patron, every night just to appease others can be frustrating as well. However, if left unresolved, these issues can have a devastating impact on business for some and on the quality of life of others within the community. When these worlds collide, mediation is crucial. There needs to be mutual

understanding for one another's needs and concerns. A mediator can facilitate that dialog and help the disputing parties craft solutions. Bar owners need to take personal responsibility for their actions and community members need to manage their expectations. When police are called to bars to address these conflicts, it takes the officers away from more serious crimes. Not only does this cost taxpayers money but threatens the safety of the community. This can easily be resolved through the use of mediation to assist with resolving community conflict is the focus of the program.

(1.5 Sub. CLE/CEs)

C2 Implications of Depolarization Research on Mediation.

Clymer Bardsley, President, Bardsley Group Mediation: Experts in Neutral Intervention



Polarization has affected political discourse and the operation of governments at all levels. It has divided the United States into camps of Red and Blue, MAGA and Woke, conservative and progressive. My colleague, Peter Coleman, at Columbia University's Teachers College has researched, written and spoken about this long-growing problem. Issues of politics can deeply impact workplace and family conflicts, by entrenching opposing perspectives and escalating tensions. Polarization can also manifest when teams or individuals align themselves with competing priorities, values, or leadership styles. This entrenched division can stifle innovation, reduce productivity, and create a toxic work environment where trust and open dialogue are replaced by suspicion and hostility. The polarization may also lead to burnout or turnover, further harming organizational health. In families, polarization can similarly drive a wedge between its members, especially when values, beliefs, or expectations clash. Generational divides, for instance, might fuel misunderstandings around traditions, parenting styles, or career choices. Such divisions are often amplified by a lack of empathetic communication, leading to emotional distance and unresolved resentments. In extreme cases, polarized conflicts can fracture family bonds, making reconciliation seem insurmountable. Whether in the workplace or the home, polarization thrives on a lack of understanding and an unwillingness to engage constructively, underscoring the need for tools like mediation and dialogue processes to bridge divides and foster mutual respect. The objective of this workshop is to give the participants some new research-based tools to intervene in conflicts that are beset by the elements of polarization.

(1.5 Ethics CLE/CEs)

C3 Bridging Minds: Integrating Mental Health Professionals into Mediation.

Deborah Gillman and Arlene Rosen –



Mediation often involves high-stress situations where emotions run high, making it challenging to resolve conflicts effectively. Mental health professionals serving as coaches bring essential tools to the table, helping parties better regulate their emotions, communicate effectively, and build resilience throughout the mediation process. This workshop equips mediators with insights into how mental health professionals can enhance the mediation process. Participants will explore practical strategies for collaboration and understand how to incorporate professional mental health coaching into their practice, ultimately leading to more constructive and sustainable resolutions.

(1.5 Sub. CLE/CEs)

C4 Mastering Mediation: Resolving Conflicts Across Generations and Peer Dynamics.

Guerline Ladouceur Laureore, MA, JD, MPA -



Dive into the art of mediation through an interactive workshop that tackles challenging conflict resolution scenarios involving adults, adults and youth, and peer-to-peer conflicts among youth. Participants will engage in dynamic role-playing exercises that simulate real-world situations, highlighting effective communication

techniques, emotional intelligence, and strategies for de-escalating tension. Whether you're mediating family disputes, intergenerational conflicts, or peer disagreements, this workshop equips you with practical tools to foster understanding and achieve meaningful resolutions. Perfect for mediators, educators, and conflict resolution professionals seeking to refine their skills in nuanced and emotionally charged cases.

(1.5 Sub. CLE/CEs)

Conference Site and Room Accommodations

Hilton Harrisburg
One North 2nd Street (GPS-friendly address is 200 Market Street)
Telephone: 717-233-6000

To book a reservation by midnight on March 12th, use the link below:
<https://group.hilton.com/wr4k0s>

or
call 717-233-6000 select option #1, then use code 966

A limited number of rooms are reserved for conference attendees at \$164, plus tax.
Reservations must be made before Wednesday, March 12th to receive the special rate.

Parking - \$15 overnight Self-Parking, valet \$26, and Day Parking (only up to 10 hours) \$7, if over 10 hours best to park in Valet or Day Parking.

By Train: Walk five blocks (7 minutes) south on Market Street to the Hotel.

Conference Questions - Contact Amanda Allis at info@pamediation.org or 412-335-3499

See the next page for registration form.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____ Email _____

Join PCM now and register at the Member rate: Includes a listing in the Find A Mediator section of the PCM web site (www.pamediation.org).

Individual/Organizational membership, add \$70 _____ Volunteer membership, add \$35 _____

SPECIAL COMBINATION PACKAGE: PRE-CONFERENCE & CONFERENCE

PCM Member \$345 _____; after March 12th \$380 _____

Non-Member \$385 _____; after March 12th: \$420 _____

Volunteer or Student \$255 _____; after March 12th: \$290 _____

PRE-CONFERENCE ONLY: Friday, April 4th

Pre-Conference training with continental breakfast and lunch

PCM Member \$185 _____; after March 12th : \$200 _____

Non-Member \$200 _____; after March 12th : \$215 _____

Volunteer or Student \$150 _____; after March 12th : \$165 _____

CONFERENCE ONLY: Friday Evening, April 4th, and Saturday, April 5th

Friday MVP program, Saturday plenary, workshops, continental breakfast and lunch

PCM Member \$205 _____; after March 12th : \$220 _____

Non-Member \$220 _____; after March 12th : \$240 _____

Volunteer or Student \$160 _____; after March 12th : \$180 _____

Complimentary Friday Wine & Cheese Networking Reception & Program

DINNER BUFFET: Friday Evening, April 4th \$50 _____

PA CLEs Pre-Conference: 6 CLEs \$30 _____ Conference: 6.5 CLEs \$32.50 _____

Social Work CE's NASW member \$20 _____ Non-member \$30 _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Please indicate your preference for Saturday Workshops

Morning Session

Afternoon Session #1

Afternoon Session #2

1st Choice A1 ___ A2 ___ A3 ___

A4 ___

2nd Choice A1 ___ A2 ___ A3 ___

A4 ___

1st Choice B1 ___ B2 ___ B3 ___

B4 ___

2nd Choice B1 ___ B2 ___ B3 ___

B4 ___

1st Choice C1 ___ C2 ___ C3 ___

C4 ___

2nd Choice C1 ___ C2 ___ C3 ___

C4 ___

A 25% cancellation fee will be applied after March 12, 2025

Payment Options

☛ Check: Send this form and your check made out to "PCM" to: **PCM, PO Box 23, Oakmont, PA 15139**

☛ Credit card: Register on the PCM website - <https://www.pamediation.org/>