

**Notes from ACR Chapter Leaders Teleconference  
April 05, 2007**

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**Agenda items for the call:**

- I. Board Update
  - II. Conference Committee Meeting Report
  - III. Annual Conference Youth Plans
  - IV. Program Planning
  - V. How to Increase Membership
  - VI. Dealing with Large Geographic Area
  - VII. Next Steps – Topics for Future Calls
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**Participants:**

- Lou Gieszl – ACR Chapters Director
  - Nicky Davenport-Weston – Georgia
  - Art Benson – Minnesota
  - Pat Shanahan – Northern California
  - Ray Lanier – ACR President
  - Ashley Parker – ACR Membership and Chapters Associate
  - Michelle Ledo – North Carolina
  - Stuart Binstock – District of Columbia
  - Christina Franco – Georgia
  - Ruth Lusby – Arizona
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**I. Board Update**

**Discussion:** There was a Board meeting on March 30-April 1. Everyone will be receiving an update on what is going on with the Board, including financial information. The Board is still reviewing the 2007 budget, and there is a real effort to cut back on certain costs and increase revenue. There will be some changes to the ways that we request “investments” from members for the Annual Fund. There will be a search committee to look for the Executive Director/CEO (as a reminder, Linda Baron is the Interim Executive Director, and both she and the Board have maintained that she will not be considered for the permanent position.) They will be looking for someone with experience running a large membership org, and not necessarily someone from within the field. The hope is to identify someone by the end of June, around the time of the next Board meeting. Lou will keep everyone updated. At the Board meeting Tara Fishler presented on the International Membership Expansion. The Board approved the plan, which will cover organizational and e-memberships. The plan is to pilot the program in Australia (for organizations) and in Latin America (for the e-memberships.) The Board also approved (with a few modifications still being negotiated) the Education Section’s Model Standards for Peer Mediation. Those should be adopted shortly and will be distributed to those doing work in that area.

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**II. Conference Committee Meeting Report**

**Discussion:** Those who have submitted proposals should be hearing soon.

**Discussion:** It is important that we do a good job of marketing the conference and encouraging members to attend.

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**III. Annual Conference Youth Plans**

**Discussion:** See Below Report.

**Discussion:** There were some questions raised as to the proposed proportion of students from Arizona versus from other states. Although the Arizona Chapter is wary of limiting the number of Arizona students (because the Arizona Youth Conference is very strong, and they do not want to minimize it by incorporating it into the ACR conference,) they recognize that other Chapters/locations might be very good at recruiting strong candidates. Therefore, the proportion is somewhat flexible. Christina Franco recommends that the program be first-come-first-served, with the understanding that there is a limit to the number admitted. This allows the program to be more open. The overall limitation on the number of attendees is set with the goal of ensuring, as much as possible, the success of the event. Additionally, it allows the program to be more dynamic and interactive (small groups, as opposed to a lecture hall environment.)

**Discussion:** The question was raised as to how Chapters should identify students that might participate. The program wants students that are already involved in peer mediation and have had some prior training. Chapters are asked to identify schools or programs in their areas. Georgia is targeting this age group for its Conflict Resolution Day event, and believes that this is a good pool to pull from for Conference participants.

**Discussion:** The Youth portion of the conference will take place on Friday, October 26. The committee would like to begin sending notices out before this school year ends (approximately May.) The final decisions probably do not need to be made until August or September, however.

**Discussion:** There has been discussion about financials and whether the student-to-Chapter funding ratio is set, or whether students who have the means will be encouraged/able to pay their own ways.

**Action:** Anyone with suggestions should contact Ruth Lusby or Ashley Parker.

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#### **IV. Program Planning**

**Discussion:** Arizona recently had a meeting in which different American Indian tribes were represented and discussed various issues. In May they will have Wayne Regina, a professor and author, present.

**Discussion:** North Carolina has an upcoming event which will include a panel discussion of directors of new mediation programs. A question and answer period will follow.

**Discussion:** Georgia has an upcoming panel discussion on what makes a good mediator, based on various different perspectives. They also have an upcoming meeting on marketing mediation practices and ensuring the success of mediators and their practices.

**Discussion:** Minnesota has its annual conference coming up.

**Discussion:** Northern California recently had its conference, which was hugely successful. They had a presentation on mediation and the media. In the afternoon they had workshops. The conference sold out this year. They are also having monthly teleseminars. Tara Fishler was their first speaker, followed by Rita Callahan. The members really like these events. They are a great way to offer more value to the members, because they are

not limited to people who are in a particular geographic area. It is a free member benefit, but they are considering opening it up, at a small cost, to non-members.

**Discussion:** DC is considering a new pro-bono program. This would be for the DC members to do pro-bono work. Stuart Binstock requests that anyone who has a similar program please contact him.

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## **VII. Next Steps**

Topics for future calls include: the process for voting for Chapters Director; Public Education; Conflict Resolution Day events; internal communications; Diversity and Equity; ACR Annual Conference youth plans; dealing with a large geographic area; and how to increase membership.

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**Our next Chapter Leaders Conference Call will take place on  
Thursday, May 03, 2007.**

**Please save the date for a call on the first Thursday of each month.**

To: Chapter Leaders, Ray Lanier, Ashley Parker  
From: Ruth Lusby, Arizona Chapter President -- Email: [ruthlusby@bcklaw.org](mailto:ruthlusby@bcklaw.org)  
Re: Chapter Leaders Conference Call April 5, 2007

Hello Everyone,

I am sorry I cannot participate in the conference call on April 5, 2007. However, I thought I would send you a report on the ACR Conference and the Youth Conference.

### **1. ACR Conference**

The Conference Theme is "Rethinking the Table: People, Places and Practices." Several members of the ACR Conference Committee will be coming to Phoenix April 19-21, 2007 in preparation for the Annual Conference, October 24-27, 2007. Arizona chapter members have volunteered for various Host Committee subcommittees (designated by the ACR Conference Committee). While in Arizona, the ACR Conference Committee will be meeting with the Host Committee members on April 21, 2007 to see where we are and what needs to be done as we move towards the Conference.

### **2. Youth Conference**

The ACR Youth Conference Subcommittee has been having regular telephone conferences to plan the Youth Conference. As previously reported, the youth conference will be limited to about 120 students plus coordinators (50-70) in order to provide both a manageable and a quality program this first year. I took the Chapters' suggestions regarding opening the invitations to high school juniors and seniors. We all agreed that inviting high school juniors and seniors is a good idea and we will do that. We are still exploring how to get the Boskey grant to help fund the Youth Conference (things look good) and the Arizona chapter will contribute funds as well. We are planning to charge \$25 per person (students and coordinators) to attend the one day conference, including continental breakfast, lunch and snacks.

Since some of you asked about the cost for out of state students/coordinators to spend extra days at the conference, we have asked Marya Kohlman to find out what the cost would be. We do not have an answer yet. We also do not have a definite cost for the hotel, but Marya thinks it is in the range of \$150 per night for the room. The room cost can be shared by the student/ coordinator/chaperone. We will update that info as soon as it is available, but the cost per person including airfare still looks to be in the \$500 range for 1 night (\$100 conf and room plus airfare).

We are in the process of finding 4-5 trainers for the conference. We are hoping to find dynamic trainers who will make the advanced training exciting for the students. So far, 2 trainers have committed. We are hoping to have the trainers and program outline in place by the beginning of May so that we can send out Email invitations/flyers to schools in Arizona and around the country before the end of this school year.

Chapter Leaders/Members: If you know of high schools in your area that have peer mediation programs in place, please let me know so we can add the school to the invitation list. We are targeting about 20 out of state students for the conference. Because this is the first year that we are going to invite students from around the country, we will need to limit the number of schools that we send invitations. If Chapters want to sponsor a student and/or coordinator, please let me know so we can try to coordinate sending out an invitation and letting the school know that a chapter may provide financial assistance. If you have ideas of how you want to

select a student to sponsor, please pass that along. If Chapters are interested in the youth conference, but do not want to sponsor a student this year, do you still want to include high schools in your area to invite? Any other ideas? Pass them along.