



SUPREME COURT  
OF VIRGINIA

# RESOLUTIONS

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

*Department of Judicial Services  
Division of Dispute Resolution*

100 North 9th Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

## Post-Conflict Kyrgyzstan: “Is There ‘Room’ for Reconciliation?”

By: Kimairis Toogood, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Conflict Prevention Specialist and Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution Doctoral Candidate

*As a doctoral student at George Mason University’s Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR), Kimairis Toogood received a one-year fellowship (The David L. Boren National Security Education Program, or NSEP Fellowship) to conduct field research in Tajikistan. This fellowship, which provides language training to graduate students in languages deemed critical to US Foreign Policy interests, required intensive Tajiki and Dari language courses while completing research activities. Immediately following her data collection, Kim registered her conflict prevention and Central Asia regional specialties with the Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) with the UNDP and quickly accepted a short-term consultancy assignment as a Conflict Prevention Specialist with UNDP in southern Kyrgyzstan. She was responsible for facilitating several important meetings between Kyrgyz and Uzbek ethnic communities that had recently experienced violent conflict, and for conducting stakeholder meetings with local and interim government officials. Kim now works with the State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) as a Conflict Assessment and Prevention Specialist and will complete her doctoral studies Fall 2011.*

The Kyrgyz Republic, a small Central Asian Republic, has experienced an enormous amount of political and social instability in the last five years. In 2005 an episode of contentious politics, sparked by poverty and government corruption and ignited by allegations of unfair parliamentary elections, ousted President Askar Akayev from political power. His successor, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, reigned for a total of five years, but never managed to consolidate popular confidence in state institutions. Coupled with nepotism and continued corruption in the five years under Bakiyev’s rule, political and social tensions remained an issue for the country. On 7 April 2010, large crowds of demonstrators, angered by the arrest of a number of senior opposition politicians, rises in utilities prices and allegations of uncontrollable corruption, broke into government buildings. Approximately one hundred people died in the unrest, and Bishkek experienced significant looting and rioting. An interim government, under the leadership of Rosa Otunbaeva, took control of stabilizing Kyrgyzstan in mid-April 2010; however, a new wave of violent incidents followed in the south of the country between April and June 2010. April 19–20<sup>th</sup> inter-ethnic clashes occurred in the outskirts of the capital and other parts of the country, followed by massive looting and land squatting. Mid-May brought clashes of different groups of



*A destroyed business in Osh, Kyrgyzstan*

protesters in Bishkek, followed by attempts by supporters of former President Bakiyev to retake administrative buildings in Osh, Jalal-Abad, and Batken. There were inter-ethnic clashes in Jalal-Abad, rallies between opposing political parties, and ongoing confrontation between Kyrgyz and Uzbek populations in Batken province.

These events led to the culmination of instability in Kyrgyzstan, with the most violent outbreak of conflict in Osh and Jalal-Abad oblasts (provinces) between ethnic Kyrgyzs and ethnic Uzbeks between June 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. According to public data, 1,462 private houses were destroyed in Osh city and 431 in Jalal-Abad city. Approximately 375,000 people were internally displaced, many of whom are currently either living with families or in temporary shelters provided by international organizations such as International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Roughly 300 business infrastructures (restaurants, cafés, retail shops, city markets, etc.) were damaged, creating a direct impact on people's income and employment. Many social infrastructures such as schools, government administrative buildings, hospitals/clinics, and cultural centers were destroyed. Overall, the conflict has had acute and pressing humanitarian consequences for over one million people.

I performed an initial post-conflict assessment for this environment using several conflict mapping and analysis frameworks, and summarized it as “a post-conflict situation with high levels of distrust between communities and local and national Government authorities and between Kyrgyz and Uzbek ethnic groups.” Working with the UNDP's Peace and Development Programme (PDP), I was embedded with the State Directorate for Reconstruction and Development (SDRD) of Osh and Jalal-Abad cities. This mandated directorate was designed not only to implement physical reconstruction activities, but also to facilitate reconciliation processes through rebuilding activities in Osh and Jalal-Abad oblasts. The second prong is significant, as many post-conflict environments with significant physical damage often find physical reconstruction and rebuilding taking precedence over “softer” reconciliatory processes, leaving communities feeling that their emotional and psychological needs are less important. Without such a two-fold approach, the social fabric cannot begin the healing process in a timely manner. My work in southern Kyrgyzstan was focused on helping Kyrgyz government officials, particularly SDRD staff responsible for physical reconstruction, understand the importance of this two-fold approach, or the interdependence between physical reconstruction and the reconciliation of damaged communities. My work was designed not only to address the immediate housing and business restoration needs of citizens, thereby strengthening their confidence in legitimate state institutions, but also to facilitate social and public dialoguing around reconstruction of public infrastructure and community housing to reconcile communities and shift the focus from negative towards positive peace.



*SDRD/UNDP Donor Coordination Roundtable at Osh State University*

To start, I met with Kyrgyz local, regional and state officials to consult on all reconstruction plans, particularly the establishment of ten multi-story apartment housing complexes. In these meetings, I reviewed construction plans for the apartment complexes for the most heavily affected communities in Osh and Jalal-Abad cities, and encouraged SDRD to facilitate community-based focus groups to open lines of communication with community members, thereby building trust between groups. Roundtables were designed with civil society organizations (CSOs) in southern Kyrgyzstan in order to share information with program staff as well as CSO beneficiaries. Information included timetables for construction, neighborhoods designated, and contact information for SDRD staff responsible for rebuilding. In an attempt to keep the reconciliatory processes from creating more tension among the damaged community members, a series of recommenda-

tions on high impact conflict issues was supplied to SDRD Director General and the Kyrgyz Republic Vice Prime Minister, Mr. Jantoro Satybaldiev.

The framework of interdependence of reconciliation through reconstruction is generally a good one. It is often noted that basic human needs in post-conflict environments are not limited to shelter, food and water, but include psychological and emotional assistance; both sets of needs should be undertaken simultaneously. Unfortunately, the issue of the multi-story apartment housing complexes left very little “room” for reconciliation. The location of the constructed complexes was seen as “strategic” in Osh, as the city has desired the vertical construction of buildings in accordance with their Master Plan. This vertical design is not conducive to the cultural and historical organization of the Uzbek ethnic minority which tends to live in *mahallas*, which are horizontal in nature. SDRD created a strict criteria for those eligible for living in the complexes, which included Uzbek minorities as heavily affected people from the June violence. However, without creating options for additional housing conducive to Uzbek cultural organization, the reconstruction plans for housing complexes leave little room for reconciliatory processes, as Uzbek minorities feel the plans are inadequate to meet their cultural housing needs.



*Construction of Multi-Story Housing Complex in Osh*

It became evident to me that while the SDRD appeared to be the best entity for executing this framework given their mandate, both macro and micro-level complexities in this post-conflict environment made it difficult for SDRD to actualize this task, thereby leaving the cities of Osh and Jalal-Abad in a fragile state of negative peace.

#1. At a macro-level, the Government of Kyrgyzstan was not, and is not, stable. The period of time between the Interim Government seizing control in April 2010 and the ethnic violence was only three months. Parliamentary elections were set for October 2010 and very few major political decisions were undertaken prior to the election for fear of resurgence of violence. The Interim Government needed to act quickly to end violence and initiate post-conflict recovery programming. Therefore, after SDRD was created in June, there was little time to thoroughly consider the strategic and systemic purpose and coherent outputs for this directorate. As a result, many of the infrastructure projects lacked coherence and struggled to integrate all relevant actors' needs and desires. This may have appeared inconsequential in July and August as homes were being constructed and shelter needs were accounted for, but it has subsequently posed and will continue to pose a major hurdle for integrating all relevant stakeholders in these activities, putting severe limitations on how much reconstruction can be used for reconciliation purposes.

#2. At a micro-level, while communities in Osh and Jalal-Abad were flashpoints of violence in June, they are representative of the greater conflict dynamic nationwide, which is much larger than the scope of SDRD. The ethnic violence is perhaps the culmination of the frustrations and shrinking opportunities stemming from the chronic absence of democratic governance institutions. People's trust in the state institutions has been eroded, making way for undesirable tendencies to create a social order on the basis of narrow nationalism, sub-regionalism and a militaristic emphasis on ethnic identity. Therefore, the general idea of using a government body's reconstruction efforts for reconciliation purposes may not have been the best model for southern Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan is at a crucial juncture of its history. The country has undergone the growing pains of instability and uneven development in the recent past, manifested in the form of violent protests, regime changes and ethnic unrest. The June violence is a symptom of the deep divisions within the Kyrgyz social fabric. Therefore, it is crucial to not only focus on 'fixing' the problems in the South but also to support the Government of Kyrgyzstan in preventing violent conflict in other regions of the country. How reconstruction interventions are carried out will determine whether the needs, rights and desires of both the majority and minority communities will be considered towards an inclusive recovery process that promotes coexistence of all citizens of Kyrgyzstan, instead of fueling tensions and increasing the ethnic divide. Because of the interdependence between peace and confidence building on one side and reconstruction efforts on the other side, and given the challenges experienced by SDRD in its attempt to implement the interdependence framework, it will be important to strengthen the ability of Non-State actors (such as International and National non-governmental organizations, Foreign Governments, etc.) to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts at the local, regional and national level.



## What Family Mediators Can Learn From Grief Counselors

Karen Asaro, Mediator, Virginia Beach



*Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break. ~ William Shakespeare*

Recovering from any major loss requires a mourning period, and divorce, separation, or the dissolution of a relationship is no exception. Grieving the end of a relationship is an intensely personal process and is different for everyone depending on unique situational and personal factors. A healthy mourning process is typically thought to include recognizing and verbalizing the meaning of a loss and its associated feelings. The level of grief attached to the ending of a relationship has been likened to that of a death, and it is true that while our clients may not be losing their intimate partner to the grave, they are losing an ideal, a way of life, and a connection they thought was going to last until “death do us part.” The break-up of a relationship or marriage might also include loss of companionship, loss of financial security, loss of children, loss of extended family, loss of status as a married person, loss of self-esteem and loss of friends.

With loss, comes grief. Simply put, grief encompasses the emotions that one experiences following a loss. According to Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, who is best known for her work with dying patients and their families, there are five stages to the grieving process. These stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. These stages are not linear; our clients do not start at the first stage and progress through them in an orderly fashion. In fact, parties experiencing the dissolution of a relationship move in and out of the stages in maddeningly random order. Being aware of the stages can help us as mediators be sensitive to the parties’ emotional healing and allow us to strategically plan intervention techniques based on where the parties are in the grieving process.

Denial is when someone believes, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, that the relationship can still be saved and that the other person is going to “come around” and want to reconcile. The person knows that the other has asked for a divorce or separation; on the other hand, there is disbelief that it could really happen. Mediators may recognize this stage of grief when a party defines his goals for mediation as “saving the marriage” or “convincing her to come home.” Those who followed John Haynes’ teachings might recall Haynes’ training video “*The Other Woman*,” in which Haynes explains to the wife that, as the mediator, it is not his role to save her marriage. Rather, if the parties plan to separate, he can help facilitate their conversation about their co-parenting schedules, financial matters, etc.

Anger is natural when people lose someone they love. They may be angry at the other party for leaving, angry with themselves for what they did or did not do to save the relationship, or just angry at the unfairness and injustice of the situation. Anger is the response to the negative emotional feelings that people experience when going through a divorce or relationship break-up and is manifested from feelings of abandonment, betrayal, disloyalty, distrust, deception, infidelity or rejection, or a combination of other feelings based on the sense of a loss of entitlement or right. Anger can inject irrational and negative emotionally charged conditions into the process. Most, if not all, family mediators would caution against having parties negotiate the terms of their divorce during this stage. Mediators recognize that anger-based decisions are more likely to seek retaliation rather than address divorce-related issues, not only diverting the parties from resolving the real legal issues, but commencing the first shot of a potentially costly emotional battle. It is important for us as mediators to keep in mind that underneath anger there is usually unresolved hurt. Kenneth Cloke in *The Crossroads of Conflict: A Journey into the Heart of Dispute Resolution*, identifies this as one of the crossroads of conflict when he asks clients if they are willing to acknowledge and grieve their losses and let them go, OR hold on to the pain as something precious and continue re-living it.



Bargaining is when someone reasons, “If only . . . then he/she would not be ending the relationship.” “I’ll do whatever it takes; I’ll change; we can work this out.” Bargaining in this context can result in statements that might appear desperate, “I’ll do anything—just tell me what” kind of statements that people make when they’re clinging to their relationship or marriage. This stage allows the grieving person to feel as though he or she has some control over the situation, and focus on hope for reconciliation, thus delaying the sadness of the reality of the relationship ending. As mediators, we should understand that this “bargaining” stage of grief does not mean negotiating the terms of the dissolution. Parties

should work through this stage of grief before negotiating the terms of the dissolution to avoid such scenarios as “I’ll give her everything and she will see how foolish she is to leave me, and she’ll want me back.”



Depression is the feeling of deep sadness about the loss. These feelings are to be expected in the grieving process. To clarify the way in which the term “depression” is used; this is not clinical depression that may require psychological/psychiatric help. Depression in this context refers instead to the normal, temporary feeling nearly everyone has during the grieving process.



Depression might be described as the anger a person feels about the divorce directed inward. Instead of being directed at a spouse, or the spouse’s lawyer, or someone in the spouse’s family, depression is anger the individual turns toward herself or himself. “I’m so sad, why bother with anything?” might dominate the person’s thinking. Moving through this stage of the grieving process requires the grieving person to acknowledge and accept the feelings he or she has in order to move forward.

Acceptance means the parties have come to terms with the fact that the dissolution of the relationship will happen or has happened. However, a person can still experience the other stages for some time to come. In this last stage, the individual begins to develop a confidence that he or she is ready for whatever comes next— “It’s going to be okay;” “I can’t fight it, so I may as well prepare for it.” Ideally, parties can both accept the reality of the break-up before they negotiate things like parenting schedules, division of assets, etc. To the extent they can do that, they



will both be more comfortable with their resolution because they will be able to stay in control. They will be able to think strategically. They will be able to focus on the next steps in their life’s journey. Their feelings may be tempered with more good memories than sadness as time passes, but that isn’t to say that waves of raw emotion won’t overcome them way after they think they should be done. There is no completion date to grieving . . . parties should let their emotions flow through the stages of grief.

As mediators, if we have a better understanding of the complex phenomenon of bereavement we are better equipped to help parties understand that these feelings will occur, thus allowing the parties to keep them in perspective. Knowing the factors that contribute to the intensity of grief reactions can inform our practice as family mediators and help us realize as John Welshons writes in his book *Awakening from Grief*: “So there is no way to apply systems, rules or emotional road maps. Our job is to be a presence . . .”

#### For additional reading:

Attig, Thomas. *The Heart of Grief: Death and the Search for Lasting Love*. Oxford University Press. NY. 2000.

Doka, Kenneth, ed. *Disenfranchised Grief: New Directions, Challenges, and Strategies for Practice*. Research Press. II 2002.

James, J. and Friedman, R. *The Grief Recovery Handbook, Twentieth Anniversary Expanded Edition*. Harper Collins Publishers. NY. 2009.

Kauffman, J. ed. *Loss of the Assumptive World: A Theory of Traumatic Loss*. Brunner-Routledge. NY. 2002.

Kubler-Ross, E. and Kessler, D. *Life Lessons*. Scribner. NY. 2000.

Martin, T. and Doka, K. *Men Don’t Cry . . . Women Do: Transcending Gender Stereotypes of Grief*. Brunner and Mazel. PA. 2000.

Neimeyer, R. *Lessons of Loss*. Center for the Study of Loss and Transition, Memphis, TN. 2000.

Welshons, J. *Awakening from Grief*. Open Heart Publications. NJ. 2002.



## Two DRS Employees Honored Through the OES Awards and Recognition Program

It is the policy of the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) to recognize employees seen by their colleagues, the public, or management as making important contributions to the ends of justice by virtue of their outstanding service. Award categories include: Catherine F. Agee Career Service Award, Outstanding Career Achievement, Distinguished Service, Innovative Advances, Constituency Services and Relations, Customer Service, Personal Achievement, and "Rookie of the Year" Award.

The OES Annual Holiday and Awards Event was held on December 10, 2010. DRS is pleased to announce that two of its employees were honored with awards.



The "**Rookie of the Year**" Award was presented to ADR Analyst, **Mandy Stallings**, who joined DRS in September 2009. The following is a brief extract from the nomination form.

*Mandy's enthusiasm and positive attitude are contagious, and she really supports the team approach that makes DRS run smoothly. Mandy is exceptionally bright and a forward thinker, always searching for improved ways to do things. Her fresh perspective has helped us move beyond our comfort zone and dream big in terms of how we can better support our judicial system. She is a natural-born conflict resolver and is passionate about helping individuals achieve solutions to the problems in which they find themselves embroiled. She has a keen analytical mind and is able to articulate what makes mediation and other methods of dispute resolution work for the parties. This is apparent when she coaches mentors and mediators and conducts trainings. Whether it's an exciting innovative project, or time-consuming, repetitive, administrative work, Mandy is onboard 100% and demonstrates an exceptional work ethic to accomplish it well.*

The **Distinguished Service Award** was presented to DRS Programs Coordinator, **Melanie Rinehults**, who has been with the division since August 1998. An excerpt from the nomination form summarizes the basis for the award.

*Melanie Rinehults consistently exemplifies, and often exceeds, the professional standards of OES and the court system. Melanie is as at ease and gracious in a room full of retired circuit court judges as she is in a room full of mediators, parent educators, or work colleagues. She is responsive, results-oriented, friendly, positive and patient with all those with whom she comes in contact. Melanie's nature is to foster high levels of productivity, motivation, enthusiasm, open and constructive communication and morale.*

*Many letters of support were received from members of the court ADR community. One mediator calls Melanie the "perfect model of excellent government service." We think that says it all!*



**Please join us in congratulating Melanie and Mandy  
for this well-deserved recognition!**

## VCRC Brings Season of Nonviolence Project to Hampton Roads

On January 17th for MLK Day 2011, The Virginia Conflict Resolution Center (VCRC) extended its goal of helping the community by bringing the Season of Nonviolence Project to the neighborhoods of Hampton Roads.



Navy, Boys & Girls Club, Girl Scout Council & Norfolk State University volunteers preparing the peace garden for planting

At a local neighborhood in the city of Norfolk and several other low-income neighborhoods throughout the season, peace gardens with peace poles that commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. were planted. Twenty-five non-profit and faith-based organizations worked with the VCRC to give residents, volunteers and others the opportunity to be of service to their community as well as take a pledge of non-violence and learn peaceful ways to deal with conflict.

The day began with a rededication ceremony of our peace garden. With the help of Old Dominion University, we marched to a local community to help clean the neighborhood and then engaged in a service commitment fair, working with other organizations to make the day oriented around "Service for Peace."



NSU's Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond, a Coast Guard volunteer, & community volunteer Iris James improve the walkway near peace garden



Volunteers attend Martin Luther King, Jr. tribute at Old Dominion University prior to the community cleanup project

*Submitted by Maerine "Mimi" Mitchell, Assistant Director of Programs/Outreach at the Virginia Conflict Resolution Center in Norfolk.*

## Virginia Association of Community Conflict Resolution

### Apple Valley Mediation Network

242 North Main Street, Suite 202  
Woodstock, Virginia 22664  
540-459-8799  
Edward F. Wilkins, Executive Director  
[avcr@shentel.net](mailto:avcr@shentel.net)

### Better Agreements, Inc.

305 Washington Street, SW  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
866-832-5093  
T'aiya Shiner, Executive Director  
[info@betteragreements.org](mailto:info@betteragreements.org)

### Conflict Resolution Center

4504 Starkey Road, Suite 120  
Roanoke, VA 24018  
540-342-2063  
Eddy Smart, Executive Director  
[director@conflictresolutioncenter.us](mailto:director@conflictresolutioncenter.us)

### Fairfield Center

165 S. Main Street, Suite A  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801  
540-434-0059  
Timothy Ruebke, Executive Director  
[tim@fairfieldcenter.org](mailto:tim@fairfieldcenter.org)

### Mediation Center of Charlottesville

P.O. Box 133  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
434-977-2926  
Patrice Kyger, Executive Director  
[mcc@mediationville.org](mailto:mcc@mediationville.org)

### Northern Virginia Mediation Service

4041 University Drive, Suite 101  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
703-865-7272  
Megan Johnston, Executive Director  
[info@nvms.us](mailto:info@nvms.us)

### Peaceful Alternatives Community Mediation Services

P.O. Box 1169  
Amherst, VA 244521  
434-929-8227  
Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Executive Director  
[info@peaceful-alternatives.com](mailto:info@peaceful-alternatives.com)

### Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center

P. O. Box 809  
Warrenton, VA 20188  
540-347-6650  
Lawrie Parker, Executive Director  
[pdrc@verizon.net](mailto:pdrc@verizon.net)

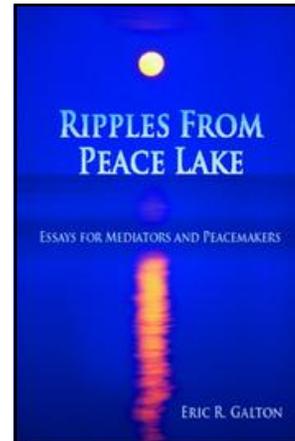
### Virginia Conflict Resolution Center

586 Virginian Drive  
Norfolk, VA 23505  
757-480-2777  
Wendi Lucas, Executive Director  
[info@vaconflictresolution.org](mailto:info@vaconflictresolution.org)

## ADR Resource Corner

### Book Review

Title: Ripples from Peace Lake  
Author: Eric R. Galton  
ISBN: 1412046386  
Reviewer: Mandy Stallings  
Available from amazon.com ,  
BN.com, and from the Virginia  
State Law Library for employ-  
ees of the judiciary. A large  
portion is also available on  
Google books.



Ripples from Peace Lake is Eric Galton's labor of love and an accumulation of wisdom gleaned from over sixteen years of mediation experience. This book is a collection of essays penned by Galton on topics such as private caucusing, avoiding burnout, patience, making a living, and mediator labels. Each of the 21 chapters discusses a different topic relevant to the mediator's craft. The chapters are short and intended to be easily read and digested. Galton's purpose in writing this book was not to expound on each of the topics with a chewy, theoretical dissertation, but rather to provide small thoughtful bites on certain topics to encourage, inspire and "touch the soul of fellow peacemakers."

I would say that Galton succeeds in this endeavor. These anecdotal essays are informal, heartfelt, and lacking in a lot of jargon or theory. The style of these essays makes them a quick, accessible read for most. While reading this book I was reminded of how amazing the results of the mediation process can be. This book reminded me that mediation is an art and that mediators help parties create something more than settlement agreements. Mediation allows parties to apologize, forgive, and display courage, breadth of heart, and graciousness that would be exceptional in the best of times, but in the circumstances that bring people to mediation are extraordinary.

Aside from providing inspirational stories and encouragement, Galton also provides some interesting tips and techniques. This book is by no means a "how to," but Galton cannot keep his experience from creeping in. One of my favorite tips is to start a caucus off with silence. This silence invites the party to fill it with a story that will often begin to paint the true picture of the conflict from that party's perspective. He also encourages mediators to ask good questions that focus on emotion rather than facts. Focusing on the emotional story will allow the mediator to more quickly uncover the interests and motivations in play and will help build trust with parties.

Galton's repeated encouragement to go slow, use silence, think outside the box, turn negatives into positives, and use physical, emotional, and temporal space to give parties opportunities to process information and make decisions is always warranted and helpful. It is easy to rush and make assumptions when doing a high volume of cases, especially if a number of those cases are in the same day. Peacemaking takes time. Galton's earnestness and honesty are refreshing in a time when so many are trying to distance themselves from the perceived "touchy-feely" nature of our craft.

Mediators will glean varied insights from this book, and there is enough good stuff to speak to both the new and the seasoned mediator. If you tend to veer away from things that get too flowery or emotive, some of the essays may read a little cheesy to you; however, most are uplifting and contain useful wisdom. I enjoyed this book. Reading it is a worthy investment of a mediator's time.

## **KEEPING YOU INFORMED**

~ A DRS Update ~

**Greetings from the Staff at  
Dispute Resolution Services.**

**Hope You're Staying Cozy  
Amidst the Winter Chill!**



### **Advance Planning for March as Mediation Month**



In observance of March as Mediation Month, DRS will host its second annual ADR Brown Bag Lunch Series. OES employees will be invited to attend, with guest speakers presenting on various ADR topics on three consecutive Tuesdays in March. Attendees will bring their lunches and DRS will provide delicious home-made desserts.

Ann Warshauer, our Parent Education Coordinator, will cover the topic of court-mandated parent education in Virginia on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The second session on March 15<sup>th</sup> will be on the subject of mediation, and several OES employees who have completed mediation training will be assisting us with a role-play. Lastly on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, retired circuit court judge Walter (Jerry) Ford will speak on the Judicial Settlement Conference Program. Each presentation is followed by a question and answer session. In 2010, approximately twenty OES employees attended each session in the series and we received very positive feedback. We encourage our readers to begin planning in advance ways to draw attention to ADR in Virginia during this special month.

### **Mentor Status Database**

DRS has created a new database table to better track the levels of certification for which a mediator has achieved mentor status. We are also on the project list for our IT department to make this information available on our website. This will make it easier for potential mediators to locate mentors qualified at the particular court level for which the potential mediator seeks certification. Currently, the online mediator profiles show the levels of certification for each mediator, but not at what court levels mentor status has been conferred. An announcement will be forthcoming when this information goes live online.

### **DRS Offers Training Opportunities**

DRS will be offering two trainings in Front Royal to kick off mediation month. We will be part of a day of training sponsored by Apple Valley Mediation Network, Inc.

The entire day of training will take place on March 1, 2011 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. After a 2-hour training presented by Apple Valley on "Advanced Domestic Violence: Using the DOVE Screening Tool" (\$40), DRS will train from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., with a 1-hour break for lunch. We will provide the following trainings:

Theatre of Ethics: A training that uses various scenarios to provoke discussion about mediator ethical requirements in light of the Virginia Standards of Ethics and Professional Responsibility for Certified Mediators, and Virginia statutes governing mediation. 2 hours Ethics CME, \$10

Child Support, the Courts, and You (Mediator): The first part of the training will focus on court policies specific to the 26th district, a child support statute review, and child support technicalities. The second half of the training will focus on calculating child support. This training will include role-plays and support calculations by hand. Attendants are required to bring their own calculators and pencils. 4 hours Family CME, \$10

If you are interested in attending any of the trainings on March 1, please contact Apple Valley Mediation Network, Inc. at 1-800-767-3898. DRS does not handle any registrations, so please keep the quick info below handy!

Quick Info:

- ✓ Full day training
- ✓ Sponsored by Apple Valley Mediation Network, Inc.
- ✓ Location: Virginia Inland Port, 7685 Winchester Road, Front Royal, 22630
- ✓ Sign in for the entire day starts at 8:00 a.m.
- ✓ Lunch is on your own or you can order a box lunch for \$8
- ✓ To register or for more information call Apple Valley at 1-800-767-3898
- ✓ Space is limited, and the last day to register is 2/24, so call early!

We look forward to seeing many of you there!

### **Virginia Mediation Network Spring Conference**

“Evolving Frontiers: Cutting Edge Issues in ADR” will take place March 19-20, 2011 at the University of Richmond School of Law in Richmond. Watch for details and registration instructions on the [VMN website](#). DRS will be presenting a workshop entitled, “GD Court Mediation – What Makes It Tick? What Makes It Better?” This will be a discussion of General District Court program models, with a focus on problem solving. Break out groups will consider referral models, outreach techniques, and court management issues.

### **Mediation and Parenting Videos Linked**

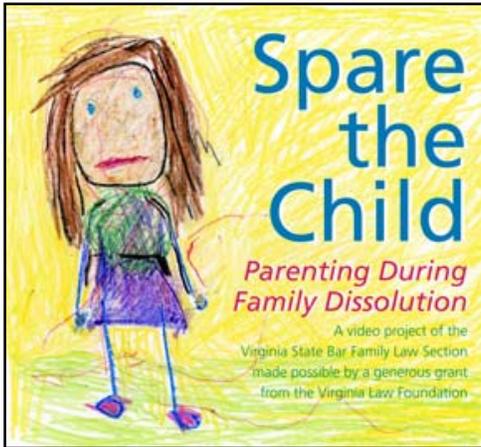
Links have been added to the Judicial System website for the viewing of the following valuable video resources:

#### **[Mediation: The Alternative](#)**

Produced by the Virginia Mediation Network in 2002, this video describes the facilitative model of mediation most often used by Virginia certified mediators.

#### **[The Three Little Pigs Go to Mediation](#)**

Produced by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, this video demonstrates mediation using familiar story characters.



DRS is hoping to link from our webpage to the new version of the [“Spare the Child” video](#), available in both English and Spanish. Produced in 2010 by the Virginia State Bar Family Law Section through a generous grant from the Virginia Law Foundation, this video gives parents a foundation for navigating separation without creating undue strain on children.

Information on ordering a DVD version of “Spare the Child” is also available at the above link.

## **Child Support Resources**

The website for the [Child Support Enforcement Division](#) (DCSE) of the Virginia Department of Social Services is a valuable resource for the latest information, forms, and instructions pertaining to child support. Here are several of the many publications available for viewing and downloading from their site:

- [Important Child Support Information](#)
- [Establishing Paternity](#)
- [Guidelines for Determining Child Support Obligations](#)
- [Child Support and You](#)

## **Save the Dates – 2011 Parent Education Events**

The Office of the Executive Secretary is pleased to announce the dates for **TWO EVENTS** of interest to parent education providers, both being offered to you at no cost through an Access and Visitation grant from the Virginia Department of Social Services. Details regarding agenda and registration will follow in February.

### ***Train the Trainer ~ Friday, April 1, 2011 ~ Supreme Court of Virginia in Richmond***

This valuable training is provided for new instructors wishing to be approved as parent education providers. Current instructors who wish to attend as a refresher course are also welcome. Materials covered will be the same as the 2010 Train the Trainer classes. Details regarding agenda and registration will be sent in early February.

### ***Eighth Annual Parent Educators Symposium ~ Friday, May 13, 2011 ~ Supreme Court of Virginia in Richmond***

There will be identical morning and afternoon sessions so that each attendee may register for his or her preferred half-day symposium. More information and registration form will follow in March.

## **Mediation Governing Documents**

We are hopeful that our mediation governing document revisions will be on the agenda for the next Judicial Council meeting in April. We certainly will continue to seek adoption by the Council and will keep the mediation community apprised.



# A Life That Inspires Janice E. Mason



Janice Mason's professional biography reveals that she worked for IBM for thirty-five years, becoming a certified IBM trainer and a member of their Corporate Diversity Council. Her educational background is in business management and communication from New York University. Janice is a qualified Myers-Briggs Type Inventory Trainer, is a workshop facilitator for the Speaker's Bureau and Work and Family Institute, and is currently employed as a Family Involvement Cluster Representative for Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). While her professional biography is impressive, it is personal qualities that catapult Janice to the head of the pack in terms of her life positively impacting those around her.

Janice shared the following about growing up: *My childhood defined my definition of family. It became clear very early in my life that family is inexplicably and irrevocably defined by love and caring, with very little to do with bloodlines or heredity. I grew up in the small city of Glen Cove, New York on the North Shore of Long Island. We lived in a large single family home on Shore Road (until Urban Renewal exercised right of eminent domain when I was a teenager), which was in walking distance of the marina where we could look across Long Island sound and see Port Washington in the distance or the Atlantic out on the horizon. We could stand on shore and see rain coming in from the Atlantic and tried often to time it so that we could run home without getting wet. We would dig clams with our toes, tuck them in our shirts and beg mom to make clam fritters. Before school, we would jump double-dutch in front of our house until we heard the first bell ring, throw the rope over the fence and run to be in our seats on time.*



*My parents were seemingly polar opposites but their love made it work. Mom, quiet and sensitive, was an avid reader who retired from teaching to care for her family. Dad, whose formal education ended in elementary school, was brash, feisty, and outgoing. This gave each of us a unique opportunity to find a comfortable balance within their range. There was a true sense of community. We knew most people in the city, and it was safe to leave doors unlocked and play outdoors from early morning to sundown without checking in or parents being concerned for our safety. We had one middle school, one high school, and one movie theater. My dad was a rescuer of all things hurt so we had many strange pets (some wild and some domestic) – a one-eyed cat, birds who didn't fly, dogs, and a caged raccoon.*

*After my oldest sister, Earlean (now deceased), was born, Mom suffered three devastating births. One sister lived a few days and two brothers even less. Thirteen years later, my older sister Mary was born, then me, and last my two younger sisters, Jean and Geraldine. After my mom retired from teaching, she became an emergency foster care provider for infants in need. We would come home from school and run in to see if a new baby was in the crib.*

Younger sister, **Jean Phelps**, described Janice during childhood as a peacemaker. *She sought to resolve confrontations by reasoning. I don't remember there being a sibling rivalry between us, even though there were several sibling altercations, usually started by me. It was not a rivalry because, rather than compete, Janice would seek compromise so that there would be an equitable solution to the situation at hand. She was a mediator even then. She believed in utilizing dialogue and fairness to resolve differences of opinion. She was able to get most people to see the bigger picture and to understand that selfishness on the part of any one individual hampered the ability for the larger group to achieve success. Her calmness of manner and ability to inspire has led others to follow suit and reach decisions and employ actions that are beneficial for improving the quality of life for all.*

When our Parent Education Coordinator, **Ann Warshauer**, was asked why she admires her friend Janice, she created a series of revealing word sketches.

*When I first met Janice, she was working in the "parent involvement in schools" part of our office, not in "parent education" as I was. As we got to know each other, I learned of her extensive background in training and our shared personal experience in divorce and single parenting. I asked her to join me in teaching the co-parenting class and she took over conducting the single parenting class. Several times Janice filled in for me at the co-parenting class with little advance notice. Janice always has your back.*



Janice with sons Bryan and Benjamin after leaving NY

*There are many reasons why I admire Janice. The first of these is her courage. Many years ago, Janice was living the life of luxury in New York. She was living in a large home and working in an important position in training and research for IBM, but her marriage was problematic. One day she walked away from it all when she felt that staying would put her family at risk. When she left with little more than her sons and the clothes on her back, she didn't even know where she was going. One of her sons said, "It's warmer if you go South." That's how she ended up in Maryland.*

*Janice not only provides support and inspiration for her own family, but to many families through her Co-Parenting and Strengthening Your Parenting Skills classes. It is rare for a person to take the time to write a thank you letter after attending a class that they were ordered to attend, but then not everyone has Janice for an instructor. For example, the comments from a father who was a participant in one of Janice's co-parenting classes:*

*"I wanted to write to you to try and express just how amazing Janice Mason is as an instructor. As I sat and listened to Janice speak about her experiences, her words of guidance, and the stories of the other parents in the class, I began to feel something I haven't felt in longer than I can recall—hope and empowerment. Janice Mason did an amazing job opening my eyes to new ideas, to areas and situations where I have made mistakes as a parent and co-parent, and to ways in which I can change the way I act and communicate. I walked out of the class eager to make positive changes in my life, knowing that in turn I can positively affect my children's lives."*

*The empathy and compassion that Janice brings to her classes serves as inspiration to not just one dad, but to all who have the good fortune to attend.*

*The past three years have presented Janice with many challenges. Most of us would have found it difficult to deal with just one, but Janice found herself facing one after another, testing her faith and her resilience. In 2008, Janice was in her car on her way to have dinner before teaching an evening class and was hit by a woman who turned in front of Janice's car. The accident was the beginning of surgery, physical therapy, and medical and legal expenses. Those of us who rushed to Janice's assistance immediately following the accident clearly felt that the other driver was at fault. Unfortunately, a jury did not agree. When Janice was left bearing the defeat and the expenses, she handled it with grace and a calm philosophical approach.*

*In 2009, Janice's son woke her and her granddaughter at 4:30 am to tell them that the house was on fire. Janice and Diamond escaped with little more than the clothes on their back. The house was a total loss. That began a year of relocation and reconstruction of her life. Janice celebrated when priceless items were discovered in the rubble and never would dwell for long in self-pity or anger. Her strong faith and supportive friends served her well. Vowing to rebuild from the ashes, she would look forward and not focus on the past.*

*2010 brought a significant health challenge, which Janice is battling today. Like all the previous events in Janice's life, she faces this with courage, a positive attitude and a determination to take an active role in her recovery. When talking about the past three years, Janice is quoted as saying, "**You don't get to choose your challenges. You can choose how you face them. You can choose how you look and behave. Don't blame others and don't drag a banner of courage or a bag of self-pity.**"*

A number of friends, family members and colleagues who know Janice well talked of deep admiration for Janice, lessons she has taught them, and ways she has consistently been a blessing to those whose lives she touches. Several common themes emerged. Let's listen in.

#### **Benjamin Mason** – Janice's son.

*My mom is passionate about life. She has been through so much in her life and feels it's her calling to give back to the youth as well as troubled parents. I'm a federal police officer and have been through several obstacles with the academy and other requirements and my mom has always been my rock. She still teaches me to this day and I'm 43! Mom taught me to never give up and that no matter how bad a situation may be, there's always a way to look at the positive side. She taught me to treat people with the respect with which I would want to be treated and to look for the good in people no matter what.*

#### **Cassandra Jordan** – Serves with Janice at their church as Sunday School Co-superintendents.

*She exemplifies perseverance with a capital "P." When the church reorganized, our Sunday school changed locations and needed to begin earlier. Janice handled all the change with precision and a positive attitude. Even in the midst of serious health issues, Janice remains totally committed and her dedication is unmatched. I admire Janice because, regardless of her lot in life, she always makes the best of it. She encourages those around her to do the same. Janice is my encourager. There is so much to do and sometimes your work goes unappreciated. Janice reminds me, "No matter what people say, you know who you are and you can do this!" So often when a discussion begins about a current challenge, her response is, "Let's pray about it." This practice stabilizes my emotions and helps me focus where I need to at the moment.*

**Odessa Simpson** – friend who met Janice at a Single Parents Ministry function at church.

*I admire the fact that Janice will always give you a thoughtful answer when asked a question. Sometimes you like the answer she gives and other times not as much. She is always kind to others. I was in the National Guard and my unit was activated for Desert Storm in 1990. Janice volunteered to take my children and care for them while I was gone. That was a big blessing for me because I never worried about whether they were well taken care of. Most of the time, it is difficult to get family to make that kind of commitment but for a friend to do it is amazing. She did not know how long I would be gone and she was familiar enough with the children to know it was not going to be easy. She loved me and she loved them enough to do it. I came home to my children, knowing that they were safe and well.*

**Vanessa Hester** – friend from church.

*I met Janice Mason when I enrolled my five-year old daughter in Sunday School. Having just gone from being a young, single, childless woman to a single woman with a very hyper, soon-to-be-adopted daughter, I needed time in the church service to reflect and gain strength for the life-long task I was taking on. At the same time, I needed assurance that my little girl would be okay in the Sunday School and the Sunday School would be okay with my daughter's hyperactivity. In the initial short time that I observed the interaction with Sister Mason and my daughter, I knew there was nothing for me to worry about. Every message of correction she exhibited was delivered with such loving sincerity that my daughter responded without hesitation. I knew from that very moment that she was a person I could learn from as I began my journey as a first-time parent. Her very presence is always a teaching moment for she teaches by example. I learned so much from her that two years after my daughter came into my life, I adopted my second child, my son who was six at the time. My daughter is twenty years old now, and my son is 18. They both love and hold the highest regard for her.*

**Gloria Coleman** – Sunday School teacher.

*She has been both a mentor and a dear friend. Janice often meets with her teachers and is committed to helping us improve and be the best we can be. She gives advice carefully and helps us understand what we are teaching. She expects her teachers to be totally committed to the young people. I would describe Janice as marvelous, totally others-centered, empathetic, and strong in 'mother wit,' which in our culture means great common sense. She has a strong faith and is a wonderful model of how to live life. Her passions are serving the Lord, her children and grandchildren, and helping children succeed. Simply put, she is passionate about life!*

**Max Melvin** – Pastor friend.

*I met Janice in 1990 when I began teaching Sunday School and she was Superintendent. I taught under her guidance for ten years and then started my own church in 2000. She was a great influence in my life and we enjoy a lifetime relationship as a result. Janice is passionate about people, but particularly children and their parents. She is committed to helping each one of them to grow and be all they can be in life. Janice has bought into the concept that it takes a village to raise a child and she lives her life sacrificially to bring success to these children. I admire her consistency. When Janice makes a commitment to do something, she keeps that promise in spite of circumstances. She has kept her word to do what she felt called to do 25 years ago. She never ever gives up.*

**Venetia Brown** – Friend and retired Air Force Colonel.

*Janice's demeanor and disposition exude positive energy, which always encourages and uplifts others. You can't stay in her presence and remain mediocre. Over the years, I have seen Janice administer discipline and encouragement to the youth in our church. She relates to the young 3-year olds just as well as the 16 and 17-year olds. Under her tutelage and nurturing, many youth in our church have attended college and blossomed into self-sustaining, professional adults. Most importantly, Janice lives the life she teaches about. She reaches out to others, helping those in need and always making time for others. Janice has left an indelible imprint on my life. She is a woman of faith and character and active in the community.*

**Roberta Arif** – Coworker at FCPS.

*She always has a positive 'learned' lesson that can apply to a situation, a word or phrase that will make you think things through in perhaps a different light. As we go through life, we meet many people. I am blessed to have crossed and entwined paths with Janice. She is a wonderful example of living life with grace and humor.*

**Daely Castillo** – Coworker at FCPS.

*What's not to admire about Janice? She is such a hard working, dedicated, easy-going, talented, energetic, humble person. She is my friend, my ya ya, and my travel buddy! We are a group of five women who have shared our lives during the last ten years. Actually, I think we have been doing what President Obama is urging our country to do – "to be better people." We are better friends, better parents, and better coworkers because we are ya ya sisters who are there for each other. She is a blessing in many people's lives. Janice is such a pleasant person that I will go anywhere with her in a blink of an eye!*

**Mary Shepherd** – Coworker at FCPS.

*Janice is one of the most gracious, positive people I have had the pleasure to know. What you see is what you get; there is no hidden agenda with Janice. She has tremendous faith, but does not impose it on others. She has keen insight and intuition that allows her to*

*connect and empathize with people with whom she comes in contact, without being judgmental. She measures her words carefully and talks when she has something of value to say. She does not waste her words on gossip or just to hear herself talk. She has taught me that being a true friend is not about what I need to say or give, but about what others need to hear or receive. She has taught me to receive graciously--whether it is advice, help, or generosity and she taught me how valuable and unique unconditional love and trust are. I trust Janice unconditionally.*

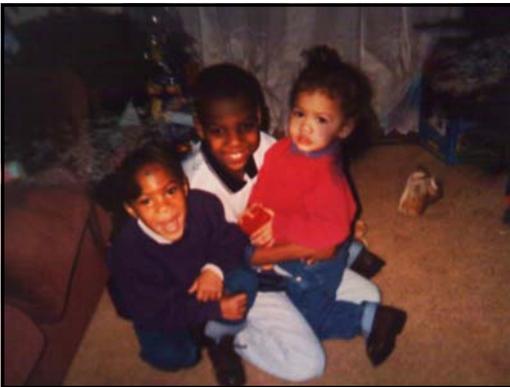
**Burnette Scarboro** – Coworker (Cluster Representative) at FCPS.

*Janice does a variety of things, but I'm most familiar with her role as Cluster Representative. Some of our duties are to give parent liaison orientations, give program development support for school administrators to ensure parent involvement at individual schools, and to coordinate welcoming atmosphere walk-throughs. I've come to know Janice very well and have seen her handle personal and professional adversities with grace and professionalism. She is a mentor for those of us who need guidance; a friend when you need someone to listen; and a teacher when assignments are somewhat challenging.*

**Micheline Lavalle** – Coworker at FCPS.

*Janice and I work together in the Parenting Education Center, she as liaison to the African American community and I as liaison to the Hispanic community. Some of my fondest memories are participating in Multicultural Parent Panels, where I really got to know her through her personal stories about being an African American woman. On many occasions, she has given me precious advice, with care and compassion. Janice is never critical of others. She really knows how to be a good friend and a good colleague and she is always ready to share her time. Janice's passion is connecting people to resources and facilitating understanding among different cultures to empower individuals. She is a natural born teacher and leader whose deeply caring nature and broad knowledge of resources impact families in a very direct way. What I admire most about Janice is her dedication to others, her strength and deep faith.*

## A Glimpse at the Family Album



Janice's Grandchildren  
Diamond, Brian and Inari



Janice's Son Bryan



Bryan, Benjamin  
Diamond, and Inari



Janice after an early literacy class  
with parents and the children  
showing what they accomplished



Son Benjamin, member of  
Honor Guard, placing  
wreath for slain NCIF  
officer's memorial service



Thank you card Janice received from a  
child whose mom attended a parenting  
class. He told her, "Mom doesn't yell so  
much and it's more fun at home."

Janice much prefers to have the spotlight on others, but she graciously consented to answer some personal questions.

### **How did you come to raise a child who is not your own?**

My younger son became a parent to my granddaughter, Diamond, at the age of 19. It was unfortunate that he hadn't had a very long relationship with her mother and they found conflict hard to manage. I tried hard to informally assist them in managing their differences. As both were resistant, I began to serve as the person to transition custody each weekend. I would pick my granddaughter and her older sibling up to give their mom some free time, and my son would spend time visiting his daughter at my home.

That relationship has been a wonderful blessing in my life. She and I have been weekend buddies since her infancy. I began to volunteer in her school when she was a kindergartner initially because her mom received a note that "Diamond is in jeopardy of failing because she doesn't know the front of the book from the back of the book." Diamond's mom was ready to go to school to give the teacher a "piece of her mind" and I asked if I could tag along. We took Diamond with us. After the teacher described her concern in person, I asked Diamond to turn the book to the front...she did; I asked her to turn the book to the back...she did; I asked her to open it to the middle...she painstakingly measured with her little fingers to the middle; then I asked her to read and she did. This opened a conversation with the first-year teacher and I became a "regular" in the classroom. This led to me receiving a volunteer award, the following year being the volunteer award keynote speaker, and then being invited to become a part of FCPS in my current office.



Janice with Diamond  
at her High School Graduation

My primary goal with Diamond and my other grandchildren, Brian and Inari, has been to create, participate in, and discuss as many positive experiences and opportunities as my circle of friends and I could orchestrate. I believe that God can do more than we can think or ask; but if we don't know what to ask for or our imaginations can't take us places we physically may not be able to go in order to cause us to aspire to make an effort to get there, we may limit our relationship with Him and His blessings. Experiences provide food for the imagination and cause it to grow. When Diamond entered high school and adolescence and began challenging authority, her mom asked if I would take her full time to live with me. We established a routine for living together and she graduated from high school in 2010.

### **How would you describe your children?**

My sons, Benjamin and Bryan, are the loves of my life – my greatest challenge and success. Often it makes me smile to reconcile that they are from the same mom, same dad and same environment, yet so very different in temperament and personality.

Benjamin - retired Navy officer and current Department of Defense Policeman: the rule follower; the one you want to have near in a crisis; the one I didn't have to give many limits or boundaries because he found ways to typically fit into responsible behavior; the one who has earned many awards and commendations; the one sought after by other leaders; the one who puts others before himself.

And, my Bryan - the entrepreneur: has already had 5 to 6 different business ventures; the envelope pusher; the one who when he enters a room the energy rises; the one who laughs loudly and when he's upset everyone is aware; the one who never saw a rule that he didn't question; the one who sometimes when pushing the envelope causes it to tear or become unrecognizable.

I love the way they enjoy each other and I think secretly each would like to be the other.

### **About what are you passionate?**

I am passionate about children. I am convinced that their parents and significant adults in their lives are the "food" that feeds their success; academically, socially, spiritually, and economically. I believe that many parents and guardians are underachieving because they are unaware of their direct link to their children's success. I'm passionate about not always needing to be right, but to hear about others' experiences and what makes others see things the way they do. I'm passionate about God and His plan for humanity – that we are just to love one another as He loves us, even if we don't like the behavior.

### What do you enjoy doing in your “spare time?”

I love reading, music, dance, family, friends, and food – and not necessarily in that order...smile. One of my most fun times was tap dancing with my granddaughter’s moms’ class. I never got really good but, wow, was it fun to keep trying!

I love hanging out with my ya ya sisters - Mary, Ann, Daely, and Roberta - a group of women whose hearts are joined together by laughter and tears --- shared through the glorious journey of life.

### Who has had the most profound influence in your life and why?

There are many whom I hold in high esteem; however, my mother had the most profound influence. In all the time my mom lived with my dad and all of us, I never heard her raise her voice or curse or hit. She lived with a dignity that still defies logic for me. She gave and gave and didn't remind anyone or hold them hostage to her giving. She expected the best in everyone and, even when it didn't happen, she continued to expect it would still come.

### What do you still hope to do or accomplish?

Live with dignity, love without conditions and work hard every day to do something that gives God glory. When I die, whether two years or twenty years from now, to know that I've worked diligently to fulfill God's plan for my life. I was called into the ministry of teaching, whether children or their parents, and the legacy I hope to leave will be for God to judge.

**Janice’s sister, Jean,** also shared how Janice influenced her to reach for her dreams.

*When I was accepted for admission into college at the ripe old age of 33, I decided that it would be a waste of time to spend four to five years trying to get a bachelors degree. When I told Janice that I did not want to “waste that time” working towards a degree since I would not finish until I was “almost 40,” she uttered words that stayed with me and that I have repeated to many other individuals who were going to give up on their dreams for a better life. “Someday,” she said, “God willing, you will be forty. Where would you like to be at 40 – in the same place as today or having achieved your dream?” With those words, I embarked on my educational odyssey, ultimately earning a doctoral degree in sociology.*

*I have remembered that conversation whenever I started to give up on a dream, and it continues to motivate me to accomplish whatever goal I set for myself. I attribute not only those words, but the continual support and encouragement I receive from Janice, as an important part of my successes. As a means of inspiring others, I have repeated that short but powerful dialogue to students, colleagues, friends, co-workers, and people that I meet on the street, in shelters, and at meetings. **Janice’s timeless expression of hope for the future has led many people to strive harder and do their best to reach “the unreachable star.” Through her words and deeds, Janice lives a life that inspires others. She is the wind beneath my wings.***



**Janice Mason,  
Virginia’s ADR/PE community salutes you,  
Yours is truly a life that inspires !**