Community Mediation Maryland's vision is for every Maryland resident to have awareness of and access to affordable, high-quality community mediation services.
Re-entry Mediation Program
2008 - 2018

Re-entry mediation responds to the well established need for individuals returning from incarceration to have positive relationships with family and friends in the community. Through re-entry mediation, incarcerated individuals have a chance to mediate with family members before release, to address conflicts and collaboratively plan for the transition to the community.

The re-entry mediation model developed in Maryland is now considered a national model, with replication under way in 3 other states. Community Mediation Maryland built the model in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. The program was developed and evolved through a collaborative process, including those who had experienced incarceration and family members of incarcerated individuals.

1,625 Incarcerated individuals have participated in Re-entry Mediation since 2008, and here is what they had to say:

“I’m really glad that I did mediation with my family while I was still in prison. The mediators gave us space to talk and figure out things. I did everything that I said I was going to do when I was in mediation. I’ve been home for months now and am working a couple of jobs trying to get back on my feet. I’m staying at my grandma’s house now helping out to take care of her and being supportive of my family. Everything is going good for me. I definitely recommend mediation!”

~ Formerly incarcerated person

“When I was locked up, it gave me a chance to really talk and get stuff out of the way. There was a lot of stuff I wanted to talk about and was able to do that in mediation. Afterwards, things didn’t work out so well with my spouse, but mediation helped us to talk about stuff. It used to be hard for me to talk about things that bothered me. With my grandmother it was different, mediation helped our relationship. Now we are closer than we were before. Now it is easy for me to talk to my family after mediation.”

~ Formerly incarcerated individual

2,269 Family and friends have participated in re-entry mediation since 2008, and here is what they had to say about their experience:

“One of my sons was in prison. All my children know my rules and if they live with me they follow my rules or they get out. In mediation, my son was able to express himself about what he would and would not do after release. I reminded him of my rules. So, mediation helped me to understand where he was coming from. It helped to open our line of communication.”

~ Father of a formerly incarcerated individual

“My husband was in prison for 21 years. The first night he was home we shared the same bed and have every night for the past year. We can do that because mediation helped to bring us closer through better communication and by carrying out the agreements we made in mediation. For example, we make sure we have time for family and each other. You get out of mediation as much as you put into it. It helped us. Everyone could benefit from mediation. It can’t do anything but help.”

~ Wife of a formerly incarcerated individual

Research shows....

Participation in re-entry mediation has a significant impact on decreasing the likelihood that an individual will be re-incarcerated post-release.

10% Reduction in recidivism for incarcerated individuals that participate in at least one session of re-entry mediation.

7% Further reduction in recidivism for incarcerated individuals for each additional re-entry mediation session.

What drives the positive impact...

In a 2018 study by Lisa Pierotte, Evaluating Treatment Heterogeneity in the Community Mediation Re-entry Program, Pierotte examined the program data and explored whether the decreased recidivism rate is tied to who is invited to the mediation, what topics are discussed, or if an agreement is reached. After controlling for as many external variables as possible, Pierotte found that these individual choices made by mediation participants did not have a statistically significant impact on the measured benefits of mediation. So, what does drive the positive impact on recidivism rates? The analysis suggests that the participants’ ability to use the mediation process in a way that works for them—free from judgement or advice—is important. Incarcerated people receiving mediation are in control of who to invite to mediation, what to discuss, and whether they want to agree to anything. Mediation offers a space to build relationships of all sorts, prior to release, and those relationships matter when an incarcerated person is released.

Book Signing with Ms. Burton

Community Mediation Maryland welcomed Ms. Susan Burton, author of Becoming Ms. Burton From Prison to Recovery to Leading the Fight for Incarcerated Women for three events. Ms. Burton began her visit by delivering a speech at a book signing hosted by The Takoma Park Presbyterian Church. She was joined by Lorig Charkoudian, Director of Community Mediation Maryland, who spoke about the re-entry mediation program and the proven benefits of mediation prior to release from prison. The following day, Ms. Burton spoke to women at the Maryland Correctional Institute for Women (MCW). She inspired the group with motivational words about her journey from incarceration to founding a non-profit, A New Way of Life in Los Angeles, CA, that helps women rebuild their lives after prison. Each woman at the event received a signed copy of her book. Ms. Burton, concluded her visit at the Kingdom Life Church in Baltimore City for a book signing and speaking engagement. Erinna Bridgefond, OCM Training Director and 2017 Marylander of the Year, took the stage and delivered an inspirational talk about the power of mediation. She was joined by Mary Brown-Bey, Advocate for Juvenile Justice, AmerCorps Liaison and volunteer, who delivered an inspirational speech highlighting the challenges she faced as a returning citizen after serving 32 years. Mary has tirelessly served the community for more than 10 years.

Ms. Susan Burton along with OCM Staff
Community Mediation 10 Point Model

1. Train community members who reflect the community’s diversity with regard to age, race, gender, ethnicity, income and education to serve as volunteer mediators.

2. Provide mediation services at no cost or on a sliding scale.

3. Hold mediations in neighborhoods where disputes occur.

4. Schedule mediations at a time and place convenient to the participants.

5. Encourage early use of mediation to prevent violence or to reduce the need for court intervention, as well as provide mediation at any stage in a dispute.

6. Mediate community-based disputes that come from referral sources including self referrals, police, courts, community organizations, civic groups, religious institutions, government agencies and others.

7. Educate community members about conflict resolution and mediation.

8. Maintain high quality mediators by providing intensive, skills-based training, apprenticeships, continuing education and ongoing evaluation of volunteer mediators.

9. Work with the community in governing community mediation programs in a manner that is based on collaborative problem solving among staff, volunteers and community members.

10. Provide mediation, education, and potentially other conflict resolution processes to community members who reflect the community’s diversity with regard to age, race, gender, ethnicity, income, education, and geographic location.

FY18 Results

- 116 New Community Mediators
- Mediated 2,578 Cases
- Mediation held at 383 sites around the state
- Received 7,506 Referrals to Mediation
- 10 Newly Certified Mediators
- 91% of participants agreed they would recommend mediation to others in conflict

Training by the numbers...

Basic Mediation Training:
- 476 Hours of training and...
- 116 New Community Mediators

Advanced Training:
- 254 Hours of training and...
- 167 Community Mediators participated in the training

Congratulations to the Volunteer of the Year Award recipients recognized at the 13th Annual Gala for their willingness to go above and beyond for their local community mediation center.

Christopher Worts, Key Bridge Foundation Center for Conflict Resolution
Crystal Bernard, Charles County Mediation Center
Jonathan Williams, Mid Shore Community Mediation Center
Ricardo Gortaire, Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County
Tara Puliatii, Community Mediation Center-Calvert County
Marietta Teret, Conflict Resolution Center Baltimore County

AmeriCorps Members serve in Community Mediation Centers across the state supporting Re-entry Mediation and Education Programs.

AmeriCorps Members 2017—2018
Legislative Education Day
February 14, 2018

Legislative Education Day began with words from Maryland State Senator Will Smith and CMM Executive Director, Long Charkoudian. The group was invited to the gallery where they were recognized from the floor. The volunteers and community mediation center staff spent the day in Annapolis educating their legislators about mediation services. They visited senators and representatives from around the state with a valentine surprise and information about how to refer their constituents to mediation, free of charge, where and when it is convenient for them.

You make it happen!

$1,000+
Anne Arundel Conflict Resolution Center
Maryland State Senator Will Smith

$500 - $999
BB&T Baltimore Community Mediation Center
Harford County Community Mediation Program
Katie Nash

$200 - $499
Nurt Bachrach
Deron Charkoudian
Laura Anne Connors
Conflict Resolution Center of Baltimore County

Thank you!
Thank you for your support!

$260,000  Maryland Judiciary’s Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office (MACRO)

$201,602  Corporation for National Service / Maryland Governor’s Office of Service & Volunteerism (GOSV)

$142,625  Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS)

$64,648  Maryland Judiciary Department of Family Administration

$36,211  Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)

$20,000  Bob Barker Company Foundation

A special thank you to our hardworking Board of Directors who served between 7/01/2017 and 6/30/2018

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CONGRATULATIONS to the Baltimore Ceasefire 365 Squad, the 2018 recipients of the Bridge Builder of the Year award. Lorig Charkoudian, Director of Community Mediation Maryland presented the award at CMM’s 13th Annual Gala. The squad received the award for their service as founding members of the Baltimore Ceasefire 365 Squad. Their valiant efforts and unwavering commitment to reducing violent deaths in Baltimore City has raised lifesaving awareness of the high murder rate, has comforted families of the deceased, and encouraged neighbors to pursue and promote peace.

Community Mediation Maryland Staff

Lorig Charkoudian, Executive Director
Hope Bcaevheart, AmeriCorps Director
Tracee Ford, Director of Quality Development
Erricka Bridgeford, Training Director
Leslie Overholser, Development Director
Akida Jones, Office Manager
Jerri Thomas, Reentry Coordinator, Baltimore
Mary Brown-Bay AmeriCorps Liaison

Pictured from L to R; Lorig Charkoudian, Michelle Shellers, Kevin “Opun” Beasley, Leatrice Gant, Darnyle Wharton, Erricka Bridgeford and Jalia Jackson

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