



Mediation Services

Celebrating 20 Years of Service!

Program Report
2013



Board of County Commissioners

Faye Griffin
District No. 1
Casey Tighe
District No. 2
Donald Rosier
District No. 3

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pride and pleasure that we present the 2013 Annual Report for Jefferson County Mediation Services (JCMS).

From its inception in 1994, JCMS has collaborated with government agencies, non-profit organizations and courts to serve them and the citizens of Jefferson County by providing effective conflict resolution delivered by qualified, dedicated volunteers. Ongoing disputes had long been draining County resources by causing repeated calls to law enforcement, trips to court and other requests for services. By resolving such conflicts, JCMS continues to provide cost savings to the County on a daily basis.

This comprehensive report paints a picture of JCMS -- from the many types of disputes we resolve, the impressive cost savings and the incredible group of skilled mediators who donate their time to JCMS, to the variety of services we offer and the continuing education programs we provide for our volunteers.

This report also gives precise information on the accomplishments of JCMS for 2013. It is an astounding example of what a volunteer program can do to manage conflict effectively in the public interest.

We served a large number of people in 2013: in the 1,615 cases referred to us, 4,312 people were directly involved, and 6,708 were affected by our work (children, neighbors, co-workers, etc.).

In the five previous years, our case load grew by 79 percent -- an average of about 13 percent each year. In these times of tight budgets, we present a program that pays for itself many times over.

Sincerely,

Mark S. Loye, Director
Jefferson County Mediation Services

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Executive Summary

Jefferson County Mediation Services (JCMS) is a contract program that is dedicated to providing mediation and conflict resolution services to county agencies, the courts and the citizens of Jefferson County. We are also a primary source for the training and education of Denver-area mediators of all levels of skill and experience.

We have saved the County significant money and other resources in a variety of ways, and we continue our efforts to make the best possible use of taxpayer dollars. In addition, we helped Child Support Services collect an estimated \$219,648 more in payments in 2013.

Our ever-increasing case load (up 49 percent since 2007) is managed by five staff members and 240 volunteer mediators. Our work supports county agencies by reducing the time they spend dealing with conflict. JCMS tailors its services to the specific needs of individual agencies; some examples of ways we serve include:

- **Child Support Services (CSS):** We help CSS clients negotiate parenting time agreements. This reduces the time CSS technicians spend working through complaints about such issues, according to a study by CSS. It also helps to increase child support collections.
- **Animal Control:** We help quarreling neighbors negotiate resolutions to problems with barking dogs, dogs at large and other animal-related disputes. Successful mediations reduce the time Animal Control Officers spend traveling to investigate recurring complaints, processing tickets and testifying in court, and free them to deal with more pressing issues.
- **Courts:** We provide mediators in several courts to help parties resolve issues prior to seeing the judge or magistrate. Our services help judges and magistrates manage their dockets better, so they can spend their limited time on more complicated cases. Studies find that when people make their own agreements, they tend to comply more readily than when a judge imposes orders.
- **Workplace:** We help County employees to resolve topics of concern with each other. When employees become frustrated with co-workers or supervisors, our services help them to address their issues in a constructive manner, so that the situations can be resolved in everyone's best interest. This improves morale and productivity, and frees managers from handling repeated complaints.

Accomplishments

JCMS is a full-service conflict resolution program, and has become an integral part of the County government's operations. Services beyond traditional mediation are also available: our facilitators help County departments hold planning retreats or public hearings on important issues, and also help employees work on team building within County departments. We can provide arbitration upon request. Experienced trainers and presenters help to improve communication and conflict resolution skills among school students, non-profit agency personnel and Jefferson County employees. County and Small Claims Courts rely upon JCMS volunteers to help control their expanding dockets. Colorado courts encourage written parenting plans, so the need for mediation between divorcing parents continues to grow. For our citizens who could not otherwise afford mediation, JCMS provides a welcome solution.

JCMS staff members and mediators are an important part of the developing mediation culture in our state. They serve the profession as board members, committee members, trainers, ambassadors, speakers, role models and mentors.

We provide our volunteers with varied continuing-education opportunities. We arrange specialized training in specific types of cases, such as Child Support cases and Protection Order hearings. We invite County agencies to explain their operations to our volunteers and discuss issues likely to arise in mediations. Judges and magistrates clarify legal and ethical issues. JCMS staff members give presentations on how the courts work and how we can assist different County departments. This helps our volunteers to expand their skills, keeps them abreast of advances in the field, and enables them to handle a wider selection of cases for the County. It also helps us to attract and keep the volunteer services of talented, dedicated and experienced mediators.

We have demonstrated clearly that mediation programs can lift a tremendous burden from the courts and County agencies. JCMS is recognized as a leader among mediation programs in our state. We share information, document achievements and results, and offer other counties and cities the benefit of our experiences. We will continue to promote the growth of the economical, ethical and effective use of conflict resolution in Colorado.

“I just want to thank each of you for helping facilitate yesterday. The table discussions were energetic and flowing. I have summarized all the great notes you took and they will be very useful as we move forward with our planning. We could not have done it without your help.

Thanks,
Jacki P.”

Mission

To collaborate with government agencies in serving the citizens of Jefferson County by providing effective mediation, communication and negotiation processes, delivered by qualified, dedicated volunteers, in order to foster harmony within the community.

Vision

To provide processes that promote and model peaceful settlement of disputes by offering exemplary, high-quality mediation, negotiation, facilitation, and communication services to the citizens and employees of Jefferson County.

Values

- **For Clients:** To provide a safe forum in which people can be empowered to make decisions affecting their lives.
- **For Volunteers:** To provide continuing education in a mutually beneficial environment.
- **For Partners (Referring Agencies):** To establish and develop a system of collaboration that supports their mission.
- **For the Community:** To provide a model of effective interaction in the face of disagreement, thus enhancing goodwill and community spirit.

Program Areas

Community Mediation: We accept cases regarding animal control, noise, property issues (damage, fences, drainage, etc.), planning and zoning, consumer complaints, landlord-tenant schools, and family conflicts.

County – Internal: We offer assistance with group facilitations (strategic planning, team-building, etc.), workplace conflicts, Child Support Services (parenting time and support modification cases) and ombudsman services.

Courts: We help with Small Claims disputes, Division H, Protection Order Conditions Conferences and Victim-Offender Reconciliation.

Each of our programs is tailored to fit the agency we are serving, so we have different data to report for each program.

County Commissioners

The JCMS staff wishes to express sincere gratitude to the Jefferson County Commissioners, who continue to provide outstanding support to JCMS.

Faye Griffin
District 1

Casey Tighe
District 2

Donald Rosier
District 3

JCMS Staff

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History and Overview

JCMS was created to deal with conflict. Conflict begins when people believe that they have incompatible interests, values or needs. Conflict can lead to creative change, but it can become destructive when the parties cannot resolve their differences. Responses to conflict can range from informal discussion to warfare. Mediation allows the participants to make their own decisions while a third party facilitates the process. Mediators do not give opinions or make rulings, and have no stake in the outcome, so the parties can negotiate in a safe setting where all concerns, interests, information and ideas can be heard.

The Board of County Commissioners approved the creation of JCMS in 1993 with Mark Loye as director, and mediations began in March 1994. Twenty volunteer mediators handled 69 cases, referred by 10 agencies, during that year. The caseload has grown steadily: in 2013, 28 agencies referred 1,613 cases to JCMS. Any Jefferson County agency, municipality, associated non-profit group or County court can refer parties to JCMS. Services are provided through the dedication of 240 volunteers with an impressive variety of backgrounds and experience. They volunteer with one goal: to provide a safe process that encourages people to make decisions for themselves.

What is Mediation?

Mediation is an informal, voluntary process. A professional, impartial third party helps the contending parties exchange views and explore possible options for resolving the conflict. The goal of mediation is to help parties reach their own mutually acceptable settlement of issues in dispute. Often, this will solve the problem and usually will at least keep it from escalating. Any decision reached is through the efforts and agreement of the parties themselves. Mediation enhances communication, promotes responsibility and helps people acquire skills that can assist in preventing or resolving future disputes.

Once all necessary parties have agreed to participate in mediation, JCMS volunteers schedule a meeting where everyone involved in a dispute can sit down together to talk about the problem. Our mediators set ground rules to provide a safe and respectful setting. They help the parties to define their concerns, to reduce hostility and to find common ground. They help the parties to generate and evaluate options for resolving the issues. Parties can then reach an acceptable agreement that will meet their needs. Finally, they can make a formal written agreement, such as a Memorandum of Understanding, to record their resolution.

Benefits of the process are significant: mediation can be scheduled quickly, and is usually far less expensive and time-consuming than going to court. In addition, the parties are typically more satisfied with the outcomes. Finally, parties generally comply better with the terms of agreements that they have crafted themselves than they do with terms imposed upon them by someone else.

How We Save Taxpayer Money

JCMS exists to save County resources. The County takes its responsibility to taxpayers very seriously and works to conserve expenditures. JCMS saves costs in many ways.

JCMS saves time for the Sheriff, Animal Control and Planning & Zoning by helping neighbors to resolve their conflicts. When people resolve problems in mediation, County officials don't need to make as many trips to investigate complaints. Each trip has costs, such as the employees' hourly wages, gasoline prices and equipment wear and tear. As these costs increase, the value of our services increases accordingly. When officials travel to unincorporated mountain locations, the costs simply to investigate a single neighbor complaint are staggering. Additionally, in mediation, people can agree to call JCMS if conflict arises again, instead of burdening a County agency. When County personnel refer citizen conflicts to mediation, they can then refocus on their regular duties.

We save costs for the District Attorney's office by settling disputes before trial. This reduces court caseloads and increases efficiency. In court cases, mediation saves hours of court time because the parties have already reached agreement or, even in cases that do not settle, the parties have identified and clarified the relevant issues. In divorce and child-custody cases, mediation typically saves five to six hours of courtroom time per case.

JCMS reduces the costs of conflict in the workplace by mediating among Jefferson County employees. The costs of conflict include lowered productivity, turnover, increased sick time and poor morale (see page 21 for additional information on our Workplace Mediation Program.) By reducing these costs, we can save resources exceeding the savings generated by all of our other programs combined.

Figure 1 shows our cost-saving estimates for each of the major departments we served in 2013. The data below are based on feedback from our user agencies.

Factors that are not shown in our cost-savings chart include trial costs of cases that go to court. Additionally, even when mediation does not resolve the dispute, the parties have had an opportunity to practice their "presentation," so they are more effective and concise in the courtroom, thus conserving the judge's valuable time. The more the agencies use JCMS, the more they save.

Mediation is saving the County some of the costs of expanding court space. State projections indicate that we will need more courtrooms, at a cost of millions of dollars. By helping parties to reach agreements before they go to court, Mediation Services allows judges to hear more cases per day in a courtroom, thus reducing or postponing the need to build additional court space at County expense.

Figure 1: Minimum Cost Savings Achieved for User Agencies in 2013

Department	Cases Settled	Cost Per Trip/Case	Trips/Cases Saved Per Settlement	Cost Savings
Animal Control	8	124.00	2	\$1,984.00
County Attorney	148	\$240.00	N/A	\$35,520.00
County Courts - All	507	\$120.29	N/A	\$60,987.03
District Attorney	1	\$162.00	N/A	\$162.00
District Court	187	\$406.61	N/A	\$76,036.07
Juvenile Assessment	3	\$201.95	1	\$605.85
Planning & Zoning	3	\$188.25	2	\$1,129.50
Human Services	173	\$80.00	1	\$13,840.00
Municipalities	26	\$123.91	2	\$6,443.32
Sheriff	4	\$141.00	2	\$1,128.00
Workplace Cases	11	\$11,167	N/A	\$122,837.00
Total				\$320,672.77

In addition, volunteers donated 5,290 hours in 2013, realizing cost avoidance for the County of an additional \$529,000. This calculation is based on a figure of \$100 per hour for mediators. The actual cost to hire a mediator ranges from \$120 per hour (Colorado Office of Dispute Resolution) to \$350 per hour and higher.

Furthermore, we helped Child Support Services to collect at least an additional \$219,648 in child-support payments.

The Clients We Serve

Jefferson County agencies, Courts, non-profit family service agencies, R-1 Schools and municipalities refer cases to JCMS. We keep growing as more departments discover that mediation can conserve staff resources, serve the public, and be effective in nearly any kind of conflict. Figure 2 below illustrates the sources of JCMS cases during 2013.

We offer a wide range of services, and some of our programs have been created in response to specific needs expressed by our clients. Examples of such programs include our employee workplace mediation program, our work with child support cases, and our assistance at protection order hearings.

Figure 2: Referring Agencies in 2013

Referring Agencies	Total Cases
Human Services	562
County Court	414
Small Claims Court	355
District Court	75
Animal Control	30
Sheriff	29
Arvada	28
Lakewood	23
Wheat Ridge	14
Jeffco/R-1 Schools	13
Juvenile Assessment Center	10
Jefferson Center for Mental Health	10
Planning	9
Mediation Services	6
District Attorney	5
Golden	5
Health & Environment	5
Human Resources	5
Gilpin County Court	4
Jeffco Action Center	4
Westminster	3
Facilities	1
Littleton	1
Open Space	1
Road & Bridge	1

Types of Cases

Our cases reflect the amazing variety of situations in which humans can come into conflict. Figure 3 shows the types of cases we handle, as well as the total number of cases in each category.

Figure 3: Types of Cases in 2013

Case Type	Total Cases
Animal Control	30
Administrative Hearing	1
Citizen-Law Enforcement	3
Consumer	77
Contract	154
Divorce & Child Custody	364
Domestic Partner	12
Employer – Employee	12
Family	23
Group	2
Intern	5
Liability Claim	69
Landlord – Tenant	331
Neighbor – Neighbor	89
Ombuds	7
Planning & Zoning	6
Patient – Provider	1
Permanent Protection Order	176
Post Decree	191
Public Contact	1
School Related	13
Truancy	2
Vehicular/Traffic	23
Victim/Offender Reconciliation - Criminal	2
Victim/Offender Reconciliation - Juvenile	5
Workplace – Employee – Employee	4
Workplace – Employee-Supervisor	10

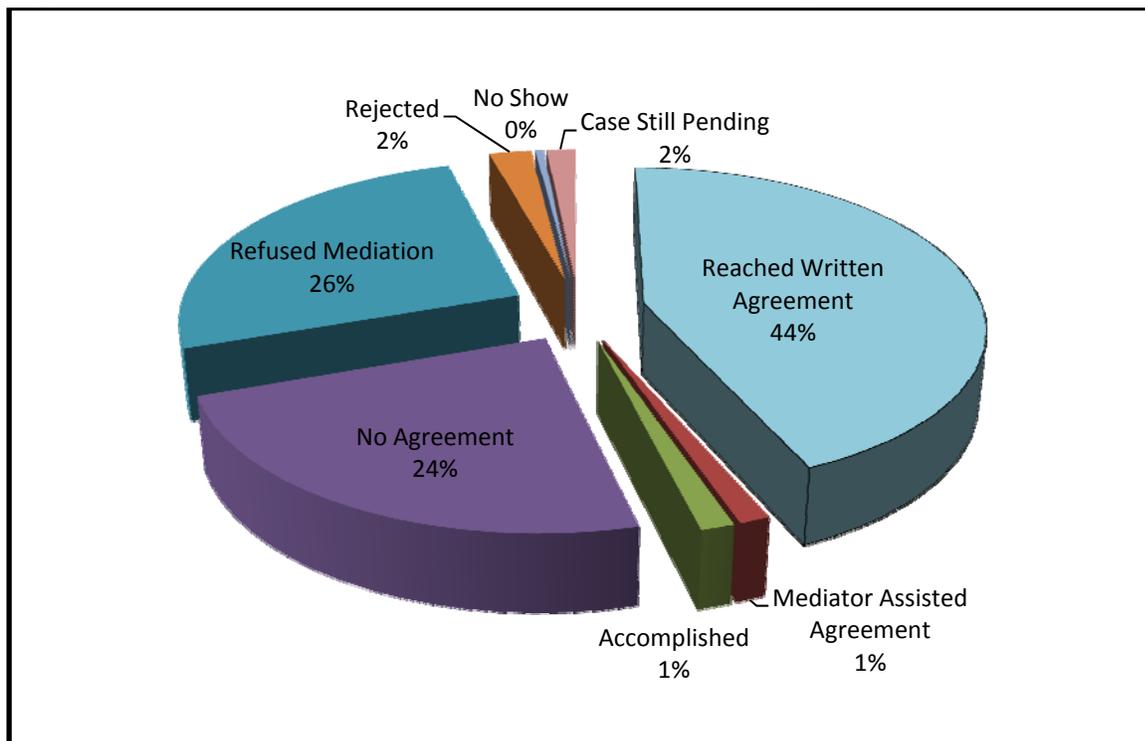
We Get Results

Figure 4 shows the raw data for the 1,613 cases referred to JCMS in 2013 while Figure 5 shows the results in percentages. In some cases, the parties do not go to mediation. We determined that 37 cases were not appropriate for mediation. In 421 cases, at least one party refused to mediate. We closed 7 cases after a party or parties failed to show up at a scheduled mediation. Of the 1,123 cases actually mediated, 743 resulted in written agreements or informal resolution, and 380 resulted in no agreement.

Figure 4: Results for All Cases Received 2013 – Raw Data

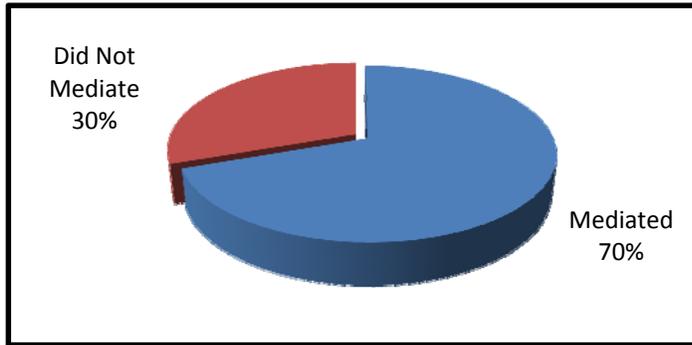
Success	Total Cases
Reached Written Agreement	701
Mediator Assisted Agreement	20
Accomplished	22
No Agreement	380
Refused Mediation	421
Rejected	37
No Show	7
Case Still Pending	25
Total	1613

Figure 5: Results for All Cases Received in 2013 – Graph



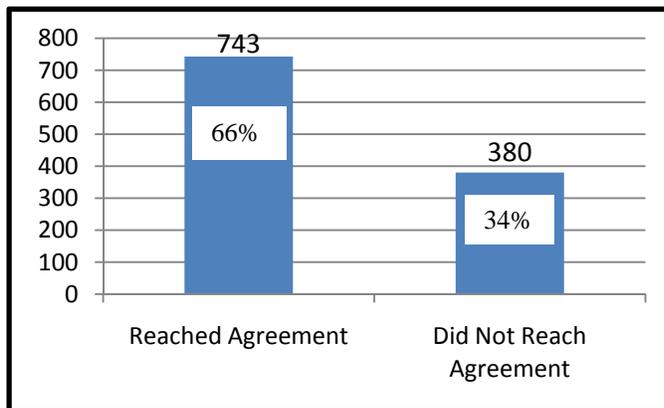
JCMS staff spends a great deal of time talking to parties about the benefits of mediation. In 2013, in 70 percent of cases, when we contacted people about mediation, all parties were willing to try it. In 30 percent, one or more of the parties chose not to participate in the process, or we rejected the case as inappropriate for mediation. See Figure 6, below

Figure 6: Percentage of Referred Cases that Went to Mediation



Mediation programs around the world report high success rates, and JCMS is no exception. After everyone agrees to participate, we assign the case to volunteers to schedule mediation. In 2013, when people met for mediation, 66 percent reached resolution and made written agreements or informal settlements, as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Results of Cases Mediated in 2013



Of the 1,123 cases that were mediated, 66 percent resulted in a final agreement. The success rates varied depending on the type of case. Landlord-tenant cases had a success rate of 70 percent, while 72 percent of child support cases reached agreement.

Quick Turnaround Time

Compared to court cases, which can take months to conclude, JCMS cases were completed very quickly. Figure 8 shows the average number of days cases took to move through our process. On average it took eight days, from the date we received the case, to contact the parties and assign the case to mediators. Once the case was received by mediators, it took an average of nineteen days for the mediation to be completed and the case closed by our office. For all 1,615 cases received in 2013, whether mediated or not, the average time from the date we received the case to the date we closed the case was twenty-five days.

Figure 8: Case Duration Data for Mediated Cases

Average Time from Case Received to Case Assigned to Mediators	8 Days
Average Time from Case Assigned to Mediators to Case Closed	19 Days
Average Time-All Cases (mediated or not) Case Received to Closed	25 days

Telephone Contact Data

In 2013, JCMS staff members handled over 2,700 phone contacts with parties, agencies and other interested individuals. Figure 9 shows the monthly tallies of phone contacts. This chart only represents actual contact with individuals. Note: These numbers do not reflect contacts made by our interns who assumed a significant part of the phone duties in 2013.

Figure 9: Phone Call Data

Month	Info Only	Referral List	New Case	Mediator Contact	Party Contact	Other Agency	Totals
January	22	11	7	28	100	14	182
February	25	6	4	30	62	4	131
March	32	10	6	52	107	13	220
April	27	2	0	46	96	18	189
May	40	9	14	39	136	20	258
June	45	10	12	46	157	10	280
July	25	20	37	36	169	2	289
August	84	22	49	21	116	10	302
September	30	15	18	45	139	21	268
October	50	13	28	6	38	4	139
November	59	11	40	28	77	11	226
December	66	19	49	20	73	5	232
2013 Totals	505	148	264	397	1270	132	2716

Codes:

Info Only: Information about mediation or direction to other services

Referral List: Sent list of mediation providers to party who didn't qualify for JCMS case

New Case: Took in a new case

Mediator Contact: Assisted mediators by answering questions, scheduling meetings, etc.

Party Contact: Spoke with parties to discuss mediation or give status updates

Other Agency: Spoke with another County agency regarding mediation info or referrals

We at Child Support Services know that if our customers take advantage of the opportunity to have JCMS mediators facilitate their family disputes, the results can mean better interpersonal relationships for them and the best outcomes for their children. Our customers are very fortunate to have this referral process available as an alternative to litigation.

Debbie Moss, Program Manager
Child Support Services

Child Support Services Summary

Jefferson County Child Support Services (CSS) is constantly working to increase collections from non-custodial parents who are ordered to pay child support to custodial parents. JCMS offered to mediate these cases, and CSS caseworkers have been delighted that they can offer a resource to people whose issues go beyond payment of child support.

This interdepartmental collaboration has had far-reaching benefits for the County and participants. Fathers may protest, "I don't get to see my kids, so why should I pay child support?" Now there is some help for them, too. The courts are pleased to be relieved of some parenting-time motions and contempt cases for non-payment. Instead of further crowding the jails, Justice Services diverts delinquent payers to work crews, providing services to the County. Children get to know both parents, and when a parenting plan is filed through CSS, parents do not incur a filing fee. Finally, the custodial parents and their children are receiving much-needed child support, so that fewer families need public assistance.

JCMS received 531 referrals from CSS in 2013. CSS reported that the rate of payment increased 17 percent among the parents who agreed to participate in mediation (88 more paying parents), *even if they can't reach an agreement or the other parent will not participate* (the custodial parent may be unwilling to alter the parenting time). At an average payment of \$208 per month for child support, the increase works out to at least an additional \$219,648 in collections for CSS.

In 2008, CSS expanded their referrals to include contested child-support modifications. If the custodial and non-custodial parents do not agree on the appropriate amount of child support, mediation can help them discuss a fair amount. If an agreement is reached, it can be implemented immediately instead of after a lengthy court process that increases conflict between the parents. JCMS now provides mediation services for Jefferson County Child Support Services (CSS) in divorce, parenting time and child support cases. This helps CSS, the taxpayers, the courts, the parents and the children.

This [successful mediation case] is a great news story, because the father had had little or no contact since the child was born. He was in jail for failure to pay child support, and while in jail, he attended the fatherhood classes that we offer. He had personally told me that at 27 years of age it would be impossible for him to change. Well, he has. Thanks to the Mediators!

Katie Smith
Child Support Services

Figure 10 shows the results of the cases referred by CSS in 2013. We received 531 cases, 228 of which were assigned to mediators. 309 did not go to mediation, including 6 cases in which one or more parties failed to show up for the scheduled meeting. Of the 222 cases mediated, 149 cases resulted in agreement and 73 did not result in agreement. Our volunteer mediators met one or more times with parties to these cases, for a total of 296 meetings.

This figure also shows the average number of days cases took to move through our process. On average, it took 18 days from the date we received the case to contact the parties and assign the case to mediators. Once the case was received by mediators, it took an average of 55 days for the mediation to be completed and the case closed by our office.

For all 531 cases received in 2013, whether mediated or not, the average time from the date we received the case to the date we closed the case was 48 days.

Figure 10: Results of Child Support Cases Referred

Total Cases Referred	531
Cases Assigned to Mediators	228
Reached Agreement	149
No Agreement	73
No Show	6
Total Meetings	296

Average # of Days from Received to Assigned	18
Average # of Days from Assigned to Closed	55

One of our caseworkers received a \$15,000 lump-sum arrears payment through our collaboration with Mediation Services. The caseworker said, ‘A lot of my lump sums have happened due to Jeffco Mediation. I have really had success with their services.’ Excellent! Another family will start the New Year off right.

Debbie Moss, Program Manager
Child Support Services

Figure 11 shows the percentage of cases referred by Child Support Services that went to mediation. In 43 percent of cases referred by CSS all parties agreed to mediation. The 57 percent of cases that did not go to mediation includes cases where JCMS was unable to reach one or more of the parties.

Figure 11: Percentage of Child Support Cases Mediated

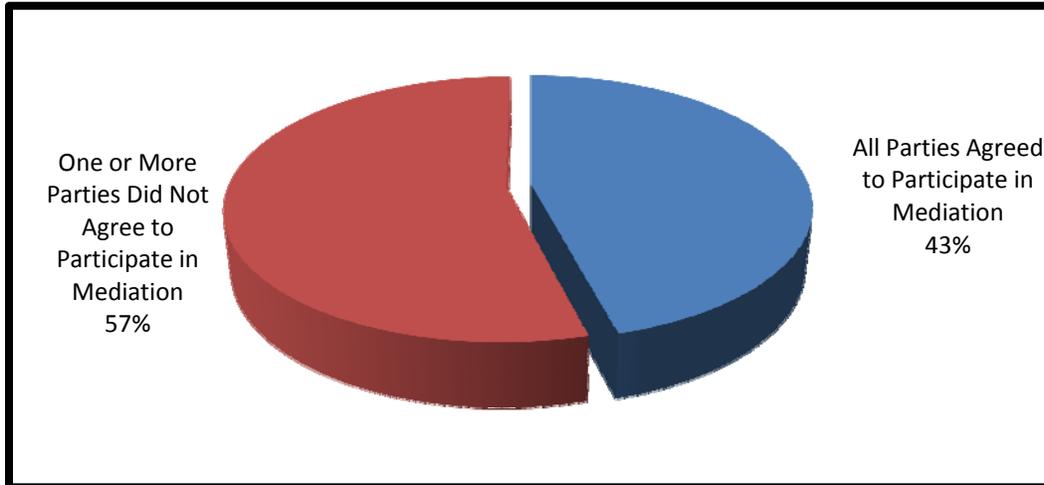
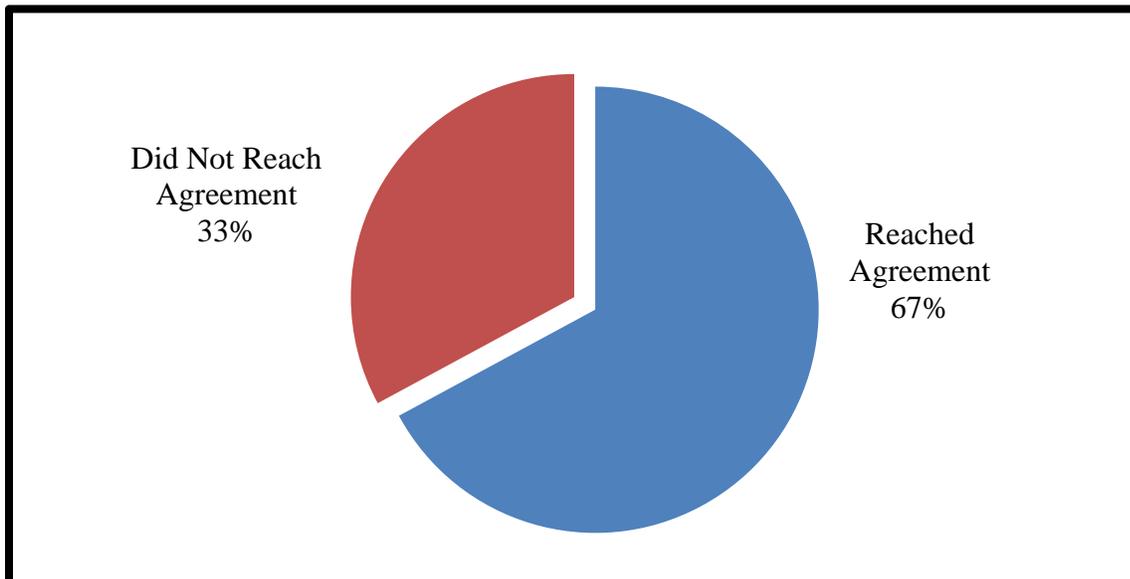


Figure 12 shows the results of cases referred by Child Support Services. 67 percent of the referred cases that went to mediation reached an agreement.

Figure 12: Results of Mediated Child Support Cases



Protection Order Conditions Conference (POCC) Cases for 2013

JCMS provides trained, volunteer facilitators to several judges on the days that they are hearing requests for permanent protection orders. These facilitators are trained in domestic violence issues, as well as conflict resolution techniques. JCMS strives to provide facilitation teams with a male volunteer and a female volunteer to create a gender-neutral environment. This service is provided without any charge to the court's budget.

Mediators use the Protection Order Conditions Conferences process. Parties are separated into different rooms, and the facilitators coordinate a discussion between the parties in shuttle fashion. This allows the parties to convey their concerns and needs to each other, and in many cases, negotiate the terms and conditions of an eventual permanent or extended temporary protection order, without the direct or implied coercion, fear and intimidation that a face-to-face mediation would potentially entail. Parties can safely negotiate conditions that more precisely meet their needs, with the assistance of trained neutral mediators who use typical conflict resolution techniques.

In domestic cases, the facilitators discuss issues such as retrieval of personal property by the restrained party, exchange of children and parenting time. In neighbor-neighbor cases, the facilitators work on ways for the parties to co-exist, given that they often live next door to each other and will continue to see each other. In student situations, the facilitators work with teenagers and their families to find solutions that will enable the students to continue their high school education peacefully. These discussions often result in a written agreement, which the parties can ask the judge to incorporate in their permanent protection order or in the continuation of the temporary order. The judge usually does not have time, and may not feel it is appropriate, to discuss issues apart from statutory requirements with the parties. The facilitators are often able to foster communication between the parties that leads to agreements that make their lives more manageable.

Figure 13 shows that of the 174 cases assigned to mediators, 111 cases, or 64 percent, resulted in agreements, and 63 cases, or 36 percent, did not. In all cases, our volunteer mediators met with parties one or more times.

Figure 13: Results of Protection Order Conditions Conferences

Total Cases		176
Cases Assigned to Mediators		174
Reached Agreement	(64%)	111
No Agreement	(36%)	63

Small Claims Court

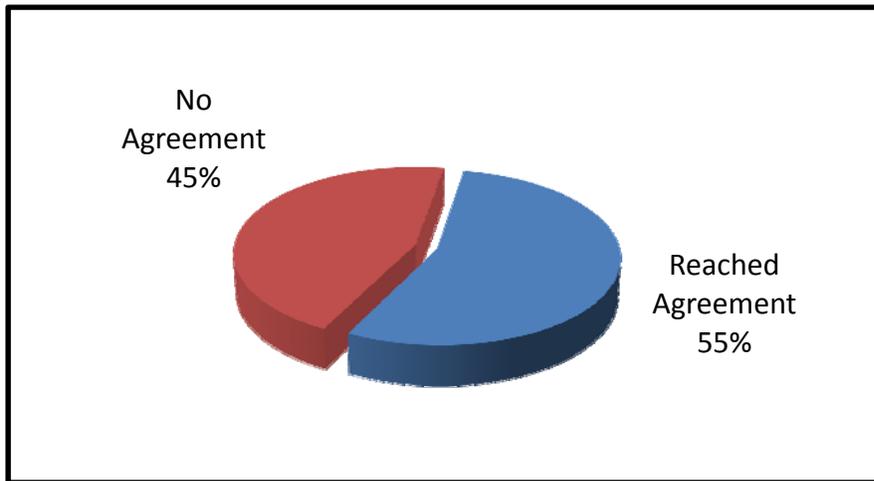
JCMS provides mediators for Small Claims Court. The mediators offer the disputants facilitated settlement conferences. If mediation does not settle the dispute, the parties proceed to have their cases heard by a judge. Some people choose to try mediation before they even file a Small Claims case, which saves even more court time.

Figure 14: Small Claims Court Cases

Total Cases	355
Cases Assigned to Mediators	343
Reached Agreement	188
No Agreement	155
Refused or Rejected	12

Figure 15 shows the results of our Small Claims Court mediations. Fifty-five percent of mediated cases resulted in agreements. This is in line with national averages for such cases.

Figure 15: Success of mediated Small Claims Court Cases



County Civil Court

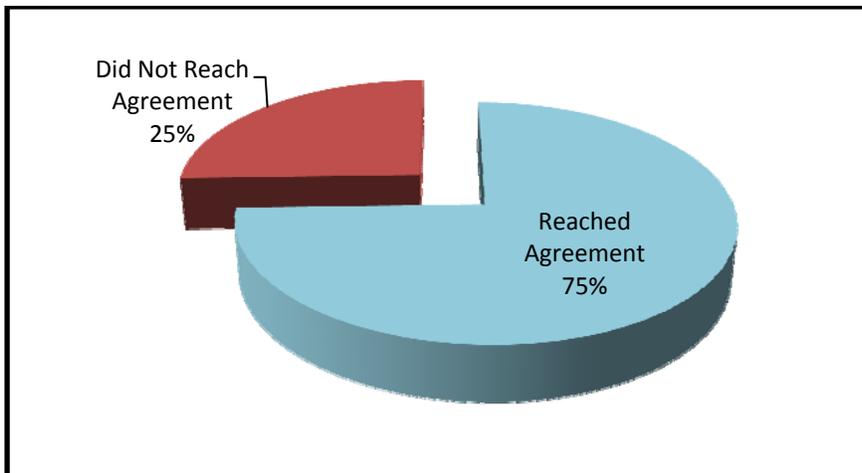
JCMS provides mediators for County Court cases besides those in Small Claims and Protection Order courts. In Division H court, the type of mediation offered is a “facilitated settlement conference,” which means that mediators are more directive and use more reality checking than in typical mediations. Since the parties are already in the court process, they may be rigid in their positions. The mediators must make relatively rapid assessments as to whether an agreement is possible and, if so, must try to reach a settlement quickly. If mediation does not settle the dispute, the parties will go back to the court to have their cases heard by the judge.

Figure 16: Data for County Court Cases

Total Cases Referred	304
Reached Agreement	208
No Agreement	71
No Show	1
Refused or Rejected	5

Figure 17 shows the success rate in County Court Mediations. Seventy-five percent of these cases resulted in agreements.

Figure 17: Results of County Court Cases Mediated



Workplace Mediation

Workplace Mediation for Jefferson County Employees

Conflict can stimulate changes and progress, but unresolved conflicts can disrupt how a team functions. Increased caseloads, changes in operations, staffing cuts and personality differences can create stress. Whatever the cause, mediation can improve communication, decrease tension and improve the team's ability to work together.

The costs of employee discord can be enormous. Recent research by various corporations and government agencies shows that:

- An average manager spends 24 percent to 60 percent of his or her time dealing with employee conflict.
- The effects of conflict include wasted time, reduced decision quality, more absenteeism, lowered motivation, higher health costs and inconvenient rearrangement of work groups to separate disputants.
- Conflict is a major factor in employee turnover, but in today's economy, many people are afraid to leave their jobs so they just endure the stresses of conflict as well as they can.

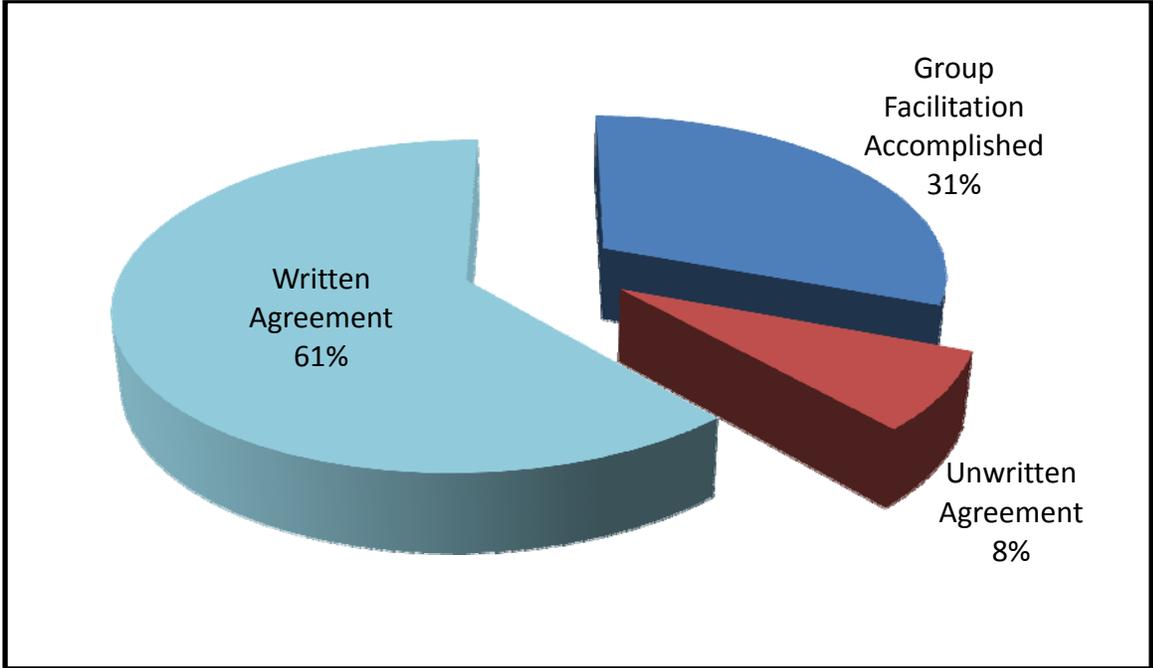
The Good News: Governments and businesses that use mediation show dramatic results. With lower conflict, employees take fewer days for illnesses and absences and increase their morale and productivity. JCMS successfully resolved 12 cases during 2013, resulting in a savings of \$134,004 at a minimum (many cases involved three or more employees, and in a few, the whole team or department was involved).

Example of a Workplace Case:

Average pay for Jefferson County employees is \$53,212, or about \$26.11 per hour. If two \$26/hour employees spend 10 minutes a day bickering ($1/6$ of $\$26 \times 2 = \8.67 x 5 days per week, x 50 weeks per year), it consumes \$2,167 per year of their pay. Then each spends 10 minutes talking to the manager – another \$2,167. Their manager earns \$30/hour and spends 20 minutes per day listening to complaints ($1/6$ of $\$30 \times 2 = \10) - another \$2,500 per year. The two also spend 10 minutes talking to co-workers about each other ($1/6$ of $\$26 \times 4 = \17.33), and it costs another \$4,333 per year for the four workers. Conflicts can go on for years, and this one unresolved conflict will cost \$11,167 per year, not including the effect on the department and its service quality. There are about 55 departments and divisions in the County, so just one conflict in each unit will cost the County more than \$614,185 each year. Disputes between employees and supervisors cost even more: leadership may be challenged or passively resisted, and the team's work will suffer.

The 14 workplace disputes in 2013 involved actual or perceived conflict between employees or with a supervisor, and we provided skilled mediators to assist them. Figure 18 illustrates that if the parties are willing to mediate, we can help them to resolve the difficulty nearly every time. Given the costs of continuing conflict, this offers enormous savings to the County and helps to ensure high-quality service to customers by promoting a better work environment.

Figure 18: Workplace Cases Mediated



Mediation in Jefferson County Schools

What we were hearing from parents, teachers, and assistant principals:

“My son is out of control - he won't talk to me, and I don't know what to do with him.”

“She's really not a bad kid, but she's so disruptive in class that the other kids can't learn.”

“Our kids are falling through the cracks, and the parents just don't want to be involved.”

Principals worry that we are losing our children. Some parents would rather leave the problems to someone else. Judges say that by the time children get to court, it may be too late to help them. Teachers are overloaded, and school administrators may have no option but discipline for children who cause problems.

What we are doing:

We wanted to help these children and ease the burden on schools, so we began our School Mediation program in 2005. The results are impressive: when parties come to the mediation table, they usually resolve their differences.

Our experienced child and family mediators are trained in family dynamics and risk/threat assessment, and they enjoy working on these cases. They love to see children succeed, and they have the skills, talent and time to help people solve problems.

It is in everyone's interest to help schools do their job well and to relieve them of problems they are not equipped to handle.

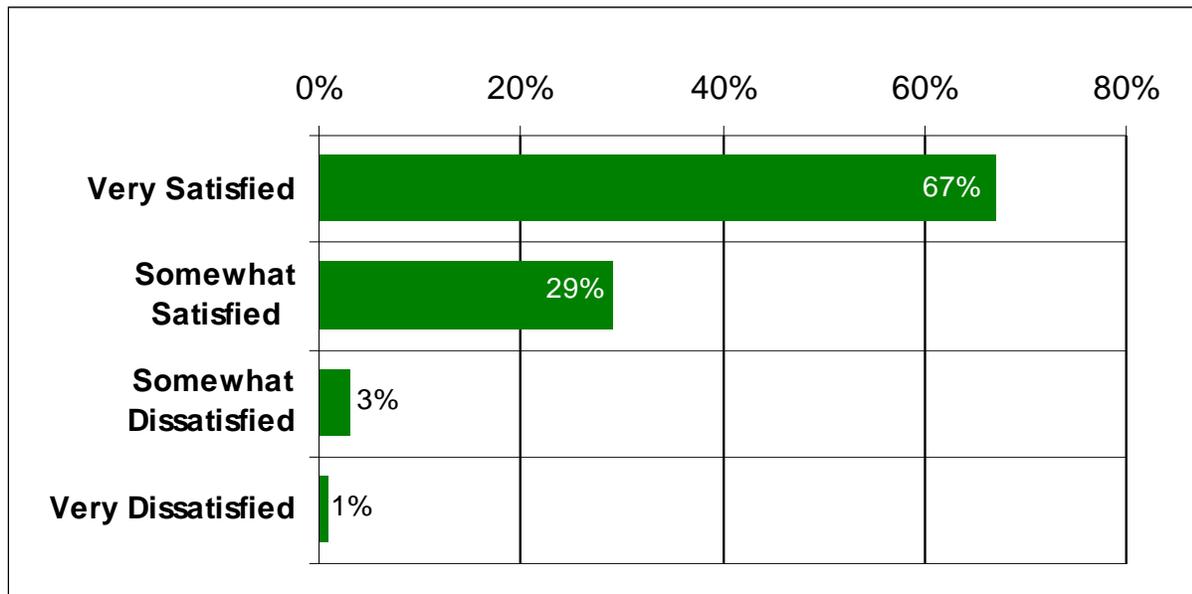
Citizen - Law Enforcement Mediation

Citizens who have complaints about law-enforcement personnel in Jefferson County can now meet face to face with the officers involved. The goal is to provide greater understanding and to improve relations among citizens and officers. Each participant gets a chance to hear how the other felt about the encounter, and the officer can explain that procedures may require certain actions. Internal Affairs officials refer only those cases in which they have determined that there is no actual impropriety by the officer. The citizen who participates understands that any citation or charge against him/her will remain, and that Internal Affairs may choose to drop the complaint against the officer. We have had excellent results with this project, and the City of Wheat Ridge has joined the Sheriff's Office in sending these cases to us.

Customer Satisfaction

Our clients praise the power of the mediation process. Figure 19 shows their high level of satisfaction: 96 percent reported being either “Very Satisfied” or “Somewhat Satisfied,” only 3 percent were “Somewhat Dissatisfied,” and barely 1 percent said they were “Very Dissatisfied.” A remarkable 92 percent of those who participate in mediation would recommend it to others – even if they didn’t reach agreement themselves. [Analysis of client questionnaires by Cory Stufflebeem and Ian Taylor, 2009]

Figure 19: Customer Satisfaction



Recent Trend:

We are seeing a new development: clients now call because their friends, co-workers or neighbors used JCMS, and said it really helped. Sometimes a phone call from our staff to the other party in a dispute will prompt people to settle a dispute on their own. These new clients never had to burden other County agencies with their conflicts.

Our Mediators

At the heart of the success of Jefferson County Mediation Services are the mediation professionals who donate their time and energy to the program on an ongoing basis. The number of volunteer mediators has expanded from just 20 when the program began in 1994 to about 240 today. In 2013, they gave a total of 5,664.8 hours to Jefferson County – an average of 3.5 hours per case.

Backgrounds and Qualifications

Our volunteers come from diverse educational and employment backgrounds and provide a large wealth of experience and expertise. They include:

- Lawyers and paralegals
- Businessmen and consultants
- Technicians
- Educators
- Medical professionals
- Psychologists and counselors
- Government workers
- Scientists

Because our program is so comprehensive and varied, it attracts volunteer mediators across metro Denver and Colorado. Each mediator brings an individual set of talents, personality and experience. Personal traits, aptitudes, training and life experiences make each mediator a unique asset to this outstanding service.

Each volunteer must complete a 40-hour mediation training course (or equivalent) prior to joining the program, attend our orientation and pass a background check.

JCMS volunteers share a desire to help citizens resolve conflict without violence. They also view the program as a credible way to build skills and experience that are recognized by our state's professional organization, The Mediation Association of Colorado. Mediators commit to serve for one year at a time; however, nearly half of our current volunteers have served for four or more years. Their contributions are immense: without the dedication, skill and hard work of each of these mediators, JCMS could not have attained the remarkable level of quality that it offers today.

The community benefits from an increasing pool of mediators experienced in the variety of cases amenable to mediation. Some of our volunteers have gone on to establish or run community mediation services elsewhere, so the benefits continue to spread, giving citizens a viable alternative to other, more expensive, destructive and time-consuming means of conflict resolution (e.g., litigation).

Our Staff

Our staff consists of a full-time director and four part-time staff. Together, we handle the myriad details involved in running such a large and varied service. Each week, we answer or return over 50 calls, open and close over 31 cases, provide information and referral lists to people who do not qualify for our free services, and field inquiries from other agencies. We contact parties to persuade them to try mediation, respond to numerous e-mails, schedule mediation sessions and manage our database. With our combined experience and expertise, we serve as a valuable resource for our volunteers, discussing their cases, answering their questions and arranging advanced mediation training. We make presentations to other agencies, attend meetings and schedule volunteers to mediate for various judges and magistrates. It's not just a job to us - we are committed to serving our clients in any way we can.

Mark S. Loye, M.S., M.P.A.

Mark is the Director of JCMS and helped to start the program in 1994. He has over 26 years of professional experience in dispute-resolution, with extensive training and experience in mediation and facilitation. His work has included multiparty environmental and land-use, business, organizational, EEO/workplace, neighbor-neighbor, divorce and child custody, real estate, task force and group facilitation. He has a B.A. in biology from Stanford University and earned graduate degrees in ecology from Cornell University, and in Public Administration from the University of Denver. He is an EEO mediator for the U.S. Postal Service, where he has conducted over 130 cases. Mark is a professional member of The Mediation Association of Colorado, and is a member of the international Association for Conflict Resolution, the National Association for Community Mediation and the Society for Range Management. In early 2011, he was appointed as the Community Conflict Resolution Representative to the Advisory Council for the Colorado Office of Dispute Resolution. He currently serves on the First Judicial District Access to Justice Committee, a group committed to maximizing availability of all aspects of the legal system to all citizens.

Julia Courtney Carter, Esq.

Julie is the Deputy Director and has been with JCMS since 2000. She has a B.A. in Sociology and Psychology from University of Colorado, and earned her Juris Doctor at University of Colorado's Fleming Law School. After working as an attorney in corporate and securities litigation and business organization, Julie became a JCMS volunteer in 1998, and mediated various types of cases before joining our staff. She received training in Restorative Justice with Longmont Community Justice Project. She has taken advanced training in workplace mediation and serves as an EEO mediator for the U.S. Postal Service. She is a member of The Mediation Association of Colorado and is a past member of the Alternative Dispute Resolution section of the Colorado Bar Association. She has been a co-instructor in Anger Replacement Training for adult paroled offenders, has co-taught several training courses for mediators, and provides ongoing coaching and support to our volunteers. Julie has played a significant role in expanding and improving our programs and increasing our collaboration with other County agencies.

Helena Jo Goldstein, Esq.

Helena is the Programs Manager and has been with JCMS since 2001. She has a B.A. in History from the University of Michigan, and earned her Juris Doctor at Northeastern University School of Law. She was an attorney in private practice in Boston, specializing in domestic law and tax issues, before her appointment as General Counsel for the Cambridge (MA) Housing Authority. Under the auspices of the Council of Large Public Housing Agencies (CLPHA), Helena traveled nationwide as a trainer on EEO issues for housing authorities. She also served on the Massachusetts committee that rewrote the state regulations for housing authorities. After relocating to Colorado in 1993, she pursued a career in mediation. She has advanced training in Workplace Mediation, Team Decision Making Facilitation, and Parenting Coordination and Decision Making. She has co-taught courses for mediators on Intimate Partner Violence. She is a professional member of the Mediation Association of Colorado, and serves as a mentor to many of the JCMS volunteers.

Brian S. Beck, M.A.

Brian has been with JCMS since 2008 and serves as Systems Manager. He has a B.S. from Oklahoma State University and earned a Master of Arts degree in Conflict Resolution from the University of Denver, as well as a Certificate in Alternative Dispute Resolution from the University of Denver's University College. He has been a mediator since 2003 and has mediated victim-offender, civil, divorce and custody cases. Brian has served as President for The Mediation Association of Colorado and is a current professional member of the organization.

Natasha Alizadeh

Natasha has been with JCMS since 2011 and serves as our clerical support. She has streamlined several of our processes, and has significantly improved our efficiency.

The Future of JCMS

What is next for JCMS? We are coordinating with County agencies to increase our services. Employees may be hesitant about trying mediation, so we work to increase employee acceptance and use of our workplace program. Those who have used mediation are pleased with the results, and agencies that collaborate with us are enthusiastic and committed to our joint efforts. Our caseload has grown dramatically over time, and we project that this trend will continue in future years.

We will continue to respond to the needs of any County agency that requests more specialized services. This is how we have become the largest, most diversified community mediation program in Colorado. We will continue to expand our collaboration with Open Space and other agencies through facilitation of major decision-making groups. These program expansions will further the aim of saving resources for the County. Our well-organized and expertly staffed County conflict resolution program can serve as a model for an eventual state program of authorized county dispute resolution offices (already in place in several states).

Mediation can become the standard method of managing the conflict inherent in all areas of human activity, and JCMS can lead the way.

Most importantly, for a small annual investment of County funds, JCMS will continue to expand the large payoff in cost savings to governmental agencies and the courts, reduce ongoing conflict both in the community and within the County, and enhance public peace and harmony. JCMS is setting the standard for innovation and progress conflict resolution across Colorado and throughout the Rocky Mountain region.

2013 JCMS Advisory Group

The Advisory Group meets quarterly to consider questions of policy and program direction. On a less formal level, the members serve as a sounding board for new ideas of JCMS staff and volunteers. These representatives of client agencies give us valuable guidance on their conflict resolution needs and feedback on the quality of our services. They also serve as advocates of JCMS to their own staff and agencies. As public managers and decision-makers, they make observations and offer insights that have been invaluable to the growth and vitality of JCMS. The Advisory Group is an evolving body, adding interested members as new client agencies and jurisdictions join those already served by JCMS.

Magistrate Jamin Alabiso
Rachel Baumel, JCMS Mediator
Janet Bell, Citizen Liaison
Nicole Boyles, Human Resources
Larry Cerrillo, JCMS Mediator
Michelle DeLeon, Lakewood Police Department
Leah DiMarco, Human Resources
Amanda Economy, Legal Advocacy Supervisor, Family Tree
Magistrate Andrew Fitzgerald, County Court
Ray Fler, Jefferson County Undersheriff
Sergeant Dick Gearke, Lakewood Police Department
Patricia Gilbert, Assistant County Attorney
Judge Tammy Greene, County Court
Joyce Knott, Operations Manager, Human Services
Timothy Lane, Deputy District Attorney
Robyn E. McDonald, JCMS Mediator
Judge Philip McNulty, District Court
Judge Gail Meinster, District Court
Kathryn Otten, Director, Justice Services Division
Vicky Reier, Assistant to Arvada City Manager
David Ruppert, Jeffco R-1 Schools
Magistrate Joel Schaefer, County Court
Cynthia A. Whitlock, Executive Director of Student Success, R-1 Schools
Tama Wood, Jeffco R-1 Schools
Carla Zinanti, Manager, Animal Control Section

Volunteer Recognition Event

Each year, we hold an event to express our gratitude to all of our volunteers. They usually work with only one other mediator at a time, when handling a case, so this is a chance for them to meet their colleagues and to network and enjoy themselves in an informal setting.

The event also allows our elected officials to express their thanks to these generous people by presenting awards to the outstanding mediators in various categories.

On September 10 we held our Volunteer Recognition Event at Mount Vernon Events Center in Golden. We all enjoyed the lovely setting, good food, and great company.

Recognition Event Sponsors

Special thanks to the following individuals and local businesses that sponsored our 2013 awards event!

240 Union

Ale House at Amato's

Amber Freelen

Arby's, Simms & Colfax

Bare Minerals, Denver

Blue Sky Café

Brent Timm Insurance

Café Jordano

California Pizza Kitchen, Colorado Mills

Colormer USA, Denver

Denny's, 32nd & Youngfield

Great Harvest Bread Co., Lakewood

Jason's Deli, Lakewood

Jose O'Shea's, Lakewood

Lakewood Heritage Center

Le Peep, 141 Union

Mimi's Café, Denver West

Morrison Inn

Old Chicago, Lakewood

On the Border, Denver West

Outback Steakhouse, Denver West

Pamela Moris Dorrance

Pizza Hut, 45 Union Blvd

Red Hawk Golf Course

Sidney Campbell

Starbuck's, Applewood

Starbuck's, Golden

Wahoo's Fish Taco, Lakewood

Wazee Supper Club

Woody's Pizza, Golden



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