

# Got Conflict?<sup>SM</sup>

Conflict Hurts. Mediation Helps.



**AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE CONFLICT MEDIATION SERVICES SINCE 1979**

Dear CDSC Friends,

Thank you for the many ways you have supported CDSC in 2020, a most complex and challenging year. We missed seeing you in person and *very much* appreciated the opportunity to stay connected. As we embraced technology like never before to offer mediations, workshops, and trainings remotely, we discovered an added bonus—"meeting" your family members, roommates, and pets on Zoom! Thanks to so many, our Virtual BASH was a success. We are very grateful for your sponsorship support and attendance.



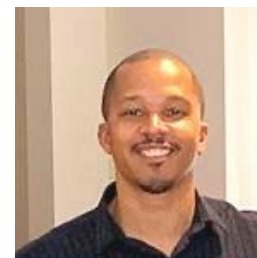
Looking ahead to 2021, we will continue to be creative, responding to unmet community needs with innovative initiatives and programs, starting with our new newsletter format. We will be sharing highlights and news more frequently. Please be our ambassadors and share it with others—your friends, colleagues, and family members as you invite them to learn about and join our CDSC family.

Thank you for joining us on our journey to promote positive conflict engagement. Stay healthy and hopeful.

In Peace,  
Gail S. Packer, MSW  
Executive Director

## Welcome Our Housing Case Manager

CDSC welcomes Jamaul "Yes" Miller to the new role of housing case manager. Yes is a mediator, conflict coach, and trainer. He has trained people of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds in mediation and conflict skills. Specifically, he has worked with middle and high schoolers, PhD candidates, librarians, community college faculty and staff, senior housing residents and staff, and government agency employees.



If you or someone you know is dealing with a housing issue and are interested in learning if mediation can help, email Yes at [cdschousing@communitydispute.org](mailto:cdschousing@communitydispute.org).

Massachusetts launched a new statewide [Eviction Diversion Initiative](#) that is run through the MA Office of Public Collaboration (MOPC) and the MA Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD). The program supports mediation centers in providing free mediation to landlords and tenants involved in evictions due to Covid-19. It complements CDSC's existing mediation services offered through court-connected referrals and those referred from "upstream" community organizations and connections.

## Diversity Initiative

CDSC is committed to diversity. We are working on diversifying our roster of mediators to include more members of the various communities we serve. We have a particular need for Spanish-speaking mediators. As part of our Diversity Initiative, CDSC, in collaboration with the MA Office of Public Collaboration, held a virtual Listening Session on January 13th with members of organizations in the greater Metro Cambridge/Boston area. As part of our Diversity Initiative, the session had two goals: (1) to learn the community's needs for conflict resolution and mediation services and (2) to measure the interest level of participants to train as mediators.

**CDSC Mediators are invited to join the next session on Thursday, February 18 from 4-5:30pm.** Please RSVP to [cdscoutreach@communitydispute.org](mailto:cdscoutreach@communitydispute.org).

Special recognition and thanks to Angelique Santiago, our intern from Brandeis University's *Conflict Resolution & Coexistence* master's program. She has been the Community Outreach Coordinator for our Diversity Initiative.

## Trainings, Workshops & Services

### Basic Mediation Training (Virtual)

March 9, 2021 – March 31, 2021

**Sold Out**

Email [cdscinfo@communitydispute.org](mailto:cdscinfo@communitydispute.org) to be added to the waitlist.

### SAVE THE DATE

Basic Mediation Training

Fall 2021

Dates to be announced. [Let us know if you would like to be notified](#)

### Conflict Skills Workshops

Would your group or company benefit from mediation training or conflict resolution services? Along with trainings for mediators, we offer "*Tools for Dealing with Conflict Effectively*" in two-hour, half-day, or multi-day interactive, skill-based workshops customized for your group or organization. Workshops are currently virtual. Call 617-876-5376 or email [cdscinfo@communitydispute.org](mailto:cdscinfo@communitydispute.org).

### Conflict Coaching and Mediation

Do you know an individual in need of conflict resolution services? CDSC offers

conflict coaching services to individuals as well as mediation services to disputants on a sliding fee based on income-based rates. You can refer that person to us: have them call 617-876-5376 or email [cdscinfo@communitydispute.org](mailto:cdscinfo@communitydispute.org).

## CDSC Roundtables

CDSC hosted several virtual Roundtables in 2021.

- A Small Claims Mediator & Staff Roundtable focused on best practices for Small Claims mediation in court.
- A CDSC Summary Process/Housing Mediator & Staff Roundtable focused on best practices for Summary Process and Housing/Eviction Diversion Court mediations.
- A CDSC Mediator & Staff Roundtable focused on "Best Practices" for virtual mediation. The session was facilitated by CDSC Board Member Ellen Waldorf and explored what's going well and what is challenging.



Look for announcements on upcoming Roundtables, including registration details, in future newsletters.

## Volunteer Mediators Launch Book Club

During a Volunteer Appreciation Zoom event, a number of mediators expressed interest in creating a book club to focus on social justice issues and their impact on the mediation process as well as how privilege and unconscious biases affect mediators. The group met in September and discussed Robin DiAngelo's book, *"White Fragility."* In November they explored the ideas in Ibrahim X Kendi's book *"How to Be An Anti-Racist"* and are scheduled to meet to discuss the *"Tyranny of Merit"* by Michael Sandel in February. The group is made up of eight to ten CDSC Mediators who plan to meet five to six times each year.



"Discussing books focused on understanding the roots of injustice with a group of mediators has been thoughtful, informative and lively. We have responded differently to these first books, questioning and exploring each other's responses and perspectives. We are open to different ideas and interested in examining how our mediation work is informed by our biases and experiences. Our hope is that these conversations will help us serve others better in mediation."

—Deborah Heller, CDSC Volunteer Mediator

## Get Involved

- We are currently seeking **multi-lingual volunteer mediators**.
- Do you have a skill that you would be willing to share on a volunteer basis? We have needs for professional help and guidance in the following areas: IT, Human Resources, and writing. Please reach out to learn more and find out if your skills and availability match our current needs.



## We would like to hear from you

**"This has exceeded my expectations in terms of how absorbed I'd be throughout the training. You are all very clear in your presentations and feedback. I love the supportive environment."**

**– Social Worker, Mediation Training Attendee**

Learning from the experience of others is valuable. Please share stories or quotes about how mediation and conflict resolution has affected you and those around you. Conflict hurts. Mediation helps. We would like to hear from you!

Established in 1979, the Community Dispute Settlement Center (CDSC), is a private, not-for-profit mediation and training center dedicated to providing an alternative and affordable forum for resolving conflict.

CDSC promotes better ways to understand and deal with conflict through skilled teams of pro bono mediators, training programs in mediation and conflict management, and broad community outreach.

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