



We are pleased to announce the JDMP Program has secured dedicated funding through the Nevada Supreme Court!

Previously, the Program has been funded through grant money. With the new budget, dependency mediations will be funded for the next two fiscal years. JDMP is currently seeking opportunities to grow this amazingly successful program.



Judge Deborah
Schumacher

JDMP's Story

In 2011, Judge Deborah Schumacher (now a senior judge and member of the JDMP panel) wanted to resurrect dependency mediation in the 2nd Judicial District. Naturally, she reached out to Kathie Malzahn-Bass of the Supreme Court Court Improvement Program (CIP). Kathie was able to commit funding, mediators were contracted, a program protocol drafted and the JDMP pilot program began. Soon, two more pilot programs started in the 5th and 8th Judicial Districts.

Eventually, these pilot programs were evaluated by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. These studies and their positive findings fueled Kathie's bigger vision: to create a uniform dependency mediation program that spanned all of Nevada. In 2016, mediators around the State were recruited, trained and selected and the Program was launched. **To date, over 1,000 mediations have been conducted and every Judicial District in the State has participated.**



Why Do Mediators Spend Time Building a Rapport?

To some, it may seem like idle chit chat, but spending time to make mediation participants comfortable is critical. One of the vital components of dependency mediation is humanizing a very difficult process. Parents and placements often arrive at mediation with high emotions, feeling overwhelmed or defeated. A gentle start rather than a hurried push to discuss terms can make all the difference in facilitating a successful process. Slowing things down and ensuring everyone is treated with respect fosters a collaborative environment that aids resolution.



ASK JDMP

Q: Why Does the Program Use Co-Mediation?

A: JDMP endeavors to build the most successful model possible for dependency mediation. In the mediation world, dependency mediation is considered advanced work.

- Co-mediation is the "gold standard" for mediation for many reasons, including:
- Balances the mediator team with regard to gender, culture, experience
- Increases participant's ability to connect with a mediator
- Beneficial for managing domestic violence issues (e.g., bifurcation, checking in, etc.)
- Allows an extra set of eyes and ears
- Models cooperative behavior for parties
- Helps avoid mediator bias
- 2 mediators can pose better questions, use different techniques
- Division of tasks – there is significant pre and post mediation work
- Learning new techniques from each other
- Helpful when working with emotionally overwrought participants

The Program will use co-mediation in the more complex cases and single mediators for less challenging cases (such as initial petition mediations).



Jae Barrick, Esq.

Get to Know Our JMDP Mediators

What's your professional background?

I am a licensed attorney who primarily practices family law. I joined the legal profession later in life after many years in banking, insurance, and investments. I decided to go to law school when most of my peers were looking at retirement. I wasn't ready for retirement and I believed that I could be more useful to my community with a legal education.

Why did you become a mediator?

In some ways, I believe I was destined to become a mediator. My father was a negotiator for his local and national unions. As a child, I sat with him at the kitchen table while he worked diligently with other union members to draft proposed terms for upcoming union contract negotiations. I listened as the men discussed the pros and cons of each suggested idea. He taught me to always try to understand and listen to both sides of any argument or discussion.

During my previous careers, I was often involved in contract negotiations, employment discrimination and harassment issues, and negotiations between insurance clients and the insurance companies I represented. When I entered law school, I was fortunate to have a professor who included ADR in my first semester. From that moment on, ADR remains the focus of my legal practice. I believe in empowering individuals by encouraging the use of alternative methods for resolving issues. I remain committed to the use of mediation and negotiation to give individuals more control of their own outcomes whenever conflicts arise.

What do you like best about dependency mediation?

I enjoy giving parents a chance to be heard and have a voice in the outcome of their dependency cases. Parents seldom have the opportunity to speak on their own behalf and never get the chance to just "tell their story" or say what is on their mind to the attorneys and other stakeholders involved with their case. These cases always have a sad story involving their children that brings the parties into mediation. Mediation allows all participants to interact as human beings, regardless of their history, and helps them work together for the best outcome for the children.

We hope you enjoyed this first issue of the JDMP News!

If you are currently part of the CIP email list, you will automatically receive a copy of this quarterly newsletter in your email over the coming weeks, and then every 3-months thereafter.

If you are not on the CIP email list and wish to receive our quarterly newsletter, please send your email address to Margaret@CrowleyMediation.com.