

**Ancillary Unit Annual Report
Mediator Mentors
July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013**

Purpose of Ancillary Unit

The **mission** of Mediator Mentors Project is to teach and nurture respectful conflict resolution skills in youth and in future helping professionals through direct instruction, guided practice and cross-age mentoring relationships. The program **vision** is focused on supporting conflict resolution education at all developmental levels for the purpose of affecting peaceful and productive problem-solving in our communities and world. Specifically, Mediator Mentors engages university students who are interested in teaching, counseling and other helping professions in the development of school-based peer mediation programs. Mentors and mediators, site teacher leaders and administrators are trained (ten to twelve hours) of communication and conflict resolution skills and strategies. The resulting University-Public School partnerships currently number 70 throughout Sanger, Clovis, Fresno, Chowchilla, Central, Dinuba, Woodlake and Soulsbyville. Consultation with the Kremen School Mediator Mentors team is offered for the life of the programs. There is no charge for the training because this teaching is central to the mission of the School of Education and Human Development. However, schools are asked to support a \$500 per semester stipend for their Mediator Mentor. Students in grades 3-8 come to Fresno State for at least one day of the two days of training and again in May for a yearly celebration of their service to their schools. The Mediator Mentors Project has been in existence since 1998 and has served over 6,000 teachers and children since its inception.

Administrative Housing of Project

The Mediator Mentors Project is housed in the Kremen School of Education and Human Development. During 2012, Dr. Pamela Lane-Garon, Professor Emeritus was the Project Director teaching in the Department of Literacy, Early, Bilingual and Special Education. Dr. Lane Garon is the originator of this project and has been steadfast in steering and growing Mediator Mentors for 15 years. She retired this year from Fresno State and passed on the directorship of Mediator Mentors to Karen DeVoogd in January 2013. Ms DeVoogd is a faculty member in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the CalStateTEACH program. Taking Ms DeVoogd's place as the Project Coordinator is Christina Cassinerio-Wilson. She is a Fresno Unified teacher support provider, special educator, teacher leader and former mediator mentor. Mediator Mentors also enjoys the volunteer assistance of former Mentor and Credential graduates.

Project functions are shared by the director, coordinator and volunteers. These functions have expanded beyond communication, presentation and training following a referral or school inquiry. It now includes the administration of needs assessments, training of school administration and staff, recruitment and training of mentors, fund raising, web site maintenance, presentations, research and evaluation, training of students, event planning, creation of training materials (video and text) and creating opportunities for celebration of school partner achievements. Mediator Mentors project director and coordinator are now also trainers with CRETE (Conflict Resolution in Teacher Education). This partnership has developed as a result

of a National Grant (Temple University) funded by JAMS (Judicial Arbitration and Mediation Services Foundation). This partnership has expanded the mission of Mediator Mentors in that we can now expose more future professionals (beyond the volunteering mentors) to the conflict resolution education content that can be infused in classroom content instruction by our teachers in the community. The CRETE content is research-based and focuses on building classroom communities in which peaceful problem-solving and respectful discourse are operant. The following graphic makes clear the project interrelationships.



Major Accomplishments 2012-2013:

This academic year, we worked through a robust schedule training new teachers, students and administrators. We added approximately twelve new schools to our project and did retraining for many established program. Our calendar shows we were involved with training or implementation related events almost daily in the fall when schools are setting up their programs.

In our presentations this year, Mediator Mentors shared successful research results that were gathered in during 2011, 2012 activity funded by a The California Endowment in Fresno Unified elementary and middle schools in Southeast, Central and Southwest Fresno. In the context of the grant implementation, Conflict Resolution Education was highly visible, both as a service and as a content teaching area. (Please see attached summary of findings in the appendix).

In the fall of 2012, a new structure with an existing partner was formed. Dr. Lane Garon and Derrick Davis of Clovis East in Clovis Unified School District worked to develop a mentoring model to mirror what we do with our Fresno State students. Mr. Davis expanded his peer-counseling program to involve his students in mentoring peer mediators at elementary schools that feed into Clovis East. Dr. Lane Garon and Mr. Davis worked with administration and teachers at Orazo, Freedom, Miramonte and Temperance Kutner Elementary Schools to create new peer mediation programs and in the case of Miramonte Elementary, re-invigorate a previously established program. Students from Clovis East attended peer mediation trainings at Fresno State with the elementary students there were partnered with. In this model, after students are trained, Clovis East peer counselors go to the elementary schools throughout the week, during lunch hours to assist the younger students in growing their skills and connecting as a positive role model. Elementary students, staff and high school peer counselors have found this to be a highly successful program. Mr. Davis brought participating students from Clovis East and Orazo Elementary to present the details of the partnership to the Kremen School of Education Community Council on April 17th, 2013. Mr. Davis and his students received

commendation from the Council for their initiative in implementing this new mentoring project. Mediator Mentors will continue to support this structure and hopes to replicate this with other schools.

The participation of Fresno Unified schools has remained strong. A refined approach that was successful this year was moving peer mediation into the purview of Professional Learning Communities with the school social workers as the lead coordinators. These coordinators worked with administration and teachers and supported more than one school with their programs such as with Muir, Slater, Thomas and Columbia. This seemed to be a small but welcome structural shift that helped us in communicating more efficiently to set up Fresno State mediator mentors and facilitate student training. We hope to grow this approach to leadership to other schools in the district.

The size of our community impact is growing beyond Fresno County. We were awarded a \$13,000.00 grant from The California Endowment, Board Member Discretionary Funds, from Dr. Walt Buster. This grant is being used to develop peer mediation and conflict resolution support in the Tri-District area of Planada in Merced County. Dr. Lane Garon and Dr. Buster connected with Dr. Jose Gonzalez superintendent of Planada schools at the Fresno State CLEAR Mentoring conference in October of 2012. The challenges of the educational community of that area are daunting; high rates of poverty, isolation, low graduation rates, and high incidence of conflict and crime. Mediator Mentors met with Dr. Gonzalez in February 2013 to establish a time line for implementation of program to support teachers and students. We did a presentation on peer mediation to the elementary and middle school staff in March 2013 which was well received. We decided to host our August CRETE training at UC Merced to better accommodate the travel of these teachers. We met again in June of 2013 and have identified a teacher leader at the Chavez Middle School who will champion the peer mediation project. The plan is for this teacher to attend CRETE in August and bring peer mediators to Fresno State for training at the beginning of the school year. Dr. Gonzalez will encourage other teachers to also attend CRETE in August 2013 at UC Merced.

Another example of how long the reach of Mediator Mentors has become is shown in our work with a new partner. This academic year, we grew an established connection with Mr. Ed Johnson through the local Association of Conflict Resolution, Central California Chapter to bring Mediator Mentors to Soulsbyville, a Sonora County District School. Ed Johnson is a professional mediator with Sierra Non-Profit working in community mediation services. There was a need expressed by members of the local and school community for conflict resolution support for their youth. We worked very closely with Sierra Non-Profit to facilitate the development of a school-based project. Ed Johnson and Mediator Mentors met with Sonora County Superintendents to describe the process of program development in a school setting. Soulsbyville was chosen as the designated school site to begin staff and student training. Sierra Non-Profit participated in our January CRETE training and from there we worked with these partners to provide awareness and training to staff, community and students in Soulsbyville. Local community mediators trained students in the late spring of 2013 and administration and teachers have registered to attend CRETE in August of 2013. An additional development from our work with Ed Johnson has been a connection to other professional mediators in other communities such as Modesto. We have connected with an attorney mediator who will attend

upcoming CRETE with the goal to join our training team. Mediator Mentors also did a presentation at Stanislaus County Office of Education to school health nurses and support providers. This shows the flexibility of Mediator Mentors to partner with community groups and schools to grow peer mediation and conflict resolution education initiatives even beyond our geographically immediate school districts.

Mediator Mentors was the focus of the Kremen School 's Community Council Fundraiser for this year. A total of \$10,213.00 was raised with the help of local sponsors via Kremen School of Education Development team. This was the Grizzlies Baseball outing, with ticket sales and jersey auction to benefit our program. The profits from this event allow us to provide stipends for Fresno State Mentors. We anticipate receiving funds later in June, 2013. (Please find the attached document that describes the accounting for this event). This fundraiser was also our Mediator Appreciation event for this year. We used sponsor monies to cover the cost of student and teacher leader tickets as well as food for the students at the game. Approximately 450 mediators and their families attended that night to be honored for their excellent work in their schools.

Mediator Mentors' capacity to serve the community was enhanced, once again, by donations from The Bonner Family Foundation. The Bonner Family Foundation has decided to fund Mediator Mentors regularly, at \$5,000 for the academic year. This amount provides ten stipends for university students who elect to become Mediator Mentors in our schools.

Other highlights showing accomplishments of Mediator Mentors for 2012/2013

- August 2012 and January 2013: Hosted and facilitated two more CRETE Institutes (Conflict Resolution Education in Teacher Education) at Fresno State.
- *(Please note that to date we have offered CRETE trainings in January and August of 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.)*
- On average, 40 pre and in-service educators, psychologists, social workers, administrators and counselors attend. This National, Award-Winning Curriculum has been grant-sponsored and has been offered free to participants. CSU Fresno is proud to be a CRETE Partner University. There are ten in the nation.
- Oct. 18th, 2012: Restorative Discipline.
- Mediator Mentors was a panel participant at this event, sponsored by the Central Valley Chapter of the Association for Conflict Resolution. Fresno Pacific University representatives, Fresno State professors and local ACR members attended as did other interested community members. The theme of the evening involved examining ways in which alternative dispute resolution can inform school discipline policy and practice.
- Fall 2012: Mediator Mentors cosponsored and lead YOUTH DAY at the National Association for Conflict Resolution Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. Students from local schools participated in conflict resolution and perspective taking exercises. They responded to their learning experience through dance and media production. They further had the rare opportunity to communicate with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Leymah Gbowee via letter writing and video.
- March 2013: Sponsored the *Peace Builder Award* for educators at the KSOEHD Cesar Chavez Conference, Recipient was Ms. Joe Dee Zajak-Kilgore, Mediator Mentor trainer.

- Mediator Mentor Director has been elected to new leadership position:
- Karen DeVoogd, Co- Chair National Association for Resolution’s Education Section
- Karen DeVoogd and Christina Cassinerio-Wilson also serve on the local Board of Central California Chapter of the Association for Conflict Resolution.
- Fall of 2012 – began use of Mediator Mentor process training video produced with cooperation of Fresno State and Clovis Elementary students. Production of similar video with Tehipite Middle School students is under development to be used in the coming academic school year.
- Dec. 18, 2012 – Mediator Mentor Advisory Board Meeting. Dr. Lane Garon shared plans to retire from Fresno State and pass along the directorship of Mediator Mentors to Karen DeVoogd and coordinator position to Christina Cassinerio Wilson.
- Spring 2013: The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Award for Professional Ethics and Moral Dispositions in Teacher Education presented its 2013 Best Practice Award for Professional Ethics and Moral Dispositions in Teacher Education to the Kremen School of Education and Human Development at California State University, Fresno. Mediator Mentors was specifically named in this award as an example of KSOEHD is developing high professional ethics and moral dispositions in future teachers.
- Spring 2013: Held working-CRE training lunches for local teachers and administrators
- Spring 2013: Established an internship connection for Fresno State students in the Peace and Conflict Studies program offered by Dr. Andrew Fiala in the Department of Philosophy
- April 2013: Submitted two grants to address the ability of Mediator Mentors to continue to serve our university and community. FRF (Fresno Regional Foundation Youth Grant) and JAMS (Judicial Arbitration and Mediation Services Foundation) Regrettably in this competitive climate in seeking support, we were not funded at this time by these grants.
- May 9th, 2013 Celebration of 15 year anniversary of Mediator Mentors. The exemplary work of Dr. Lane Garon and her many mentees was noted and commended for the depth of impact on the youth of our community. This event was very well attended giving further testimony to Mediator Mentors being a highly respected program at Fresno State and in our local schools.
- Spring 2013: Reconnected with the Lowell Revitalization Project at Fresno State. The group was reconvened by Provost Covino to plan for new initiatives in Lowell community in the 2013/2014 school year.

Numbers of On and Off Campus Participants

Approximately 62 Schools participated in training in the 2012, 2013 academic year. On average there are 40 students in each of these trainings. That brings the total of participants in Mediator Mentor, peer mediation training to be approximately 2,500. In Fall and Spring semesters together, approximately 30 university student mediator mentors were trained and ‘adopted’ their school peer mediation program and served on site with teacher leaders as program developers and mentors to peer mediators. Most of the 30 students received \$500 stipend (per semester) for serving as a site Mentor. In some cases, Fresno State students used their hours of Mediator Mentor work as service or volunteer allocations of time. In addition, Mediator Mentors reached another 400 adults in the community who attended related lectures and events sponsored or co-sponsored by Mediator Mentors in this academic year. A record of expenditures for these and related activities are shown in the Transaction Analysis Report (budget), which is appended to this document.

An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of These Activities

Program evaluation is conducted at the school site. Each site decides what outcomes to measure. Mediator Mentors (university students) complete a survey at the close of their semester of service. Participating students report that their experiences assist them in a) understanding children's conflict, b) learning program development skills, c) making their own communication more effective and professional.

The results of the research done in our work with The California Endowment in 2011/2012 has been reported in detail to CalEndow and shared in summary with all teacher presentations. This is attached as an appendix to this document. This shows statistically significant gains in social emotional and academic learning in students who were trained as peer mediators, pre and post, comparing mediators and non-mediators. An article analyzing this data is pending in spring of 2014 by Pam Lane Garon, Karen DeVoogd, Christina Cassinerio Wilson and Chuck Kralowec.

The following article summarizing program effects on school climate and peer mediators was published in Conflict Resolution Quarterly Winter

- *Conflict Resolution Education and Positive Behavioral Support: A Climate of Safety for All Learners.* Pamela Lane Garon, Jessica Yergat and Chuck Kralowec
Conflict Resolution Quarterly Winter 2012. Vol 30, Issue 2, pages 197 – 217

The impact of Mediator Mentors is clearly seen in our partnering elementary schools and middle schools. It should also be noted that it is also continues to inspire educational leadership doctoral candidates in the Ed.D program at Fresno State. Dissertations with conflict resolution education and mediation topics were completed by Drs. Eimear O'Farrell, Johnny Alvarado, Kimberli Law and Deanna Cardoza. Dr. Joe Thomson continues this focus with the following doctoral class: Conflict Resolution Education: Theory, Research and Application for Educational Leaders (the class was originated by Dr. Lane-Garon).

Since we have become a CRETE partner (National Conflict Education Grant), we have completed pre/post assessments of the four-day training participants and these have been overwhelmingly positive.

Source of Funding

Since 2008, Mediator Mentors has received support from The Kremen School Community Council, The Garabedian Foundation, The Bonner Family Foundation, Friends of Civic Engagement, JAMS, Fresno County Office of Education, Rotary Fresno, The Lemmons, University Outreach Services, Dean Beare of the Kremen School, Spano Enterprises, The Kremen School Internship Program, Lozano-Smith Attorneys at Law, Clovis Child Development Department, Fresno Unified School District, Sanger Unified Schools, The Catholic Diocese of Fresno, Gromis and Aguirre Attorneys at Law, Dorothy Rohlfing, SAVE MART Shares program, The National Association for Conflict Resolution and the Central Valley Chapter of the same. However, in the academic year of this report, the main sources of support were Bonner Family Foundation, The California Endowment and Rotary. We typically start each academic year with a zero (or near) balance. With ongoing grant writing and outreach to interested

partners, we hope to change that picture and fund Mediator Mentors in a more stable way, over time.

Funds Including Income from Service and Product Sales

It is important to note, that although Mediator Mentors does not charge for services, we were able to bring in tuition income to the University this year with the offering of Graduate Units for CRETE trainings. These high-quality educational experiences for educators and counselors span four, eight hour days. Participants take away beautifully developed curriculum materials to use in their classrooms.

Other Revenues and Expenditures

Some expenditures not covered by program funds have been colored materials, brochures, folders etc. (FedX/Kinkos) for presentations, food provided at Mentor Trainings and Space and Equipment Utilization (University Business Center use of training rooms and VCR). Many of these expenses, along with costs of T shirts for Mentors, have generally been absorbed by faculty (over \$2,500).

Within our budget, we offer a small stipend to Henry Placenta who has provided valuable assistance with our website and technical support during CRETE. We serve more than 65 school programs and are fully stretched to meet training requests. As a result, we have had to use Mediator Mentor funds to pay stipends for additional trainers who are experienced, certified mediators in our community.

The Kremen School of Education and Human Development has provided a stipend this spring of 2013 to support Christina Cassinerio Wilson as our project coordinator. This is an ongoing challenge to find financial support to more appropriately compensate Ms. Cassinerio Wilson for her invaluable assistance with Mediator Mentor coordination and CRETE training.

Space and Equipment Utilization

It is becoming increasingly more difficult to find available rooms on campus that are large enough for student training. The average group size is 30-45, although when two schools attend together, that number is doubled. Active learning for students in grades 3 through 8 necessitates role-play as well as lecture and small group activity. University Business Center has the facilities that are most flexible for our needs, however, there is a cost associated with room rental and equipment use. It is still the Project Director's hope that the Deans of the Kremen and Craig schools might negotiate an arrangement on behalf of Mediator Mentors and other program to eliminate this cost.

Goals and Objectives 2013-2014

The following Year's Goals and Objectives

Mediator Mentors is in a pivotal moment with the retirement of the founding director and professor in LEBSE Dr. Pam Lane Garon. The advisory board and the new director and coordinator are fully dedicated to continue to advance the vision of Mediator Mentors. The

following specific goals are listed here, not necessarily in order of importance, as all elements will need to be pursued vigorously:

1. Pursuing more stable funding over all for Mediator Mentors activities is a major goal and to that end more grant writing and sponsor support is needed to allow us to maintain and grow our program and support additional trainers.
2. Mediator Mentor stipends support our Fresno State students and this is something we are committed to continuing. More stable and perhaps different funding sources or structures will be pursued in hope that we can maintain this offering.
3. The coordinator position of Mediator Mentors is currently paid through stipend and needs to be supported with a more stable funding source to assure continuity and sustainability.
4. CRETE is well respected in our community of educators and it is currently a temporary topics class of 180T and 280T. We will work with Dr. Susan Macy and LEBSE committees to make these permanent elective classes.
5. CRETE training will take Mediator Mentors faculty to other counties and hopefully other schools of education in California. In August of 2013 we will host CRETE training at UC Merced as per our current CalEndow grant implementation agreement, to reach the Tri-County area.
6. We plan to grow the “Clovis East model” of fostering cross age mentoring from high school to middle and elementary schools in Fresno Unified with peer mediation programs. We have connected with a key leader in Fresno Unified, Lori Gambera who is charged with supporting healthy school culture with the FUSD and have preliminary plans in place for fall of 2013.

Request for Renewal of the Unit

Based on the enthusiastic requests for mediation program development and training for students and teachers in our school communities in (6 districts), Mediator Mentors requests the renewal of their current status as a Kremen School of Education and Human Development Special Project.

Appendix

- A. The unit’s financial statement prepared by the California State University, Fresno Foundation.