



## Be Neutral

August 2010

A Publication of the Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution



### From the Director

Last month we were saddened by the death of Georgia Court of Appeals Judge Debra Bernes on July 20. Judge Bernes was a member of our Commission on Dispute Resolution from 2006, and she was active on the Training and Credentials Committee and the Strategic Planning Group. We were fortunate to benefit from her wisdom and counsel for those few short years.

The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* published an obituary, which you can read [here](#). Judge Bernes' memorial service was held July 22 at Ahavath Achim Synagogue in Atlanta. Commission Chair Edie Primm and I attended, along with more than 1200 friends, family members and colleagues.

If you would like to make a memorial donation, you can do so through two organizations:



### The Judge Debra Halpern Bernes Scholarship

Cobb County Bar Association  
30 Waddell St., Suite 601  
Marietta, GA 30090.

The scholarship assists Georgia residents who want to attend one of the state's public law schools – the University of Georgia or Georgia State University. The scholarship will be awarded to a student who has given back to the community through service. For more information, contact Bar Association Executive Director Linda C. Hill, 770-424-7149.

### The Jewish Educational Loan Fund

4549 Chamblee Dunwoody Road  
Atlanta, GA 30338, 770-396-3080.

### Shinji Morokuma, Director GODR

gaodr@godr.org



### Mediators Needed in Tifton Circuit

The Tifton Judicial Circuit ADR Program, the newest ADR program in Georgia, is seeking registered mediators for its local roster. Needed especially are domestic relations mediators and specialized domestic violence mediators, as well as mediators in Irwin and Worth counties. (The circuit also comprises Tift and Turner counties.) Contact ADR Program Director Jacqueline Reynolds, Tifton Judicial Circuit, P.O. Box 1369, 225 N. Tift Ave., Suite 302, Tifton, GA 31794, 229-386-7904, fax 229-386-7977, [jreynolds@planttel.net](mailto:jreynolds@planttel.net).

### Exclusive Insurance Products for Neutrals Gaining Popularity

Response was fast and furious to last month's announcement of our new insurance and retirement program for registered neutrals. If you are looking for good deals on major medical insurance, healthcare savings accounts, dental and vision insurance, and more, check out the [GODR Registered Neutrals Insurance and Retirement Programs website](#). How about a good deal of professional liability insurance for mediators and arbitrators? See our [website](#) for more information or contact [Betsy Thomas](#) at [Complete Equity Markets](#), 800-324-6234, ext. 472, and tell her you're a Georgia registered neutral!



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### Recent Changes in Local ADR Programs

Two well-established ADR programs have undergone some leadership changes over the last two months. At the DeKalb County Courts Dispute Resolution Center, Director Deborah Blanton has taken early retirement, and she has been succeeded by Amber Gallman, Esq., a veteran mediator and attorney.

Myra Crawford left the DeKalb ADR office to direct the recently revitalized DeKalb County Juvenile Court Mediation Program. She formerly was director of the Clayton County Juvenile Court Mediation Program.

At the Cobb County Juvenile Court Mediation Program, founding director Pam McClure has taken early retirement. She has been succeeded by Rodney Savage.

The latest contact information for local court ADR programs is always available on our [website](#). Search by county or program name.

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### Divorce Mediation in the News

A nice story last week in the [Arizona Republic](#) featured two couples and their productive experiences with divorce mediation. One result: A father who stays in his ex-wife's spare bedroom when he's visiting his daughter. The story showcases how such a creative arrangement was possible through the power of mediation, and it describes how mediation promotes amicable relations that have lasting positive impacts on couples and kids.



Coincidentally, the new Summer 2010 issue of *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* contains an article on "Divorce Mediation Outcome Research: a Meta-Analysis," by Lori Anne Shaw of Abilene Christian University. The author analyzed the results of five previous studies on the effects of divorce mediation v. litigation. The article's conclusion: mediation had a moderate but significant positive effect in measurements of process satisfaction, outcome satisfaction, emotional satisfaction, spousal relationship and understanding children's needs. A short abstract is available [here](#) for free. If you want a copy of the full article, see the [Conflict Resolution Quarterly](#) website for instructions on how to purchase one.

Thanks to Professor Susan Raines of Kennesaw State University for alerting us to the [Arizona Republic](#) article. Dr. Raines is also, coincidentally, editor in chief of [CRQ](#).

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### Faculty Openings in Conflict Management at KSU

Want to teach others what you love to do? Kennesaw State University is searching for candidates to fill three new faculty positions in conflict resolution: 1) Assistant Professor of Conflict Management, who will primarily teach in KSU's Master of Science in Conflict Management program. See [here](#) for details. 2) Two openings tenure-track professors for a new Ph.D. program in International Conflict Management. See [here](#) for details.

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### Save the Date

The 16th Annual ADR Institute and 2010 Neutrals' Conference will be held Friday, December 10, 2010, at the State Bar of Georgia Conference Center, 104 Marietta St. NW, Atlanta. Attendance was standing room only last year, and we hope to fill as many seats or more this year. At least 6 hours of neutral continuing education and 6 hours of CLE (including 1 Ethics Hour) will be available. More details and conference registration will be available through [www.iclega.org](#) in November. Stay tuned!



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### Upcoming CE and Training Offerings

Lots of CE and training opportunities are upcoming. Brush up on your skills or acquire new tools to assist you in your practice. Check frequently at our [website](#) for the latest CE and training offerings.

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### Commission Meeting in September

The next meeting of the Commission on Dispute Resolution is scheduled for Thursday, September 9, at 2 pm, in Meeting Room 1 of the [State Bar of Georgia](#) Conference Center, 104 Marietta St. NW, Atlanta, GA 30303. Meetings are open to the public. Upcoming Commission meetings, agendas and minutes are always posted on our [website](#).

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### Did You Know

You can check any neutral's registration status anytime by going to [www.godr.org](http://www.godr.org) and clicking on "Find a Neutral" at the top of the page. There, you can search the neutral by using county, mediation category, registration ID, additional expertise, last name, or first name. If a neutral's name does not appear on the list, then the neutral's registration is not current and may be in inactive or archived status. If you see any inaccuracies in our records, [please let us know](#).



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