

# IFSP FACILITATORS' NAMES AND OCCUPATIONS

## Jean Biesecker

Jean M. Biesecker, a solo practitioner, has been a family law attorney for over 25 years, graduating from the T.C. Williams School of Law and obtaining her Master in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University. In addition to representing families in a range of matters related to separation and divorce, Jean has served as an advocate for children, parents and foster parents in the child welfare system. Since 1997, she has incorporated mediation as a key component of services in her family law practice and has been a Mediator for the Montgomery and Chester County court-connected custody mediation programs since May 2002. In addition to her family law mediation practice, Jean has also mediated pre-EEO complaints for the U.S. Postal Service REDRESS Program and has training in elder mediation matters. Jean is also a collaborative family Law attorney and Parent Coordinator, facilitating resolution of parenting disputes as a Parent Coordinator for high conflict families in the Denver District Court from 2000-2001.

As an educator, Jean is a former co-instructor for Denver-based Dispute Resolution Professionals, teaching a court-mandated parenting education class; trainer for Pennsylvania Child Welfare Competency-Based Training and Certification Program as well as the Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth and Family Services; former adjunct faculty at James Beasley School of Law, co-teaching a clinical custody mediation program. Jean continued to provide supervision for law students in the clinical program from the Fall 2008 through Spring 2011.

## Cheryl Cutrona, Esquire

Cheryl Cutrona has been the Executive Director of the Good Shepherd Mediation Program for 20 years. She is a mediator, facilitator, conflict coach, trainer, arbitrator, editor, attorney and adjunct faculty at Temple University Beasley School of Law. She mediates for the Office for Dispute Resolution; the Philadelphia Bar Association Lawyer Fee Disputes panel; the Philadelphia Landlord-Tenant appeals mediation program; and the U.S. Postal Service REDRESS. She arbitrates for the Better Business Bureau, DeMars Associates, and the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas. Cutrona sits on the SR 160 PA Task Force on Alternative Dispute Resolution Advisory Committee; the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Council of Mediators; the Board of Directors of the Association for Conflict Resolution Greater Delaware Valley Chapter; and the Editorial Board of *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*. She is the 2008 recipient of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee "Sir Francis Bacon Dispute Resolution Award" and was named "Most Valuable Peacemaker" by the Pennsylvania Council of Mediators in 2010. Cutrona holds a BA from Michigan State University, a Masters in Library Science from Wayne State University, and a JD from Temple University, Beasley School of Law.

## Ellen J. DeBenedetti, M.Ed.

Ellen J. DeBenedetti M.Ed. has been a mediator since 1990. She began her career in mediation at a community mediation center and is now a mediator, trainer and conflict coach in private practice. She also mediates for Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, United States Postal Service, PA Department of Education (Special

Education mediations), Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA), Key Bridge Foundation (Department of Justice ADA mediations), Transportation Security Administration, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and US District Court Western Division. From 1997-2010 she was the training coordinator / senior mediator at Dialogue and Resolution Center of CVVC (formerly Pittsburgh Mediation Center), where her primary responsibilities included training in Conflict Management, Mediation, Team Building and Diversity issues, conflict coaching, and mediating some of the more complex and multi-party mediations.

Ellen has been training mediators since 1992. Ellen has taught mediation courses at Duquesne University and California University of PA. She designed and taught the original "Methods of Resolving Conflict Course" for the Duquesne University Sociology Department's certificate program in Conflict Resolution and Peacemaking. She participated in the Pittsburgh Public Schools mediation training, co-authored the "Keys to Peaceful Conflict Resolution" curriculum and taught that curriculum as a volunteer at East Hills Elementary School. Ellen is on the boards of the Pennsylvania Council of Mediators and The Mediation Council of Western PA. She is certified by the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation to be a mediator. In addition to her career in mediation, Ellen was a special education teacher for 20 years. She views mediation as an opportunity for the people involved to have a constructive conversation and to make decisions about the issues

### **Thomas J. Frost**

Mr. Frost is a special education mediator for the Office of Dispute Resolution. He has been active in the field of special education for over thirty five years. He served as a special education mediator in the state of New Jersey for fifteen years. . He is certified as a special education mediator by the Atlanta Justice Center. He has served as a director of special education in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Mr. Frost holds degrees from St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Southern Connecticut University and Rowan University. Mr. Frost recently retired from an intermediate unit where he served as a professional development specialist working with parents and school staff. Mr. Frost facilitated a Local Taskforce on the Right to Education for four years. He also served as a county interagency coordinator bringing together mental health agencies and school districts to support individual student's education as appropriate and necessary.

### **Barbara Foxman**

Barbara Foxman is a licensed clinical social worker, psychotherapist and mediator. She specializes in the treatment of children and adolescents with special needs including learning differences, issues of bereavement and loss and the impact on divorce on children and adults. She has worked with schools for educational planning of the children that she sees. Ms. Foxman has also worked as a therapist with children and their families at Southern Home for Children in Philadelphia, The Devereux Foundation and Bryn Mawr Hospital, Youth and Family Psychotherapy Program. Ms. Foxman mediates elder mediation, family, divorce, EEOC matters and mediation in school settings. Ms. Foxman has presented workshops on Values and Ethics for Social Workers ethics in health care, ethical standards for mediators practicing elder mediation, and conflict resolution for addiction counselors. She has been a trainer for Elder Mediation, and use of conflict resolution in health care settings. She has also spoken on areas of loss, bereavement and emotions for court custody mediation programs and in health care settings. Ms. Foxman has a MSW from Wayne State University, and is a Board Certified Diplomat in Social Work.

### **Lou Ann Gray, M.ED., NCPC**

Lou Ann Gray, M.ED., NCPC, is a private practitioner in the areas of mediation, parent coordination and counseling. An adjunct faculty member at Pennsylvania Highlands Community College in the areas of sociology, psychology, human services anthropology and education, Ms. Gray specializes in high conflict mediation. In Pennsylvania, her practice encompasses the counties of Cambria, Bedford, Somerset and Allegheny counties. As a mediator for the United States District Court of Western Pennsylvania, she participates in mediation of civil, domestic relations and education cases. Her mediation training includes basic and advanced sessions in civil, domestic relations, interested-based bargaining and education modules and was completed in the states of Pennsylvania, Michigan and Illinois.

Ms. Gray completed her master's degree in Counselor Education from the University of Pittsburgh. She received a bachelor of science degree from the University of Pittsburgh in Psychology. Her professional experience includes; advocacy for children with learning disabilities, 18 years of public education where she served as a Guidance Counselor, LEA and coordinator of MDE and Child Study teams, behavior specialist, and director of one of the first alternative education programs in the state of Pennsylvania.

Currently Ms. Gray is a member of the Association for Conflict Resolution, Pennsylvania Council of Mediators, Mediation Council of Western Pennsylvania, Professional Academy of Custody Evaluators, and Business and Women's Association, Windber, PA Chapter. She is an expert on the panel of mediators for Center of Resolution, LLC Chicago, IL.

### **Nancy Geist Giacomini, Ed.D.**

Dr. Giacomini is a private educator, mediator and author based in Chester County, PA. Her longtime national advocacy for integrating inclusive conflict management practices in education culminated in her co-edited journal Reframing Campus Conflict: Student Conduct Practice through a Social Justice Lens (Stylus 2009). She has enjoyed national speaking engagements, webinar series, and system review consultations based on the ideas collaboratively advanced in this groundbreaking publication.

Dr. Giacomini returned to the University of Delaware in 2011 as the graduate practicum instructor for Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education (College of Education and Human Development). She is certified to administer the Conflict Dynamics Profile (CDP) and teach Becoming Conflict Competent curriculum developed by Eckerd College and is presently investigating opportunities to develop the instrument and curriculum for undergraduate and graduate coursework. Nancy earned her Doctor of Education Degree from the University of Delaware while a Conflict Resolution Program (CRP) Associate in the Institute for Public Administration. She taught in the master's program, mediated special education disputes for the Delaware Department of Education, and facilitated statewide dialogue. Doctoral research, "Enhancing the Collaborative Capacity of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in Delaware Schools", helped shape state-wide IEP facilitation and training. Nancy holds additional degrees in Counseling and Psychology.

Dr. Giacomini held national leadership positions in the Association for Student Conduct Administration (ASCA) including roles as annual faculty member, planning team member and co-chair of the association's annual summer training institute for student conduct professionals in higher education. Under her leadership, ASCA integrated marginalized

conflict resolution themes across traditional adjudication training tracks, organized the first nationally offered restorative justice training for student conduct administrators, and updated the annual mediation curriculum to include social and restorative justice theories and the Spectrum of Resolution Options Model (Schrage & Thompson, 2008) to help evolve student conduct practice beyond an adjudication model. Nancy was national program chair for two annual conferences and was elected to a three year-board position as president. In 2004, she was honored with the Gehring Award, the association's top honor.

Dr. Giacomini's interest in conflict resolution began at the University of Delaware while Assistant Dean of Students for Judicial Affairs. Over a decade of on campus leadership included roles as mediation trainer and advisor to the student government as students worked to develop a town/gown mediation program. She chaired the Appellate Judicial Board, Council for Student Judicial Affairs, and Sexual Assault Awareness Weeks and was awarded the prestigious Institutional Award for Women's Equity for her campus advocacy. Nancy's career has bridged conduct and conflict management practice in higher education, special education, K-12, government, business and non-profits. Today she enjoys a diverse educationally-based training, mediation, and consulting practice; teaches K-12 curriculum-based programs at Longwood Gardens in Kennett, PA and volunteers in local schools, girl scouts and for animal rescue.

### **Lorraine Heeter, Esquire**

Attorney Lorraine Heeter earned a bachelor of science in Nursing from LaSalle University and her Juris Doctor from Case Western Reserve University. She has 11 years' experience in pediatric nursing before changing careers to the practice of law. Attorney Heeter practiced with a law firm for two years before becoming a PA Special Education Appeals Panel Member, of which she was a member until the current change in the PA Due Process system. Attorney Heeter attended the certificate program for Conflict Resolution and Mediation at the Center for Victims of Violence and Crime in Pittsburgh PA.

### **Dr. Constance Fox Lyttle, Esquire**

Associate Clinical Professor, Drexel University

Attorney in Private Practice (PA)

Academic/Inclusion Consultant/Coach (NY/NJ)

Former Tenured Associate Professor of Special Education (10 years) Duquesne University; Associate in Law firm of Kirkpatrick & Lockhart; PA Special Education Hearing Officer & Appeals Panel Hearing Officer

### **Jean M. Lupariello, Esquire**

Jean M. Lupariello is an attorney/mediator with a private practice in mediation and collaborative law. She has been a court-appointed mediator in the custody department of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas for the past 13 years and has been appointed as a Parenting Coordinator and a Guardian Ad Litem by the Family Court judges on many cases. She is also a contract mediator for the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh. Attorney Lupariello has spent many years representing families in Juvenile Court where she is involved with the agencies and resources ordered for children with special needs and attending and providing input at IEP meetings as an Educational

### **Gerald Powers, Ed.D.**

Mediator in Private Practice

Retired Professor of Education from Bloomsburg University of PA

### **Jane Rigler**

Jane Rigler has nearly thirty years of experience as an arbitrator and mediator. She spent twenty-seven years associated with an educational institution and currently resides in Carlisle.

### **James Salem**

James Salem has been employed as a certified special education teacher, administrator, and consultant to both private and public schools in Pennsylvania for 55 years. He has a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Pittsburgh and a Master of Science degree from Gallaudet University.

In 1993, Mr. Salem was trained to be a mediator by the Justice Center of Atlanta, and since that time he has been employed by the Office for Dispute Resolution, conducting hundreds of mediations, Resolution Meetings, and IEP facilitations.

Mr. Salem has chaired and/or participated in hundreds of special education program audits for the Pennsylvania Department of Education. He is a former member and chair of the state Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP), and has served as co-chair of the Educational Resources for Children with Hearing Loss committee (ERCHL), an advisory committee to the Bureau of Special Education.

### **Janice Seidenfeld**

Mediator in Private Practice

Mediator for the Key Bridge Foundation

### **Marty Thomas-Brumme**

Development Officer for Elizabethtown College

Previous Director of the Rose Mediation Center

### **Judy Tobe**

Judy Tobe, M.A. received her Master's Degree in Communication Disorders from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1983. In addition to diagnosing and treating various populations with speech and language disorders, she has developed and presented learning programs in the form of executive level presentations, intensive skill sessions and multi-day trainings to professional associations, hospitals and corporations both nationally and internationally. In 2000, she became a mediator and, as a mediator in private practice, has mediated over 500 cases involving educational, employment and discrimination disputes. In addition to mediating for the Office for Dispute Resolution, Ms. Tobe also serves as a mediator for the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania

### **Max Wald, Ed.D.**

Max Wald, Ed.D. has served as a teacher, school principal at both the elementary and secondary school level, director of special education, college professor, hearing officer, and mediator. Dr. Wald earned all of his degrees at Temple University where he also taught

and supervised student teachers. He served as a principal in the School District of Philadelphia, Colonial School District, and the Cherry Hill School District. He was a director at the Woods Schools and the Pathway School. He has taught at Temple University, Arcadia University, and at the University of Leicester in England. Dr. Wald received a research fellowship in rehabilitation psychology at the Moss Rehabilitation Hospital and is certified as a teacher and supervisor of special education. He served as a Hearing Officer with the Office for Dispute resolution for the past nine years and is currently a trained mediator. He is certified by the Florida Supreme Court as a family mediator.