



**Announcing the Third Annual
Social Justice Mediation Training
Friday, August 21 – Tuesday, August 25, 2009**

Dear Colleagues,

OSCR is inviting nominations and soliciting applications for participation in our Third Annual Social Justice Mediation Training to be held Friday, August 21 through Tuesday, August 25, 2009 (8:30 – 5:30 each day). Please circulate this announcement widely to other community members.

OSCR offers Social Justice Mediation as an integral component of our menu of conflict resolution services to students who seek assistance resolving a conflict. In mediation, people involved in a conflict are provided the assistance of an uninvolved third party to explore and address their conflict. In OSCR's approach to conflict resolution, intersecting relationships between conflict, power, and identity are considered to the fullest extent possible. All Social Justice Mediation Training participants explore critical issues and concepts related to social justice work and the role of power, privilege, and oppression in society, organizations, and intergroup and interpersonal relations as a foundation for understanding and addressing conflict in a socially just way.

Participation in OSCR's Third Annual Social Justice Mediation Training requires a commitment to attending every minute of the five-day, forty-hour training, as well as an agreement to volunteer as a mediator at least once during the 2009-2010 academic year. In order to provide a rich training experience, participation in Social Justice Mediation Training is capped at 24 participants. Please see additional information about Social Justice Mediation Training at the bottom of this email.

We invite you to apply for a spot or to nominate a University community member, including students, faculty, and staff who might appreciate the opportunity to go through Social Justice Mediation Training. **To nominate someone, simply reply to this email with your nominee's name and email address, and ideally (although not required) a sentence or two about why you are nominating them.**

If you would like to apply to participate, please review the information below and bear in mind the commitment involved. If participating in the training will take time away from your employment, please be sure to consult your supervisor before applying. Since attachments are not permitted on DSA-wide emails, **email me or your unit lead to request the application form, and note that all completed applications must be submitted to me by Monday, June 22, 2009.**

Please forward this announcement to other community members, and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

In Building Trust, Promoting Justice, and Teaching Peace,

Carrie Landrum
Student Conflict Resolution Coordinator
Team Coordinator for OSCR's Third Annual Social Justice Mediation Training

P.S. If you are interested in Social Justice Mediation but are unable to attend this year's training, please email me and let me know your interest.

What is Social Justice Mediation?

Social Justice Mediation is a service OSCR offers to University community members who would like assistance resolving a conflict. In mediation, people involved in a conflict are provided the assistance of an uninvolved third party to explore and address the conflict. Unlike in arbitration, a mediator does not dictate the outcome or resolution of a conflict. Rather, participation is strictly voluntary and any resolution to a conflict is completely in the hands of the parties.

OSCR employs a particular mediation model known as Social Justice Mediation which recognizes the intersecting relationships between conflict, power, and identity, and the ways power, privilege and oppression relate to conflict in society at large and between individuals. Many mediation models emphasize mediator neutrality and impartiality, and may focus on a resolution agreement. Social Justice Mediation instead emphasizes multipartiality and recognizes that socialization and the reality of oppression dynamics in society inhibit the ability of mediators to achieve genuine neutrality or impartiality. Additionally, the focus of Social Justice Mediation is on storytelling, by providing space for each person to describe their own conflict narrative without being influenced by others' perspectives or framing. The theoretical underpinnings of the Social Justice Mediation model can be found in articles such as *Racial Identity Development and the Mediation of Conflicts* by Leah Wing and Janet Rifkin.

What does Social Justice Mediation Training involve?

OSCR brings in Leah Wing and Deepika Marya of the Social Justice Mediation Institute in Amherst, MA to lead our 40-hour certification course in Social Justice Mediation. A typical mediation training course lasts 40 hours and focuses on introducing participants to mediation concepts and skills without attention to issues of social justice in conflict resolution. OSCR's Social Justice Mediation Training first thoroughly explores issues of power, privilege, and social identity before moving on to mediation concepts, yet it is packed into the same 40 hours. Therefore, it is imperative that participants are committed to attending every minute of the five-day, forty-hour training.

What is expected of Social Justice Mediators?

OSCR relies on its trained, volunteer mediators to co-mediate conflicts as requested. When students request mediation, OSCR will send an email call for mediators who self select if and when they are available to mediate. OSCR asks each person who goes through Social Justice Mediation Training to commit to being available to serve as a mediator at least once during the following academic year. Social Justice Mediators work in teams, so must be comfortable working with co-mediators. It is also expected that Social Justice Mediators are adept at working with different cultural and personal styles of storytelling, are good listeners, are able to stretch themselves to invite under-the-surface stories by being aware of issues of power and privilege in society, and are comfortable surfacing and discussing such issues in the event they may be relevant to a mediated conflict.

Carrie E. Landrum
Student Conflict Resolution Coordinator
Office of Student Conflict Resolution
University of Michigan
www.oscr.umich.edu
Build Trust. Promote Justice. Teach Peace.