



OREGON MEDIATION ASSOCIATION
An Oregon Non-Profit Corporation

The Hispanic/Latino Community Dispute Resolution Project

Final Report to
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Grant #2001-6697

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Submitted December 30, 2004

This project and this report were made possible because of a generous grant
from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

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The Oregon Mediation Association (OMA) would like to thank everyone associated with this project. Because so many individuals and programs contributed along the way, and some before OMA was involved, OMA sincerely apologizes for any omissions.

Thanks to:

Christina Albo, Clackamas Family Court Services
Frances Alvarado, OHDC, Woodburn
Silvia Baez, Samaritan Counseling
Victoria Barnhart, Head Start, Multicultural Event
Craig Bazzi, Parole Supervisor, Marion County Juvenile Department
Dago Benavides
Jason Caldwell, Marion County Boys & Girls Club
Tom Carranza, Citizen Review Board, Marion County
Ginger Casto, consultant
Catarino Cavasos, Oregon Human Development Corporation
Mary Lou Cornejo, Volunteer Coordinator, Oregon University Extension Services
Samuel Davila
El Programa Hispano, Gresham, OR
Juanita Ephraim, Talent Middle School
City of Fairview, OR
Angelica Figueroa-Hull, Headstart
Cleo Freauf, Marion County Juvenile Department
Ernestina Garcia
Frank Garcia, State of Oregon
Krista Hazen, Children and Families Commission
Angie Hedrick, Department of Community Services
John Hoffmeister, IA, Salem Police Department
Marth Ibarra, Oregon Child Development Coalition
Lana Holman
Linda Gertz, YWCA
Mauricio Gutierrez, West Medford Family Center
Barrie Jordan, Salem Housing Authority
Paul Johnson, Polk County Victim Offender Reconciliation Program
Jean Lasater, NW Human Services
Rosa Lombardi, Community Coordinator
Frank Lopez, Oregon State Hispanic Employees Network
Pam Lucas, Educational Services District
Dr. Gilberto Lucero, Portland State University
Mt. Hood Community College
Lauren McNeill
Lili Olberding
Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement
Cam Preus-Braly
Portland Public Schools
Carmen Ramirez, Farmworkers Housing Project

Raul Ramirez, Hispanic Interagency Committee
Juan Ramirez, Intensive Family Services, Marion County
Tadeo Saenz
Connie Saldana, Rogue Valley Council of Governments
Milo Salgado, Kathy Kasee, Hispanic Interagency, Jobs Council
J. Luis Sarinana
John Schafer, Marion County Juvenile Department
Elida Sifuentes, Woodburn City Council and McLaren Rehabilitation Center
Gabe Silva
Maria Swann, Medford Police Department
Mike Swaim, former Mayor of Salem
Matia Trejo, Oregon State Lottery
Maria Underwood, Marcy Robichau, La Clinica del Valle
Amanda Vallejo
Debbie Willer, journalist
Gustavo Wilson
Father Dave Zegar, Woodburn Pastor
Lisa Zepeta, Women's Crisis Center

Former commissioners and staff at the Oregon Dispute Resolution Commission
OMA Board of Directors

Special Thanks to:

Terry Amsler, The Hewlett Foundation
The Hewlett Hispanic/Latino Project Advisory Committee:
Dago Benavidez, Marion County CASA
Cherlie Benitez, Oregon Dept. of Education
Lily Caceres, Hispanic Services Roundtable
Tricia Crawford, OMA Board
Merced Flores, Oregon Dept. of Education
Ernestina Garcia, Willamette ESD
Tomas Garza, Linn-Benton Mediation Services
Hal Harding, Oregon Dispute Resolution Commission
Lana Holman, Juvenile Justice Commission
John Lenssen, Oregon Dept. of Education
Francesca Levy-Johnson, Eugene City Manager's Office
Lauren McNeill, Oregon Association of Family Court Mediators
Celia Nunez, Oregon Dispute Resolution Commission
Lili Olberding, Court Certified Interpreter
Andrea Ortiz, Bethel School District
Cam Preus-Braly, Community Colleges and Workforce Development
Paul Ramirez, Marion County Sheriff
Erin Ruff, Oregon Judicial Dept.
Amanda Vallejo, Oregon Dept. of Transportation
Gustavo Wilson, Oregon Dept. of Housing and Community Services
Oswaldo Bernal & Michael Hanna, KGW TV
Roberta Cordero

Gemma Escale, Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement
Jennifer Fenniman
Spencer French, La Zeta Radio
Eve Ford, Oregon Department of Housing and Community Services
Tomas Garza, Garza Mediation
Clara I. Gomez
Rafael Montalvo
Mike Niemeyer, Department of Justice
Connie Ozawa, Ph.D., Portland State University
Frances Portillo, Portillo Consulting, International
Esther Puentes and the staff at Interface Network, Inc.
Julio Quan
Rosemary Romero, Association for Conflict Resolution
Maria Smith
Lami Subia
Cristian Villasenor and the staff at KWBY, La Pantera Radio
Walter A. Wright
Mary Young, Latin Media Specialists
The boards, staff, and volunteers of participating community dispute resolution programs

Background and History

Oregon's demographics were rapidly changing. The 2000 Census estimated Oregon's Hispanic/Latino population¹ at approximately eight percent of Oregon's total population.² Additionally the US Census Bureau estimated in 2000 that it would continue to grow fifteen to twenty percent within four years. Staff at The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (Hewlett Foundation) familiar with Oregon's dispute resolution resources and staff at the Oregon Dispute Resolution Commission (ODRC) began to discuss the needs and possibilities of a statewide project to provide culturally appropriate services to the Hispanic/Latino community through individual community dispute resolution programs (CDRPs³).

ODRC staff discussed the possibilities and submitted a formal application to the Hewlett Foundation. In September 2001, a \$250,000 grant was awarded to the ODRC for the support of a multi-year project intended to design and deliver culturally appropriate dispute resolution services to Oregon Hispanic/Latino and Spanish speaking communities. There were four specific goals of the project:

1. Increase Oregon Hispanic/Latino participation in appropriate dispute resolution.
2. Increase knowledge about Hispanic/Latino needs and preferences for appropriate dispute resolution.
3. Understand and address culturally based conflict, especially in relationship to the Oregon Hispanic/Latino population.
4. Build linkages between appropriate dispute resolution services and communities which utilize those services.⁴

During the initial phase of the grant, the ODRC formed an Advisory Committee consisting of Hispanic and Latino community leaders, administrators from public and private sector programs that work with Hispanic and Latino constituents, and dispute resolution practitioners and program managers.

In addition to the formation and convening of the Advisory Committee, the ODRC worked with the Oregon CDRPs to explain the goals and intention of the grant. Ultimately, six CDRPs expressed interest in the grant and submitted proposals to demonstrate how they would work to meet the goals of the project. The ODRC also hired a private consultant to design and assist CDRPs in implementing needs assessments of their local communities regarding the types and needs of conflict resolution services for Latino and Spanish speaking communities the local CDRPs served.

¹ Hispanic/Latino is used to include people of both Hispanic and Latino origin and is inclusive of all races.

² US Census Bureau, www.census.gov

³ The acronym CDRC (Community Dispute Resolution Center) is also used in this report to refer to the same type of organization.

⁴ ODRC grant application to the Hewlett Foundation.

Changing Demographics

The percentage of Hispanic/Latino and Spanish-speaking people in each of the six project communities varied widely. Based on Census 2000 data, Linn County had one of the smallest Latino populations at 4.4%, followed by Jackson County (6.7%) and Multnomah County (7.5%). Deschutes County had the smallest population in the project (3.7%) but the CDRP that serves Deschutes County also serves Jefferson County, which has the largest percentage of Latinos in their community (17.7%). Marion County also had a large percentage of Latinos (17.1%).⁵

But percentages of population are only part of a more complex story. Those numbers represent both recent immigrants as well as people whose families have been here for multiple generations. Communities are not only dealing with differences in ethnicity, but also differences in income, education, and language abilities. For example, Portland's immigrant population more than doubled in size during the 1990s.⁶ A study of the tri-county region of Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties reported that Latin Americans represent 36 percent of the foreign-born population.⁷ In addition, the study reported that foreign-born in the tri-county area are more than twice as likely to live in poverty and "almost three times as many noncitizens (23 percent) live below the poverty level when compared with naturalized citizens (8 percent)."⁸ The study of the tri-county area also reported that "eight percent of the total population and 52 percent of the foreign-born population five years and older is limited English proficient" with the majority of those being Spanish speakers.⁹

CDRP Program Descriptions

As explained earlier, six CDRPs throughout Oregon were chosen to participate in this project. The following section briefly describes each of the CDRPs in this project.

Central Oregon Mediation

Central Oregon Mediation (COM), formerly Community Dispute Resolution Program, is a non-profit organization located in Bend, Oregon and serves Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson Counties and Warm Springs. COM is a non-profit organization receiving funding from local governments and private and public donations. COM offers dispute resolution services in situations that include: neighborhood complaints, family/relationships issues, organization/workplace, consumer/business, landlord/tenant, land use, personal property, school, manufactured dwelling parks and others.

Working with an estimated annual budget of \$89,000, COM employs two staff and relies on a pool of approximately 35 volunteer mediators. COM provides services in over 90 cases per year.

⁵ US Census Bureau, www.census.gov

⁶ "Portland In Focus: A Profile from Census 2000," The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, 2003, p.24.

⁷ "A Profile of the Foreign-Born in the Portland, Oregon Tri-County Area." The Urban Institute, 2003, p. 5.

⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

⁹ Ibid., p.9

East Metro Mediation

East Metro Mediation (EMM) provides mediation services for the eastern portion of Multnomah County. EMM also provides basic mediation training services. Practice areas include, but are not limited to: noise complaints, pet concerns, consumer complaints, renter/owner problems, housemate disputes, citizen/government disagreements, property damage/upkeep, harassment, and interpersonal employee disputes. EMM is affiliated with the City of Gresham. Many services are provided free while others may require a nominal fee.

EMM's budget is approximately \$83,000. On average, they employ only one paid staff member and count on administrative and in-kind support through their affiliation with the City of Gresham. Their current mediator pool contains just over twenty mediators and they average about 150 mediation cases per year. Their primary focus is resolving neighbor-to-neighbor disputes, which account for roughly two thirds of their cases. EMM also handles a significant amount of landlord-tenant type disputes and some workplace issues.

Linn Benton Mediation Services

Linn Benton Mediation Services (LBMS) is a nonprofit organization that provides alternative dispute resolution services to residents of Linn and Benton Counties. Dispute resolution services include community and court-referred cases involving neighbor-to-neighbor, property disputes, small claims, manufactured dwelling disputes, family conflicts, juvenile and adult offenders and their victims, and assistance to parents and adolescents in conflict.

LBMS estimates an annual operating budget of \$110,000. The major component of this program is related to judicial referrals for small claims and victim/offender cases. LBMS assists by providing services to over 500 cases yearly. Fees vary and no one is turned away for inability to pay. They currently count on over 40 volunteer mediators across both counties. LBMS also offers training to mediators and the general public in conflict management, parenting, mediator training, and advanced training.

Mediation Works

Mediation Works (MW) is a non-profit organization providing community mediation services to Jackson County, OR. MW provides manufactured dwelling park mediation services, community mediation, family mediation, small claims mediation, and workplace mediation. Additionally, they offer senior mediation, juvenile victim/offender mediation, education services, facilitation, and training and development.

MWs annual budget is approximately \$260,000 and counts on up to 80 volunteers to support its efforts. They work extensively in family and victim/offender mediation and will provide services in more than 600 cases this year.

Neighbor-To-Neighbor

Neighbor-to-Neighbor (N2N) is a community mediation service provider located in Salem, Oregon. N2N is a non-profit service that has been in existence since 1986. Working closely with Marion County, N2N provides primarily victim/offender mediation, community/family mediation, and workplace conflict resolution services. They also offer facilitation and training services. Most services are provided free.

N2N operates on an annual budget of approximately \$40,000, which supports two part-time staff members. They currently count on a pool of approximately 75 mediators. Information regarding cases served was unavailable at the time of this writing.

Resolutions Northwest

Resolutions Northwest (RNW) is a nonprofit organization providing mediation and education in Multnomah County. They work extensively in victim/offender services and offer peer mediation programs through their affiliations with two local high schools. In addition, they offer family, neighborhood, and workplace mediation. RNW also provides conflict resolution services for businesses and organizations and professional training classes.

Resolutions Northwest operates with a yearly budget of approximately \$500,000 and employs 11 staff. They are the largest nonprofit mediation center in the state of Oregon. RNW offers services through its primary location in the juvenile justice center and their neighborhood mediation program located adjacent to a local elementary school. Currently, RNW employs 11 staff and counts on over 80 volunteer mediators to provide a wide array of conflict resolution services.

To give some comparison, the following table lists the CDRPs, the counties each serves, and the 2001 population count of the county.

Table 1: Population Counts

CDRP	County	Population¹⁰
Central Oregon Mediation	Crook	19,850
	Deschutes	122,050
	Jefferson	19,400
East Metro Mediation	Multnomah (East portion)	666,350
Linn Benton Mediation Services	Benton	79,000
	Linn	103,500
Mediation Works	Jackson	184,700
Neighbor-to-Neighbor	Marion	288,450
Resolutions Northwest	Multnomah	666,350

¹⁰ *Oregon Blue Book*, Secretary of State Archives Division, State of Oregon. <http://bluebook.state.or.us/>

Needs Assessment

Phase I of the grant also included a Needs Assessment (See Attachment B). In 2002, ODRC contracted with Interface Network, Inc. to:

1. Design a linguistically and culturally appropriate needs assessment process to determine: a) the need for dispute resolution services for the Latino community in Oregon; and b) the diversity training needs of the CDRCs' staff.
2. Facilitate and supervise the implementation of the linguistically and culturally appropriate needs assessment process by the selected six CDRCs.
3. Develop a report that documents the needs assessment findings, conclusions and recommendations and that can be used to replicate the process at the local, state and national levels.¹¹

That report contained numerous conclusions and recommendations about the needs of Oregon's Latino and Spanish-speaking communities as well as the needs of the CDRCs. Some of the findings included:

- Third party mediation and the dispute resolution process are foreign to many Latinos in the State of Oregon. The use of third party mediation is contrary to the Latino cultural norms for resolving conflict; but through extensive education and appropriate information dissemination, changes can occur over time.
- Mediation service delivery through interpreters is not effective. Non-Spanish speaking or non-Latino mediators have a difficult time gaining the trust and confidence of Latinos participating in mediation. Spanish speaking Latino mediators have the most success mediating for Latinos.
- To significantly increase the number of Latinos in Oregon accessing and using mediation services provided by the CDRCs, funding will be necessary to implement the systemic changes, strategic outreach/marketing plans, service delivery plans, recruitment and contracting of Latino Spanish speaking staff and training of CDRC staff and volunteers.
- Increasing the number of Latinos using mediation services in the State of Oregon will not occur with "quick fix" solutions.¹²

¹¹ "Oregon Dispute Resolution Commission Latino Community Dispute Resolution Project Phase I: Needs Assessment Summary Report" Interface Network, Inc., April 17, 2003, p. 4.

¹² Ibid., pp. 4-5.

Phase II

After completing the Needs Assessment in April 2003, ODRC began moving into Phase II of the project. The Needs Assessment recommended that the CDRPs select one or more components from among eight different Training and Technical Assistance Frameworks and Diversity Competency Models when designing their implementation strategy for Phase II.¹³ To support these implementation strategies, Phase II included intercultural communication training and individual service development and delivery approaches at each of the six CDRPs. However, during the 2003 Oregon Legislative session (January-August) the ODRC's future was at risk. Much of the work on this project was suspended during this time. Ultimately, severe cuts were made to disperse resolution including the abolishment of the ODRC in August. After receiving input from members of the Advisory Committee and the six CDRPs, the Hewlett Foundation transferred the balance of the grant to the Oregon Mediation Association (OMA). OMA is a statewide nonprofit association of nearly 400 mediators and members committed to the development, support, and advocacy of mediation in the State of Oregon. Most Oregon CDRPs are institutional members of OMA.

To maintain continuity, the OMA Board felt that keeping the existing staff was important to this project so that the transition could happen quickly. Jaime Chavez, a private consultant, served as the coordinator of the project while it was at ODRC. However, Jaime was also an OMA board member. The OMA Board considered possible conflict of interest issues at its September 6, 2003 meeting. After full discussion, the Board determined that Jaime could both remain an active board member and serve as a contract project coordinator for the grant. In this capacity, Jaime worked with the CDRPs regarding their Phase II work plans, service delivery models, and assisted with outreach to local project partners. He did not, however, participate in any decision making that the Board made regarding the grant after OMA became the project administrator.

The Board also decided that the OMA Executive Director would work as the project manager to provide overall coordination with Hewlett, the OMA Board, and the Advisory Committee. The project manager's main focus was formulating and securing grant agreements with the CDRPs, issuing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for project work, managing the selection processes, and coordinating all reporting and fiscal aspects of the project.

Intercultural Communication Training, Service Development & Delivery

Because of the challenges the CDRPs faced in their own communities, each CDRP developed individual project plans and service models and built relationships with project partners that were most appropriate for their specific community. As stated earlier, the Phase I Needs Assessment recommended that the CDRPs select one or more components from among eight different Training and Technical Assistance Frameworks and Diversity Competency Models when designing their implementation strategy for Phase II.¹⁴ One of the most prevalent models used by the six CDRPs was the Collaboration Model. The Needs Assessment describes the purpose of the Collaboration Model is to: "Develop

¹³ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

long-term partnerships and form collaborative relationships with existing Latino community service providers already established and trusted in the Latino community.”¹⁵ Similarities in CDRP approaches included networking, the recruitment and training of bilingual and/or bicultural volunteer mediators and board members, and the design and development of appropriate outreach and education campaigns. The differences reflect specific community needs.

Training

Both the original grant application and the Needs Assessment called for the design of intercultural communication training. While ODRC had first issued a request for proposals (RFP) for this training, it had to be rescinded once the ODRC was legislatively abolished. The RFP that OMA ultimately issued was based on the ODRC RFP except it transferred the assessment of service delivery models duties to Jaime Chavez. OMA and members of the Advisory Committee believed that transferring the assessment duties to Jaime would save considerable time so that services for the Hispanic/Latino communities could begin more quickly.

OMA issued a RFP and hired a consultant to design and deliver a curriculum on intercultural communication, with emphasis on the Latino/Hispanic culture. The consultant met with the participating CDRPs to get their input and designed a three-part training that was delivered three times throughout the state (Portland, Central Oregon, and Southern Oregon). The modules included looking at categories of culture, a module on Hispanic/Latino culture, and a module with programs applying parts of the first two modules to their experiences with mediation.

The feedback on the training was generally positive. Some participants felt it was very good and thorough, while others who had already taken extensive training on cross cultural communication and conflict thought the training was too basic. Others commented that they felt the training was too academic. And still others wanted to see the impacts of cross-cultural communication on the mediation process more clearly expressed. The feedback on the training highlights the fact that there is not a standard cross cultural communication curriculum for Oregon CDRPs and they all have varying levels of knowledge, comfort, and experience working across cultures. One of the most reveling things of the training was that most of the new Hispanic/Latino volunteers were overwhelmingly pleased with the training and trainer who is also a Latina, while most of the negative reaction was from the CDRP non-Hispanic/Latino staff. In hindsight, this training should have occurred very early in the grant, prior to the CDRPs beginning their implementation phase. In addition, while the trainer is an expert in intercultural communication, she is only familiar with, and not an expert in, mediation. Future trainings should strive to find someone who is also more experienced in mediation or should team a mediation trainer with an intercultural expert, even if it means hiring someone(s) outside of Oregon.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 13.

Outcomes, Learnings, & Evaluation

Oregon's experience with expanding mediation services for a growing Latino population is not unique. In 2002, a survey of the Texas Dispute Resolution Centers was conducted under the auspices of the Texas Association of Mediators. At that time, nearly 70% expressed some or an urgent need for Spanish-speaking mediators and 75% of the respondents expressed some or an urgent need for Spanish-language brochures and written information.¹⁶ To address these and other needs, the authors of the survey developed several recommendations including beginning with outreach, Spanish-language promotional materials, live role plays conducted in Spanish, Spanish-speaking mediators and interpreters, a mediation model that was culturally adaptable to the cultural differences of the parties, and Spanish-language mediation forms and evaluations. They also encouraged CDRPs to keep statistics to demonstrate the need for Spanish-language services and to share their experiences and resources with one another.¹⁷

The six Oregon CDRPs involved in this project began their work by embracing these very recommendations. Each of the CDRPs experienced successes. Each of them also experienced setbacks. But in total, this is a project rich with learning and it has laid an important foundation for these CDRPs and other Oregon mediation programs to better deliver services to the growing Hispanic/Latino communities throughout the state. Because the CDRPs responded to the needs of their individual communities, none of the project sites looked exactly alike. This also reflects differences in education and socioeconomic levels in Oregon's diverse Latino/Hispanic populations across the state. The next sections include a discussion of successes and challenges with some brief examples from the project sites.

Successes

Outreach, Promotion & Mediation Materials in Spanish

Each of the CDRPs had one or more of their outreach and promotional materials translated into Spanish (see Attachment A). Resolutions Northwest has general flyers, program brochures and family mediation brochures in Spanish. Mediation Works has a general brochure, a family mediation program brochure, and an education program brochure in Spanish. Central Oregon Mediation also translated their brochure into Spanish. East Metro Mediation uses a bilingual Spanish/English brochure to market their program. In addition to general program brochures, documents used in the mediation session such as the agreement to mediate, a mediation contract, and evaluation forms have been translated into Spanish at all of the CDRPs. The bilingual program coordinator at Mediation Works also developed a PowerPoint presentation in Spanish.

The CDRPs created Spanish-language socio-dramas that were performed at community events and on the radio. Linn-Benton Mediation Services advertised for both their program and the Marion County Neighbor-to-Neighbor program on radio stations in the mid-Willamette Valley region. Additionally, the Linn-Benton Mediation Services program developed posters noting services in Spanish (Servicios en Español) and placed

¹⁶ Clara I. Gómez, Josefina M. Rendón, and Walter A. Wright, "Enhancing Mediation Services to the Spanish-Speaking Community: Perceived Needs and Recommendations" found on www.mediate.com

¹⁷ Ibid.

them widely in their community: in libraries, schools, public health agencies, and counseling and community centers.

Program coordinators from East Metro Mediation and Resolutions Northwest participated in a Spanish language radio program to promote mediation services. The program coordinator from Central Oregon Mediation also participated in a Spanish language radio program and wrote an article for the Spanish edition of the local newspaper. Finally, many of the program coordinators appeared at community events, fairs, and celebrations to outreach to their local Hispanic/Latino Communities. East Metro Mediation coordinated their own cultural event “Unity in the Community” at a local community college that included cultural performances as well as a socio drama to demonstrate mediation.

Project Partners

Each of the CDRPs identified numerous project partners in the Needs Assessment Phase and continued to build relationships throughout this grant. Developing project partners in the Hispanic/Latino communities served to network and spread the word about the services the local CDRP provides. This networking helped to create referral sources both to the CDRP for dispute resolution services and to the project partners who can serve Hispanic/Latino communities when mediation is not appropriate. Finally, these important partnerships will continue to serve as a connection to the Hispanic/Latino communities so that CDRPs have a means to recruit new volunteer mediators and board members.

Program Coordinators

Part of the success of developing project partners was due to most of the CDRPs hiring program coordinators for this project that were already well-connected in their local Hispanic/Latino communities. At a project debrief meeting, the CDRPs identified the key elements to look for when hiring a project coordinator to do this type of work.

Critical qualities:

- Bi-lingual
- Personable
- Ability to do outreach
- Able to communicate respect
- Time and commitment
- Experience with the Hispanic/Latino community
- Fluidity in/out/through different communities

- Other considerations that would help (but aren't necessary)
- Well connected
- Knows mediation
- Bi-cultural, multi-cultural

These were the general attributes identified. The group acknowledged that the needs of the individual community and program also need to be taken into consideration.

In addition to the program coordinators, many of the CDRPs included other staff to support their efforts. This team approach is critical to transforming the entire organizational culture. All CDRPs agreed that project coordinators hired specifically for working with these communities, who may not be as familiar with mediation, need to be treated as equals in staff groups and recognized for their skills and talents that make bridging cultures not only possible, but also successful.

Challenges

Language

Part of the challenge of mediating across cultures has to do with bridging aspects of culture such as whether parties prefer direct or indirect communication, how formal or informal the mediators are, and whether the ideal mediator is neutral and unfamiliar with the parties or is a trusted family friend or respected community member. The other challenge has to do with language. While both aspects were and continue to be addressed by the CDRPs, this project highlighted the challenges of bilingual mediation. In some cases, a translator or interpreter was used. When a bilingual mediator was used, the mediator was sometimes surprised that the interpreter was doing more than merely translating what was being said but was also changing or leaving out key pieces of information. Mediators in this case were not always certain about how much they should correct the interpreter or start doing the translation work themselves. Questions of whether a mediator should act in a dual capacity as a translator have been raised. In bilingual mediations, it also raises questions of how the non-Spanish speaker views the neutrality of the bilingual mediator if the mediator is also serving as a translator. These issues need to continue to be studied as more Spanish speakers become mediators and more Spanish-language and bilingual mediations take place.

Culturally appropriate services

What it means to provide culturally appropriate services to the Hispanic/Latino community is still yet to be determined. CDRPs made strides in identifying ways to market and outreach their services. They have trained and are using bilingual and bicultural mediators. Yet, what it means to truly provide culturally appropriate services will still take time to define and implement. More conversations and evaluations of the services themselves, including in-depth interviews with Hispanic/Latino participants, will assist in further modifying the traditional mediation model so that Hispanic/Latino participants feel comfortable utilizing mediation.

Program placement

In addition to further modifying the mediation model used at the local level, CDRPs struggled with whether to continue to build capacity within their own program or to build the mediation capacity at other Hispanic/Latino community based organizations. The Needs Assessment referred to earlier in this report discussed the Collaboration Model.¹⁸ That model discusses both initial intake being done by other service providers and placing satellite CDRP offices in Hispanic/Latino community based organizations.

¹⁸ “Oregon Dispute Resolution Commission Latino Community Dispute Resolution Project Phase I: Needs Assessment Summary Report” Interface Network, Inc., April 17, 2003, p. 13.

Linn Benton Mediation Services developed an informal agreement with a church where the Hispanic Ministry Coordinator answers questions for parishioners and members of the community about mediation and refers cases to the program. Resolutions Northwest's program coordinator had office time at a Hispanic/Latino community based organization a few hours per week. That "face-time" allowed her to engage in critical networking with community members and gave her more access to the larger political and community circle, thereby enhancing the visibility of the program and mediation as a viable service.

There is no one right answer to whether a CDRP should build the capacity of another program or their own. Some have questioned if placing the program outside of the CDRP results in the CDRP not really ever adapting its services to be more culturally appropriate. Others argue that Hispanic/Latino participants may not feel comfortable going to an unfamiliar provider. Regardless of where the program is placed, fundamental to this work is a commitment to building relationships and providing services to Hispanic/Latino clients in a respectful manner. That may look different depending on the needs of the client. CDRPs should be as flexible and adaptable as possible when working with the Hispanic/Latino community.

Recruitment & Retention

To build internal capacity, CDRPs recruited bilingual and bicultural mediators from the community. Most of the programs found some difficulty in recruiting new mediators. Some community members reported that they are approached by many organizations seeking to extend their services to the Hispanic/Latino community. This results in a few key community members often being over-committed to many different organizations and outreach efforts. Other CDRPs reported that they had commitments from bilingual or bicultural people to attend volunteer training and at the last minute they did not attend or did not complete the full training. In the future, recruitment by existing bilingual and bicultural mediators may help in identifying and securing new volunteers.

CDRPs that were able to recruit bilingual and bicultural mediators now will have to work to retain those mediators. While there is always some turnover of volunteers, these bilingual and bicultural mediators are valuable assets the CDRPs cannot afford to easily lose. As one program put it, "Losing a volunteer is losing a substantial time and cost investment. Yet, we put little time and effort into rewarding, entertaining, and advancing volunteers. Acknowledging this allows us to work harder on rectifying it."¹⁹

Basic Training

Programs that included bilingual people in basic mediation training reported that the training took more time because concepts had to sometimes be explained in both English and Spanish. Dispute resolution professionals that train in 'English-only' know the difficulty of training new volunteers in unfamiliar concepts. Training across language barriers further adds to this challenge. Some CDRPs that trained bilingual volunteers reported that more time needed to be added to accommodate for late arrivals, longer discussion periods, and more social interaction time. These accommodations need to be

¹⁹ Resolutions Northwest, Final Report.

taken into consideration when planning new mediation trainings. One of the CDRPs, Resolution Northwest, also held their first basic mediation training in Spanish. Considerable effort was put into this training to translate materials and documents ahead of time. In addition with feedback from past participants, they added more role-plays and practice so that each person had more time practicing mediation.

This type of modification of the basic training is an excellent example of a way to meet the needs of bilingual and bicultural mediators. Those who choose this approach should recognize that it extends the length of a basic mediation training. Some programs may have an easier time adjusting to this than others. In addition, when the training is held programs will need to meet the needs of individual participants. Many cannot afford to give up entire work days or even weekends to take on this type of commitment. Creative incentives like providing childcare might assist in helping community members attend basic mediation training.

Program Capacity

CDRPs in Oregon and nationally continue to struggle with funding challenges. One challenge for small nonprofits is staff retention (generally, not specifically the Hispanic/Latino program staff). Two programs, Marion County Neighbor-to-Marion and Central Oregon Mediation, both experienced staff turnover during the course of this project. Both CDRPs lost Executive Directors and Central Oregon Mediation also lost their volunteer coordinator. When staff turned over, both CDRPs struggled to continue with the project. Adjustments were made so that both could continue in more limited ways, but the impact to this project was significant.

Many CDRPs have limited program staff. This grant helped support additional staff time for them. However, capacity and sustainability issues were raised again and again by center directors. Providing dispute resolution services to a targeted community is tough on limited budgets. Many of the CDRPs in this grant said that starting new services that require new language, networking, outreach, and modified service delivery without additional funding would not be possible.

Now that some of the CDRPs have built limited capacity, the question remains to what extent services can continue without additional funding. Some feel that they have a responsibility to provide these services to the Hispanic/Latino community. Others struggle with how they can continue without additional resources. Often, the Hispanic/Latino community sees the Anglo community only providing services when money is available or something else is to be gained. The program coordinator for Resolutions Northwest included in her final report a comment from one focus group participant and Hispanic community member, “que le llenen a uno con muchas esperanzas y expectativas, y después no cumplen.”²⁰ The report states that another participant added, “Han venido muchas agencies, recogen mucha información, y para que

²⁰ They fill a person up with hope and expectation and then they don't follow through.

(para estudiarnos)? Necesitamos a alguien que de verdad llegue a ayudarnos aquí con los problemas...”²¹

Building Social Capital

In some ways this project is more than just expanding dispute resolution services to the Oregon Hispanic/Latino communities. In some ways, these CDRPs can be seen as building important social capital in their communities. Robert Putnam defines social capital as “social networks, norms of reciprocity, mutual assistance, and trustworthiness.”²² He goes on to talk of two types of social capital, bonding and bridging and says that both are needed to resolve social conflicts. Bonding refers to linking people who are similar--it is building cohesion among like groups. Bridging refers to building capital between different types of people, or bridging heterogeneity.²³ This Hewlett project helped to both build cohesion among the CDRPs that participated in the project and begin the bridging process to the Hispanic/Latino community and the project partners.

The staff of the CDRPs made great strides in identifying and working with project partners to identify needs of the Hispanic/Latino community and have begun developing services to meet those needs. This work will take time and continued commitment from the CDRPs to sustain those relationships. Building social capital, just like resolving conflicts, is not easy. “It takes person-to-person contact over time to build the trust and mutual understanding that characterize relationships that are the basis of social capital. So we see no way that social capital can be created instantaneously or en masse.”²⁴

But the alternative of continuing to build and sustain these bridges is that the important gains made during this project will be lost. While it is too early to measure the full impact of this project, we do know that important strides have been made. As more Hispanic/Latino mediators are trained, more cases are mediated, and as feedback is received from Hispanic/Latino participants, the services and programs offered might look different than they do now. But as Oregon changes, so must the CDRPs. Being responsive to an increasingly pluralistic society is critical to the mediation community’s survival. The Oregon mediation community must do whatever it can to ensure that these services not only continue but are expanded to other CDRPs and geographic areas of Oregon that were not included in this grant.

Conclusion

The OMA Board is committed to doing what it can to build on the successes and learnings of this project to help secure additional resources to support the on-going efforts of the CDRPs and the Hispanic/Latino communities in Oregon. Letters of intent have been sent to foundations and funders. Requests for additional grant funds are being

²¹ Many agencies have come through, they take information, and for what (to study us)? We need someone who is really coming to help here with our problems...”

²² Robert D. Putnam and Lewis M. Feldstein with Don Cohen, *Better Together: Restoring the American Community*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), p. 2.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

made when and where appropriate. At the same time, the CDRPs are seeking revenues to help support this effort into the future. We are all aware that only with the continuation of the relationships and services can we begin to adequately answer the important questions raised about effectiveness of services, what changes have been successful and still need to be made, and how successful we have all been in bridging and building social capital through the resolution of conflicts. OMA and all the project partners are grateful to the Hewlett Foundation and its staff for the support of this first step in what promises to be a long and fruitful set of relationships in Oregon.