



International Academy of Mediators

Report of the Communication & Outreach Committee

Christine Masters, Chair

January 10, 2021

Purpose and Evolution of the Committee: As originally envisioned by former Chair Chuck Doran, the purpose of the IAM Communication and Outreach Committee (C&O) is to communicate IAM's vision and accomplishments to IAM members, potential members, and consumers of commercial mediation through social media, blogging, and, internally, through Member Updates. After working on Member Updates since 2016, I assumed the mantle of Chair of the C&O Committee in mid-July 2019, when Chuck Doran assumed the role of Presidency of the IAM. I have continued in as Chair at the behest of Jon Fidler.

The C&O Committee currently consists of Lynne Bassis, Todd Smith, Vance Cooper, James Mang'erere, Tat Lim with Jeff Trueman overseeing the IAM Blogs, Tim Corcoran as our FaceBook Moderator, Scott Markus as ListServ Moderator, and Jeff Kichaven as Book Talks moderator. Recently added to the Committee's purview is the iCloud Library with Rande Sotomayor and Sheldon Stark.

I have been working closely with Richard Rejino to ensure the mission of the Committee is accomplished. Given the pandemic and the holidays, the Committee hasn't been as active as other times. That said, we have achieved some good results since October 2020, the date of my last report.

Member Updates

Member Updates provide fellows with an opportunity to stay connected and informed about what is going on with other members, both professionally and personally. Members are asked to share a personal and/or professional update of up to 150 words. In reaching out for Updates, each committee member encourages our colleagues to consider submitting blogs or other postings on social media.

Our goal has been to publish an Update generally three to four times per month via the Listserv, and we have been generally meeting that goal. Since my last report in October, we have posted 3 updates (about once a month), and have reached out to those members who have not yet participated.

IAM Blog

As you know, Keith Seat stepped down as Editor in Chief in 2019 after posting some 60+ blog entries. Since my last report, we have posted two articles, including one by Eileen Carroll about

her experiences with virtual mediation. With the help of Jeff Truman, we are in the process of posting a three part article from Sheldon Stark on managing opening offers. We have a few options under consideration and would like to post at least one article per quarter.

We really could use Board assistance in attempting to meet our goals. While each committee member originally agreed to propose a blog idea from a list prepared by Keith and me, and then work with the author to get it in shape for posting to the IAM Blog, there have been no submissions. If any Board member has an article they are writing or even thinking about, or has heard about a member who might have an article, please contact Jeff Trueman or myself.

IAM Social Media Efforts

While updates and blogs have been the organization's primary communication and outreach tool, the Committee has also used other social media outlets to broaden the circle of potential readers. Since IAM's social media accounts were set up in 2015, there have been many postings, but not a comparable level of responses. On Twitter, we have more followers 350 (up from 228 in the last report) but not much tweeting activity. Our LinkedIn Group currently has 443 members (up from 73 from the last report). In addition, we have two Facebooks pages, one public and one a closed group. Tim has regularly posted news about upcoming events on our private page. Currently we have 258 followers (up from 249).

So far this year, IAM has hosted 12 webinars, including a well-received zoom program "Trauma and Resilience for Practitioners", thanks to Alicia Kuiu as well as Orit and Jeremy's webinar On January 12, 2021 "...Working with Emotions." While the webinars are only for IAM members and mentees, the Board might want to consider opening them to the public.

The Committee needs input from the Board and the membership to identify content to be posted on our various platforms. It would be great to have a message from the President reminding members to regularly review the IAM website, as well as to send either Richard or me any news about their practices, any articles/books they have published and a link thereto, and to respond to requests for updates. Members might also be encouraged to contact Wendy Kramer or Logan Cooper if they have ideas for a webinar.

Book Talks

Book Talks, a Zoom program created and hosted by Jeff Kichaven, began in April. After six successful programs, it was decided to take a summer break as of July 1, 2020. I will be in contact with Jeff to discuss whether this is something he would like to renew.

iCloud Library

In December Rande Sotomayor and Shel Stark contacted me about this project. We've had two fruitful zoom meetings, with another set for January 18, 2021. Rande, Shel and I have each contributed various forms for the project, and have solicited and received a few additional contributions from Jeff Trueman. Eric Galton has agreed to provide a few forms as well. Rande has

reached out to Vance Cooper and Rob Daisley, as we would like to have representative forms from many jurisdictions. We're expecting to have a core of forms to initiate the project shortly.

I have been in touch with Richard, who will take our core library of forms and post them. They will be searchable by author, by topic and by browsing. Rande is drafting an email to the entire IAM membership explaining the project, providing a link to the core library by way of examples and a solicitation for contributions to the form bank. We plan to draft a "limited license" that permits IAM to post the forms for use and modification by our members.

Conclusion

In anticipation of making this report to the Board, I sent an email on January 3, 2021 to all of the Committee members to determine interest/commitment in continuing on the Committee. In response to my email, I received lukewarm responses. My plan is to have a meeting this month of the Committee (difficult because of timezones) to see if we can generate more interest. The IAM Happy Hours seem to draw great interest from most of the membership. While I am committed to the Committee, it may be time to think about the future of the Committee, its goals and members, including a successor as Chair.

Please send me an email if you're interested in submitting an update or a blog or have any news to post at christine@masters-ribakoff.com or give a call 818-9555-8518.