

EXPANDING YOUR PERSPECTIVE

2026 IAM SPRING CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Tuesday, May 26, 2026

2:00 – 5:00 pm IAM Board of Governors Meeting (Commonwealth Room)

Wednesday, May 27

10:30 am – 3:30 pm **Freedom Trail/Faneuil Hall/Quincy Market Walking Tour** (Optional/**must be pre-registered**)
(meet in Fairmont Hotel lobby by 10:15 am)

General Sessions are in the Grand Ballroom

Thursday, May 28

7:00 am **Registration desk open**

7:30 – 8:45 am **Breakfast** (registered attendees only – Ballroom Foyer)

8:45 – 9:30 am **Welcome and Introduction** – *IAM President Jonathan Lloyd-Jones; Conference Chair Arthur Pressman; MA Chief Justice Heidi Brieger*

9:30 – 11:00 am **Negotiating the Non-Negotiable: Navigating the Emotional Undercurrents That Can Make (or Break) Mediation**
- *Daniel Shapiro, PhD*

Why does mediation so often turn adversarial, convoluted, and intensely emotional - especially when you're working hard to keep it on track? In this talk, Dr. Shapiro takes you into the lesser-seen corners of human nature to reveal five powerful emotional forces that pull parties – and occasionally mediators – into a divisive mindset that damages relationships and derails agreement. Drawing on his research and advisory work in some of the world's most challenging conflict zones, Dr. Shapiro explains how these forces distort judgment, inflame toxic emotions,

and make resolution feel untenable. We'll unpack how these forces take hold, why they escalate tension so quickly, and, most importantly, what you can do to disrupt these dynamics and create conditions for cooperation and mutual gains.

11:00 – 11:15 am **Break**

11:15 am – 12:15 pm **Breakout Discussion Groups**

12:15 – 1:30 pm **Lunch** (registered attendees only – Ballroom Foyer)

1:30 – 2:30 pm **Talking About What Matters Most** – *Professor Sheila Heen, Thaddeus R. Beal Professor of Practice, Harvard Law School*

In this world of polarized rhetoric, whether in the metaverse or the mediation room, how to listen for what this is “really about” for each party? And how to decide whether negotiating, or continuing to mediate, makes sense? This session will share some of the more recent research out of the Harvard community and a chance to experiment with getting to the heart of the matter when talking across differences.

2:30 - 2:45 pm **Break**

2:45 – 4:00 pm **Building Conflict Resilience: Using Productive Disagreement to Drive Better Outcome** – *Robert Bordone, Senior Fellow, Harvard Law School*

A mediator’s mission is to help parties resolve their conflicts. But what if conflict well-handled could be used to build connection and help parties work together going forward even when there is no “resolution”? Conflict Resilience -- the ability to sit with the discomfort of disagreement, to listen deeply, and to assert authentically – can be a powerful tool for mediators, clients, and all of us. In this talk, Bob will share insights from his new USA Today best-selling book *CONFLICT RESILIENCE* (HarperCollins 2025), which describes what is happening in our brains when we are in conflict. He will offer evidence-based strategies from both neuroscience and practice on how to become more conflict-resilient in the face of ongoing disagreement.

4:00 – 5:00 pm **Breakout Discussion Groups**

5:45 – 7:00 pm **Cocktail Reception** (Ballroom Foyer)

7:15 pm **Sign and Dine**

Friday, May 29

7:00 am **Sound Bath Yoga Session** (Commonwealth Room/optional for attendees)

8:00 am **Registration desk open**

7:30 – 9:00 am **Breakfast** (registered attendees only – Ballroom Foyer)

9:00 – 11:00 am **Use of AI in Mediation** (interactive panel) – *Professor Sarah Cole, IAM Scholar-in-Residence, and Renee Jackson, Founder & CEO of Dyspute AI, along with panelists Hayden Wilson, Rob Daisley, and Jonathan Lloyd-Jones*

In this session, the speakers will explore the ways in which professional mediators can effectively and responsibly integrate the use of generative AI into their practice. They will examine current uses of the technology, confidentiality fears, and cognitive risks like automation bias or overreliance. While some practitioners choose to remain "analogue" mediators to avoid comprehension erosion and cognitive atrophy, others imagine using AI to interview clients or predict BATNAs. Looking twenty years into the future, the talk outlines how tools like facial expression analysis, predictive analytics, and automated decision support could reshape dispute resolution. Ultimately, it evaluates how future mediators might use AI on the business side of practice while keeping their core clinical skills sharp.

11:00 – 11:15 am **Break**

11:15 am – 12:00 pm **Breakout Discussion Groups**

12:00 – 1:15 pm **Lunch** (registered attendees only – Ballroom Foyer)

1:15 – 2:15 pm **Psychological Dimensions of Impasse Breaking in Mediation** – *David Hoffman, John H. Watson, Jr. Lecturer on Law*

David Hoffman will address both the cognitive and emotional barriers to settlement in mediation, with a particular focus on the Internal Family Systems (IFS) model. (IFS is not about families – it's about our internal operating systems and the 'family-like' relationships our sub-personalities have with each other.) Participants will then have a chance to roleplay a sample case involving a family-business dispute and try out a variety of impasse-breaking tools.

2:15 - 3:00 pm **Breakout Discussion Groups**

3:00 – 3:15 pm **Break**

3:15 – 5:00 pm **Voice, Vibe, & Vision: Tapping into the Flow of Negotiation** - *Berklee College of Music Jazz Masters:*
Edmar Colon, Skip Hadden, Regie Gibson, and Kenny Werner

Mediators do more than manage conflict - they *perform*. Like jazz musicians and spoken word poets, mediators must listen intensely, respond in the moment, and transform conflict into cooperation. On a basic level, mediators are always refining their ability to develop rapport with participants, solve problems and improve communication. Same thing with performers who must master the basics of their craft. But on a higher level, mediators – like artists - establish a “flow” to their process. When the participants in mediation loosen their narratives, exhibit more flexibility, and focus on tomorrow more than yesterday, the mediation flows from a conflict problem to be solved into a new story about change. Rather than teach “what to say” or “what to do” in mediation, this program offers an interpretative, artistic way to understand flow, creativity, and negotiation. Performing artists who are also professors at the Berklee College of Music offers will lead the discussion and performance.

6:00 – 7:00 pm **Reception** (Fairmont Venetian Room)

7:00 – 9:00 pm **Banquet** (Fairmont Oval Room, dress is business casual)

9:00 – 11:00 pm **New Trolls & the Banff Family Singers Singalong** (Fairmont Oval Room)

Saturday, May 30

7:00 am **Sound Bath Yoga Session** (Commonwealth Room/optional for attendees)

8:00 – 9:00 am **Breakfast** (registered attendees only – Ballroom Foyer)

9:00 – 10:00 am **Advancing Social Justice as Part of Commercial Mediation Practice** – *Pedro Spivakovsky-Gonzalez,*
Diego Faleck, and Bill Marsh

The panel will address the main different approaches to handling social justice disputes, based on the experience of established community mediation programs and victim’s compensation settlements and programs, stemming from complex situations. Panelists will address the potential market for mediators in designing and implementing innovative processes to prevent and resolve a myriad of

cases that entail advancing social justice, while creating a sustainable and promising mediation practice.

10:00 – 10:15 am **Break**

10:15 am – 11:00 am **Introduction: 2027 Conference in Rome, Italy; IAM Annual General Meeting; Installation of New Officers and Board Members**

11:00 am – 12:00 pm **Open Mic** with Claude Amar, New IAM President

Breakout Discussion Groups: *(located in State Suite A, State Suite B, St. James Room, and the Grand Ballroom)*

THURSDAY, 11:15 AM

1. **That Tough Mediation? How We Prepare Ourselves and Recover Well** - Nina Khouri and Michelle Reinglass (*Grand Ballroom*)
2. **Mediation After ABA Ethics Opinion 518** - Jeff Kichaven (*State Suite A*)
ABA Ethics Opinion 518 has focused new attention on a fundamental question: how should mediators structure their processes so that lawyers can fulfill their ethical duties of competence and independent judgment to their clients? We will explore the intersection of mediator ethics and lawyer ethics, including evaluation, mediator's proposals, self-determination, and the line between supporting lawyer judgment and supplanting it.
3. **Responding to Challenges That Often Arise When Mediating Commercial Disputes Involving Diaspora Communities** - Zaza Elsheikh (*St. James Room*)
This workshop will provide an opportunity to explore the challenges of "unseen" principles and dynamics which are influenced by cultural and religious norms and how they can be successfully navigated using core mediation skills such as non-judgmental listening and reframing of offensive statements through real case studies

THURSDAY, 4:00 PM

4. **Why We Mediate: Exploring Meaning, Inspiration, and Resilience in Mediation Practice** - Greg Derin and Ramin Mizrahi (*St. James Room*)
What initially drew you to this work and how has your "why" shifted over the years? Has being a mediator changed you as a person? If so, in what ways? What personal values, philosophical beliefs, or faith traditions have most influenced the way you approach mediation? Have you found that the same empathy or commitment that drew you to mediation can sometimes make the work emotionally difficult and if so, what has helped? When you feel like you've hit a wall or had a "bad run," what anchors you? For some -- external, like faith or community, for others internal - e.g., reflection, mental framing, etc. What helped you sustain resilience in this work over time? If you were mentoring a newer mediator, what advice would you give them? Have you found inspiration in unexpected places?
5. **How to Hit the Curveball** - Robert Tessier (*State Suite A*)
Learn from others how to be successful when you encounter the unexpected during your commercial mediation.
6. **Dealing with Nation-to-Nation Conflicts: Are There Lessons to be Learnt from Person-to-Person Mediations?** - Paul Godin (*State Suite B*)
Come to this ideas-gathering session about how we might apply mediation at the level of nation-to-nation conflicts. This conversation will look ahead from first principles more than back at existing or past conflicts. What are the goals for such a system/approach? What are the concerns with the existing system of nation-to-nation bargaining? What components are needed for an effective system of international mediation? How could those components be organized? What lessons can we derive from our own

practices? Mediator-driven approaches or flexible styles within a core system of steps/approaches? How does one get buy-in from independent nations to an international system? Is there a role for the IAM? Many questions. Be ready to help us answer them!

7. **AI Warning: How the Advice of Bots is Based on How They are Trained** - Hal Abramson and Dwight Golann (Grand Ballroom)
In this session, Hal and Dwight will pose the same questions to advisor bots built on different sources with different trainings. The session will offer opportunities for participants to pose questions, hear different answers, and discuss the implications for practicing with advice from AI.

FRIDAY, 11:15 AM

8. **Advanced/Active AI Users Learn from Each Other** - Allan Stitt (State Suite A)
Mediators who are experimenting with using AI to prepare for and participate in mediations will share experiences, challenges, stories and ideas that we can implement to provide the best and most up-to-date service to clients.
9. **AI Notwithstanding: Why Mediation is Inherently Human** - Claude Amar and Eric Galton (Grand Ballroom)
For those unwilling to grab the shiny ring of AI and believe that mediation and mediators are a fundamentally human thing and want to articulate the human skill sets that make the process amazing, come play with us and join the resistance!
10. **How Attorneys are Using AI to Turn the Neutral's Brain Against Them** - Joël Bertet (St. James Room)
Learn how cognitive hacking by AI-powered advocates seeks to outgame the mediator.

FRIDAY, 2:15 PM

11. **Leaving What you Love: Retirement from Mediation - If, When, Why, and No Way** - Gene Moscovitch and John Snellings (State Suite A)
Believe it or not, someday you may need or chose to retire from your mediation practice. For most of us, these are generally uncharted waters. What might be some of your primary considerations in deciding whether, when and how to proceed? This break-out session will seek to identify some of the hurdles that you are likely to encounter and will attempt to offer some suggestions as to how you might best prepare for and navigate this important life transition.
12. **Developing a Mediation Practice** - Stacie Hausner and Angela Reddock-Wright (St. James Room)
13. **What Do You Want From IAM?** - Lee Jay Berman (Grand Ballroom)
It's been some time since we've held an open conversation about IAM's future. In that period, most of our founding visionaries have retired, other members are stepping back, and new members — many from outside North America — are assuming leadership roles. We navigated the pandemic, moved programming to Zoom, launched regional conferences, and reinstated the Fellow membership level. Now we want to hear from you. How is IAM serving you? How could it do even better for you? What should our mission, membership, and global, regional, and virtual programming look like next? What guidance do you have for the Board and Strategic Committee? Join us for a candid, engaging discussion to help shape our next chapter. Your voice will influence IAM's direction and priorities.

