



## Celebrating 10 Years of Connection

### Susquehanna Valley Mediation

713 Bridge Street, Suite 3  
Selinsgrove, PA 17870  
570-374-1718

#### **SVM office hours:**

Monday - Thursday  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

#### **Mediation appointments available:**

Monday through Saturday  
10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Monday through Thursday 6:30 pm

#### **To contact us or request an appointment:**

Call 570-374-1718  
or email Meg Martin at:  
casecoordinator@svmediation.org

#### **Visit our website:**

www.svmediation.org

#### **Executive Director:**

Susan Jordan  
570-837-9563  
sjordan@svmediation.org

#### **2021 Board of Directors**

Linda Turner, *President*  
lturner@svmediation.com

Bob Shabanowitz, *Vice President*  
rshabanowitz@svmediation.org

Sharon Silberman, *Secretary*  
ssilbmn@dejazzd.com

Elayne Sobel, *Treasurer*  
esobel@svmediation.org

Barbara Skrivanek  
bskrivanek@svmediation.org

Mary Sholley  
marysholley@gmail.com

Patti Urosevich  
pattiu1585@yahoo.com



*"The mediation program has taken off in dramatic fashion. Our custody mediators are extremely busy providing wonderful service to the community. In fact, so busy that it is now necessary to train others who will be able to take on some of the work."*

~Al Sobel, Founder of SVM in 2009

### 10 Years and Going Strong!

On September 25, 2009, Al Sobel wrote the statement above to a small group of volunteer mediators at the Neysa C. Adams Pro Se Assistance and Mediation Clinic, which was operated by Susquehanna University. Al was the Clinic Director who went on medical disability leave. In the spring of 2010, Susquehanna University decided to close the Clinic. In response to the closure, volunteers created the Central Susquehanna Valley Mediation Center, Inc., now known as Susquehanna Valley Mediation, Inc. (SVM) in August, 2010. SVM allowed the work of the Clinic to continue, thanks to support from the courts, volunteer mediators, and many generous community supporters. With the assistance of a handful of volunteers, who became the first volunteer board of the mediation center, Al recognized that his vision of a community mediation center would be realized. Now, ten years later, the mediation center has trained over 100 volunteer mediators and continues to provide "wonderful service to the community," as Al once claimed. Al passed away on November 23, 2010, after a courageous battle with cancer, but the mediation center lives on. He is sorely missed and we think he'd be proud of what this organization has become.



SVM staff, from left to right: Terrell Mosley, prison re-entry coordinator, Anne Coyne, crisis/rapid response coordinator, Meg Martin, case coordinator, and Susan Jordan, executive director.

If you shop on Amazon, SVM can now receive donations based on your purchases. Go to **Amazonsmile.com** and select Susquehanna Valley Mediation. Thank you!



## From Our Director...

2020 has been a year unlike any other. We teach mediators the art of staying present in the midst of conflict, to not make assumptions, and to stay open to where the conversation goes. This year has given SVM ample opportunity to practice this principle, as our community has dealt with incredible upheaval and uncertainty. Covid-19 has amplified inequities and vulnerabilities that already existed in our community. In March, we closed our physical doors and opened our virtual ones. Thanks to our patient and hard-working staff and volunteers, we had minimal interruptions to our services. Zoom has become our friend. We've shared what we've learned about virtual mediation across the state, country, and globe. We have improved and expanded collaborations with other organizations in the Susquehanna Valley to match our services with community needs. At this time of reflection, we recognize that our founders' vision from 10 years ago is as important as ever. People are hungry to be seen and heard and to stay connected.

As we look forward to 2021, we ask you to consider donating to support our work with a quick visit to our website @ [svmediation.org](http://svmediation.org) or the old-fashioned way by returning the enclosed envelope. If you are able, we would be so grateful. We will put it to good use! Wishing you and yours a happy holiday season.

## New Landlord/Tenant Mediation Program To Help with Covid-19 Eviction Crisis

As the temporary eviction moratorium approaches its expiration date, the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania provided training, resources, and grants for communities to set up landlord/tenant mediation programs to prevent evictions. SVM and the Union-Snyder Community Action Agency (CAA) are partnering to create a program to serve the Susquehanna Valley. Landlords and tenants will have access to housing counselors and resources through CAA, legal information provided by North Penn Legal Services, and mediation provided by SVM to help them avoid evictions and make decisions together. SVM and CAA will be working in the coming months to educate landlords, tenants, and other community organizations about the program. "We encourage people to contact us before a housing crisis point. Our case manager can make referrals and help gather support people together to have a conversation and make a plan to deal with the challenges they face," said Susan Jordan of SVM.

### SVM by the Numbers

Since 2010:

- 2,426 cases referred to SVM
- > 100 mediators trained

In 2020:

- 67 Crisis/Rapid Response Meetings
- 10 Plan of Safe Care Meetings
- 30 + virtual mediation trainings
- 150 mediation cases
- 25% of cases were self-referred
- 40 volunteers donated more than 3,000 hours to the community
- Over 50 individuals in community organizations participated in conflict training with SVM
- 82% percent of parties said that mediation helped them communicate with the other person

## Mediator Profile: Stacy Gasteiger



Stacy Gasteiger first joined SVM with the 2019 training cohort, and has quickly established herself as a dedicated and capable mediator of both custody and Rapid Response cases. Stacy has mediated 21 custody cases and 6 Rapid Response meetings since July! Speaking of her ability to quickly start mediating during the pandemic, Stacy says, "I've been incredibly impressed by how the staff was able to pivot in a pandemic and offer mediations and Rapid Responses virtually. I had a bit of an advantage during the change, because I had only been mediating a few months, so I wasn't so entrenched with the in-person model."

Stacy was drawn to SVM because she saw a connection between SVM's work and her work as a teacher in the Selinsgrove Area School District – both organizations create opportunities for the well-being of children to flourish. The principles of the transformative model resonate with Stacy, and in her experience as a Rapid Response facilitator, she sees that, "Sometimes there is a lot of pain, sadness, or anger involved, and it can be hard to stick with the parties' narrative—but it's vital that we follow where they lead."

In her free time, Stacy loves to travel, garden, and read. She has three grown children and just had her first grandchild.

## Family Engagement Initiative Reduces Family Separation

SVM now serves Union, Snyder and Northumberland counties through our partnership with Children and Youth Services (CYS) on the Family Engagement Initiative. SVM Mediators facilitated 67 Crisis/Rapid Response Meetings for families and their support networks this year. In Northumberland County alone, the number of children placed by CYS outside of their family network was reduced by 30% in 2020. SVM is proud to be part of this important, systemic change in child welfare, which supports family voice and choice, and engagement with their support systems. "Family engagement helps heal the harm and trauma of family separation. We are then able to partner with families to develop a resource network of support which facilitates their continued healing and life-long well-being," said Jenn Evans, Administrator of Snyder County CYS.

Anne Coyne, case coordinator, provides added support to families. "Anne is so skilled at talking with families at their most vulnerable moments, listening to their fears and frustrations without judgement, and providing them space to make decisions about whether and how to participate in the meetings," Susan Jordan added.



## Conversations About Difference

A summer of local Black Lives Matter protests got many people interested in talking about race, some for the first time. SVM was invited to facilitate discussions with the Mifflinburg Kiwanis Club, the Sunbury Rotary Club, and others. People said they often avoid conversations about race altogether because they're afraid to say the wrong thing. SVM provided a space for people to join the conversation, perhaps get uncomfortable, and learn from each other, without judgment.

## Police Forum Gave Residents Clarity, Next Steps

In October, SVM's Susan Jordan moderated the Buffalo Valley Regional Police Public Forum. The format for the evening was co-created by local citizens, led by Janice Butler, and Police Chief Paul Yost. "By providing an opportunity for dialogue between law enforcement and interested individuals at a public forum, our hope is to increase community awareness and understanding," said Butler. Over 170 people signed up for the event. Chief Yost started the evening with a presentation in response to questions submitted in advance during online registration. Following the presentation and Q&A, mediators from SVM facilitated small group conversations in Zoom breakout rooms. Organizers plan to use the input from those small-group discussions to guide future work. Many participants submitted questions concerning racism in policing and community safety. Feedback after the event showed that Chief Yost's presentation gave community members increased clarity and eagerness for more conversations and action.

## Staff Profile

### Terrell Mosley

SVM is proud to introduce Terrell Mosley, our new Prison Re-entry and Reintegration Coordinator. Terrell has been busy during his first few months with SVM - learning our programs, completing virtual mediation training, and meeting with individuals impacted by incarceration and with community partners for the Re-entry Program. Terrell is ideally suited to lead the Prison Re-entry program. Formerly incarcerated himself, Terrell brings compassion, dedication, and a gift for connecting with people.

Terrell grew up in Milton, PA where he still lives with his family. He has an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice. He has two children in college, one in high school, and a toddler who keeps him very busy. Terrell also helps to care for his 82-year-old grandmother who has dementia. Welcome Terrell!



*"I'm humbled and grateful for this opportunity to help people further their goals and become productive members of society! This has been a goal of mine for many years. I'm honored to work with such a thoughtful and dedicated staff that share a similar vision that focuses on building positive relationships and stronger communities through our services at SVM."*

~ Terrell Mosley

## In Memory of Steve Jacobsen



It's been almost a year since we lost founder, friend, and mentor Steve Jacobsen. He passed away on December 5, 2019. We miss him very much. On a visit shortly before he died, Steve said that he didn't fear death, but felt peaceful and curious about the mystery of it. Steve had a fascinating way of being both deeply scientific and deeply spiritual. He pondered the big questions of the universe and what it means to be human. He often brought those conversations around to connect them with his mediation and other peace building work.

Before he passed, Steve wrote, "As you know, I've been involved in the start-up of several different nonprofits, but CSVMC has been a wonderful capstone to that career. Knowing that you all carry the dream forward is a great source of strength as I face my career's close. I am SO lucky to have the sense that the work in which I invested so much will continue—albeit with its own adaptations to changing times, but rooted in the model we know so well."

We wish continued peace and comfort to Steve's wife Marion, his son Mark and his family, and all who loved him.

### Many Thanks To:

- Our many generous donors
- Our wonderful volunteer mediators and board members
- Our dedicated staff: Meg Martin, Anne Coyne, & Terrell Mosley
- Our interns: Jennaya White, Taishi Tsosie, Clara Ferrari, and Krissy Horissian
- Our Rapid Response Team
- The Union & Snyder County Commissioners for their continued financial support
- Union County for financial support through their CARES Act funds
- The GSV United Way for supporting Family Engagement, Safe Care for Moms in Recovery, and so much more!
- The National Association for Community Mediation for support of our Prison Re-entry & Reintegration Work and more!
- The Lewisburg Prison Project and the PA Institutional Law Project for their partnership
- The PA Housing Alliance for supporting our Landlord/Tenant Eviction Prevention Mediation Work
- Central Susquehanna Community Foundation for supporting technology needs during the pandemic
- Joanne Troutman, Stacey Piecuch, and volunteers from the United Way's Diversity and Inclusion Council
- Professors Neil Boyd and Eric Martin and the Management for Sustainability students from Bucknell University
- Sue Auman and the Union/Snyder CAA and Core Susquehanna AmeriCorps for their partnership
- Judges Hudock, Sholley, Saylor, Rosini, and Rowe and their staffs in the Union, Northumberland, & Snyder County Courts
- Scott Kerstetter, Chief of Union County Probation, and his staff
- All of the participants in our prison re-entry listening sessions
- Jennifer Evans, Matt Ernst, and Katrina Gownley, administrators of Children and Youth Services in Snyder, Union, and Northumberland Counties, respectively
- Kelly Feiler and Javier Videla from the Selinsgrove REC
- The Dayton Mediation Center staff and mediators for offering joint trainings and resources
- Advoz: Mediation and Restorative Practice in Lancaster County, for their partnership
- Billy Kelly from Yay Design for designing our new logo

### **Donate Online!**

Visit [svmediation.org](https://svmediation.org) and click "Donate Now"

*Susquehanna Valley Mediation is classified by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501 (c)(3) organization, and your donation is fully tax-deductible as allowed by law.*

### **We're here to help!**

*SVM is open and available to anyone in the community who needs our services. Please call 570-374-1718 for a confidential conversation with our case manager, Meg Martin.*