

Celebrating 12 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

2023 Board of Directors
Patti Urosevich, *President*
purosevich@svmediation.org

Linda Turner, *Vice President*
lturner@svmediation.org

Mary Sholley, *Secretary*
marysholley@gmail.com

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esobel@svmediation.org

Bill Haynos
whaynos2@gmail.com

Tracey Wolfe
twwolfe128@gmail.com

From Our Director...

When I reflect on the past year, the word that comes to mind is engagement. In our crisis, reentry, and housing work, we help people engage with their support networks, address concerns, and provide assistance and support from area service providers. In our mediation work we provide opportunities for people to engage with one another and their conflict.



One of the harmful impacts of the pandemic on many of us, and especially children, people in recovery, and other vulnerable groups, was a temporary loss of face-to-face engagement. We know that, as humans, we need one another in order to thrive, heal from trauma, feel a sense of belonging, and be physically and mentally healthy.

Our work at SVM creates opportunities for people to engage with one another and address difficult situations that might otherwise keep them isolated and alone. We look forward to the coming year where we will continue to bring people together. Would you like to join us? We are looking for volunteer mediators for our next training that starts in February!

We hope you enjoy reading about what we've been up to this year, and consider a donation to support our work for 2023. As always, you can donate through our website @svmediation.org, or send it in the old fashioned way in the enclosed envelope. We are so grateful for your support. We wish you and yours a happy holiday season!



Mediators Needed!

Our next mediator training is scheduled for **February 24-26 and March 10-11**. Our volunteer mediators are critical to the success of SVM and our ability to provide service to the community. To apply, call our office or **visit our website @ svmediation.org**. Why become a mediator? Hear it from our volunteers in their own words!

"Being a mediator...

- has made me a better, more patient listener."
- has made me more empathetic and less judgmental. It has also given me more awareness about the burdens other people carry."
- keeps my brain active and challenged as I journey through my "golden" years."
- is so rewarding. I love seeing people come together to resolve issues."
- has helped me be more mindful about my communication in my personal life."
- has given me a chance to make meaningful friendships with other mediators. "
- has helped me be a better parent."
- has been rewarding. I love to see people move from confrontational to conversational."

Come join our team!



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!



Our mission: Susquehanna Valley Mediation is a community mediation center committed to supporting constructive responses to conflict in the Susquehanna Valley through mediation, facilitation, training, and education.

We believe in people's abilities to treat one another with **dignity** and **humanity**, even when they have conflict and profound differences.

MEDIATION SERVICES

- Custody and Divorce
- Family Conflict
- Community
- Neighbor, Workplace, Elder
- Prison Reentry
- Landlord/Tenant



MEETING FACILITATION

- Crisis Family Meetings
- Group/Community Dialogue
- Listening Sessions



EDUCATION

- Kids First Program for Co-Parents
- Basic Mediation Training
- Active Bystander Workshops
- Responding to Conflict Training



For More Information, call Meg in our office @ 570-374-1718

Tips for Having Tough Conversations -Community Event-

In November, SVM's Susan Jordan facilitated a Community Conversation called "Tough Talks: Tips for Better Conversations." Many attendees wanted to explore challenges with workplace conflict and shared their own wisdom about what makes tough conversations go better (and worse!)

The workshop offered ideas for:

- Preparing better for tough conversations
- Listening practices to create more openness
- Recognizing and interrupting dehumanizing talk
- Reducing defensiveness in yourself and others
- How stepping into tough conversations can create more connection and collaboration

Keep an eye out for more community workshops in 2023 and call our office for more information.

Meredith Lemons joined SVM in September as our new Crisis/Rapid Response Family Meeting Case Coordinator. Meredith was raised in Selinsgrove and attended the University of Denver in Colorado where she graduated in June, 2022 with a bachelor's degree in psychology, leadership, race and ethnic studies, and criminology. During the few months she has been with us, Meredith has been involved in planning crisis/rapid response family meetings, observing mediations, and doing lots of training! She looks forward to learning more about mediation and restorative justice, working with our volunteer mediators, and expanding on her own interests around prison reentry and peer-mediation. In her free time, she enjoys baking, reading, and spending time with her family and dog, Lilly.



SVM by the Numbers

3,113 cases since we opened our doors in 2011.

In 2022:

- **125** Crisis/Rapid Response Family Meetings to support child safety and family healing were held with over **875** people participating
- **5** Plan of Safe Care Meetings were held for families of babies born drug-affected
- **265** new mediation cases initiated
- **145** mediations held with over **325** people participating
- **23%** of cases were self-referred
- **32** volunteers donated more than **2,400** hours to the community
- **3** Interns gave over **2,000** hours to support SVM's work
- Over **350** People participated in **14** Workshops and talks
- Over **20** partner organizations
- Over **50** individuals impacted by incarceration served
- **1** 'Stopping Abuse for Everyone' class facilitated in Union County to individuals convicted of Domestic Violence crimes

Story Circles

SVM is proud to partner with the Susquehanna Valley United Way's Community Mapping Project. The project is a process of story-gathering to create a deeper, more human-centered view of the region. This project is consistent with SVM's values of providing opportunities for people to have a voice in addressing challenging issues, along with our core belief that people thrive when they feel a sense of connection and belonging.

The Story Circle element of the project, led by Jerry Stropniky, JoAnne Henry, and Rebecca Armstrong, and funded by the First Community Foundation Partnership, is designed to bring groups of people together from across the region to share their experiences of living in the valley. The stories will become part of the community map, as well as offer opportunities for people to connect, build friendships, and learn about their neighbors.

For more information about the project, or to participate, contact SVM or visit:

<https://www.gsvuw.org/community-mapping>

Prison Reentry & Reintegration



Pictured: Scott Kerstetter, Union County Chief of Probation and Terrell Mosley, SVM's Reentry Coordinator, after Terrell's presentation on reentry mediation at the PA Probation Chiefs Conference

Susquehanna Valley Mediation's Prison Reentry and Reintegration Program, led by Terrell Mosley, works with people and their families who are impacted by incarceration, before, during, and after their release, to restore supportive relationships within the family, to constructively address conflict, and to provide peer mentorship and support. The program has recently been bolstered by a three-year grant from Union County, which will help us expand our services and secure long term funding.

The program was created after intensive listening sessions where we looked at re-entry from all angles with formerly incarcerated people, community service providers, and law enforcement. We identified a need for a program that would provide a supportive bridge between jail/prison and the life outside.

When asked what inspires him about the work, Terrell says, "I am driven to work with individuals who are ready and willing to change their lives. I try to be a support and walk alongside them. I'm in their corner and I want them to see me as someone who wants them to succeed. Each time I go through the journey with a client, it's almost like walking through the fire myself. My dream is to expand the program and hire additional personnel to reach more people inside the county jails and work with clients on goal-setting before they get out. While conflict is the driving source of many issues, good communication makes anything possible."

If you know someone who would benefit from this service, call Terrell @ 570-264-2243 or visit our website @svmediation.org.



Before

Judge Sholley Retiring

After more than 30 years practicing law, 13 of those serving as judge, Judge Michael Sholley is set to retire at the end of the year from his role as President Judge for Pennsylvania's 17th Judicial District, having been honored with awards for his leadership and advocacy for children and families across Union and Snyder Counties and the state of Pennsylvania.

"Judge Sholley has been one of SVM's biggest cheerleaders since our founding. He has been instrumental at every point of significant growth in our organization. Most importantly, he has taken the time to understand what we do and he believes in it. He has demonstrated time and again that he supports people's desire for self-determination and connection. We're grateful he'll be sticking around a bit longer," said Susan Jordan, SVM's executive director. SVM Staff and Volunteers wish Judge Sholley a happy, well-deserved retirement, full of family, friends, and plenty of adventure!

After



Volunteer Profile Barb Skrivanek

After retiring from teaching and administration in New York, Barb moved back to Pennsylvania, where she was raised. Moving to rural PA was an adjustment. Less traffic, fewer stop lights, and greater distance between neighbors. So, she decided she needed to get involved in the community and became a volunteer mediator. That was 11 years ago. As a longtime board member, she is proud of how the Center has grown since then. About her mediation work, Barb says, "Mediation has challenged me to address some of my own 'control' issues. It isn't necessary to solve other people's problems because they are quite capable of solving their own with a little support. It is an honor to be a mediator for people in my community."

While Barb will complete her service as a board member at the end of the year, we are fortunate that she will continue to be an active mediator with SVM.



"Mediation requires mediators to forego the illusion that we know best for people. It requires us to be better listeners, have sensitivity to the emotions in the room, and help clients realize they have the ability to solve their own problems or conflicts."

"I'm amazed at the number of times clients say, 'This was the best conversation we've had in a long time.'"

~ Barb Skrivanek

2022 Fall Fundraiser - Thank you!

Many thanks to everyone who attended our Fall Fundraiser at Union Cellars. We are already looking forward to next year's event!



Save the Date

2023 FALL FUNDRAISER

Date: September 9, 2023

Location: Fero Vineyards and Winery

965 JPM Rd, Lewisburg, PA
17837



MANY THANKS TO:

- You, our many generous donors
- Our volunteer mediators and board members
- Our dedicated staff: Susan Jordan, Meg Martin, Terrell Mosley, Meredith Lemons, and Kendra Parke
- Our interns: Arin Lohr and Sophia Rowe
- Our Crisis/Rapid Response Family Meeting facilitators
- The Union & Snyder County Commissioners for their continued financial support
- Sue Auman and the Union/Snyder CAA and CORE Susquehanna AmeriCorps for their partnership
- Judges Sholley, Hackenberg, Saylor, and Rosini and their staffs in the Union, Northumberland, & Snyder County Courts
- Scott Kerstetter, Chief of Union County Probation, and his staff
- Jennifer Evans, Matt Ernst, and Katrina Gownley, administrators of Children and Youth Services in Snyder, Union, and Northumberland Counties, respectively, and their hard-working staffs
- Sandy Moore and her staff with the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts for their mentorship and leadership.
- The GSV United Way for supporting Family Engagement, Safe Care for Moms in Recovery, and so much more!
- Members of the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformative, for their guidance, collaboration, and support of SVM.
- The National Association for Community Mediation for support of our Prison Re-entry & Reintegration Work, and more!
- Prabha Sankaranarayan and The Trust Network - for collaboration on Social Cohesion and Violence Prevention
- Members of HealPA Taskforce on collaborating for a more Trauma-Informed Pennsylvania
- Members of the Union, Snyder, and Northumberland County Reentry Coalitions
- Adrienne Mael, Stacey Piecuch, Rebecca Armstrong and volunteers from the United Way's Diversity and Inclusion Council
- Lisa Eroh from Transitions of PA for help with our Domestic Violence Training for mediators.
- Alice and Todd at St. John's UCC Church in Lewisburg for offering last minute space when we need it for crisis meetings.
- Sarah Farbo and Lynn Pearson from Bucknell's Office of Civic Engagement
- Jed Carr and Michaeline Shuman from Susquehanna University's Service Leader Program
- Sharon Leon, Director of the Union County Housing Authority and Union County's Justice Bridge Housing Program
- Our new friends at Mediation Services of Adams County
- Everyone in our community who is working to make the Susquehanna Valley a place where everyone can thrive.

Donate Online!

Visit 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.



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