

DEBRA SYNOVEC

2811 Franklin Avenue East, #102
Seattle, WA 98102

(206)568-5337

debra@wholemediation.com

Legal - Financial - Dispute Resolution - Management

Accomplished professional and creative visionary combining legal knowledge, financial analytical skills and conflict management abilities to foster constructive change by creating sustainable solutions.

- ***Established track record of achieving goals*** by assessing needs, developing strategic plans, building relationships, and managing conflict; experienced working with complex organizational structures and with individuals from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic cultures.
- ***Proven expertise in collaborating with different constituencies*** and multi-disciplinary teams to create, execute, and evaluate programs according to best practices considering organizational objectives, regulations, and financial positions.
- ***Adept at creating strategic plans and achieving organizational goals*** in challenging environments by using perceptive and pragmatic skills to design, champion and implement solutions.
- ***Experienced international traveler*** having exceptional ability to develop connections with people from other cultures; travel included Africa, Central and South America, Middle East, Russia and Europe.

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

William Mitchell College of Law, St. Paul, MN, J.D. (Member of Washington Bar) 1982-1986

University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, B.S. Accounting (CPA designation) 1975-1978

St. Cloud State College, St. Cloud, MN, B.A. Social Work 1971-1974

Mediation Certificate, Erickson Mediation Institute, Minneapolis, MN (40 hours) 1988

Harvard University, Harvard Negotiation Insight Initiative Training, Cambridge, MA (24 hours) 2006

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

DISPUTE RESOLUTION OFFICE OF DEBRA SYNOVEC

1990 - Present

Mediator and Alternative Dispute Practitioner

- Pioneered and advanced dispute resolution programs and built successful civil and family mediation practice.
- Championed and promoted mediation usage in legal community that strongly opposed ADR methods.
- Collaborated with diverse groups to establish and coordinate dispute resolution programs.

Attorney

1990 - Present

- Provided diverse legal services including family law, real estate, business, tax, estate planning and employment.
- Skilled at working with government officials and navigating through established policies and rules.
- Formed productive network of contacts and cultivated clients using relationship building, leadership, and diplomacy skills.
- Achieved exceptional client trust and satisfaction, retaining over 95% of clients.
- Negotiated and solved diverse, challenging, complex cases by collaborating effectively with attorneys, judges and clients.
- Minimized client losses through investigation, tactical intervention, and the ability to devise mutually acceptable solutions.
- Increased profits by improving client business practices, developing strategic plans and using creative thinking.
- Reduced exposure to litigation by identifying, assessing, quantifying and mitigating business risk.

Administrative Hearing Officer

Mclean County, Bloomington, IL

2000 - 2005

- Recruited to be initial Court Hearing Officer for innovative child support and parentage program.
- Effectively managed challenging, fast-paced court docket of 35-40 cases per day.
- Successfully resolved more than 90% of the cases, significantly reducing judicial time.
- Authored initial procedure and practice guidelines, streamlining casework and ensuring consistent outcomes.
- Optimized settlements by advancing collaborative relationships and applying diplomacy skills.

ERICKSON MEDIATION INSTITUTE, Minneapolis, MN

1988 - 1989

Mediator

- Recruited to provide mediation services, training and client development.
- Provided comprehensive family and civil mediation services.
- Collaborated with management to design, improve and implement training programs.

DAIN CORPORATION, Minneapolis, MN

1981 - 1987

Controller and Chief Financial Officer National Real Estate Consulting Company

- Promoted to be the first CFO; served as a key participant of the executive team responsible for all strategic planning, evaluation, and negotiation of complex multi-party real estate transactions holding over \$150 million in investment capital.
- Directed finance and accounting department for three corporations and 46 partnerships having annual revenues in excess of \$22 million; liaison between executive team, parent company representatives, corporate attorneys and auditors.
- Reported financial information and performance activity to over 14,000 investors.
- Streamlined decision making and information processing by transforming accounting department to computerized system.
- Overhauled accounting policies to bring reporting into compliance with GAAP.
- Hired, trained, evaluated and mentored staff; originated internal personnel policies.
- Evaluated third-party property management organizations; significantly increased efficiency by standardizing reporting.
- Devised and implemented company policies and procedures to facilitate compliance with government requirements and to accurately account to investors; significantly reduced costs by streamlining reporting, audit and tax practices.
- Collaborated with outside legal counsel to draft blue sky and regulatory documents; performed due diligence.

THE CENTER COMPANIES, Minneapolis, MN

1979 - 1981

Accounting Supervisor Real Estate Property Management

- Directed all budgeting, financial planning, and accounting related to common area for national mega-mall manager.
- Interfaced with department heads to meet operational, financial and employment objectives and goals.
- Successfully led department and improved the planning and financial analysis process by advancing team-building practices and streamlining procedures; hired, trained and coached staff.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL AND NONPROFIT ACTIVITIES

Washington State Bar, Past Chair of Alternative Dispute Resolution Section: Co-chair of task force formed to study dispute resolution programs in Washington; Member Real Estate Trust and Probate and Family Law sections

Association for Conflict Resolution, Advanced Practitioner Member: Consulted and mentored new members; promoted professional development and best practices by providing workshops.

International Academy of Collaborative Professionals: Member

King County Collaborative Law: Member

Washington Mediation Association: Certified Member Domestic Relations

King County Bar Association: Member of Family Law and ADR sections

Mediation Council of Illinois, Former Director/Treasurer: Improved and expanded profession by evaluating ethics, monitoring professional standards, and developing conferences.

Collaborative Solutions Institute, Inc., Co-founder/ Former Board Member: Created organization dedicated to providing educational, therapeutic and dispute resolution programs; advanced mission by collaborating with nonprofit organizations and judiciary.

Victim Offender Reconciliation Program of McLean County, Illinois, Former Director: Expanded program and outreach by partnering with governmental entities to advance adult and teen offender program; developed mediation training programs.

McLean County Domestic Violence Board, Former Advisory Member: Championed and assessed domestic violence program by collaborating with representatives from diverse community groups.

SELECTED TRAININGS AND FACILITATIONS

Adjunct Professor, Business Law, Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Business Mediation with Erickson Mediation Institute, Inc., St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN

Victim Offender Reconciliation Training, McLean County, IL

Civil Mediation Training, Town of Normal, IL

Family Mediation Lecturer, Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Bringing Children Into Mediation, Association of Conflict Resolution Annual Conference