



AAA Mediation.org™

**FN-5286517 MN-5286517 LN-5286517**

**San Ysidro, California**



**Current Employer-Title** Relationships-at-Work, Inc. - Chief Executive Officer

**Work History** Chief Executive Officer/Founder, Relationships-at-Work Incorporated, 2011-Present; Owner/Founder, Relationships That Matter, 2005-2011; Consultant/Senior Mediator, Peninsula Mediation - Department of Navy, 2000-2020; Director of Training, Mediation Training Institute (MTI), 2000-2005; Owner/Founder, Vitali Rehabilitation Consultants, 1988-2005; Principal, Casserly Vocational Rehabilitation Consultants, 1982-1988.

**Experience** Nearly 40 years' experience advising public and private sector organizations on workplace issues related to employee-management and executive differences. Experienced with disputes, Title VII protections, sexual harassment charges and prevention, communication and conflict management strategies, and matters of disability/medical conditions in the workplace.

Extensive experience in the psychology of organizational conflict, creating psychological safety for leaders and followers, with leadership coaching and employee development for improved workplace engagement and profitability. Involved in handling complex organizational issues surrounding hostile workplace, discrimination, retaliation, and harassment allegations.

As Director of Training for MTI, trained human resources, management and legal professionals in workplace mediation practices for five years. Recognized expert in workplace disputes by Peninsula Mediation and Department of Navy's mentor mediator program for the Federal Executive Board - Los Angeles in the development of workplace mediators for the federal government.

**Mediator Experience** Completed basic mediator training in 1993 and immediately applied skills and process to workplace issues involving employees with medical conditions impacting their ability to 'be at work, stay at work, and perform the work' for their employers. This required additional EEOC training in Title VII protections, expanding service practice areas into mediation for discrimination, retaliation, and hostile workplace allegations. Designed and implemented ADR systems for public and private sector organizations.

Following the 1998 Executive Order by President Clinton, affiliated with the Department of Navy's Mentor Mediation program to address Title VII protections for federal employees throughout the United States. As Senior Mediator, actively co-mediated hundreds of cases throughout the United States for over 20 years.

Concurrently worked with the Los Angeles Federal Executive Board (FEB) for five years serving as Mentor Mediator for various federal agencies implementing their workplace mediation programs.

Delivery of mediation services continued for various private entities and public agencies related to Title VII and wrongful termination as well as general relationship issues impacting organizational functioning.

Previously served on mediation panels for the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), National Center for Resolution of Conflict (NCRC), and San Diego Superior Court. Presently serve on the mediation panels for the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

## **Representative Issues Handled as a Mediator**

Typical issues of mediation involve allegations of discrimination, retaliation, and hostile workplace environments. Discrimination issues primarily center on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, and sexual orientation and gender identity. Today's hot topics include return-to-work issues for employees and organizations following pandemic conditions and guidance on hybrid work conditions, vaccinations, testing, and safety issues.

## **Mediator Style & Process Preferences**

My early training in organizational and family dynamics led to my pursuit of licensure in 1986 as a Licensed Marriage Family Therapist (LMFT #23250) to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics of people in conflict at work and at home. As work is such a central tenet of our identity and financial success, I turned my training and licensure to workplace issues to guide people and organizations in sustaining emotional and financial health by working through differences in values, philosophies and underlying interests.

Although originally trained in community mediation using a facilitative model, continued pursuit of workplace mediation as my foundation was coupled with advanced training in workers' compensation, medical case management, rehabilitation counseling and EEOC practices as well as personal experiences in family-owned businesses, entrepreneurial start-ups, and business partner formation | dissolution. Those early years provided first-hand experiences for working with CEOs, boards of directors, government officials, labor representatives as well as employees from all walks of life – all central to the conflict at hand.

By employing a mediation approach to workplace issues, it provides a confidential and structured process that creates psychological safety facilitating the parties' issues, interests and concerns to unfold strategically to reach mutual resolution.

While additional ADR models have been studied and explored (i.e. evaluative, transformative and arbitral approaches), the process of mediation regardless of the model is what holds the magic for reaching mutual resolution. Understanding the parties' concerns prior to the mediation is critical for effective facilitation of crucial conversations to navigate through challenging issues. Each party brings value to the process from their perspectives as well as have ideas for reaching resolution.

With my early training as a licensed therapist followed by a doctorate degree in psychology, these combined experiences enable me as mediator with acute awareness of the emotional factors driving positional viewpoints, distortions in thinking, and impasse created. I draw upon my skills and abilities to help navigate parties towards breakthrough opportunities.

I view my role as facilitator and director of the process, sharing ideas where relevant for how others approached similar situations, elevating insight and awareness leading to opportunities for mutual resolution and repair of damaged relationships.

## **Education**

Ryokan College (PsyD, Psychology-2014); University of California Santa Barbara (MA, Education and Organizational Psychology-1982); University of California Santa Barbara (BA, Psychology-1979).

## **Professional Licenses**

Admitted in 1986 by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) as a Licensed Marriage Family Therapist (LMFT) #23250.

## **Professional Associations**

Board of Directors, Southern California Mediation Association (SCMA); Ex Co-Chair/Newsletter Editor, Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR); Workplace Section/President of ADR-San

Diego/President, California Association of Rehabilitation Professionals (CARP); American Bar Association - Dispute Resolution Section (ABA-DR); California Association of Marriage Family Therapists (CAMFT).

## **Recent Publications & Speaking Engagements**

Delivery of direct mediation services evolved over the last 18 years into teaching opportunities in basic and advanced mediation techniques for professionals (managers, human resources and legal professionals – advocates and mediators) throughout North America. With experience in the behavioral sciences around people in conflict, developed techniques and strategies focused on the human element driving parties to impasse and their positions held about the conflict at hand.

Educational services include the Hong Kong Institute of Mediation (HKIM) on advanced mediation strategies for workplace issues as well as keynote speaker for the American Bar Association (ABA) - Dispute Resolution Section, AAA International Centre for Dispute Resolution, and Mediation Steadfast (Perth, Australia). Served for five years as an Adjunct Professor in Dispute Resolution at National University's undergraduate and graduate certificate programs, five years at California Western School of Law - San Diego in Alternate Dispute Resolution (negotiation, mediation and arbitration), and three years in advanced psychological concepts at Ryokan College - Los Angeles.

A current faculty member for Advanced Mediation Topics at American Arbitration Association (AAA).

## **Mediation Rate**

\$400 Per Hour

## **Languages**

English

## **Citizenship**

United States of America

## **Locale**

San Ysidro, CA

The AAA's Rules provide the AAA with the authority to administer a mediation including, mediator appointment, general oversight and billing. Accordingly, mediations that proceed without AAA administration are not considered AAA mediations, even when the parties select an mediator who is on the AAA's Roster.

The information contained in this resume has been supplied solely by the individual mediator and may, or may not, be a complete recitation of their experience. The AAA assumes no responsibility for the content, completeness, accuracy, or reliability of the information contained in a mediator's resume. If you have any questions about a mediator's experience or background, you are encouraged to contact your case manager.

Mediators on the AAA Roster are not employees or agents of the AAA.