



Upstate Mediation Center

of South Carolina A Non-Profit Organization

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Bernie Ferrone Honored by Upstate Mediation Center

Greenville, SC – At the 15th Anniversary celebration of the Upstate Mediation Center, Bernie Ferrone was honored for mediating the highest number of Family Court mediations. This was the second year he has received this distinction. The celebration was held in conjunction with National Mediation Week in October.

During his twenty year real estate career, Ferrone mediated contract property disputes for the South Carolina Association of Realtors, and long before his retirement in 2011, he felt a strong need to give back to the community. After looking at possibilities, he decided that being a volunteer at the Upstate Mediation Center offered him a perfect way to continue using his mediation skills.

The Upstate Mediation Center is a nonprofit organization that offers a voluntary alternative to the adversarial court process by resolving disputes through use of mediation. In mediation, the parties are free to work out their own unique and sometimes very creative solutions to their problems, and are not bound by the procedural rules or case law that are required in court. Ferrone liked the idea of helping individuals and families work through difficult situations and find peaceful resolution.

In Greenville County, if there are any disagreements between the parties, mediation is mandated before a final court order is issued in Civil, Circuit, Family and Probate Courts. Ferrone began as a mediator for Magistrate Court, and then took the 40 hour South Carolina Bar training to become a Family Court mediator. The parties in Family Court cases are usually in conflict over divorce, alimony, child support, visitation, or property division. The end result of mediation is more cooperation and less tension between parents and fewer emotional scars for everyone concerned. During the process of helping parents resolve their issues, Ferrone realized that Family Court mediations were also helping to greatly alleviate suffering of the children involved.

Ferrone always begins mediations with the understanding that mediators don't make decisions: their role is to facilitate communication between two parties so that they can reach an agreement. He says "Nobody wins in court and mediation gives the participants a chance to decide their own future." A UMC staff member says "Bernie genuinely loves helping people and that is his motivation for mediating. He has a calm presence and authority that puts people at ease. "

Ferrone plans to continue volunteering at the Upstate Mediation Center indefinitely. He says "I care about people and I care about helping them solve their problems. I truly enjoy mediation." The Upstate Mediation Center appreciates Ferrone and all of the other volunteer mediators who give generously of their time to the Center to help individuals and families resolve differences.

The UMC welcomes new volunteers who are qualified to do mediations or who are willing to take the five day training offered through the South Carolina Bar for Family Court mediations. For more information contact the UMC at 864-370-9771.

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The Upstate Community Mediation Center is a non-profit organization that offers a voluntary alternative to the adversarial Court process by resolving disputes through use of mediation. The Upstate Mediation Center aims to promote the use of mediation and other non-adversarial means of resolving conflicts and to nurture peace by restoring and

strengthening family, business and community relationships. For more information about the center, see www.upstatemediation.com.