

NW FAMILY TIES



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Make Plans Now for the Fourth Annual WA AFCC Conference

**Saturday March 15th
2014**

Frontiers of Family Law

**Meet and Greet Social Hour
and Fund Raising Event to
follow immediately after
conference at 5:00 p.m**

**Contact Us by Email to
Ensure You Receive
Conference Materials**

info@wa-afcc.net



Up to 6 hours CLE
(approved WSBA), CE for
NASW approved.

Sessions in the program are under review
by the AFCC organization for continuing
education credit. The AFCC parent
organization is approved by the American
Psychological Association to sponsor
continuing education for psychologists.
AFCC maintains responsibility for this
program and its content

FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE PLANS UNDERWAY— MARK YOUR CALENDER

Get Ready for another outstanding line-up of Training Opportunities at the 4th Annual WA AFCC Conference to be held **Saturday, March 15th, 2014** at the Washington Athletic Club in Seattle.



Frontiers of Family Law

Morning Plenary Sessions with noted author and speaker, Dr. Phil Stahl (joined by Stacy Heard, J.D.) addressing "Deconstructing Child Custody Evaluations." The second morning plenary is by another outstanding speaker and author, Dr. Leslie Drozd who presents on the issue of "Decision Trees for Complex Parenting Plan Evaluations." Attorneys, judges, mental health workers, and GAL's will find these topics to be practical and insightful for formulating better case presentation and challenging faulty evaluations conducted by others.

The afternoon provides *six 90 minute break-out meetings to choose from including* sessions on Reducing Confirmatory Bias (Rybicki, Benjamin & McGlothlin), Using a Sex-Pert (Keilin & Wheeler), What Drives Conflict (Baumann), The Pros and Cons of Shared Parenting (Fainsilber Katz, Wheeler & Hutchins-Cook), Child Sexual Abuse Risk Assessment (Lee), and Current Advances in Relocation Case Analysis (Stahl, Drozd, Heard).

You can register now or wait for information sent to you in January for online registration. Watch for additional news or check the website for details. Attorneys, GAL's, mental health professionals and others will find this to be another worthwhile day of presentations, discussions, networking and sharing of information.

**March 15th, 2014
8:30 to 4:30**



**Social at 5:00 to
7:00 p.m.**

Washington Athletic Club
1325 6th Ave., Seattle



ASSOCIATION OF
FAMILY AND
CONCILIATION COURTS

WA CHAPTER MOVES INTO HIGH GEAR

Significant work is in progress on several new committees this year. We want to create several additional committees during 2013-2014 to move our chapter objectives forward. Committees advance the goals of a chapter!

The success of the Conference Committee, led for three years by Dr. Daniel Rybicki, is now forging ahead with planning the March 15th, 2014, 4th annual conference for the Washington AFCC Chapter. The Frontiers of Family Law is our theme for 2014. The success of our Conference Committee has been the cornerstone for our new AFCC Washington Chapter. Special thanks to Daniel and Gerry Rybicki for your organization acumen and unflinching leadership! (continued p.2)



Dana Dean Doering, ARNP
and Daniel Rybicki, Psy.D.

*“The AFCC
Washington Chapter is
the culmination of a 10
to 20 year dream for
many of us in
Washington State.”*



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

The AFCC Washington Chapter is the culmination of a 10 to 20 year dream for many of us in Washington State. As we celebrate the 4th year of our new chapter, as well as the 50th Anniversary of AFCC National/International this year, we all reflect on the many changes observed over these past five decades. The sixties saw reconciliation; while the seventies saw families and society at-large embrace “Divorce with Dignity”. The eighties saw the explosion of mediation and alternative dispute resolution- a true quest for peace and reduced conflict in family dissolutions. The nineties ran us close to what many thought was the edge of the cliff with “Complexity in Family Issues”, as we crafted new definitions of family systems and expanded our views on human, family and community relationships. Now we find the cliff edge of the nineties is more like the infinity of a vanishing point- always more to come, ever endless, and very dependent on each unique and perpetually shifting perspective. We now must face and address the increased violence in society, schools and workplace overall, and the dramatic rise in domestic violence that is redefining family life, and the divorce and child custody process. High conflict in divorce is also bogging down already beleaguered court systems as they are grappling with many new and complex issues of never-married parents, unrepresented litigants, same-sex partnerships, dependency mediation, non-residential parenting, relocation, alienated children, domestic abuse, parenting coordination, custody evaluations, and the many diverse needs in the realm of family preservation.

Divorce is increasing in our society and around the world. Children and families are often not adapting well to these changes. The Courts and laws established in the Roman Empire, struggling under 150 years of tradition, seek to become more relevant in the modern world. Many hopeful changes are afoot for kinder, less destructive and more collaborative problem solving. Watch for more news on this front. Families and children need us to create a new para-

digm! AFCC WA Chapter development can provide one more important platform for this conversation, and for the creation of many good ideas and opportunities for positive change in the world.

New AFCC Washington Chapter friendships and partnerships are being formed across the state in both urban and rural counties. AFCC is reaching out to all 39 counties in the State of Washington. These new friends & partners are reaching out to their personal and professional friends and colleagues; they include judges, attorneys, retired judges, GAL's, psychologists, nurses, mental health experts, social workers, court administrators and staff, and other relevant collaborative partners and leaders in their respective counties. They all report being starved for information and training opportunities, and seek AFCC Washington Chapter help in organizing formal and informal training conferences, brown bag lunch meetings, after-hours trainings, wine & cheese social get-togethers, as well as collaboration across counties and the state for education and establishing new standards for practice.

The AFCC Washington Chapter is proud to be a part of the discourse about these complex issues and to offer an organizational network for combining of expertise- both vast and diverse amongst our membership. Additionally, this member network provides opportunities for collegiality, support, timely access to information, exchange of essential information, a place to share perspectives and projects and to learn from one another. The AFCC website is a treasure trove of great information, research, and unlimited access to articles and information. AFCC is multidisciplinary and people join us from all over the world. We are proud to be such a great new chapter!

Please join us at our 4th Annual Conference on March 15th, 2014, where we will explore the Frontiers of Family Law. Sincerely, Dana Dean Doering, President WA AFCC

Committee Work (continued from p.1)

The Quality Assurance Committee, led by Natalie Novick Brown, Melanie English and David Hodges has made great strides this year. This Committee has done an extensive study of guidelines from many professional domains, as well as from many states across the USA. They are proposing new Child Custody Parenting Evaluator and Guardian ad Litem Guidelines & Standards for Practice in Washington State. The proposed guidelines and initial drafts have generated hot debate, demanded harsh assessment of current standards or lack of standards already in effect, exposed amazingly wide differences in practice and needs across the 39 jurisdictions in the state (many quite rural and remote), and germinated new thinking about the differences between court rules, certifications, training standards and more general aspirational goals. Significant work and hundreds of hours of thoughtful comparative analysis are currently in progress as many new designs and goals are carefully considered. These essential building blocks, in future, will be

Committee Work (continued from p.2)

carefully and slowly chiseled and shaped into new standards of practice for our state.

The Outreach and Speaker's Bureau Committees made a trip to Thurston County on Nov 5th to break new ground for AFCC WA Chapter. The Thurston County/Olympia group of AFCC Washington members & friends invited our Speaker's Bureau to attend a meet & greet evening at the home of Mary Anne Trause PhD. The evening was co-hosted by her and the Honorable Paula Casey. We had a huge turnout of psychologists, judges, lawyers and GAL's. The food and warm welcome were both wonderful and they look forward to hosting future events with us at AFCC. This group was especially receptive to hearing about the vision and future of AFCC Washington Chapter, as well as the benefits of Chapter membership. Many of them will join us in March for our 2014 conference. Give them a special welcome! And, we also wish to offer our thanks to Stacy Heard, David Hodges, Dennis Doering and Dana Dean Doering for traveling to Olympia for this wonderful outreach opportunity!

Other committees are being considered and formed. We are seeking members to serve in leadership positions and active working roles on these many committees. We need good ideas and the time commitment at this point is small. We need to have many new ideas and all voices included. Please join a committee work group!



Liaisons, Links, and Leadership

Washington State Bar Association: ADR Legislative Committee

Paul McVicker, chair of the WSBA/ADR legislative committee invited Daniel Rybicki and Dana Dean Doering, as representatives of AFCC WA Chapter, to regularly attend the ADR legislative committee meetings on mediation standards and guidelines for Washington State. This led to some new and wonderful opportunities to connect on behalf of the AFCC Chapter with the Resolution Washington President, Andrew Kidde, and Warren Olson of the Kitsap DRC and WMA, as well as with the President of Washington Mediation Association (WMA), Gayle Murdock. Dana is regularly attending the legislative meetings and learning quickly how much the mediation world overlaps with the mission and goals of the AFCC WA Chapter. Thank you to the ADR section for this invitation to have the voice of WA AFCC heard and for us to learn how much the work of the ADR Legislative Committee fits with our own AFCC WA Chapter agenda. We are now established as regular participants in this process. Thanks especially to Paul McVicker for being so inclusive to WA AFCC!

**AFCC Leadership Institute**

Kansas City recently hosted the annual Leadership Institute for all national and international Chapter Presidents and organizational leaders from all disciplines across AFCC. Current 2013-2014 Chapter President, Dana Dean Doering attended from Washington State Chapter and came away with many great ideas to share with the AFCC Washington membership and Board. Non-profit guru, Maureen Robinson taught a leadership segment on making non-profit boards healthy, happy and efficient places to serve. She wrote a book called "Non-Profit Boards That Work". She leads the Center for Non-Profit Advancement. Leslye Hunter shared the spotlight with Maureen at the Institute and led a very powerful seminar that changed all of our thinking about how to listen, inspire, plan, persuade and motivate. We are all excited to go home to our respective states and countries and to share this excitement with

our boards and member networks. Learning how to turn Chapter dreams into well-calibrated ideas and plans and to match that with the human resources needed in every chapter to execute those dreams was the exciting part of the agenda at the Institute. Leaders across from the oldest to the newest learned from each other.

Dispute Resolution Center Outreach

Resolution Washington is a statewide association of Dispute Resolution Centers (DRCs). There are currently 20 Dispute Resolution Centers operating in the cities and counties of Washington State, with a coverage area of approximately 93% of all Washington residents. These DRCs provide low-cost and effective conflict resolution services, including mediation, facilitation, and training to individuals or organization in their communities. Several of our AFCC members will attend the Thurston County DRC mediation training in January 2014. Please join us if you need a training. We look forward to connecting with all 20 Centers in 2014.

Collaborative Professionals of WA: 6th Annual Conference Nov 7-9th, 2013

Collaborative Professionals of Washington (CPW) recently hosted their annual conference and training for the Collaborative Practice Groups. The CPW crowd celebrated the passing of the UCLA, the Uniform Collaborative Law Act, that Governor Jay Inslee signed it into effect July 28th, 2013. Washington is the 7th state to pass the UCLA. Dana Dean Doering and Sarah Persha from the AFCC WA Chapter member network attended their 3-day conference to help celebrate this great victory and to learn more about the practice group method in Collaborative Law. Their theme this year was Hot! Hot! Hot! And they explored both the challenges and opportunities of conflict. A really great conference and lots of new friends and good connections for AFCC got built during that week. CPW- Congrats on the UCLA passing!

INTERESTING NEWS— NY TIMES ON THE CHANGING AMERICAN FAMILY

The Changing American Family: American households are continuing to evolve, resulting in diverse non-traditional family systems. These systems are continuing to break the mold and redefine our definition of family. According the New York Times, “Families...are becoming more socially egalitarian over all, even as economic disparities widen. Families are more ethnically, racially, religiously and stylistically diverse than half a generation ago – than even half a year ago.” The results are surprising to both researchers and laymen at large. The rise of non-traditional families has resulted in declining divorce rates, which have been slowly decreasing since 1996 and are now at 40% for first time marriages, down from 50%. Super interesting break-out statistics quoted in this article—if you compare traditional to non-traditional or include economics and educational status of parents into the mix. There are some huge and fun surprises also revealed in this article. Have fun reading it!



The New York Times further reports that marriage as an institution has lost much of its power. Healthy relationships, outside of the traditional context, are becoming much more valued and embraced. This is resulting in a complex and evolving definition of what he traditionally called “family.” As professionals, we need to be aware of the changing trends among American families and the unique challenges that may result. This will impact how we serve an ever-changing market.

FINAL THOUGHTS FOR THIS EDITION

Our goals and objectives include increasing awareness for the AFCC National organization in the State of Washington, creating new membership for the AFCC Washington State Chapter, serving our Superior Courts with new educational opportunities, establishing new standards and guidelines for best practices, creating training opportunities across the state, connecting to our many professional partners, and building a truly statewide collaborative organization that will become a valuable and lasting resource for the courts, the various professionals and the children and families that we all serve.

Collaboration, the cornerstone of the Washington State Chapter formation will continue to be our motto as we build further connections, education, training and outreach across the State of Washington.

Please join us on March 15th, 2014 at our 4th AFCC Washington Annual Conference. Emails will go out soon with registration information and there will be hard-copy flyers sent to you as well. So mark your calendars now for this exciting event. Wishing you all a wonderful winter holiday season.

Dana Dean Doering, President WA AFCC

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