

2016 Dispute Resolution Center Annual Conference Award Recipient

The Sharon Press Excellence in ADR Award was initiated in 2009 and is bestowed upon an individual for visionary leadership, professional integrity, and unwavering devotion to the field of alternative dispute resolution.

The award's 2016 recipient, Kathy Reuter, is a sophisticated thinker, thoughtful innovator, dynamic educator and transformative leader. Hundreds, if not thousands of mediators, have benefitted from the contributions Kathy has made to the field of conflict resolution over her professional career. Kathy embodies the principles upon which the Florida Academy of Professional Mediators bestows the Award of Merit. She is an:



Susan C. Marvin, Acting Chief of ADR with Mrs. Reuter's daughters, Michelle and Margie, accepting the award on her behalf.

Innovator: Kathy, as a member of the Supreme Court Committee on ADR Rules and Policy, led the efforts to have mediator certification based on points rather than strictly on educational degrees or Florida Bar membership. It would not be an exaggeration to refer to Kathy as the grandmother of the mediator point system. Kathy advanced a revision to the small claims rules that ultimately was discussed during oral argument before the Supreme Court of Florida. Kathy also served as one of two mediators on a workgroup formed under the Trial Court Budget Commission and Trial Court Performance and Accountability Commission to create an operational plan for ADR Programs in Florida's Trial Courts. Chief Justice Quince adopted the workgroup's recommendations in full. In all, Kathy served on Supreme Court ADR Committees from 1998 to 2009.

Professor: Kathy taught at Barry University College of Law for a decade beginning in 1998. Kathy was one of two professors selected to teach the inaugural Mediation and Theory class for the law school. Her classes were certified as county court mediation training programs thereby allowing her students to become certified county mediators while in law school.

Trainer: Kathy co-taught the DRC's county mediation training from 1996 to 2007 and helped to develop many of the educational materials used in the training. As recently as January 2014, although retired, Kathy served as a volunteer to provide critiques of role plays for the DRC's county mediation training program in Daytona. She traveled and spent 7 hours of her time on education to assist future volunteer mediators. As usual, she received raves reviews for her insightful remarks to the trainees.

Administrator: Kathy was the ADR Director of the largest court-connected mediation program, the ninth Judicial Circuit, Orlando, until the time of her retirement. Under her leadership, the ADR program flourished and continues to conduct more court-connected program mediations than any other judicial circuit. In Fiscal Year 2008-2009, Kathy's last year of employment with the courts, the ninth circuit held 10,137 court connected program mediation sessions. The second most referrals came in the fifteenth circuit with 7,843 sessions held.

Volunteer Mediator: Kathy is a FL Supreme Court certified county and family mediator. She serves as a volunteer in county court during the six months of every year that she resides in Florida.

These are the highlights of Kathy's work and many contributions to the field of ADR.