



# Heartland Mediators Association

## Professionals in Conflict Resolution

HMA is a not-for-profit organization bringing together people who share a common interest in mediation. HMA advocates for and provides continuing education about mediation and provides a network for information, skill sharing, and referrals.

P.O. Box 14971  
Lenexa, KS 66285  
Phone: 913-956-7620  
Fax: 913-825-3243  
Email: [HMAOrganization@everestkc.net](mailto:HMAOrganization@everestkc.net)



The Honorable Lawton R. Nuss  
Kansas Supreme Court Chief Justice

Accepts The President's Award on behalf of the Kansas Supreme Court. The award honors individuals or agencies that have contributed significantly this past year by increasing public awareness pertaining to conflict resolution.

## 2019 Annual Conference: Conflict Coaching

Tricia Jones was electric. She lit up the Heartland Mediators Association's annual conference April 11 and 12 at KU's Edward's campus offering something many had asked for -- advanced training on conflict coaching.

The day and a half training began at noon on Thursday and ended about 5 pm on Friday. An ethics training was also included for the 87 members and guests attending.

Jones ignited the participants with her ideas and skills about that new stuff, conflict coaching even though some questioned her about the word "coaching."

Why call it coaching? Why not.

It was whispered about the room that coaching and mediating just don't go together.

Later she explained that about 10 years ago she got to thinking about how she might help those who wanted mediation, but the other party didn't show up for the sessions.

For mediation to be effective both parties must participate, but with conflict coaching a party might alter the way they look at a situation and change the way the other party looks at it as well.

She brings laughter into her training but is humble in her work. She helps participants become interested in her training.

A longtime mediator, Jones saw many parties found it difficult for those wanting to mediate yet they had no one to negotiate with them. It's understandable that some believe that the word "coaching" might seem odd, but one is meeting the party where they are and it is a one-on-one endeavor.

You meet the party where they are and try for alternatives that impacts reactions and values, she explained. "It goes beyond emotion."

Jones, originally from Jefferson City, MO., was attending Ohio State University when she had the opportunity to drop into a conference on alternative dispute resolution back in 1981. "It was possibly one of the first trainings for mediators."

Conflict coaching is a one-on-one process to develop a party's skill in conflict strategies and/or interaction skills in conflict analysis, preferred direction and development of specific skills to help them through the situation with the other party.

She agreed with several who proffered questions about it by saying, Yes, it is closer to a therapeutic approach but assists with what blocks a party from being OK with what's going on with more than one issue.

"Conflict coaching creates a more future-focused mediation," she said. Most agreed that is the way mediation should be.

She noted that most would leave the conference knowing where the differences are.

Jones was willing to share how to get to the story – exploring the perspectives of identity, emotion and power, then crafting the best story and then enacting the best story.

Jones has been married 42 years to Marty Remland, history professor at Westchester University. She said she never expected to move out of the Midwest but

was offered a job at Temple University in Philadelphia. She went to visit and called her husband and told him, "We just have to consider this."

She has a 22-year-old son, Alex, who seems to be a natural mediator. He has a spot on the Autism spectrum but is in college and now doing quite well she says.

For the first 10 years as a mediator, she worked as a divorce mediator, but wanted something that would work in education, work place and family areas.

"I wanted to design a process that our students could use especially when the mediator has only one party there."

She now does mostly coaching and not as much mediation. A lot of research is being done now and she is doing a lot of training in New York centers. Data suggests that people like coaching and seem to do better with the outcomes.

"They seem to understand why others are taking the stance they are." She said. "Conflict coaching is helping them take advantage of mediation when they do get to the point of beginning the process."

When a party understands they will enter mediation as a more powerful and more in control negotiator. She said some of the critical concerns are confidentiality, transparency, dual roles, mandatory reporting, multiple coaching. Conflict coaching should always be voluntary.

This helps each person bring their best self to the mediation. "Who do you want to be in this process," she said. "How you identify others affects the outcome of the process."

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Linda King Laird is a past president of Heartland Mediators and continues to bring balance to conflict through parent-child mediation, domestic mediation and conciliation in the Manhattan and Lawrence programs as well as Dispute Solutions of Kansas for sliding scale mediation.

## Other 2019 HMA Award Winners

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### The Scholastic Award

Nominations from Kansas schools



Regina Platt and Steve Backman of the Lawrence Gardner High School in Topeka's Kansas Juvenile Justice Correctional Center Complex, nominated by John Errante.

### The Margaret "Peg" Nichols Volunteer of the Year Award



Dave Mathis, nominated by Thea Nietfeld and received the award from Roxanne Emmert-Davis

### The Acorn Award

Recognizes an HMA member for their contribution to the field of mediation and to the association



Tonya Ricklefs, nominated by Art Thompson

### The President's Award

Honors individuals or agencies that have contributed significantly by increasing public awareness pertaining to conflict resolution



Art Thompson nominated The Kansas Supreme Court, pictured with The Honorable Lawton R. Nuss, Kansas Supreme Court Chief Justice





# Who are we, what do we do, and how do we do it

Jim Donovan, President

At our annual meeting these questions were included on the bottom of the agenda. In fact, these questions have been placed at the bottom of Board agendas for quite some time.

I use these questions with all not-for-profits I am involved with to remind us to reflect on how we serve our membership. At the annual meeting I stated that I would be providing information that assists in addressing these questions.

Today I will address the first question: Who are we? Well, I am a numbers guy. Each March I review our membership list and compare it to the Kansas Supreme Court List of Approved Mediators <http://www.kscourts.org/programs/alternative-dispute-resolution/mediators.asp>

I recognize that Kansas mediators must “opt in” to have their name put on this list. However, I also recognize that to date it is the best list to evaluate our members to and official “approved” list.

These are the numbers I reflect on when addressing the other two questions, which will be discussed in future columns.

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## Heartland Mediators Association 2019 Membership at a Glance

Member Identified State of Residency:

135 Kansas  
28 Missouri  
1 Nebraska  
1 Ohio  
155 TOTAL HMA MEMBERS

HMA members on the Kansas Supreme Court List of Approved Mediators:

<http://www.kscourts.org/programs/alternative-dispute-resolution/mediators.asp>

73 Kansas  
3 Missouri  
76 TOTAL HMA MEMBERS

HMA Member Area of Approval

	Parent			Mentor		
	Core	Civil	Domestic	Adolescent	Juvenile	Mentor
Kansas Total Only	58	29	41	16	1	43
Missouri Total Only	1	1	2			1
TOTAL	59	30	43	16	1	44
PERCENT OF HMA MEMBERS	38%	19%	28%	10%	0.6%	28%

**HMA Membership** is open to any person interested in mediation or interested in pursuing a career in mediation or alternative dispute resolution. Membership goes from June 1 to May 31.

The Heartland Mediator Association's quarterly newsletter welcomes submissions of articles about mediation and news of mediation activities in the state of Kansas.

HMA Email: [HMAOrganization@everestkc.net](mailto:HMAOrganization@everestkc.net)

HMA phone: 913-956-7620

## Save The Dates

Upcoming HMA Training Dates. Training material and registration will be forwarded

Fall 2019 – To Be Announced

February 28, 2020 – HMA Winter Training, Topeka Public Library

April 16 and 17, 2020 – HMA Annual Meeting, Overland Park