



July 27, 2011

LINCOLN -- Chief Justice Mike Heavican and key staff members of the Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation will travel to several Nebraska communities this August to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Nebraska Dispute Resolution Act. Each of the Supreme Court Office of Dispute Resolution approved mediation centers will receive a commemorative plaque from the Chief Justice honoring the anniversary. During the afternoon of each visit, the Chief Justice and staff will travel to the probation day-reporting center, drug court and/or to the courthouse to complete the day.

*This 20th anniversary commemorates the 1991 creation of the Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) within the judicial system and celebrates the many contributions of mediation and alternative dispute resolution in Nebraska. Centers are located in Fremont, Kearney, Omaha, Lincoln, Beatrice and Scottsbluff.*

**FREMONT**

Wednesday, August 17, 2011

Mediation Open House: **Nebraska Justice Center**  
Jane Martin-Hoffman, Executive Director  
Drug Court: Judge Geoffrey Hall  
Probation Visit: Bob Denton, Chief Probation Officer

**KEARNEY**

Monday, August 22, 2011

Mediation Open House: **Central Mediation Center**  
Lynne Favinger, Executive Director  
Drug Court: Judges William Wright and John Icenogle  
Reporting Center: Tour new facility with Sue Gugel, Coordinator  
Clay Schutz, Chief Probation Officer

**OMAHA**

Tuesday, August 23, 2011

Mediation Open House: **Concord Center**  
Cindy Tierney, Executive Director  
Reporting Center: Jennifer Finigan, Coordinator  
Ron Broich, Chief Probation Officer

**LINCOLN**

Thursday, August 25, 2011

Mediation Open House: **The Mediation Center**  
Casey Karges, Executive Director  
Reporting Center: Cindy Wohlers-Green, Coordinator

## **BEATRICE**

Friday, August 26, 2011

Mediation Open House: **The Resolution Center**  
Judy Pingel, Executive Director  
Welcome New Probation Chief Sarah Rinne, Chief Probation Officer  
Courthouse Tour: Judges Paul Korslund and Steven Timm

## **SCOTTSBLUFF\***

Thursday, September 1, 2011

Courthouse Reception: **Mediation West**  
Rae Ann Schmitz, Executive Director  
Awards Presentation: Judge Randall Lippstreu and  
ODR Director Debora Brownyard  
*\*The Chief Justice is unable to attend due to scheduling issues. Select staff members will participate in the Mediation West celebration.*

Administrative office staff participating in celebratory visits:

Debora Brownyard, Director of Office of Dispute Resolution  
Sheryl Connolly, Director of Trial Courts Services  
Steve Rowoldt and/or Deb Minardi, Deputy Probation Administrators  
Janet Bancroft, Public Information Officer  
Scott Carlson, Statewide Coordinator for Problem-Solving Courts, will attend all drug court visits  
State Court Administrator Janice Walker will participate in several events

## **ABOUT MEDIATION IN NEBRASKA**

Nebraska's Mediation Centers strive to help people resolve conflict, achieve and maintain self-determination in their lives, preserve relationships between people, and eliminate the strain of avoidable litigation and pressure on the courts.

The six regional ODR-approved non-profit community mediation centers provide "best practice" approaches to mediation, facilitation, and conflict resolution. Mediation is found to be especially effective in resolving disputes such as parenting and custody matters, divorce, landlord/tenant, consumer, workplace, small claims and neighborhood conflicts. Juvenile victim offender dialogue, child welfare mediation, and facilitation of pre-hearing and family group conferences for children and families are particularly well-suited to address the best interests of children and individual accountability. Because of all of this, court referrals to the centers have increased by 134% over the past three years. Since 1992, the centers have handled over 27,915 mediation cases. Of the 1,604 cases mediated in 2010, 85% were resolved successfully.

Mediation is increasingly being viewed as one of several choices that the public, lawyers, and the courts themselves have to resolve problems: a "multi-door courthouse." It is a less expensive, less combative, and less time-consuming alternative to litigation.

<http://www.supremecourt.ne.gov/mediation/index.shtml?sub7>

## **ABOUT PROBATION IN NEBRASKA**

The Legislature created the Office of Probation Administration and outlined administrative functions to provide central management of probation services which, in turn, enhance public protection and offender rehabilitation.

Probation, administered by the judicial branch, refers to a convicted offender serving his or her sentence in a community setting rather than in a correctional institution.

With a probationary sentence, the convicted offender is allowed to live at home, may be required to make restitution, and is required to perform certain activities designed to rehabilitate rather than to punish. This living arrangement allows probationers to financially support themselves without monetary intervention by the State. Also included in the probationary sentence is the requirement of the offender to report regularly to a probation office in the district in which the sentence is being served.

The Nebraska State Probation System is a state-financed with fee-based programming.

Probation's Community-Based Supervision, Programs and Services include:

### Specialized Programs:

- Specialized Substance Abuse Supervision (SSAS)
- Work Ethic Camp (WEC)
- Problem Solving Courts
- Juvenile Intake

### Specialized Services:

- Day & Evening Reporting Centers
- Standardized Model for Delivery of Substance Abuse Services
- Fee for Service (Voucher) Program
- Mental Health and Co-Occurring Disorders Initiative

<http://www.supremecourt.ne.gov/probation/index.shtml>