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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Free Volunteer Mediation Training Offered by Harford County Community Services

BEL AIR, Md., (Jan. 6, 2016) - Do you like helping people? Can you listen to others without passing judgement? The Harford County Dept. of Community Services is offering free basic mediation training for volunteers interested in promoting peaceful solutions in the community.

“Being a mediator is stimulating and rewarding,” said Susan Fisher, administrator for the Harford County Dept. of Community Services, Office of Human Relations and Mediation. “Mediators get the same benefit participants do; satisfaction at being able to resolve conflict, and finding ways to create closure and hope for the future, which is very powerful. Last year volunteers provided over 400 citizens with conflict resolution services.”

Training is provided through the Harford County Community Mediation Program, which offers citizens a free, voluntary, confidential and neutral process to resolve conflicts. Such conflicts include disputes between neighbors, families, friends, businesses and consumers. Referrals are received from citizens, schools, outreach groups and the State’s Attorney’s Office.

The training program provides 50 hours of conflict management and resolution classes. Volunteers will learn valuable techniques, as trainers use experiential learning to teach listening and conflict resolution skills. Experiential learning means:

- Trainers use class exercises to create group experiences that teach effective conflict resolution

- Learning from your own experiences and the experiences of others
- Practicing and gaining experience through skill-building exercises and role play

After completing the 50 hours of training, a candidate must also serve as a volunteer mediator for a minimum of 100 hours within a calendar year – the equivalent of two mediations or 10 hours of office work and outreach per month. Training is mandatory and perfect attendance is required in order to receive a certificate. A candidate who misses even one hour of class time will be required to retake the entire training at a later date. Trainings are only offered once per year.

Training sessions for 2016 are listed below. The deadline for applications is March 1.

Friday, April 1, 2016 | 6:00-9:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 2, 2016 | 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 3, 2016 | 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Monday, April 4, 2016 | 6:00-9:30 p.m.

Friday, April 8, 2016 | 6:00-9:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 9, 2016 | 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 10, 2016 | 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 16, 2016 | 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

An acceptance interview is required and limited training slots are available, with priority given to those seeking a long-term volunteer opportunity. To learn more or to apply, please contact Susan E. Fisher at 410-638-4807 or visit www.harfordmediation.org.

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