SHARE. SUPPORT. SUSTAIN.
Community Boards’ Annual Report
July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015
# Table of Contents

- **3** From Our Executive Director & Board President
- **4** Our Guiding Principles
- **5** Our Core Programs
- **6** Our 2014-15 Service Record
- **7** Facts About the San Franciscans We Assisted
- **8** A Sampling of Outcomes for Our Services
- **9** What Our Clients Have Told Us
- **10** Trainings & Scholarships
- **11** Volunteer Voices
- **12** Our Family of Peacemakers, Page 1
- **13** Our Family of Peacemakers, Page 2
- **14** FY2014-15 Condensed Financial Information
- **15** San Francisco Peacemaker Awards
- **16** Thank You to Our Donors & Our CB Members
- **17** Introducing Our New Legacy Society
- **18** Who We Are | Special Acknowledgements
Dear Friends,

Community Boards turns 40 in 2016. Its impressive history is full of milestone achievements and accomplishments. Looking at our successes in 2015, we take pride in our collaborative efforts to maintain the core of CB’s work while developing new approaches to meet a changing San Francisco. We’re glad to share the highlights with you in this report we’ve entitled **Share. Sustain. Support.**

Throughout this past fiscal year, our commitment to peaceful solutions have been reaffirmed through many inspiring mediations and group facilitations. The rapid demographic changes in SF are felt profoundly in neighborhoods throughout the city and within families. Community Boards is stepping up to lend its expertise in fostering communication and collaborative problem solving.

For instance, in 2015 we’ve been working in partnership with the SF Planning Department to facilitate community forums in the Mission so that residents concerned about eviction and gentrification can offer recommendations to Supervisor Campos and city planners.

One thing that hasn’t changed is Community Boards’ commitment to our mission. To support that commitment, we’re fortunate to have a community of generous donors and loyal funders. We sincerely value and appreciate their confidence in our work and their continued financial support.

Our ongoing goal has been to keep our overhead low while diversifying our revenue streams. Fortunately, 2015 was a banner year for our annual fundraiser, the San Francisco Peacemaker Awards, raising over $34k to support our programming, scholarships and services. For a fuller detailed description of our program activities and condensed financials, please read on.

Combined with the talents and expertise of our community volunteers and trainers and strong stakeholder relationships, we believe that Community Boards is positioned to respond to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Thank you for wholeheartedly being a part of the mediation movement. We value and appreciate our incredible community of volunteer mediators and coaches, as well as our talented trainers and facilitators. With your support, Community Boards is – and will continue to be – a beacon of hope to those in dire need of resolution and an example for other community mediation centers nationally. We cannot do what we do without all of you.

Respectfully yours,

Darlene Weide, MPH, MSW
Executive Director

R. Kamala Laird, Esq.
President, Board of Directors

From Our Executive Director & Board President
Our Mission and Values

Our Mission
The purpose of Community Boards is to empower communities and individuals with the strength, skills, and resources needed to express and resolve conflicts peacefully and appropriately for their culture and environment.

To accomplish our mission, we provide and promote peaceful, collaborative conflict resolution. We serve diverse communities and offer mediation, conflict coaching, training, and referrals. We build more peaceful, respectful, healthy, and just communities – one relationship at a time.

We envision Community Boards in the forefront of the conflict resolution field, working with individuals, communities, schools and groups across the country and around the world.

Our Values
We are guided by the following values and commitments:
- To provide accessible, fair and inclusive problem solving and conflict resolution services
- To respect the many forms of communication and problem solving utilized by and appropriate to diverse people and communities
- To maintain an organizational orientation to self-assessment, ongoing learning and internal practices consistent with our purposes and values
- To enhance people’s capacities as involved, aware and effective residents of their communities

Highlights of Our Public Service
Since 1976 Community Boards has...

- Trained 17,000 volunteer peacemakers and assisted 50,000+ San Franciscans in resolving their disputes.

- Developed a unique panel mediation model of three mediators working collaboratively to create a safe and confidential conflict resolution process for all San Franciscans.

- Created a rewarding — both personally and professionally — avenue for concerned citizens to volunteer their time, energy, and skills in helping others.

- Introduced in 1982 its Conflict Manager Program, a peer mediation model, that is now one of the oldest programs in the United States and is found in 3,000+ schools nationwide.

- Built partnerships and collaborations with a broad array of social service organizations, public agencies, and community nonprofits including the SF Police Department, the SF Unified School District, the SF Superior Court, SF Rent Board, SF Planning Department, housing/tenant rights groups, assisted living residences, and arts and cultural organizations among many others.
Our Core Programs & Services

Community Boards is the longest running public conflict resolution center in the United States. We help San Franciscans resolve a wide range of disputes through multiple services. Our Neighborhood Services are low cost with no one turned away for lack of funds. Our Specialized ADR Services provide high quality, low cost options for businesses, organizations, and public agencies. We offer a comprehensive array of alternative dispute resolution trainings for individuals, groups, and public/nonprofit agencies. We offer scholarships to keep our trainings accessible to as many as possible.

We also create vibrant opportunities in civic engagement for volunteers, who receive extensive training, regular evaluations and feedback, and ongoing support.

Community Boards’ mission and work is provided at the eight key service points described below.

Case Openings & Referrals
All people requesting assistance receive empathic support for their individual situations. When mediation isn’t the best option, we make referrals to other resources and partner organizations.

Neighborhood Mediation
Our Neighborhood Mediation Program offers full case development and mediation in Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, and English. Mediations are provided year-round, Mondays-Saturdays, 10 am-9:00 pm.

Conflict Coaching
Our Conflict Coaching Program provides confidential one-on-one in person or phone sessions that assist individuals in addressing and solving a specific problem.

Public Education: Taking Mediation to the People
As a community based organization, we focus on face-to-face grassroots outreach: tabling at public events, presentations to groups, and partnerships with other nonprofits and social service agencies.

Volunteer Services & Development
All volunteer mediators, conflict coaches, and facilitators receive preparatory and advanced trainings, regular evaluations, and ongoing support through individual sessions and quarterly group meetings.

Specialized ADR Services
Our specialized mediation and facilitation services assist independent contractors, small businesses, tech startups, property managers, homeowners, and nonprofit organizations. All are affordably priced.

Trainings & Scholarships
We offer a wide range of trainings for new and experienced professionals, and for businesses and nonprofits seeking staff and organizational development. We award many scholarships to keep them accessible.

District Attorney’s Neighborhood Courts
Since 2012, we have provided the District Attorney’s Neighborhood Courts program with year-round trainings, observations, evaluations, reports, and support for its volunteer adjudicators.
Our 2014-15 Service Record

Total Number of Delivered Service Units

3509

- Neighborhood Services: 1724
  - 270 opened cases
  - 437 were invited to mediate
  - 224 attended 85 mediations
  - 214 received referrals
  - 26 received conflict coaching
  - 553 attended presentations

- Community Boards Trainings: 336

- Volunteer Services & Development: 327

- Scholarships: 52

- Specialized ADR Services: 232
  - 35 opened cases
  - 66 were invited to mediate
  - 39 attended 10 mediations
  - 92 attended 6 facilitations

2014-15 Service Unit Totals Recap

Community Boards delivered 3509 service units:

- 1,956 through Neighborhood & Specialized ADR mediations, case openings & referrals, conflict coaching sessions, and facilitations.
- 641 through training, coaching, observations, evaluations & feedback.
- 52 through training scholarships.
- 327 volunteer mediators, conflict coaches & facilitators through support, evaluation, feedback & additional training opportunities.
- 533 through face-to-face public education presentations and meetings.

An additional 900+ San Franciscans were reached via tabling & literature distribution at public events.

Volunteer Mediator Hours

Our volunteer Community Mediators donated 837 hours of their conflict resolution expertise.

837 Hours

THANK YOU, ALL!
A Few Facts About the San Franciscans We Assisted

**Where They Live/Work**
- Inner Mission/Bernal Heights: 19%
- Ingleside-Excelsior/Crocker Amazon: 12%
- Castro/Noe Valley: 9%
- Visitacion Valley/Sunnydale: 9%
- Polk/Russian Hill/Nob Hill: 7%
- Hayes Valley, NOMA & Tenderloin: 19%
- Haight Ashbury: 7%
- SOMA: 7%
- Other: 5%

**How They Learned About Us**
- Word of Mouth: 26%
- SF Police Department: 18%
- SF City & County Agencies: 15%
- Internet: 12%
- SF City & County Agencies: 15%
- Legal Services: 7%
- Nonprofit Organizations: 5%
- Public Education & Outreach: 17%

**Types of Disputes**
- Relationships: 32%
- Quality of Life: 17%
- Finances: 10%
- Construction: 5%
- Harassment: 5%
- Eviction: 6%
- Property: 23%
- Other: 2%
A Sampling of Outcomes for Our Services

**Neighborhood Mediation**
- 2013: 35 cases
- 2014: 56 cases
- 2015: 81 cases

**Specialized ADR Mediation**
- 2013: 15 cases
- 2014: 17 cases
- 2015: 12 cases

**Conflict Coaching**
- 2013: 3 cases
- 2014: 15 cases
- 2015: 29 cases

**Mediation Cases Opened**
- 2013: 26
- 2014: 24
- 2015: 26
- 2016: 30
- 2017: 31
- 2018: 31
- 2019: 33
- 2020: 36
- 2021: 32

**A Sampling of Outcomes for Our Services**

85% Resolved
- **Written Agreement**: 62%
- **Verbal Agreement**: 19%
- **Partial Agreement**: 4%
- **No Resolution**: 15%
What Our Clients Have Told Us

Neighborhood Mediation

“Our mediation changed everything.”

“No one in the new family upstairs spoke very good English and we don’t speak Spanish. We tried to talk to them about the noises coming through our ceiling, but they didn’t understand. Having a Spanish-speaking mediator made all the difference. Our mediation changed everything. They bought rugs and padding, and now we have our quiet home back!” – Two Families, North Beach

“People treat us as referees and judges...”

“We’re always getting calls where people want us to settle a personal dispute. People treat us as referees or judges. You name it. Fortunately I’ve been able to make numerous referrals to Community Boards. I give folks your little card for their problems where no law has been broken, but when we’ve been dispatched.” – Police Officer, Tenderloin

“We have our family back.”

“My wife and I had been estranged from our daughter for over 10 years. When she moved back to the city, she sent out feelers through mutual friends. Something we kept hoping for a long time. One friend recommend you...Well, not to sound too melodramatic, we have our family back. It took three mediations and lots of tissues...You have our gratitude.” – Family, Outer Richmond

Conflict Coaching

“...a gentle, practical, conversational exploration...”

“My coaching session was a gentle, practical, conversational exploration of what was important on all sides of my issue. My coach was able to get me to envision a different scenario that would not trigger me.”

“...distilled my issue into one I could better understand.”

“I felt comfortable with my coach and she really distilled my issue into one I could better understand. My session was a nice balance of care and curiosity combined with a focus on the practical.”

Facilitation

“10 of us went into the meeting and 1 team came out.”

“Our small board faces multiple challenges for both the organization and among ourselves as its formal directors. Our board consultant suggested facilitation as a proactive option and then recommended you all. A sizeable minority had reservations (myself included), but we all agreed to try. In short, 10 of us went into the meeting and 1 team came out.”
Trainings and Scholarships

TRAININGS  Community Boards offers a range of introductory, advanced, and customized conflict resolution trainings for students, new and experienced professionals, those pursuing continuing education requirements, as well as for groups, nonprofits, public agencies, small businesses seeking team, staff, and organizational development.

SCHOLARSHIPS  Our scholarship program allows us to expand the diversity of our citywide pool of volunteer peacemakers. We also strive to keep professional adr skill-set building as accessible as possible to all. We work to make these trainings accessible to low income residents, people of color, seniors, LGBTQ members of the community, and students.

The Basics of Mediation
Siobhan Cassidy & Donald Proby
The Basics of Mediation is our flagship training, now approaching its 40th year. It’s an comprehensive introduction to the fundamentals of effective mediation.

A dynamic training team, Siobhan and Donald have led this 40-hour training since 2011. They continue to receive laudatory evaluations and feedback.

Conflict Coaching
Cordell Wesselink, MA & Betsy Zeger
Cordell and Betsy developed our Conflict Coaching program in 2012. They continue to refine it, adapting the model to complement our neighborhood programs, services, and special needs.

As a team, they provide both introductory and intermediate trainings throughout the year and have created a highly skilled and enthusiastic cadre of conflict coaches.

District Attorney’s Neighborhood Courts
Susan Stone & Cordell Wesselink, MA
Cordell and Susan provide the District Attorney’s Neighborhood Courts program with multiple trainings, observations, evaluations, and feedback for the courts’ panelists.

Cordell leads the core introductory training and organizes ongoing workshops for the panelists. Susan leads the restorative justice trainings and regularly attends court sessions to maintain their integrity and high quality.

We Thank Our July 2014 - June 2015 Mediation Clinic Leaders
Community Boards is appreciative of these trainers for sharing their skills, experience, and intellectual property pro bono at our Mediation Clinics. Scheduled monthly over a full calendar year, these intensive, eclectic workshops are now in their fifth season and have become an excellent, sought out Bay Area resource for ADR professionals and those working in conflict resolution.

Mark Batson Baril: Organizational Work Teams, Post Mediation Tools for Uncovering Conflict Systems
Katharina W. Dress, MA: Using Nonviolent Communication in Mediation, An Empathy-Centered Model
Emily Epstein: Gender Issues in Mediation and Negotiation
Jared Finkelstein: NVC Mediation in Action
Paula M. Lawhon: How Attorneys Can Help, Not Hurt, the Mediation Process
John O’Grady: Ethics in Mediating Financial Elder Abuse
Antonio Piazza: The Physics of Fighting
Scott Rutz, MA: The Art of the Question
Charles Spiegel, Esq.: Mediating Divorce Choice, Current Topics in California Divorce Mediation
Helene Taylor, Esq.: Mediating Child Custody and Support Issues
Julia F. Weber, JD, MSW: Domestic Violence and Mediation, What it is, Why it Matters, and What to Do About It

Community Boards remains ever grateful for the generous, ongoing support of JAMS as the founding host of our Mediation Clinics.
Volunteer Voices

Volunteers of the Quarter

Many remarkable people volunteer at Community Boards on different projects and programs. In appreciation of their great work, we created “Volunteer of the Quarter” to honor and acknowledge their energy, skills, and commitment to civic engagement.

“I had a tenant who didn’t pay her rent. She brought me to Community Boards to negotiate payment. I mediated with her and it was very successful. Afterwards, I realized mediation was such a wonderful process, where you can discuss all you want in a very safe environment…I joined Community Boards because I wanted to give back to my community and this was a good place to start.” – Community Mediator since 2000 and former Board Member

Sing Chin, Summer 2014

“Working with Community Boards has been incredibly rewarding. I love watching people palpably move from frustration and anger to understanding and relief during the mediation process. When people leave Community Boards happier and lighter because they have resolved their conflicts, I really know we are helping restore peace in the community.” – Community Mediator since 2010

Tori Freeman, Fall 2014

“Conflict gets a really bad reputation in this world. For me, I believe conflict is actually this very ripe possibility for intimacy…I think the most rewarding aspect of being a Community Mediator is seeing people walk into their mediation session being really stressed and then walking out feeling relief. This is really the most satisfying experience of volunteering with Community Boards.” – Community Mediator since 2008

Dylan Miles, Winter 2015
Many Kudos to Our Family of Peacemakers

Community Mediators, Conflict Coaches & Facilitators


“"My first mediation seemed like the longest three hours of my life. There was so much anger when we started and it just kept coming. Then something “clicked” for the parties. When it ended, I felt like a miracle had happened when they actually smiled while shaking hands.”


“I became a mediator to learn how to help folks who had problems. One of the best results, though, is more personal. I use and model my conflict resolution skills at home with my three kids and when I coach their soccer team…Put simply, I’m a better parent.”


“I have six mediations under my belt now! With this perspective, I’ve noticed that even when I mediate with people I’ve just met, we can work as a group. I’ve liked how our different mediation styles seem to meld together, turning us into one, really effective team.”

Continued on next page
“Training as a conflict coach was natural after becoming a mediator. Validation and restatement are my favorite mediation ‘tools.’ With conflict coaching I’ve complemented these two practical skills with something so personally gratifying: the ‘art’ building of trust through empathy.”

“I helped facilitate a group meeting with almost 60 people. Though briefed beforehand about their tensions, I felt like a UN Peacemaker trying help several warring nations. In four hours, we had multiple caucuses, but in the end, they spontaneously applauded each other at closing.”
**Revenue** $290,216

- **Government Grants**: 55%
- **Training**: 18%
- **SF Peacemaker Awards Ceremony & Benefit**: 11%
- **Donations**: 6%
- **Specialized ADR Services**: 3%
- **Membership**: 3%
- **Other**: 2%
- **Corporate Grants**: 2%

**Expense** $288,335

- **Management & General**: 70%
- **Fundraising**: 11%
- **Program**: 19%

**Audit Statement**: Community Boards has biennial audits. FY2013 was the most recent, conducted by Mandel & King, CPA’s.

**Opinion**: In our opinion, the financial statements referred to present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Community Boards as of June 30, 2013, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with account principals generally accepted in the United States of America. - January 15, 2014
With the San Francisco Peacemaker Awards, we salute and celebrate the significant contributions of others who make San Francisco a city of healthier, more respectful neighborhoods and communities.

Our awards recognize individuals and organizations with proven track records while fostering the next generation of "rising" young peacemakers.
We Thank Our Generous Donors


We Thank Our CB Members

Visionary Circle
Frank Adam | Bob Bailey | Krista Bell | Joseph Bubman | Sandira Calviac | Linda Dunn | Emily Epstein | Lindsay Hower | Dan Landy | Tracy Lemmon | Farrah Moos | Sarah Nichols | John O’Grady | Nicole O’Hay | Margaret Okuzumi | Megan Oliver Thompson | Lorie Reichel-Howe | Bruce Robertson | Donna Salazar | Melanie Sengupta | Central Bank of the Bay Area | Michael Tobriner | Debra Varner

Leadership Circle
Angelo Aloisio | Michael Tobriner | Debra Varner

Peacemakers Circle

Friendship Circle
Introducing Our New Legacy Society

Our Legacy Society will help ensure that our unique peacemaking and training services, provided citywide in San Francisco, will continue to be available and publicly accessible for years to come.

There are many legacy options for those wishing to support us: Will/Trust Bequests, Life Income Gifts, Life Insurance Policies, Life Estate Gifts, and Stocks & Securities.

You can learn more about joining our Legacy Society on our website, www.communityboards.org.

“Community Boards is an essential resource to resolve community conflicts. In order to ensure that Community Boards is able to continue its grass-roots mission of providing community conflict resolution services, I named Community Boards in my will as a beneficiary. I am proud to have Community Boards be a part of my legacy, and to help ensure that this powerful, community-driven resource remains available for future generations. I encourage you to join me in making this possible.”

Tracy Lemmon
Founding Member, Legacy Society
Chair, Advisory Council
Staff
Darlene Weide, MPH, MSW - Executive Director
Cordell Wesselink, MA - ADR Programs Director
Arnold “Mac” McGilbray - Case Development Manager
Deb Gatiss - Community Outreach Coordinator
Jim Garrison - Communications Director
Liliya Shilman - Finance Manager

Board of Directors
R. Kamela Laird, Esq. - President
Paula Connelly | Linda Dunn | Sonja Kos
Marc Martin | Kyra Millich | Christina Sabee
Tonya Saheli | Victoria Borrego Swepson | Betsy Zeger

A Special Acknowledgement for Their Recent Board Service
Bob Bailey | Krista Bell | Farrah Moos | Nicole O’Hay
Megan Oliver Thompson | Sondra Price
Melanie Sengupta | Gerald Solk

Advisory Council
Tracy Lemmon - Chair
Terry Amsler | Bob Bailey | Kathleen Coogan | Jon Eldan
Bill Hafferty | Eileen Hansen | Donald Proby
Joseph Ragazzo | Gail Sadalla | Julia Salinas
Elizabeth Shwiff | Teri Sklar | Charles Spiegel

Interns
Victor Diaz | Allison Edwards | Morgan Hernandez | Sidney Pucek | Amanda Reinke | Mei Chang Yu

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- San Francisco District Attorney’s Office, Jackson Gee and Katherine Miller
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- San Francisco Police Officers Association
- To all our inspirational BAACM colleagues at the Center for Human Development in Concord, Conflict Resolution Center of Santa Cruz County in Santa Cruz, the Office of Citizen Complaints in San Francisco, Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center in San Mateo, Project Sentinel in Santa Clara, SEEDS Community Resolution Center in Berkeley, and Yolo Conflict Resolution Center in Davis.