

Dispute Resolution Education Offers Opportunities



Shelley Bobb, Student –
Master's in Dispute Resolution

As part of her coursework in the master's in dispute resolution program, Shelley Bobb wrote a paper titled "The Philosopher's Stone: The Cutting Edge Contribution of Jurgen Habermas to Mediation." This paper offers a unique link between the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas' theory of communication and the principles of mediation. After responding to a formal "call for papers" by the University of Massachusetts' Dispute Resolution Department, Shelley's paper has been selected out of 150 proposals from graduate students across North America and many international locations for presentation at the biannual conference in October. In addition, this paper has been accepted to present at a conference on "Rhetoric and Society" in Antwerp, Belgium in January!

Shelley's coursework has also provided her with the opportunity to participate in a Kenosha small claims court mediation case and contribute to the successful settlement of a landlord-tenant dispute. "This

experience made me realize that mediation can be a very rewarding and satisfying way to help people reach an equitable decision and make a good difference in the world," she said.

Shelley's education includes a bachelor's degree, two master's degrees and an unfinished Ph.D. After serving as a Lutheran pastor for over 25 years, she felt that it was time for a change. When Shelley was presented with an opportunity to speak with Len Riskin, a leader in the field of mediation, he highly recommended Marquette's Graduate Program in Dispute Resolution. Shelley decided to meet with program director Eva Soeka and was impressed with the program, the knowledge and excellent practitioner experience of the instructors, and the level of spiritual depth at Marquette. She decided it was worth the drive from Madison to attend classes on Saturdays and earn a master's degree in dispute resolution.

"I am impressed with my student colleagues and the animated spirit, thoughtful perspectives, and encouragement that is evident," commented Shelley. "No one can 'grade' this type of thing or make it a class expectation, but when it happens, it enhances the classroom experience and the overall learning journey."