

FSRI Year End Update 2023

Successful Delegations to India and Brazil

India- We returned to India in early October, with an excellent delegation, comprised of FSRI Board members Dana Curtis, Howard Herman, and Claudia Bernard (and me), where we had a world-wind tour of several Indian cities. It was one of our most successful visits to a host country. In Delhi, under the auspices of the Supreme Court, we provided two days of training (at the Supreme Court) to the trainers working countrywide to train future mediators—a most important and challenging undertaking to assure quality mediation processes in the future.

This was followed by a trip to Hyderabad where we provided a one-day specialized training course on dispute resolution for family business owners at the Indian School of Business. This unique family business program was especially well-received, given the great percentage of such businesses in India.

Thereafter, we conducted a separate training of attorneys (for in-house counsel and law firms) on effective advocacy in mediation

We then flew to Bangalore where we met with staff and mediators from Laila Ollapally's Center for Advanced Mediation Practice, CAMP, for an open-ended discussion and exchange on mediation developments in Bangalore. The next day we presented a full day program on conflict management at one of India's most highly respected law schools, the National Law School. This was followed with a full day program at the Law School on effective advocacy in mediation for lawyers, corporate counsel and mediators. On the last day of our visit we provided training to judges at the Judicial Academy on best practices for case referral to mediation centers.

The India trip involved a very busy and intense program, which I believe was one of our most impactful and successful delegations. This is largely due to the expertise, excellent presentations and coaching provided by our Board members, Howard Herman, Claudia Bernard, and Dana Curtis. What a superb team, and such a pleasure to work with in India. We had the excellent support of Laila and Tara Ollapally, Rukmani Menon, and the CAMP staff, without whom we could not have had such success. We can all be proud of the good work carried out by this very special group of FSRI Board members and supporters. I believe we really moved the needle a significant degree in what is a growing acceptance of mediation in India as a form of peaceful dispute resolution in a country with a heavy backlog of court cases (32M).

Brazil- Board member Jennifer Brandt and I completed a trip to Brazil from November 7 thru 11, which also went very well. We participated in several panels at the annual, national CBMA mediation conference in Rio, and networked extensively with our counterparts/colleagues in Brazil. We were welcomed with warmth, enthusiasm and gratitude.

In addition to panels on mediation developments and best practices around the world, I made a special presentation to Brazilian judges at their judicial academy on effective case referral/selection, actually demonstrating “best” referral techniques. Jennifer honed in on the resolution of family business disputes, which is a particularly important area given the large number of family businesses in Brazil (and in the world generally).

As always, Jennifer did a great job in her presentation and in

representing FSRI. She and I also enjoyed coaching conference attendees as requested, and broadening our network of collaborating partners in Brazil.

Coaching/Counseling- We have continued our ongoing, virtual coaching and counseling with mediation leaders, systems administrators of mediation programs and judges, upon request. This allows us to provide support for these ongoing programs as well as to enhance the quality of these mediation centers and providers as their programs evolve. Also, when various judges/mediators/lawyers visit the United States we have met with these professionals to provide one-to-one counseling, support and encouragement. This has involved representatives from Bulgaria, Argentina, Vietnam, Poland and elsewhere, allowing us to develop supportive, personal relationships with those carrying on their mediation work when they return home.

Future outlook- we are hopeful that Covid related epidemics remain somewhat stable so as not to interfere with our planned trips. We intend to schedule additional delegations in 2024, focusing on Eastern Europe in Bulgaria, Croatia and the Republic of Georgia, and to further continue and expand our work.

Special Request- As you are probably aware, air flights and related transportations costs have skyrocketed this past year. Consequently, the costs for the recent delegations have been very significant. You may recall from my earlier communications that I have not requested donations while we were not traveling to host countries during the pandemic. Now that we have resumed such travel, and that we are planning significant delegations in the new year, I would request your kind contribution to FSRI in your holiday gifts if you are able. As in the past, such contributions can

be made directly by sending a check (made out to “FSRI”), and mailing it to my office at 190 Golden Hills Drive, Portola Valley, CA, 94028. Alternatively, secure online donations can be made at <http://www.fsriadr.org/financial-contributions> All such contributions are tax deductible as we remain a c(3) charitable organization - federal tax ID # 46-1217071. THANK YOU! Your support is so vital to the continuation of our work to promote peaceful dispute resolution around the globe.