

# NEW YORK STATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION ASSOCIATION

## 2025 LEGACY CONFERENCE



Honoring 40 Years of Advancing  
Access to Justice Through ADR

**Reflect. Celebrate. Advance.**

September 25 & 26



## Reflect. Celebrate. Advance.

Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pride and gratitude that I welcome you to the New York State Dispute Resolution Association's 40th Anniversary Legacy Conference. This milestone offers us a unique opportunity not only to celebrate the vision and dedication of those who founded and built NYSDRA, but also to reflect on the growth of our field and the vital role dispute resolution continues to play in our communities.

For four decades, NYSDRA has been a champion of constructive conflict engagement, advancing mediation and alternative dispute resolution practices that create space for dialogue, dignity, and understanding. We stand on the shoulders of leaders, practitioners, and community members whose commitment has shaped a strong foundation for our work today.

This conference is more than a celebration—it is a legacy. Together, we honor the history that brought us here, recognize the achievements of those who have carried this mission forward, and look ahead with hope and determination. The challenges of our time call for creativity, compassion, and collaboration—qualities that have always defined NYSDRA and will guide us into the future.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our members, partners, and supporters. Your contributions and dedication ensure that the legacy of dispute resolution in New York will continue to thrive for decades to come. May this conference inspire us all to carry forward the spirit of peacebuilding, innovation, and community connection that has been our hallmark for 40 years.

With appreciation and excitement for what lies ahead,

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theresa Hobbs".

Executive Director  
New York State Dispute Resolution Association

## Honoring Four Decades of Impact: The History of NYSDRA

Founded in 1985, the New York State Dispute Resolution Association (NYSDRA) emerged as a statewide leader in the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) movement, providing advocacy, coordination, and professional support to Community Dispute Resolution Centers (CDRCs) and ADR practitioners across New York State. As the field of ADR gained national momentum in the 1980s, NYSDRA was established to unify and strengthen the growing network of CDRCs that had been launched through a state-funded initiative by the Unified Court System.

NYSDRA's early efforts focused on institutionalizing mediation programs, sharing resources, and providing a forum for training, collaboration, and quality assurance. The association became a crucial voice in promoting the value of mediation, especially for underserved communities and marginalized groups. It fostered a culture of inclusivity, professional development, and innovation in dispute resolution practice, guided by the principles of neutrality, accessibility, and community empowerment.

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, NYSDRA expanded its scope by collaborating with state agencies, courts, schools, and advocacy organizations to integrate mediation into areas such as family dynamics, special education, workplace conflict, agriculture, mental health, and restorative justice. It developed model standards for mediators and dispute resolution programs, supported credentialing efforts, and increased its emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion within the field.

The organization also took a proactive role in legislative advocacy and policy development, ensuring ongoing support for the CDRC network and championing the use of ADR in addressing emerging societal challenges. NYSDRA's annual conferences became a hallmark of professional engagement and thought leadership, drawing practitioners, academics, and public officials from across the state and beyond.

Today, NYSDRA continues to be a trusted convener, educator, and advocate, celebrating 40 years of advancing access to justice and strengthening communities through peaceful conflict resolution. Its legacy is reflected in the thousands of New Yorkers who have been empowered to resolve disputes constructively and respectfully outside of the courtroom, and in ways that foster long-term understanding and healing.



# NYSDRA LEGACY CONFERENCE 2025

## Thursday, September 25



Reflect. Celebrate. Advance.

### 8:45 - 9:00 AM | Conference Opening & Welcome

Love Odih Kumuyi, Esq., NYSDRA Board Member

### 9:00 - 10:00 AM | Morning Keynote Address

*The Art of Reflection: Global Wisdom for Local Practice*

Dr. Sukhsimranjit Singh, JAMS Mediator & Arbitrator

Board of Directors, Weinstein International Foundation

### 10:00 - 11:00 AM | Concurrent Sessions

#### AI & the Future of ADR (CLE)

Alexander Paykin, Esq.

#### Voices of Change: A Community Mediation Training Documentary

Gina Tinker-Williams & Austin Bunn

#### Mental Health Empowerment Coaching: New Opportunities for Mediators and CDRCs

Dan Berstein

#### Restorative Justice in Action: Community-Based Programs for Lasting Change

Kailani Capote

### 11:15 AM - 12:15 PM | Concurrent Sessions

#### Community Resilience Through ADR: The CDRC Model

Courtney Chicvak, Esq.

#### Restorative Justice Responses to Traffic Violence: Successful Stories & Persistent Barriers

Hillary Packer, Esq. & Bobby Preti

#### Partnering for Impact: The Role of Law School Mediation Clinics in Court-Based ADR (CLE)

Robyn Weinstein, Esq., Kamella English, Esq., Cai Phillips-Jones, J.D. and Susan Salazar, Esq.

#### Navigating Mediation Rosters: A Practitioner's Guide (CLE)

Bridget O'Connell, Esq. and Krysta Hartley, Esq.



## **12:15 - 1:00 PM | Lunch & Networking**

Connect with colleagues and continue conversations

## **1:00 - 2:00 PM | Concurrent Sessions**

### **Maintaining Balance: Supporting Collaboration in Attorney-Mediated Cases (CTLE)**

Bobbie Dillon, M.S. and Shari Greenleaf, J.D.

### **Better Prep, Better Sessions: The Power and Pitfalls of Pre-Session Work**

Amber Russell

### **Champions for ADR in Family Court, Part 1: Building Bridges Between Courts & Communities**

Shira May, Ph.D. and Kate Wurmfeld, Esq. (facilitators), John McCullough, Subrata Paul, Esq., and Karen Carroll, J.D.

### **When Child Welfare Cases Stall: The Role of Mediation**

Suzanne K. Shafer, M.A.

## **2:15 - 3:15 PM | Afternoon Keynote Address**

### ***The Moral Dimension of Mediation: Celebrating my Friend and Colleague Len Riskin***

Robert A. Baruch Bush, J.D., Professor of Alternative Dispute Resolution

Maurice A. Deane School of Law, Hofstra University

## **3:30 - 4:30 PM | Concurrent Sessions**

### **Seriously, You're Still Saying "Facilitative" and "Evaluative" Mediation in 2025? AI Can Help.**

John Lande, J.D., Ph.D.

### **ADR in Guardianship Proceedings: Emerging Practices (CLE)**

Marcy Einhorn, Esq., Sabrina Morrissey, Esq., Deborah Rosenthal, Esq., and Carolyn Wolf, Esq.

### **The Evolution of a Conflict Center & What That Means for Conflict Professionals (CLE)**

Hon. Judge Ray Kramer and Halley B. Anolik, Esq.

### **LIT-U-ATION: Sparking an Interest in Literacy Through a Restorative Lens Across Generations.**

Quianna Bennett, Tracey Johnson, Ph.D., Marshay Hines, and Tia Pressey, Ph.D.

## **4:30 - 4:45 PM | Closing Remarks**

Alison Ritchie, NYSDRA Board Member

2025 Conference Committee Chair

## September 25 - Morning Keynote

### *The Art of Reflection: Global Wisdom for Local Practice*



**Sukhsimranjit Singh, Ph.D.**  
JAMS Mediator & Arbitrator  
Global Thought Leader in Dispute Resolution

#### **About Sukhsimranjit Singh, Ph.D.**

JAMS Panelist Sukhsimranjit Singh is the Founder and CEO of Singh Academy. He also serves as Director of Global Development, Outreach and Leadership at Weinstein International Foundation, where he works closely with the Foundation's Board of Directors and Senior Leadership to facilitate the growth of the Foundation worldwide. Previously he served as Judge Danny Weinstein Managing Director of the Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution at Pepperdine University Caruso School of Law, where he also served as Professor of Law and Practice and directed the LL.M programs. Dr. Singh oversaw the Institute's global outreach efforts, world-class professional training programs, and rigorous academic curriculum.

Recipient of many awards including the Cloke-Millen Peackemaker Award, the Gold Medal by the Judiciary of Brazil and an Award of Recognition by the LAPD, City of Los Angeles, Dr. Singh's practice, teaching, and scholarship focuses on cross-cultural dispute resolution, faith-based mediation, and utilizing modern theories, science, and technology to devise creative solutions for global disputes.

Dr. Singh currently serves as the mediator for Willamette University's Atkinson Graduate School of Management, where he identifies and resolves organizational conflicts, and for the City of Beverly Hills, where he was recently nominated for the city's annual Peace Award.

**September 25 - Afternoon Keynote**  
***The Moral Dimension of Mediation:***  
***Celebrating my Friend and Colleague Len Riskin***



**Robert A. Baruch Bush, J.D.**  
**Professor of Alternative Dispute Resolution**  
**Maurice A. Deane School of Law, Hofstra University**

**About Robert A. Baruch Bush, J.D.**

Robert A. Baruch Bush, Rains Distinguished Professor of Alternative Dispute Resolution, Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University; Co-Founder and Board Member, Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation.

Professor Bush's scholarship and teaching focuses on mediation and alternative dispute resolution. He is one of the originators of the "Transformative Approach" to mediation, as explained in his best-selling book, *The Promise of Mediation* (1994, 2d ed. 2005), co-authored with Dr. Joseph Folger and translated into six languages. Bush has practiced, taught and written about mediation for over 40 years, authoring five books and more than thirty articles/chapters on mediation and ADR.

His latest article is "Beyond the Toolbox: Value-Based Models of Mediation Practice" published by *Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution* in 2023. In 2017, Bush received, together with co-author and colleague Joseph Folger, the Association of Conflict Resolution's "William Kreidler Award for Distinguished Service to the field of Conflict Resolution." In 2022, he received the "L. Randolph Lowry Educator of the Year Award" from the Southern California Mediation Association.

**NYSDRA LEGACY CONFERENCE 2025**  
**Friday, September 26**  
**Crowne Plaza Albany - The Desmond Hotel**

*Sessions marked with 🌐 offer hybrid attendance (in-person + virtual).*

*Sessions marked with 🏢 are in-person only.*

**9:00 - 10:00 AM | Registration & Networking Breakfast 🏢**

Light refreshments and informal networking with colleagues across sectors.

Location: King Street Walkway BC

**10:00 - 11:15 AM | Keynote Address 🌐**

***Advancing Justice Through ADR: Field Building Trends, Tools & Transformations***

Daniel Kos, Statewide ADR Coordinator, NYS Unified Court System's Division of ADR

Location: Town Hall

**11:30 AM - 12:30 PM | Taking Stock: ADR from 1985 to 2025 🌐**

Maria Volpe, Ph.D. (facilitator), Homer La Rue, Esq., Hal Abramson, Esq., Carol Liebman, Esq., Arthur Matthews, J.D. and Judy Saul

Location: Town Hall

**12:30 - 1:00 PM | Lunch & Networking 🏢**

Location: Fort Orange Courtyard

**1:00 - 2:30 PM | Champions for ADR in Family Court, Part 2 🌐**

Kate Wurmfeld, Esq. (facilitator), Courtney Chicvak, Esq., Jennifer Svensson, Karen Andolina Scott, J.D., Orla Connolly, & Subrata Paul, Esq.

Location: 6 & 8 King Street

**2:30 - 3:30 PM | From Vision to Reality: Judge Cooke and the Birth of New York's CDRC Network 🌐**

Chris Daly, Esq. (facilitator), John McCullough, Mark Collins, Andrew Thomas, & Thomas Christian, Ph.D.

Location: 6 & 8 King Street

**3:45 - 5:00 PM | The NYSDRA Story: Legacy, Lessons, and Leadership 🌐**

Charlotte Carter (facilitator), Lisa Hicks-Yackel, Sarah Rudgers-Tysz, Esq., Mark Collins, & Ronald Vero

Location: 6 & 8 King Street

**5:00 - 5:30 PM | Cocktail Reception 🏢**

*Celebrating 40 years before our closing event.*

Location: Fort Orange Courtyard

**5:30 - 7:00 PM | Legacy Dinner & Lawrence Cooke Peace Innovator Award 🏢**

*Honoring John S. Kiernan, 2025 Peace Innovator*

Location: Fort Orange Ballroom



**September 26 - Keynote Address**  
***Advancing Justice Through ADR:  
Field Building Trends, Tools & Transformations***



**Daniel Kos**  
**Statewide ADR Coordinator**  
**New York State Unified Court System**

**About Daniel Kos**

Daniel Kos is the Statewide ADR Coordinator for the New York State Unified Court System's Division of ADR, where he oversees training and data collection units while supporting program development across the state.

For over twenty years, he has collaborated with courts, state agencies, local stakeholders, and funders to develop innovative ADR programs in both court-based and community settings.

This keynote address will offer a comprehensive statewide perspective on the evolution of court-based conflict resolution—exploring where we've been, where we're heading, and how we can collectively strengthen and expand the field.



## **Lawrence H. Cooke Peace Innovator Award**

The Lawrence Cooke Peace Innovator Award was created to honor individuals and organizations that have provided innovative leadership in the field of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). This award was named after The Honorable Chief Judge Lawrence H. Cooke, who was influential in promoting the field of alternative dispute resolution in the NYS Court system.

Presenting this award is a cherished NYSDRA tradition and an important part of our annual conference, celebrating those who exemplify vision, leadership, and a commitment to advancing peace and justice through ADR.

### **Past Recipients**

2023 Brad Heckman

2021 Hon. Edwina G. Mendelson

2019 Chief Judge Janet DiFiore and Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence Marks

2018 Senator John Bonacic

2016 Jody Miller

2015 Lisa Hicks-Yackel

2014 Sherry Walker-Cowart

2013 Roz Magidson

2012 John McCullough

2011 Mark Kleiman

2010 Mark Collins

2009 Judy Saul

2008 Maria Volpe, Ph.D.

2007 Duke Fisher

2006 Michele Kirschbaum and Lourdes Rivera-Putz

2005 Judge Sharon S. Townsend, District Administrative Judge

2005 Judge Janice Rosa, Supreme Court Justice

2004 Justice Doris Ling-Cohan and Justice Fern Fisher

2003 Sandy Mindell and Herbert Israel

2002 Judge Joseph Lauria

## **2025 Lawrence H. Cooke Peace Innovator Award Honoree**



**John S. Kiernan, Esq.**

John S. Kiernan is a retired partner of Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, where he served as Co-Chair of the Litigation Department and Chair of the firm's Ethics Committee. Now practicing as a mediator and arbitrator both independently and with Phillips ADR Enterprises, John brings decades of experience resolving complex commercial disputes. His legal practice spanned a wide range of areas including corporate governance, securities, mass torts, intellectual property, and international treaty claims.

A nationally recognized leader in the field, John has long championed access to justice and the use of alternative dispute resolution to resolve conflict fairly and efficiently. He currently serves as Co-Chair of the New York Chief Judge's Advisory Committee on Alternative Methods of Dispute Resolution and sits on the New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice. His leadership has extended to many justice-related nonprofits, including service as Board Chair of the International Institute for Conflict Prevention and Resolution (CPR), Legal Services-NYC, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and the Justice Resource Center.

In addition to his extensive contributions to the legal field, John has supported numerous community and education initiatives through volunteer leadership, mentorship, and service. He is the current Board Chair of Prisoners' Legal Services of New York and the William Nelson Cromwell Foundation, and Co-Chair of the Inner-City Scholarship Fund, Lawyers Division. John is also a former President of the New York City Bar Association and has taught as an adjunct professor at NYU Law School. He holds a B.A. and J.D., both magna cum laude, from Harvard University and Harvard Law School.



## A Legacy 40 Years in the Making

At tonight's NYSDRA Legacy Conference 2025, we proudly celebrate the transformative vision of Chief Judge Lawrence H. Cooke (1914–2000)—a jurist whose leadership reshaped access to justice in New York State.

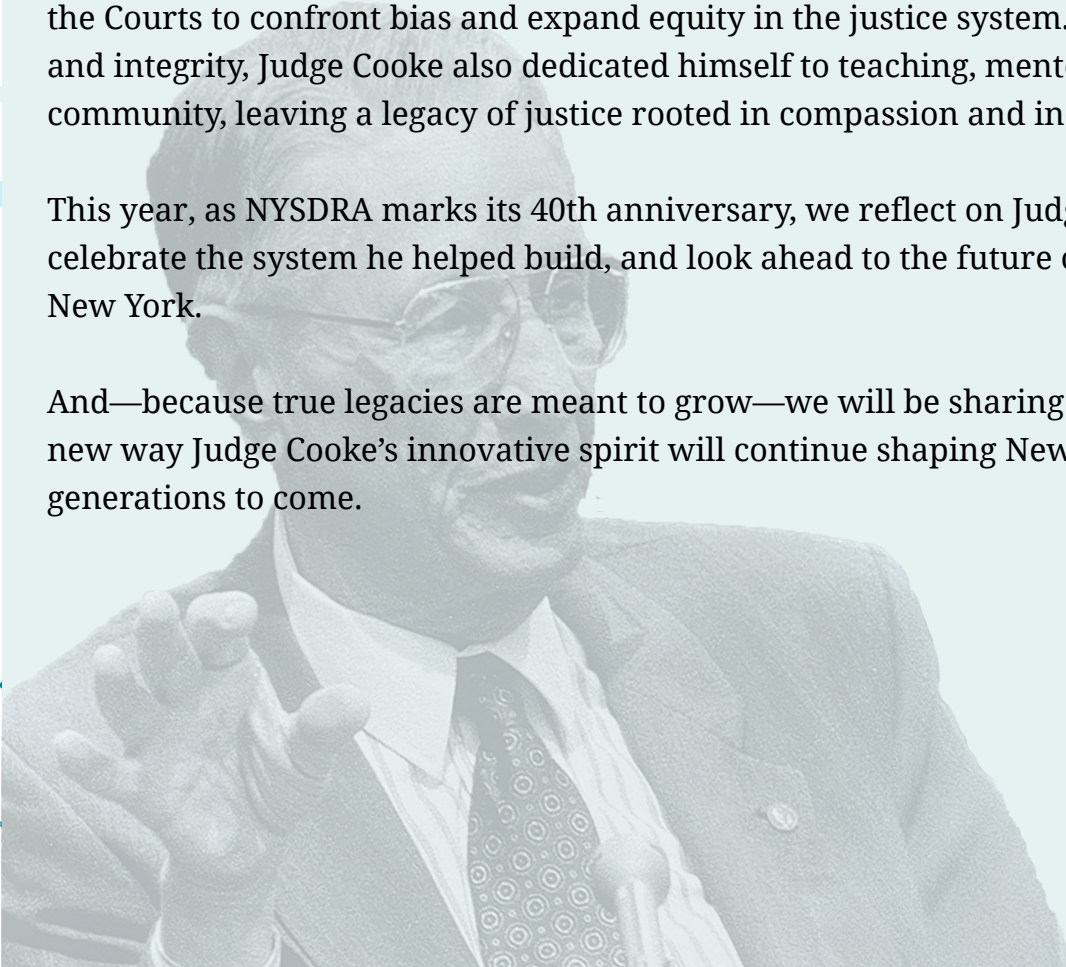
Judge Cooke believed that *“justice should be the right of everyone, not just the privileged.”*

Guided by this conviction, he became a driving force behind the creation of New York’s Community Dispute Resolution Centers (CDRCs) program in the late 1970s and early 1980s—the first statewide network of its kind in the United States. Today, that network serves all 62 counties, providing New Yorkers with alternatives to costly, protracted litigation and opening doors to community-based conflict resolution.

Throughout his career—as Sullivan County Judge, Supreme Court Justice, Appellate Division Judge, and ultimately Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals—Cooke championed fairness, access, and innovation. He implemented reforms to reduce court backlogs, introduced technology to improve efficiency, and established the Task Force on Women in the Courts to confront bias and expand equity in the justice system. Known for his humility and integrity, Judge Cooke also dedicated himself to teaching, mentoring, and serving his community, leaving a legacy of justice rooted in compassion and inclusion.

This year, as NYSDRA marks its 40th anniversary, we reflect on Judge Cooke’s vision, celebrate the system he helped build, and look ahead to the future of dispute resolution in New York.

And—because true legacies are meant to grow—we will be sharing exciting news about a new way Judge Cooke’s innovative spirit will continue shaping New York’s justice system for generations to come.





**NEW YORK STATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION ASSOCIATION**  
**40th Anniversary Legacy Conference**

**LAWRENCE H. COOKE**  
**PEACE INNOVATOR AWARD DINNER**

Friday, September 26, 2025  
Fort Orange Ballroom  
The Desmond Hotel, Albany

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Honoring the Legacy of Chief Judge Lawrence H. Cooke  
&  
Celebrating John S. Kiernan, Esq.  
2025 Award Recipient

**~ PROGRAM ~**

Cocktail Reception - Fort Orange Courtyard

Celebration Dinner - Fort Orange Ballroom

Remarks by George Cooke II  
Son of Chief Judge Lawrence H. Cooke

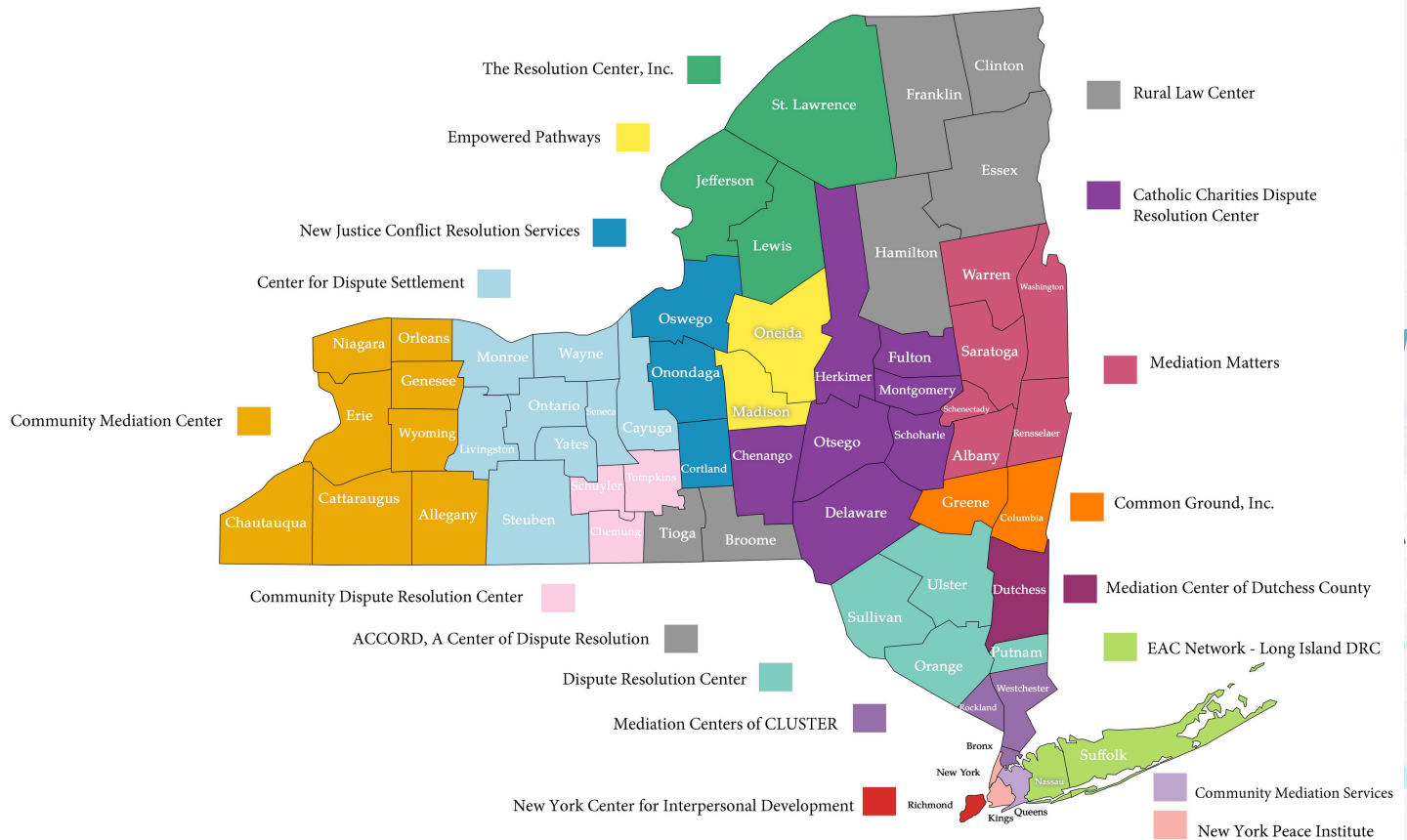
Lawrence H. Cooke Dispute Resolution  
Legacy Fund Announcement

2025 Lawrence H. Cooke Peace Innovator Award  
Presentation to John S. Kiernan, Esq.

Acceptance Remarks

Closing & Reception

# Thank You to Our Community Dispute Resolution Centers



ACCORD, A Center for Dispute Resolution  
 Catholic Charities Dispute Resolution Center  
 Center for Dispute Settlement  
 Common Ground Dispute Resolution, Inc.  
 Community Dispute Resolution Center, Inc.  
 Community Mediation Center  
 Community Mediation Services  
 Dispute Resolution Center  
 EAC - Long Island Dispute Resolution Centers  
 Empowered Pathways  
 Mediation Centers of CLUSTER  
 Mediation Center of Dutchess County  
 Mediation Matters  
 New Justice Conflict Resolution Services, Inc.  
 New York Center for Interpersonal Development  
 New York Peace Institute  
 The Resolution Center, Inc.  
 Rural Law Center

# **2025 Legacy Conference Sponsors**

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Unsiload



Reflect. Celebrate. Advance.

**2025 Honorary Committee Members**

Hon. Lawrence Marks  
Hon. Jaclyn A. Brilling  
Hon. Randolph F. Treece  
Hyacinth Charles  
John Harrison  
Wilma Jozwiak  
Jonathan Murray  
Love Odih Kumuyi  
Alison Ritchie  
Niki Rowe  
Will Sawma  
Bernadette Tracy, Ph.D.

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