

Michelle M. Smith, Esq.

Licenses

Admitted to practice law in the States of New Jersey (March 2006) and New York (April 2006)
Licensed notary public in the States of New Jersey and New York

Education

Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center, Huntington, NY
Juris Doctor, Magna Cum Laude, 2005

Saint John's University, Jamaica, NY
Bachelor of Arts in Psychology 1997

Law and Mediation Experience:

State of New Jersey Judiciary, Trenton, New Jersey
Clerk of the Superior Court
Superior Court Clerk's Office (SCCO)

September 2013- Present

Responsible for the management and oversight of six primary statewide support functions. Responsible for the management and development of more than 123 staff assigned to the Division, including five court executives. Serve as a constitutional officer and statewide Clerk for operations related to policy and planning, records management, foreclosure and judgments case processing, access to the Judiciary's reports, data and systems for public users, management of the Superior Court Trust Fund and customer call center support and problem-solving. Responsible for the development and management of the foreclosure docket, including eliminating backlog, identifying efficiencies and/or recommending enhancements to existing processes, Court rules and the electronic management of court records. Responsible for supporting and collaborating with other areas of the Judiciary, including but not limited to judges, vicinage staff, the bar, and internal and external customers. Responsible for recommending amendments to the court rules and for recommending policy changes related to work processes and legislative initiatives. Responsible for managing all aspects of employee relations, including hiring, progressive discipline, termination and administrative hearings. Responsible for managing a budget of approximately \$900,000, which includes unit operating expenses and conversion to court records statewide. Collaborated with other senior managers related to policies, statewide initiatives and customer support.

Assistant Chief (Court Executive 2a)
Superior Court Clerk's Office (SCCO)

July 2012-September 2013

Responsible for the management of foreclosure and judgment court processing services, a division of the SCCO. Supervises and/or manages more than forty (40) full-time staff and (8) part-time staff, included but not limited to performance expectations, time management, personnel actions and disciplinary measures. Responsible for the development and management of work flows designed to address backlog and to identify efficiencies and/or enhancements to existing processes. Responsible for supporting and collaborating with various stakeholders of the Judiciary, including but not limited to the General Equity Judges, vicinage staff and internal and external customers. Assists in the development of materials, including user guides, presentations and flow charts to document and map out uniform standards for document processing in statewide foreclosure and judgment related workflows. Collaborate with the Civil Practice division to review current workflows including procedures, recommend automation enhancements, strategize ways to reduce backlog and propose rule amendments, directives and/or rule relaxations. Responsible for setting goals and establishing performance expectations, for all court processing staff, including accountability measures and performance targets.

Community Mediation Services, Inc., Jamaica, NY
Associate Executive Director of Mediation Services
Queens Mediation Network

October 2006-July 2012

Responsible for several programs within the division with an annual budget in excess of 1.7 million dollars. Supervised and managed a full-time staff of fourteen and 120 volunteers. Manage operations from six remote locations, including city-wide programs and satellite mediation offices. Provide legal guidance on issues related to the agency, including but not limited to HR matters, ethical considerations, orders of protection and agency liability. Conduct mediations and arbitrations. Cultivate and maintain long-term, collaborative relationships with key stakeholders, board of directors, governmental funding sources and private donors to achieve mutual goals. Actively seek out opportunities to create revenue generation and strategic partnerships. Acts as a representative to the local community to promote positive relationships and strong partnerships for the benefit of the organization. Responsible for the development and management of departmental work plans. Responsible for the identification of new business development opportunities. Responsible for supporting the Executive Director and board of directors in all aspects of fundraising through strategic and operational planning.

Director, New York City Family Court Mediation Program

January 2005-October 2006

Created and instituted the first Family Court Mediation Program in the areas of Custody and Visitation, PINS and juvenile delinquency throughout the New York City Family Court system. Oversee the daily operations of the Family Court mediation program. Supervise six staff, two college interns per semester and a roster of paid mediators. Responsible for creating policies and protocol for program, staff and consultant mediators, as well as provide direction and feedback. Train and mentor prospective applicants to serve on the mediation panel. Interact directly with Judges, Referees and other Court personnel to improve the quality of service provided to litigants.

Director, QMN Family Mediation Programs

June 2004-January 2005

Oversee the daily operations of the Family Court mediation programs. Supervise and advise staff on procedures and policies related to the program. Attend community meetings and other outreach programs to promote mediation and create a network with the community and court system. Interact with the Judges, Referees and court personnel in Queens Family and Queens State Supreme Court. Prepare and facilitate a curriculum to train the participants in mediating parent and child and custody-visitation cases. Create training manual and subsequent materials to assist the participants.

Parent-Child Mediation Director/Coordinator

December 2002 – October 2003

Completed detailed assessments on families to determine appropriateness of mediation. Oversaw assignment of cases and referrals. Facilitated parent and child mediation training for more than 30 participants each class. Managed more than 250 cases per year.

Case Worker

May 1997-December 2002

Prepared detailed psychosocial histories of the families, assessed each family member's needs and provided appropriate service referrals. Provided short-term counseling and mediation.

Family Court Mediator, New York City and Westbury, NY

Consultant Mediator,

August 2007-July 2012

Mediate custody, visitation, permanency, and support cases referred by the New York City and Nassau Family Court system. Provide administrative follow-up for future appointments and changes to agreements. Responsible for drafting agreements that convert to court orders.

Law Office of Michelle M. Leonard, Esq., Middletown, NJ and Brooklyn, NY
Attorney,

January 2009- July 2012

Provided legal services to clients in the areas of Family Law, Divorce and Municipal Offenses. Responsible for the management and oversight of the cases, including but not limited to motion practice, litigation, Separation and Settlement Agreements and other forms of conflict resolution to resolve cases.

Latin American Cultural Center of Queens, Kew Gardens, NY
Human Resources Director and Interim Executive Director,

January 2005-March 2010

Provide part-time human resource administration to a small not-for-profit with an annual budget of about \$250,000. Responsible for all issues related to payroll and employee relations. Familiar with applicable laws as it relates to payroll and employer-employee rights and responsibilities. Responsible for writing grants and completing documentation related to state and city issued performance contracts.

Law and Mediation Office of Teresa Ombres, Bayside, NY
Executive Legal Assistant

October 2003-June 2004

Drafted legal documents, including but not limited to summons, complaints, orders to show cause, separation agreements and Qualified Domestic Relations Orders. Conducted legal research, maintained client contact and completed Divorce Mediation Training. Mediated appropriate divorce cases. Utilized MatLaw software.

Teaching Experience:

Touro Law Center, Center Islip, NY

December 2004-Present

Adjunct Law Professor

Developed and implemented an intersession course for law students in the area of mediation and conflict resolution. This six day course is designed to teach students applicable theory and corresponding practical skills to assist them in resolving conflict. This position also requires the supervision of students in a clinical practicum to enhance the skills learned in class.

New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury, NY

June 2009-Present

Education Law Adjunct Professor

Developed and implemented an Education Law curriculum teaching students in an advanced Master's program in Education on educational law, policy and ethical considerations. Presented class lectures and activities to promote and support the student's learning objectives. Provided guest lectures on conflict resolution and mediation skills to other educational cohorts seeking to obtain a Master's degree in Education.

Adjunct Professor

Developed and implemented an intersession course for Graduate level students in the area of mediation and conflict resolution. This five day course is designed to teach students applicable theory and corresponding practical skills to assist them in resolving conflict.

Columbia University-Teacher's College, New York, NY

November 2009- December 2015

Adjunct Professor

Developed and implemented an intersession course for Graduate level students in the area of mediation and conflict resolution. This six day course is designed to teach students applicable theory and corresponding practical skills to assist them in resolving conflict. This position also requires the supervision of students in a clinical practicum to enhance the skills learned in class.

John Jay College, New York, New York

August 2006-May 2012

Adjunct Professor

Developed and implemented class curriculum on the theories of conflict and conflict resolution practice and policies for students at an undergraduate level. Responsible for co-teaching an advanced professional mediation course as part of a continuing education series.

References:

Professional and personal references are furnished upon request.