


# PRESENTER BIOS


**Richard Abbott** is the Program Director of Juvenile & Family Services for the Maryland Judiciary, Administrative Office of the Courts. He previously served as Deputy Court Administrator, Family Law Administrator, and DCM Coordinator for the Circuit Court of Baltimore County from 1995-2018. Before coming to Maryland, Richard was the District Court Administrator for the 56th Judicial District, Carbon County, Pennsylvania, from 1992 to 1995. Richard obtained his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, a Master of Public Administration, with a Certificate in Personnel and Labor Relations, from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, and a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Scranton.

**Shannon M. Baker** is the Deputy Director and Quality Assurance Director for the District Court of Maryland Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Office. Shannon first learned about the District Court ADR Office and its ADR programs as a Day of Trial volunteer mediator in Southern Maryland. She began her career in the ADR Office ten years ago as the Local ADR Programs Coordinator for Baltimore City, and shortly thereafter was promoted to Regional ADR Programs Director for Baltimore City and Harford County. She transitioned to her new role as Deputy Director and Quality Assurance Director in 2016. Shannon's experience includes program development, program evaluation, volunteer management, best practices and quality assurance systems design, and experience as a trainer and presenter. Shannon has been mediating for 12 years and has acquired training in multiple mediation frameworks, as well as advanced facilitation and community conferencing. Shannon holds a B.A. in French and a B.S. in Business Administration with an emphasis in Global Management from Susquehanna University. During her time at Susquehanna, she also interned and studied abroad in Paris, France. Shannon holds a J.D. from the University of Baltimore School of Law and was a UB Law Scholar. She received the *Nancy Cogliano Strause Award* for graduating first in the evening program and was named by the Honors Committee as the 2014 Law Faculty Award evening recipient. Shannon was admitted to the Maryland Bar in 2014.



**Gray Barton** is the Director of the Maryland Judiciary's Office of Problem-Solving Courts where he oversees the planning and administration of various types of drug and DUI courts, mental health courts, veterans' courts, truancy courts, and other problem-solving court programs. Mr. Barton began counseling emotionally disturbed adolescent males at New Dominion Wilderness Program in Cumberland, MD. He later took an Addictions Specialist position with the State of Maryland, diagnosing and treating adolescent males with chemical dependency issues. He held the Treatment Supervisor position at The Abraxas Foundation of Ohio before becoming the Treatment Court Coordinator for the Mansfield Municipal Court and assisted the court in developing one of the first municipal drug courts in the State of Ohio. Then as the Treatment Coordinator of the Richland County Drug Court, Mr. Barton was involved in the implementation and continuation of regional municipal and common pleas drug courts in several counties, assisting in the planning and implementation of drug court programs in these jurisdictions.

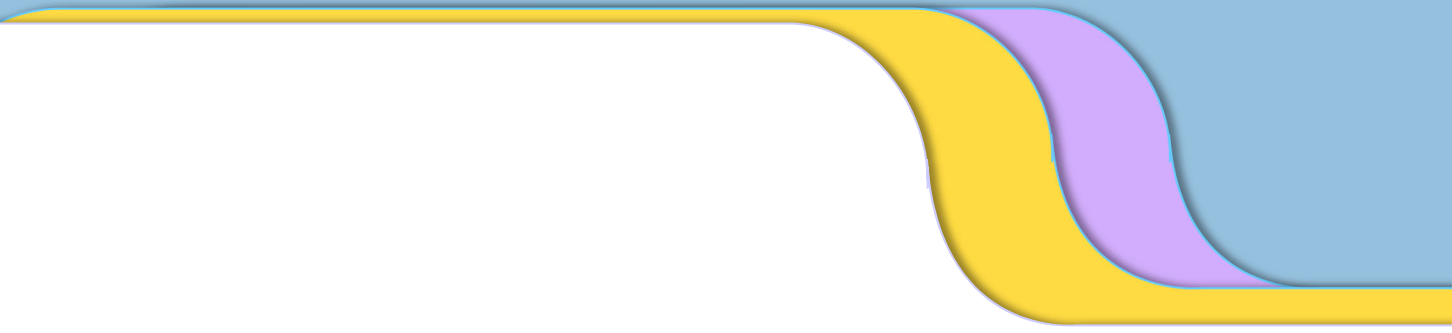
**Ann Marie Foley Binsner** is the Executive Director of Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)/ Prince George's County, Inc. She began her tenure in 2001 as the organization's first Executive Director and has concentrated her time on program development, expansion, and capacity building. Ms. Binsner developed programs and advocacy services for homeless and low-income children and families for nearly seven years prior to joining CASA/ Prince George's County. Ms. Binsner is a steering committee member of the Prince George's County Model Court Team, co-chair of the Prince George's County LGBTQ Youth Task Force, a member of the Program and Outreach Committee of Maryland's Foster Care Court Improvement Project, and a member of the Prince George's County Homeless Youth Workgroup. Ms. Binsner holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Villanova University and received a graduate leadership certificate in Non-Profit Management at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. Ms. Binsner was awarded the 2009 Bridge Builders Award from the Prince George's Community Foundation and received the 2013 National CASA Program Director of the Year Award.



**Hope Braveheart** began coordinating Community Mediation Maryland's AmeriCorps program in 2007. She now directs the program and is responsible for program design, site development, national recruitment and selection of members. Hope also serves America's Service Commission as the Maryland States for Service Representative and is a Coalition Leader for the Atlantic Cluster. The cross pollinating from her national work increases the health and vitality of AmeriCorps programs in Maryland. Hope is also training her new puppy, Ponyo, to be Community Mediation Maryland's first AmeriCorps Therapy Dog. Ponyo, a husky/border collie mix, is well on her way through training as she has attended most AmeriCorps events this year and accompanies Hope to work daily.

**Nathan J. Cabrera** is the Outreach Manager for Volunteer Maryland. He is responsible for program marketing, outreach, and partnership development including the recruitment and selection of Volunteer Maryland Sites and Coordinators. Nathan has experience working with small businesses incorporating the National Main Street model, working within Historic Districts; and managing commercial improvement and homeowner curb appeal projects. He's hosted large community events to increase community engagement, while overseeing 500+ volunteers alongside community leaders to help support events as well as clean-up and greening initiatives. Nathan is also an expert in content marketing, web design, and growing social media.

**Shamika Dent-Williams** is the Manager for the Judicial College of Maryland, Department of Professional Development. She has over ten years of experience in management, leadership, strategic planning, and adult education in both corporate organizations and higher education. She has a passion for continuing education and staff development. With extensive knowledge of the adult learning theory, course design, authoring tools, learning management systems, and instructor-led training and virtual learning courses, Mrs. Dent-Williams has developed both asynchronous and synchronous learning, on a range of topics: professional image, generational differences, team building, corporate culture, customer service, time and stress management, emergency response, and new employee onboarding. Mrs. Dent-Williams is not only a developer and facilitator



of learning, she is also a passionate learner and will be soon seeking her PhD in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Mrs. Dent-Williams earned a Master of Science in Instructional Design and Technology with a specialization in online learning from Walden University. In addition, she holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Justice Studies from the College of Saint Elizabeth located in Morristown, NJ.

**Andrew Fontanella** joined the District Court ADR Office in July of 2015 as the first Regional ADR Program Director for the Eastern Shore. He came to the District Court from the private sector, where he last practiced law as a solo practitioner in Baltimore, MD. For the past 15 years, he owned his own firm and litigated in the circuit and District courts in Maryland and in the District of Columbia. He also practiced in the federal bankruptcy courts in both jurisdictions. Andrew enjoys working in language-minority communities since he speaks Spanish and signs American Sign Language. Since 2009, he began exploring ADR practices for his clients and is trained in collaborative practice, mediation from both the transformative and inclusive models, facilitation, and conflict coaching. He is a former roster mediator for the Circuit Court for Baltimore County, and currently mediates in the District Court Day of Trial programs and the Family Division of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. Although Andrew worked in the legal field for almost 30 years, part of his journey also included a 3-year stint with a Catholic Franciscan ministry program, which allowed him to live in many parts of the eastern United States and Lima, Peru during a cultural and language immersion experience in the summer of 1995.

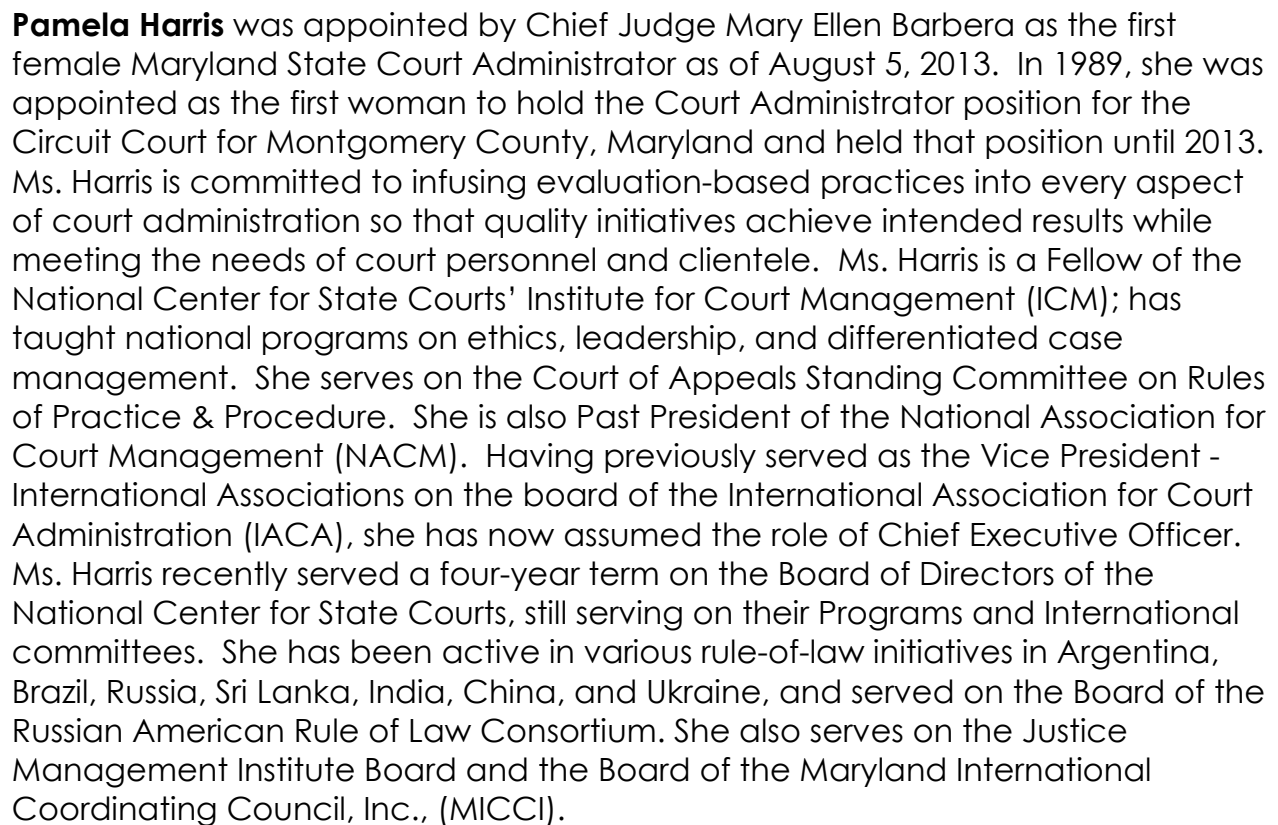
**Kelly Franks** is the Senior Program Manager for Juvenile & Family Services in the Programs Division of the Maryland Judiciary. In this role, she oversees the department's grant program. Prior to joining the Maryland Judiciary, Kelly was the Program Coordinator at CASA/Prince George's County, a non-profit that provides advocacy to children in foster care. Her past professional experiences also include serving as a Mediation Liaison for the Baltimore City Community Mediation Center and serving as a law clerk for the presiding judge in Denver Juvenile Court in Colorado and the presiding judge in the Family Part in Atlantic and Cape May counties in New Jersey. During law school at Rutgers Camden,



Kelly worked at the legal center in Atlantic City's Covenant House shelter and volunteered as an advocate for domestic violence victims as a small claims mediator and as a parenting plan mediator in the Camden County courts.

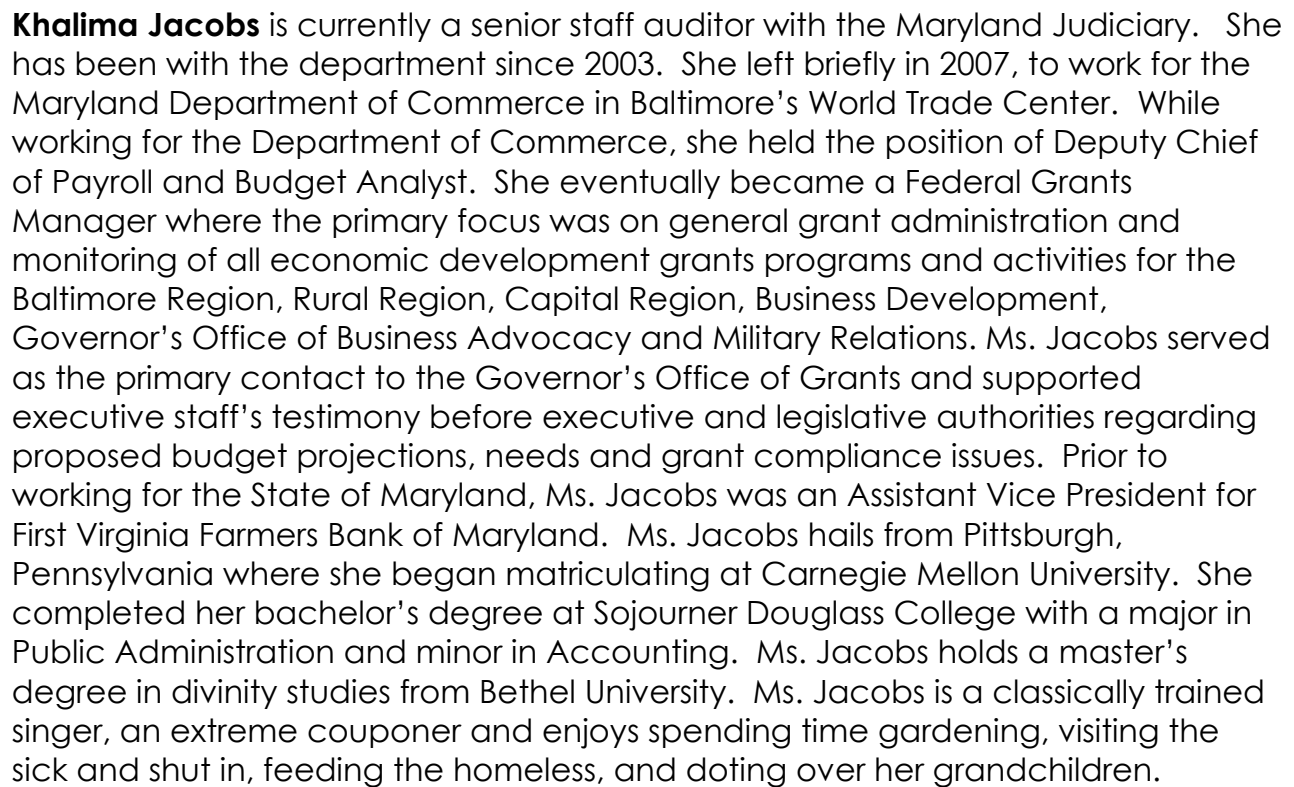
**Lou Gieszl** is Assistant State Court Administrator for Programs at the Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts, where he leads a diverse, highly skilled team to advance court innovations and services statewide, and he oversees grant-making programs to support access to justice, mediation and conflict resolution, juvenile and family services, problem-solving courts, and policy research for courts and justice partners statewide. Prior to this, Lou served for 16 years with the Maryland Judiciary's Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office (MACRO), a statewide resource for conflict resolution programs and mediator excellence. Lou is also an adjunct professor at the University of Baltimore's Master's Degree Program on Negotiations and Conflict Management. A skillful mediator, facilitator, trainer, and conflict consultant, Lou is active in mediation at the national and local level. Lou is a Past President and former Diversity and Equity Officer of the Association for Conflict Resolution, the leading organization for all conflict resolution practitioners. He has also served on the Board of Directors of the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation, the world's premier center for advancement, practice, and study of mediation in the transformative framework.

**Brandy Hall** joined the Maryland Judiciary team in 2018 as a Training Specialist. Prior to this step, she served Towson University as their Assistant Director of Leadership Development in the Office of Student Activities. As she developed a passion for leadership development via her work in higher education, Ms. Hall has been able to specialize in facilitating coursework on project management, team building, communication skills, emotional intelligence, and stress management. She has also worked independently with individuals and teams as a Gallup-Certified StrengthsQuest consultant. Ms. Hall also teaches courses for Professional Development within the Judicial College and assists in a variety of programs and projects. Ms. Hall received her B.S. in Mass Communications from Towson University in 2013 and her M.Ed. from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2015.



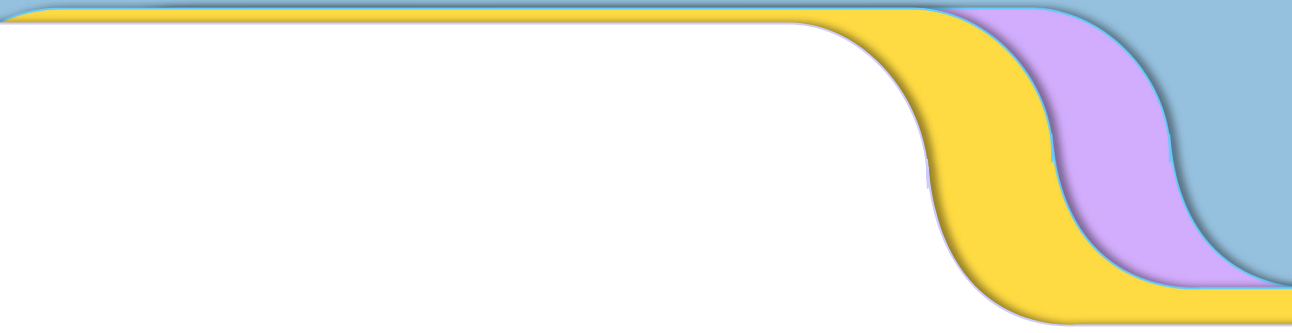
**Pamela Harris** was appointed by Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera as the first female Maryland State Court Administrator as of August 5, 2013. In 1989, she was appointed as the first woman to hold the Court Administrator position for the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Maryland and held that position until 2013. Ms. Harris is committed to infusing evaluation-based practices into every aspect of court administration so that quality initiatives achieve intended results while meeting the needs of court personnel and clientele. Ms. Harris is a Fellow of the National Center for State Courts' Institute for Court Management (ICM); has taught national programs on ethics, leadership, and differentiated case management. She serves on the Court of Appeals Standing Committee on Rules of Practice & Procedure. She is also Past President of the National Association for Court Management (NACM). Having previously served as the Vice President - International Associations on the board of the International Association for Court Administration (IACA), she has now assumed the role of Chief Executive Officer. Ms. Harris recently served a four-year term on the Board of Directors of the National Center for State Courts, still serving on their Programs and International committees. She has been active in various rule-of-law initiatives in Argentina, Brazil, Russia, Sri Lanka, India, China, and Ukraine, and served on the Board of the Russian American Rule of Law Consortium. She also serves on the Justice Management Institute Board and the Board of the Maryland International Coordinating Council, Inc., (MICCI).

**Brandi Hill** works for the Maryland Judiciary as a Child Welfare Policy Specialist in Juvenile & Family Services' Foster Care Court Improvement Program (FCCIP). Ms. Hill works closely with the FCCIP's Kinship Care Workgroup, the Permanency Planning Liaisons, and on the older youth permanency project. Prior to joining the Judiciary, Ms. Hill was the Supervisor of the Adoption and Guardianship Unit at Prince George's County Department of Social Services. She has 15 years' experience working in the field of child welfare; with a special interest in educating families about racial identity development and the unique aspects of transracial adoption. Ms. Hill has extensive experience working with families formed through international and domestic adoption; and has facilitated numerous workshops and programs for parents, youth, professionals, post-adoption groups and adoptive and foster parent trainings.



**Khalima Jacobs** is currently a senior staff auditor with the Maryland Judiciary. She has been with the department since 2003. She left briefly in 2007, to work for the Maryland Department of Commerce in Baltimore's World Trade Center. While working for the Department of Commerce, she held the position of Deputy Chief of Payroll and Budget Analyst. She eventually became a Federal Grants Manager where the primary focus was on general grant administration and monitoring of all economic development grants programs and activities for the Baltimore Region, Rural Region, Capital Region, Business Development, Governor's Office of Business Advocacy and Military Relations. Ms. Jacobs served as the primary contact to the Governor's Office of Grants and supported executive staff's testimony before executive and legislative authorities regarding proposed budget projections, needs and grant compliance issues. Prior to working for the State of Maryland, Ms. Jacobs was an Assistant Vice President for First Virginia Farmers Bank of Maryland. Ms. Jacobs hails from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where she began matriculating at Carnegie Mellon University. She completed her bachelor's degree at Sojourner Douglass College with a major in Public Administration and minor in Accounting. Ms. Jacobs holds a master's degree in divinity studies from Bethel University. Ms. Jacobs is a classically trained singer, an extreme couponer and enjoys spending time gardening, visiting the sick and shut in, feeding the homeless, and doting over her grandchildren.

**Dominique Johnigan** is a Senior Researcher at Research and Analysis in the Programs Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts. Dominique began working for the Maryland Judiciary in 2010. In her role, she is responsible for training and assisting the circuit and District courts with their time standard analysis. She is also responsible for the statewide analysis of court performance for the trial and appellate courts and supporting courts in updating their Differentiated Case Management Plans. Dominique currently staffs the Case Management Subcommittee, the Expungement Workgroup, and the new Data Reporting and Statistical Reporting Workgroup. She is a Certified Court Executive through the National Center of State Courts' Institute for Court Management (ICM). Dominique received her Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Morgan State University, and a Master of Arts in Applied Experimental Psychology from the Catholic University of America.

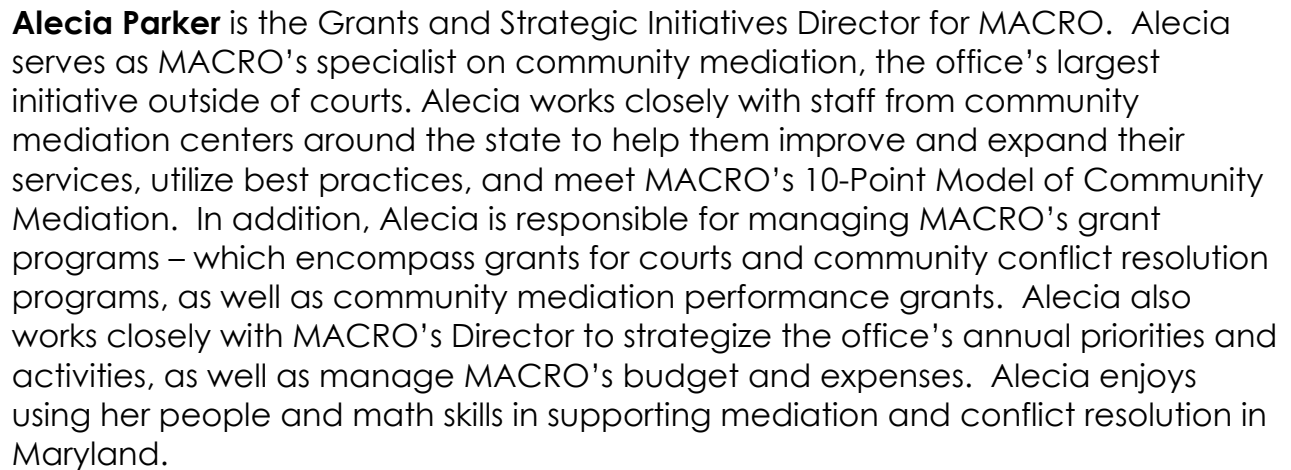


**Cynthia Jurrius** is the Court ADR Resources Director for MACRO, where she works with courts, ADR practitioners, and other stakeholders to develop, evaluate, improve and expand court alternative dispute resolution programs throughout Maryland. She serves as MACRO's primary point of contact for all Maryland circuit courts, working collaboratively with court personnel to develop and enhance court ADR programs, as well as providing legal and policy guidance on ADR related matters. She is also involved in consideration and support of court ADR resource needs through the grant programs of MACRO and the Programs Division of the Administrative Offices of the Courts.

**Jovonne Lewis** is the Family and Court Program Evaluation Manager for Juvenile & Family Services at the Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts. She is also an Adjunct Professor at Baltimore City Community College. She was previously the Research Evaluation and Development Manager for Baltimore City Court Appointed Special Advocates from 2014-2016 and a Volunteer Manager from 2010-2014. Jovonne's professional experience includes having served as an AmeriCorps member from 2008-2009 and a Student Clerk for the United States Attorney's Office District of Maryland 2006-2008. Jovonne obtained a Master of Public Administration and BA in Government and Public Policy from the University of Baltimore.

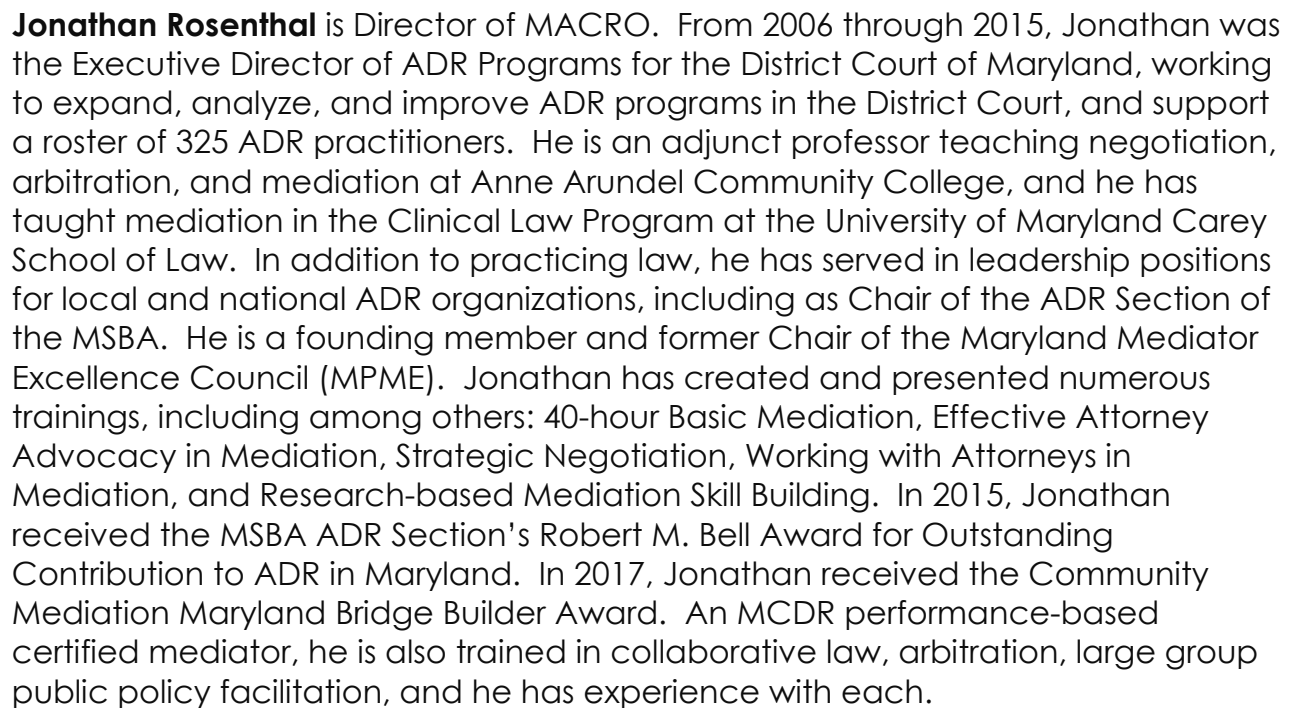
**Leslie Overholser** is the Deputy Director for Community Mediation Maryland. (CMM) In this role, she is responsible for development activities to include fundraising and event planning. In addition, Leslie provides financial and HR management and supports education programs in schools statewide. Leslie also works closely with CMM partners and provides technical support to community mediation centers. Prior to working with CMM, Leslie was the Executive Director at the Anne Arundel Conflict Resolution Center, and prior to that spent 20 years with Bank of America as an SVP in banking operations. Leslie made the career choice to leave banking in 2010 to pursue her dream of working for a non-profit. Leslie holds a B.A. degree in Communications, is a CMM certified mediator in the Inclusive Model, and has logged over 500 hours of mediating cases from re-entry to parenting plans.





**Alecia Parker** is the Grants and Strategic Initiatives Director for MACRO. Alecia serves as MACRO's specialist on community mediation, the office's largest initiative outside of courts. Alecia works closely with staff from community mediation centers around the state to help them improve and expand their services, utilize best practices, and meet MACRO's 10-Point Model of Community Mediation. In addition, Alecia is responsible for managing MACRO's grant programs – which encompass grants for courts and community conflict resolution programs, as well as community mediation performance grants. Alecia also works closely with MACRO's Director to strategize the office's annual priorities and activities, as well as manage MACRO's budget and expenses. Alecia enjoys using her people and math skills in supporting mediation and conflict resolution in Maryland.

**Sarah Parks** is the Court Operations Specialist at Research and Analysis in the Programs Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts. In this role, she supports the courts by monitoring and reviewing case flow management and developing and updating business processes for circuit courts. She also provides training and technical assistance to the courts and program management staff. Sarah is actively involved in several judiciary workgroups and staffs the MDEC User Group, the Clerk Manual workgroup, the Juvenile Law and MDEC User Group, the MDEC Code Review Workgroup, and the new Data Reporting and Statistical Reporting Workgroup. Sarah is also a member of the MDEC Advisory Subcommittee. Prior to her position in Research and Analysis, Sarah worked as a Unit Supervisor of Court Operations for the Courtroom Clerks department at the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County for seven years. While at the circuit court, her position focused on training new and existing employees. She is a member of the Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management (MAACM) and is a part of the Institute for Court Management (ICM) class of 2020. Sarah holds a Maryland Educator Professional Eligibility Certificate and is a Certified Court Manager. Sarah received her Bachelor of Arts in Human Development from Washington College in 2009.



**Jonathan Rosenthal** is Director of MACRO. From 2006 through 2015, Jonathan was the Executive Director of ADR Programs for the District Court of Maryland, working to expand, analyze, and improve ADR programs in the District Court, and support a roster of 325 ADR practitioners. He is an adjunct professor teaching negotiation, arbitration, and mediation at Anne Arundel Community College, and he has taught mediation in the Clinical Law Program at the University of Maryland Carey School of Law. In addition to practicing law, he has served in leadership positions for local and national ADR organizations, including as Chair of the ADR Section of the MSBA. He is a founding member and former Chair of the Maryland Mediator Excellence Council (MPME). Jonathan has created and presented numerous trainings, including among others: 40-hour Basic Mediation, Effective Attorney Advocacy in Mediation, Strategic Negotiation, Working with Attorneys in Mediation, and Research-based Mediation Skill Building. In 2015, Jonathan received the MSBA ADR Section's Robert M. Bell Award for Outstanding Contribution to ADR in Maryland. In 2017, Jonathan received the Community Mediation Maryland Bridge Builder Award. An MCDR performance-based certified mediator, he is also trained in collaborative law, arbitration, large group public policy facilitation, and he has experience with each.

**Rebecca M. Stahl, J.D., LLM** is Deputy Director of the Sayra and Neil Meyerhoff Center for Families, Children and the Courts at the University of Baltimore School of Law. As a lawyer for children in dependency and private family law cases, Rebecca previously worked at the Children's Law Center of California in Los Angeles county and the Pima County Office of Children's Counsel in Tucson, Arizona. Rebecca was a Fulbright Scholar in New Zealand and during her Fulbright year earned a Master of Law degree from the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand and studied the role of lawyers for children in family court cases. Rebecca has presented at a variety of international conferences focused on children's rights and family law on topics ranging from the role of lawyers for children to trauma. Rebecca coauthored, *Representing Children in Dependency and Family Law: Beyond the Law*, a book regarding the psychological issues



lawyers for children need to understand to better represent their child clients and has published articles on the role of children's representation.

**Jennifer Williams** is the Executive Director at Mid Shore Community Mediation Center and Board Chair for Community Mediation Maryland. Jenn lead the establishment of one of the most active and comprehensive school-mediation center partnerships in the state. The programs developed in this partnership supported research and recommendations for the Commission on the School-to-Prison Pipeline and Restorative Practices. Jenn attended Hood College and Salisbury University, completing graduate study in Conflict Resolution. Jenn has more than fifteen years of experience working with troubled or disadvantaged youth, in multiple contexts.