



Collaborative Corner

A Publication of the Collaborative Professionals of
Central Pennsylvania

Summer 2009

Collaborative Professionals of Central Pennsylvania Expand Membership

President's Message

Welcome to the first issue of Collaborative Corner. This newsletter will be available in electronic and print format on a quarterly basis. Our goal is to provide continuing information and education about the Collaborative process and movement in Central Pennsylvania while also sharing information about the Collaborative movement across the country and around the world.

As noted in this issue, we are excited to welcome affiliated professionals and know that the energy and enthusiasm of new members will only enhance our already vibrant group. If you aren't familiar with Collaborative practice and want to learn more about it, please check out our web site at

www.collaborativelawpa.com or check out the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals at www.collaborativepractice.com.

If you'd like to join us for one of our monthly meetings, we'd love to have you as our guest. We meet at noon on the third Tuesday of each month in the Community Room above the Giant grocery store in Camp Hill. The meetings last one hour and focus on substantive issues that practitioners are experiencing in their Collaborative cases.

Each and every one of our members is excited about growing and expanding this extremely powerful means of assisting families dealing with matters of divorce, custody or other changes to their family structure.

Tim Colgan, 2009 CPCP President

Members now include affiliated professionals

On May 19, 2009, the Collaborative Professionals of Central Pennsylvania (CPCP) officially expanded its organizational structure to include affiliated professionals. The group, formerly known as the Independent Collaborative Attorneys of Central Pennsylvania (ICACP), previously limited membership to Collaboratively trained lawyers. With the new structure, professionals from other disciplines are able to join the group. Local mental health professionals and financial professionals have expressed great interest in joining the group.

Did You Know* ...

Collaborative Practice is a way for a divorcing couple to work as a team with trained professionals to resolve disputes respectfully, without going to court. The term encompasses all of the models that have been developed since Minnesota lawyer Stu Webb created the Collaborative Law model in the 1980s. This model is at the heart of all of Collaborative Practice. Each client has the support, protection and guidance of his or her own lawyer.

The lawyers and the clients together comprise the Collaborative Law component of Collaborative Practice.

While lawyers are always a part of Collaboration, some models provide child specialists,

financial specialists and divorce coaches as part of the clients' divorce team. In these models the clients have the option of starting their divorce with the professional with whom they feel most comfortable. Then the clients choose the other professionals they need.

The International Academy of Collaborative Professionals is a worldwide membership organization committed to fostering professional excellence in conflict resolution through Collaborative Practice.

The Growth of Collaborative*

- There are more than 10,000 professionals trained in Collaborative Practice in the U.S.
- There are more than 200 Collaborative Practice groups around the world.
- In Canada, there is a Collaborative Practice practitioner in every province and two territories.
- Groups range from five to more than 300 members.
- The attorneys general of Australia and Canada both have embraced Collaborative Practice as an appropriate alternative to litigation in those countries.
- There is a Collaborative Practice practitioner in all but four states in the U.S. (ND, SD, WY and MT)
- IACP membership has grown from 200 in 2001 to more than 2,400 in 2006.

What distinguishes Collaborative practice from other methods of divorce?*

Collaborative practice promotes respect and keeps spouses in control of the process, not judges.

It addresses each couple's unique concerns, as opposed to litigation which is driven by the general rule of law meant to apply to all. Because clients agree not to go to court, the process is more open and less adversarial. The goal is to enhance communication throughout the process and lay the foundation for a healthier relationship after the divorce.

What is the biggest difference between Collaborative practice and litigation?

Control

In Collaborative, the participants agree not to go to court. This gives them control of the process and outcome versus litigation, where a judge makes the final decision.

Collaboration

Instead of the win-lose court setting, the entire Collaborative team ensures that both spouses work with each other, not against each other, towards mutually beneficial solutions for critical issues.

Communication

One barrier in litigation is a lack of effective communication between spouses. In the Collaborative process, spouses learn a framework for effectively communicating their concerns and goals.

Speaking Out

Members of CPCP have been speaking out to inform and educate others about the Collaborative process. Many presentations have been made over the last year to mental health professionals, financial service providers, accounting firms and bar associations. Most recently four members of CPCP presented at the Spring Continuing Education Conference of the Pennsylvania Psychological Association (PPA). Another presentation will be offered at PPA's annual meeting on June 20, 2009 in Harrisburg. If you are interested in scheduling a presentation, please contact Tim Colgan at tcolgan@cmlaw1.com or (717) 502-5000.

You can find a list of local Collaborative professionals at www.collaborativelawpa.com.

Interdisciplinary Training Opportunity November 13-14

CPCP is proud to sponsor an Introductory Interdisciplinary Collaborative training with Rita Pollak, Esq. and Cathy Heenan, Ed.D. on November 13-14, 2009 at the Dauphin County Bar Center on Front Street in Harrisburg.

Attorney Rita Pollak is a former board member of the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals who now limits her practice to Collaborative. Cathy Heenan is a licensed psychologist, educator and author. Pollak and Heenan have presented the Collaborative interdisciplinary model throughout the United States and most recently in the Netherlands in January 2009.

For more information or to register for the training, contact Nichole Staley-O'Gorman at nstaley@pkh.com or Karen Miller at kmiller@caldwellkearns.com.

*Source: International Academy of Collaborative Professionals