



## Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

### Judiciary Administrative Office

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## PRESS RELEASE

### ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION TRAINING

The NMI Judiciary held a two-day training class on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) - Basic Mediation Training - November 22-23, 2013. Mr. Patrick Wolff and Mr. David Nelson from *Inafa' Maolek Conciliation* on Guam conducted the training for twenty-five (25) participants who were selected with the assistance of the NMI Bar Association and the Judiciary's Family Court Division.

Chief Justice Alexandro Castro and Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo welcomed the trainers and the trainees on Friday morning at the NMI Supreme Court courtroom.

After becoming Chief Justice, one of Chief Justice Castro's first projects involved convening the Judiciary's Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee. There are two separate committees the Family Court Committee and the ADR Committee for all other civil matters. The Family Court Committee decided to hold a basic mediation training to train a cadre of local mediators to assist the courts in mediating cases. Funding for the training came from a grant that the Family Court Division received from the Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA).

Mediation is a process of dispute resolution in which a third party (the mediator) facilitates a dialogue between the parties affected by the dispute in order to create and implement a mutually acceptable resolution.

Judge Govendo in his opening remarks indicated that mediation is a powerful process, and he has been using it in Family Court cases since the beginning of the year. He assesses the cases before him and refers those he feels may benefit from mediation to the Family Court Manager, Joseph



*(Alternative Dispute Resolution Training participants are pictured with Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro, center and Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo to his right.)*

Kevin Villagomez, who begins the process. Judge Govendo is pleased that Mr. Villagomez has twenty-five newly trained mediators with which to work.

The participants of the recently completed training were a mixture of lawyers and community members. They are: Virgilio Abueme, Tayna Belyeu-Camacho, Nikita Cabrera, Jeffrey Camacho, Jerry Cody, Kay Delafield, Calvani Deleon Guerrero, Adam Hardwicke, Fr. Ryan Jimenez, Sr. Stella Mangona, Former Presiding Judge Edward Manibusan, James McAllister, Dr. Janet McCollough, Sheli Neal, Cindy Nesbit, Reena Patel, Celina Romolor-Route, Gil San Nicolas, Tom Schweiger, Matt Smith, Darrah Benavente-Tagabuel, Lynnette Tenorio, and Sheila Trianni.

The NMI Judiciary will be conducting more mediation training in 2014. People interested in attending the training should contact the Family Court Division at (670) 236-9781 or 236-9783.



Chief Justice Castro provides opening remarks



Future mediators



Trainer: Mr. Patrick Wolff

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