



FSRI

The Foundation for Sustainable Rule of Law Initiatives

Spring 2014 FSRI Update

Recent Activities

Pro Bono Award for FSRI

- In February, FSRI President, Vic Schachter, received a Super Lawyer Pro Bono Award for 2013 for the excellence reflected by the work of the Foundation in establishing mediation centers in India and elsewhere around the globe. There were only two individual attorney recipients of this award, and FSRI was honored to receive this recognition and a modest honorarium. [Click here](#) for further information about the award.

Washington, D.C.

- In early March, Vic met with the Federal Judicial Center, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and various law professors in the Washington D.C. Area who focus on human rights issues, to explore collaboration and fundraising initiatives for FSRI as it scales up its operations for 2014. There are many promising collaborative projects under discussion, and future efforts in mutually desirable locations around the globe will be continuing. Enthusiasm was shown by all the parties with whom we met in Washington about the mission and accomplishments of FSRI.

India

- In March/April, the Foundation sponsored its first “India Team” initiative. The team was composed of Laila Ollapally (FSRI Advisory Board Member), Jennifer Brandt (an experienced mediator from New Jersey), John Koeppe (an experienced mediator and current litigator with the Ropers Majeski firm) and Vic. The team visited mediation centers in Delhi, Chandigarh (our first trip there), Kochin and Bangalore, at which time we met with Supreme Court and High Court Justices, trial judges, mediators, mediation center administrators, bar officers and advocates. In addition, there was an opportunity to revisit the mediation centers in Delhi which were established in 2005 at Tiz Hazari

and Karkadooma. They are very much thriving and expanding into the surrounding districts, as are community (walk-in) mediation centers.

In addition to promoting the positive benefits of mediation, the FSRI India team observed and coached mediators at the centers, trained referral judges on proper referral techniques, advised/counseled on improved mediation center systemic procedures, audited existing programs and facilities at the mediation centers, and consulted with mediation governing boards (usually composed of High Court Justices). In addition, the team presented verbal recommendations of its findings at the conclusion of the audits, which will be followed by written reports of recommendations to the governing boards. In addition, for the first time, we were able to focus on some case management programs (particularly in Chandigarh) and critique a planned program and make recommendations. Lastly, educational sessions about mediation were held with High Court Justices, trial judges, bar executives and advocates.

- For the first time, we had the opportunity to visit Thrissur, Kerala's inaugural district court program about two hours outside of Kochin. During this visit, we had the opportunity to speak to counsel and mediators, visit the physical facility, and thereafter make recommendations as to improvements. This small but significant center is one of the better examples of a district mediation program which promises to reach out to populations outside of the major urban areas.

Upcoming Activities/Global Visits

- At the present time, a return trip to the Balkans (specifically, Bulgaria, Kosovo and possibly Croatia) is scheduled for July, where we plan to meet with mediation administrators, judicial officers and government officials in developing, improving and upgrading existing court annexed mediation programs, and private mediation initiatives.
- In late July, Vic has been invited to attend and speak at the 6th International School on Business Mediation Conference in Admont, Austria, where he and Advisory Board Member Laila Ollapally will make a presentation on the work of FSRI and the topic of building mediation centers globally. In addition, there will be a five-day mediation training course with the opportunity to network with some of the world's finest mediators.
- Tentative plans are in process for a visit to Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paola in Brazil in the Fall, 2014. This will depend on the timing of mediation legislation which is being considered in Brazil. The passage of a favorable mediation law will hopefully provide an effective platform upon which to build a stronger mediation program there.

June FSRI Board Meeting

- The next FSRI Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 16, 2014, at which time there will be a report of recent activities, developments, and proposed initiatives for 2014. Emphasis will be placed on scaling up the operations of FSRI and building our team of volunteer contributors who will participate in additional initiatives in the coming years.