



FSRI

The Foundation for Sustainable Rule of Law Initiatives

Spring 2013 FSRI Update

FSRI recent activities

In late January through early February 2013, Vic Schachter, President of FSRI, visited and worked within several mediation centres in India. Beginning in New Delhi, he met with Supreme Court Justice Madan Lokur and with High Court Justice Mohan Mehta, each of whom provided an overview of the state of mediation/ADR throughout India and discussed plans for further ADR initiatives. He also visited the Samadhan Delhi High Court Mediation and Conciliation Centre, meeting with the Centre's Senior Coordinator to discuss the state of the program, innovative mediation techniques, and the expansion of the program into outer districts. There are currently four Delhi Mediation Centres in the districts, located in Tis Hazari, Karkardooma, Rohini, and Dwarka.

From New Delhi, Vic traveled to Bangalore, the capital of the state of Karnataka, an economic and technology hub. In Bangalore, he was joined by Laila Ollapally, a key member of the FSRI Advisory Board and Senior Coordinator at the Bangalore Mediation Centre. The two met with the Board of Directors of the Centre, conducted advanced training mediator sessions, and led and coached mediators in small group meetings to allow for informal discussion and problem solving exchanges. Vic and Laila also met with the president of the Karnataka Chamber of Commerce, and corporate representatives and individuals from leading law firms in Bangalore to encourage use of the Mediation Centre to resolve business and employment disputes. These business leaders were very interested in the Centre expanding its capabilities within the private sector.



Thereafter, Vic and Laila flew to Kochi, in the state of Kerala, where they consulted with mediators at the Kerala Mediation Centre, observed Mediation Centre operations and procedures, and met with the Centre's Board of Governors to discuss their recommendations. The visit also involved a presentation to the executive officers of the Kerala Bar Association regarding the current state of mediation and recommendations for continued improvements to the program.

While in Kerala, Vic and Laila conducted a review of the District Court Mediation Centre in Ernakulam, the first District Mediation Centre in Kerala, and held a brief mediation "update." At the conclusion of these Kerala meetings, they had extensive discussions with the Board

of Governors and additional stakeholders in the mediation system, including Chief Justice Manjula Chellur, Bar Association Officers, Referral Judges of both High Courts and District Courts, Coordinators of the High Court and District Court, and Mediators of the High Court and District Court. Vic and Laila presented a training session on current mediation techniques,

including a role- playing session with trial court judges on "best practices" for successful judicial referral to the court-annexed centres.

Vic and Laila followed up each of their visits to Bangalore and Kerala with written reports and recommendations to the respective Boards of Governors. In all, there has been marked improvement in the operations of the alternative dispute programs. This trip was both intensive and fruitful - we look forward to many exciting challenges ahead.

FSRI a 501(c)(3) public charity

FSRI is pleased to announce that the Internal Revenue Service has granted the Foundation 501(c)(3) tax exempt status as a public charity. The IRS determination allows FSRI to receive tax deductible bequests and contributions, retroactive to September 2012.

FSRI Inaugural Board Meeting held

FSRI held its first meeting of the Board of Directors on February 21, 2013. The Board discussed and ratified the foundation's infrastructure and basic corporate policies, and received the President's verbal report regarding his recent trip to India. The next Board meeting will be held on June 10, 2013, with a discussion focused on FSRI's broader strategies in the coming year.