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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



J. Benjamin Stevens
AAML President

The shortest month of the year will also have the shortest President's Letter of the year, so please take 90 seconds to read the following important announcements:

[MidYear Meeting Special Announcement](#) – I'm thrilled to announce that the surprise

Craig's show will be complimentary to our Fellows and registered guests. If you have not already registered for the Mid-Year Meeting, please do so soon, as [registration](#) will close in the coming weeks. Don't forget to [book your hotel room](#) to receive a discounted room rate, **hurry the deadline is Friday, February 9!**

[National Family Law Conference](#) –

Registration is open for AAML's inaugural National Family Law Conference in Nashville, TN May 16th - 18th. Please spread the word about this conference

as it should appeal to anyone who might be a candidate to become a Fellow now or in the next few years.

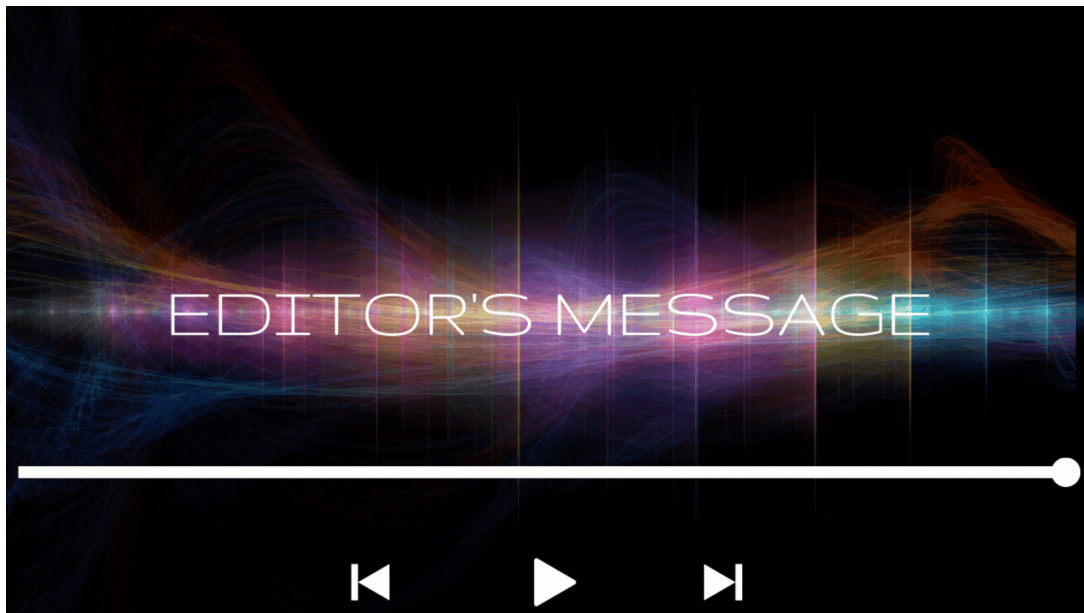
[AAML Institute for Associates](#) – All of our Fellows know that the Institute is one of the crown jewels of the Academy, and we have decided not to have this program in 2024 and to take the next year to recharge this program to make it even better when it returns in 2025. Stay tuned.

I look forward to seeing everyone in the warm weather in a few weeks. As always, thank you for your support of the

referenced last month is that nationally renowned comedian and award-winning [Craig Shoemaker](#) will perform a private show for our group on Tuesday evening.

to your colleagues, local bar associations, family law sections, etc.

Academy and all your efforts to make it a success.



[CLICK HERE](#) or Above
to play a message
from Newsletter Editor
[Rod Firoozye](#)

THE EDITOR'S NOTE – FEB. 2024

By Rod Firoozye, AAML Newsletter Editor

High-Conflict Cases – Some of us relish these types of cases, but often, there are no real winners. So, how do we cool down the temperature and resolve such cases? This month, we feature some compelling articles with various suggestions for reaching settlements using Alternative Dispute Resolution.

Additionally, our guest article this month is an interview with Taran Singh Brar, the director of a recently released documentary film titled “The Marriage of a Scientist.”

I became interested in this documentary after I saw an interview with Taran on my local news channel. The documentary revolves around the life of Professor Charles H. Townes. Before watching this film, I was unaware of Prof. Townes and his remarkable scientific achievements, which seem to rival those of Einstein or Edison's.

After viewing this documentary, I began comparing the enduring relationship of Professor Townes and his wife, Frances, with the marital trajectory of Albert Einstein and his first wife, Mileva Marić, which ultimately led to divorce.

For those interested, "The Marriage of a Scientist" is accessible [here](#).

This Month's Videos & Webinars:

- [Guest Interview](#): Director Taran Singh Brar.
- Latest [Tech Tip](#) with Scott Bassett: Software Tools for Improving Writing.

This Month's Articles:

- This Month's [Judge's View](#) with Hon. Dianna Gould- Saltman, Los Angeles Superior Court: Mediation and the High Conflict Case: Is that even an option?
- [Bruce Clemens Article](#): Mediation Pathways & Hurdles
- [Neil Kozek Article](#): Divorce with Respect: Why AAML Fellows Should Consider Adding Collaborative Practice to Our Menu of Options for Our Clients and Ourselves
- [Lisa Sharpe Article](#): Mediation Mastery: AAML Pro Tips for Successful Family Law Mediation
- [James Vedder Article](#): Child Inclusive Mediation
- [Amy J. Amundsen and Jennifer Bingham Article](#): 2024 Arbitration Training Institute
- [Melissa Kucinski Article](#): Uniform Law Commission Assembles Committee to Draft New Act on In-Camera Interviews of Children
- [Brian Vertz Post](#): AAML Foundation's President update
- Joani Moberg: Health & Wellness Update



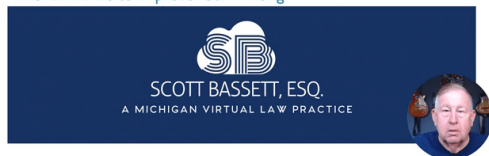
**Check out our guest interview with
Taran Singh Brar and our editor
Rod Firoozye!**

[CLICK HERE](#) or on the [GRAPHIC](#) to
[PLAY the FULL VIDEO](#)



**Favorite Legal Writing
Tools**

Word Add-Ins to Improve Your Writing



[CLICK HERE](#) OR ABOVE
TO WATCH THE VIDEO

Tech Tips Videos

The AAML Law Practice Management & Technology Committee's Tech Tip for December is brought to you by [Scott Bassett](#) who will share some of the programs he uses to help edit his writing. Check out this and all of the videos this committee has been providing you since 2021. [Click Here](#) for all Tech Tips *to Date* (Login Required to View All)



UPCOMING NATIONAL EVENTS/MEETINGS

[2024 AAML Midyear Meeting](#)

[March 11-15, 2024](#)

[Playa del Carmen, Mexico](#)

[AAML National Family Law Conference](#)

[May 16-18, 2024](#)

[Nashville, Tennessee](#)

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2024 AAML Midyear Meeting

Last Chance to Receive Lowest Room Rates

Don't forget to [book your hotel room](#) before Friday, February 9 to receive the lowest rates

Experience high-quality Continuing Legal Education (CLE), networking opportunities and leisure activities in the breathtaking setting of the Fairmont Mayakoba in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, during the 2024 Midyear Meeting of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML). Enjoy beachfront luxury, engage in beach activities, spa indulgence and participate in a golf tournament on the El Camaleón Mayakoba LIV Golf Course.

New for 2024! What's included for every registrant: Monday Evening Welcome Reception; full breakfasts Tuesday, Thursday and Friday;

Opening Dinner/Entertainment Tuesday Evening; Beach Reception/Dinner Friday. For Seminar Attendees: CLE/CPE credit hours.

REGISTER & BOOK YOUR HOTEL ROOM TODAY



AAML National Family Law Conference

This inaugural AAML [National Family Law Conference](#) is specifically planned to attract attorneys who are not yet Fellows but who should be good candidates to apply to the Academy now or in the future. This is a unique opportunity for non-Fellows to attend AAML-quality CLE and learn more about our organization and fast-track their practice. Please [share the information](#) about this first-of-its-kind conference with your friends, colleagues, local and state bars, etc.

Register by February 29 and save \$200 with the Early Bird discount!

REGISTER NOW



THE JUDGE'S VIEW

Mediation and the High Conflict Case: Is that even an option?

By Hon. Dianna Gould-Saltman,
Los Angeles Superior Court, Ret.*

I was asked whether I would consider taking “high conflict” cases into mediation. In typical lawyer-like fashion (getting my chops back), my immediate response was, “It depends on what

As I transition from the public bench to the private mediation/adjudication sector, I've had the opportunity to consider the types of cases I might choose to take (and those which might choose to take me!).

you mean by that." The reality is that I would and will take those cases, but want to make it as easy as possible for advocates in those cases to come out the hero by having the mediation provide an outcome the client will appreciate. I'll give you a few ideas here how to best accomplish that.

[Click to read more.](#)



The Art of Mediation – Pathways and Hurdles Towards Excellence

By [Bruce A. Clemens,
Esq.](#)

I have enjoyed 50 years in family law litigation, including 42 years as a co-founding and managing partner in the Beverly Hills firm of Jaffe and Clemens and most recently as exclusively a family law neutral at Alternative Resolution Centers (ARC) helping parties and their attorneys resolve the challenges of the breakup of marriages.

To many of you, this article will be a reminder of what you already know from your own experiences. To others, it will explain and relieve your concerns that mediation seems too unstructured, notwithstanding that it frequently works surprisingly well. There also are a few things that may alter your view of the difference between competent mediation and great mediation.

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Imagine working with attorneys we like and respect. Imagine controlling our schedules. Imagine no accounts receivable and no requirement to work if we are not being

and your Collaborative Colleagues additional cases because they have respected the process, the attorneys, the professionals, and each other.



**Divorce with
Respect: Why AAML
Fellows Should
Consider Adding
Collaborative
Practice to Our
Menu of Options for
Our Clients and
Ourselves**

By: [Neil E. Kozek,
Esq.](#)

paid. Imagine voluntary formal discovery, neutral valuations, and forensic custody professionals with colleagues with whom we have worked for years. Finally, imagine two satisfied clients who refer to you

Collaborative Divorce (also “Collaborative Practice”) is an out-of-court settlement model seeking to resolve conflict without the court system and...

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**Mediation Mastery:
AAML Pro Tips for
Successful Family
Law Mediation"**

By [Lisa Sharpe, Esq.](#)

**Strategize Before You
Mediate:**

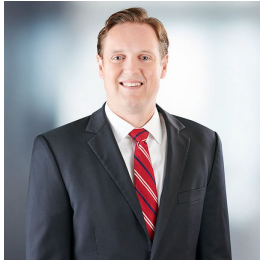
Familiarize yourself with your goals and priorities, and be ready to articulate them clearly during mediation. *“When I prepare for mediation, I have the client set out their goals and prioritize them. If we can only settle one thing, what is it?”* AAML Member Richard West from Florida.

**Set Realistic
Expectations:**

Understand that mediation is about finding common ground, not necessarily achieving everything on your wishlist. “Prepare prepare prepare. You are not going to walk out of mediation and get everything you want. Avoid the word “fair” and substitute “acceptable.” - AAML Member Richard West from Florida.

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CHILD INCLUSIVE MEDIATION

By [James Vedder](#)

Child-inclusive mediation is becoming a more popular and regular tool used to resolve custody and parenting time disputes in family law matters.

Child-inclusive mediation is intended to get more information from not just the parents, but also the parties' children to craft custody and parenting time awards that are in the best interests of the parties' children. It can be effective tool of done correctly and cautiously so that the parties' children are not put in the middle of their parents' disputes.

Child-inclusive mediation typically involves two mediators. One mediator who meets with the parties' children to get information about custody and parenting time issues and then reports back to the parents on how to best incorporate the thoughts of the parties' children into a custody and parenting time award.

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2024 Arbitration Training Institute

By [Amy J. Amundsen](#) and [Jennifer Bingham](#),
co-chairs of the
Arbitration
Subcommittee

Back by popular demand is the AAML Arbitration Training Institute. We had raving reviews in

Now is your opportunity to sign-up before spots fill up again. Arbitration is on the rise with two more states adopting the Uniform Family Law Arbitration Act (UFLAA) in 2021. This comprehensive and well-regarded Institute will be held on June 6 & 7, 2024 at the Chicago's Gleacher Building. The AAML, the preeminent family law organization in the country and only professional organization offering family law arbitration training, has limited seats for 35 Fellows.

[\[1\]](#)

The esteemed faculty include **Fellow Carolyn Moran Zack**, author of *Family Law Arbitration: Practice, Procedures and Forms* (ABA 2020), **Rochelle Grossman**, co-trainer of the 2023 AAML Arbitration Institute, experienced arbitrator and former family court hearing officer from Pennsylvania, and **Fellow David M. Johnson**, an experienced arbitrator, mediator, and former family court magistrate from Colorado.

[Click to Read More](#)

response to the Institute last year and a lengthy waitlist.



**Uniform Law
Commission
Assembles Committee
to Draft New Act on In-
Camera Interviews of
Children**

by [Melissa Kucinski](#)

Melissa is an international family law expert based in Washington, D.C. She served as Head of Delegation for the International Law Institute to the 8th Special Commission Meeting.

The Uniform Law Commission(ULC) has gifted the field of family law with some of our most important laws. Every family lawyer should be familiar with the Uniform Child-Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA) – unless you are in Massachusetts-and the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) since we are required to plead jurisdiction for every custody or child support matter by citing to our state's enactment of one or the other.

The goal of the ULC, particularly in the United States where family law is addressed by each individual state,is to put forth laws that help promote uniformity in an otherwise un-uniform field of practice. Uniformity is critically important when parents are electing to forum shop for a jurisdiction that may provide them a more sympathetic arbiter of their family law case.

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Throughout the Twin Cities, Tubman provides safe shelter, legal services, mental and chemical health counseling, youth programming, and

and has expanded dramatically on a regular basis over the past 45 years, in both scope of facilities and programing.

**Letter from AAML
Foundation President
Brian Vertz**

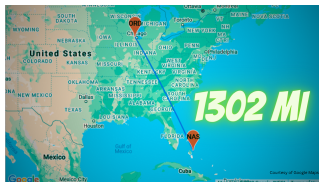
Tubman is one of the leading providers of domestic abuse, chemical and mental health assistance in the Twin Cities. Based in South Minneapolis but providing services throughout the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area, Tubman helps people of all ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds who have experienced relationship violence, sexual exploitation, homelessness, mental and chemical health challenges, and other trauma.

community education, including public information campaigns to provide community members with the information and support they need to get help or give help.

Tubman started in 1974 as Chrysalis Women's Collective, to offer support groups, chemical health services, and childcare and have constantly grown and expanded their services helping individuals and families

In 1976 they opened the Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter, then only the third battered women's shelter in the country. In 1977 individual legal advice and information sessions on family law issues begin at the Chrysalis Center. In 1981 they began offering legal advocacy and Orders for Protection assistance in Washington County through the Family Violence Network.

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**From Health &
Wellness
Committee:
(Chair: Joani
Moberg)**

Great Job! We have collectively traveled 5,677 miles far surpassing our original goal to travel 1302 miles from the Bahamas to Chicago! The Health & Wellness Challenge is going strong! Starting on June 1, fellows from across the country have been walking, running, biking or rowing to meet our original goal, which was to

that figure in the dust! Joani Moberg reports that the Minnesota Chapter remains in 1st place, with the most miles traveled, North Carolina has taken 2nd place, and the Southern California Chapter is at a close 3rd.

**Thanks to all who
are making this a
fun competition!
Let's keep on**

travel the 1302 miles
distance from the
Bahamas to
Chicago. As you can
see, we have left

**moving
and reporting
those miles
'weekly' to [Joani!](#)**



Editor:
[Rod Firoozye](#)

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