



Jean Civikly-Powell Retires!

At the end of the spring semester, Jean retired from her 46-year career at UNM. While we were planning several retirement parties for her, COVID-19, alas, had other plans for us. In lieu of any parties, we collected comments, well-wishes, and recollections of Jean’s many years of dedicated service to UNM’s faculty, staff, and students.

Jean came to UNM in 1973, having just completed her PhD in Communication at Florida State University. She was a respected member of the faculty of UNM’s Communication and Journalism department from 1973 to 2001. She is commemorated in the department through the annual Jean Civikly-Powell Award for Outstanding New Teaching Assistant (MA).

In addition to a variety of UNM administrative appointments and recognitions, she was honored for her service through a Presidential Teaching Fellow Award for Fall 1995-1997. As described on the UNM Center for Teaching Excellence website, “The Presidential Teaching Fellowship promotes excellence in teaching by establishing a core group of faculty who are given the highest recognition for their effective teaching. Additionally, Fellows carry a special responsibility for ensuring teaching excellence by sharing their expertise with the University Community. One Fellow is selected each year and serves an active term of two years...”



Two years before her first retirement in 2001, Jean began her work as Ombudsperson and Director of the Ombuds/Dispute Resolution Services for Faculty in the Provost’s Office. For the next twenty years, Jean has provided a safe place for faculty members to discuss their concerns about their colleagues and to engage in mediation. She has provided innumerable trainings to the faculty. She has mentored graduate students in developing mediation skills as graduate assistants in the Ombuds/Dispute Resolute Services for Faculty program.

Jean decided to enter a second and full retirement at the end of the Spring 2020 semester. While we really do wish her well, we will miss her. §

**Let us not look back in anger or
forward in fear, but around us in
awareness.**
James Thurber

I took Jean’s workshop for training faculty mediators about a billion years ago in 2008. A number of years before that I had been involved in a difficult situation that was successfully resolved by mediators. So, when I saw the opportunity for free training here at UNM, I jumped at it. Jean was an amazing teacher, so when she asked if I would be a coach the next year, I said, “yes!” About the same time, she asked if I would do a mediation: I said, “yes!” Some time after that she asked if I would serve as a faculty outreach person: I said, “yes!” Then she formed an advisory committee for the program. “Would I help?” I said, “yes!” More recently, as she was thinking of full retirement, she asked if she could propose my name to the Provost’s Office to step in, at least in an interim capacity, as Ombudsperson and Program Director. I said, “yes!”

In the twelve years I have known Jean, I have never regretted saying “yes!” to her. Her enthusiasm for improving communication through mediation services and general trainings has inspired me since the day I met her. §

Margaret Ménache



Alhambra Palace in Grenada, Spain.
Photo by Justine Andrews



Although some people describe themselves as verbal and others as visual, Jean has shown herself to be at home in both areas. The quotes with which she peppers her communications are capsules of information drawn from her wide literary interests. I have chosen some to include in this document. I hope they are among her favorites; they certainly are among my favorites.

The images here are also taken from a folder full of artwork she had pulled from magazines, calendars, postcards, flyers, and brochures. At the conclusion of the Faculty Mediation Program, she would spread them out across the table and ask each of us to “select an image to share with your colleagues and use this starter phrase: ‘This image reminds me of mediation because...’” §

I am super grateful to Jean for so many things! There are two things I learned from her that were transformational for me.

The first was the “conflict styles” survey. I learned both the content and the bigger lesson that styles are not fixed but changeable! This was an early introduction to what is now commonly discussed as “growth mindset.”

The second thing I learned was the value of the constructed practice of meditation for the purpose of perspective taking. Moving from role to role and perspective to perspective really helped me see the whole picture. This content and technique were also transformational in my teaching!

I am so very grateful for these life-changing lessons and wish Jean the very best in the future! §

Sally Fortner

If you can't think of anything nice to say, you're not thinking hard enough.

Kid President



Prague's Ancient Journey
Carol Anthony

I have known Jean for the last thirteen years or so, as she has been an important member of the CARS Advisory Board. I also had the pleasure of teaming up with her in facilitating workshops for the Chairs School.

She is a delightful person and it has always been a pleasure working with her. If I ever wanted to present on a topic in collaboration with anyone, I would wish it to be with her.

I have always appreciated her kind presence and I am grateful for her significant contributions to a climate of respect at the University.

I wish her all the best in her new adventure! §

Steve Rugala





I first met Jean through her mediation training program, which she has organized and presented for many years. I was struck by her presence. She was funny, supportive, collegial, and a very effective teacher. Faculty are not the easiest students to teach, but Jean gets people to talk across their disciplinary boundaries and she gets people to do new things, which require considerable trust, together.

I have gotten to know Jean much better over the last few years, as part of her kitchen cabinet, that also included Jay Parkes and Margaret Ménache. We got to see her dedication and her strategy for helping faculty through what is, for many of them, the most challenging period in their career. She inspired confidence in her co-mediators and in the faculty who were placing a lot of hope in the mediation process.

She always remained the professor, and encouraged those around her to contribute to the learning of UNM faculty and to mediators statewide. She participated in, and got us to participate in, presentations on phenomena related to conflict and its resolution. Through these sessions she created the same ecumenical atmosphere that defined the annual mediation training programs. In short, Jean has been one of those rare faculty members and office holders who has created connections across the university and opposed our silo-ing.

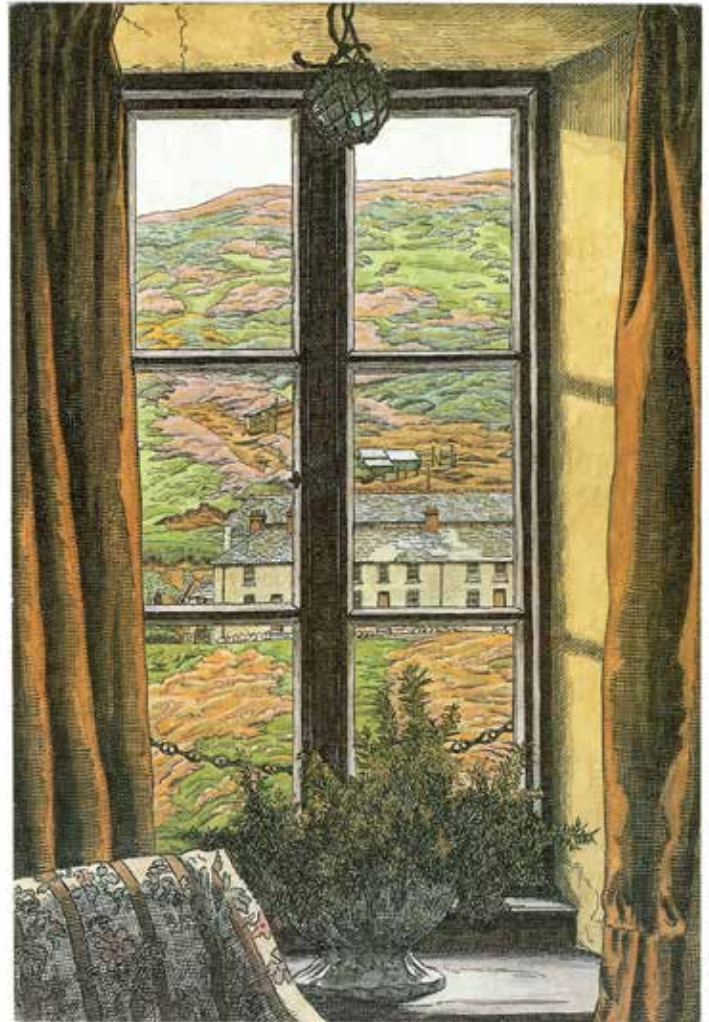
I think what I will most remember about Jean is her generosity. She is generous to everyone she comes into contact with. Her generosity inspires others to be their better person. This is obviously useful in mediation, but she gives in all of her interactions.

I will miss Jean immensely. She has provided so much to our institution, and to my own development as a member of our university. §

Jonathan Bolton

Dignity is non-negotiable.

Vartan Gregorian



Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing
and rightdoing there is a field.
I'll meet you there.

Rumi



Jean, thank you for seeing something in me that told you I should be teaching mediation, and for recommending that I teach it. I remember the call from the C&J Dean where he said, "If Jean recommends you, that's all I need to know." That was almost twenty years ago, and I've been teaching mediation every year since.

Today I say that if I win the lottery, the one thing I would continue to do is teach mediation because I see how transformative it is. And all of that is because you took the time to meet with me, saw something in me, and opened this door for me. Thank you! §

Anne Lightsey

I have worked with Jean for the last seven or eight years since I help her scheduling rooms at the Business Center for the Mediation Training for Faculty. It has been delightful to work with such as an organized person like her. She used to send me her requests with more than enough time so we could work on scheduling rooms together for her needs.

She always respects and understands our room guidelines thus I have never had any issues about that. Although I see her just a few times a year, I really enjoy working with her. She is always smiling and never forgets to recognize what I help her with, although it is part of my job. Thanks, Jean, for being awesome! §

Cynthia Perez Chavez



Bloodstars near Alert Bay, British Columbia. By Peter Thomas.

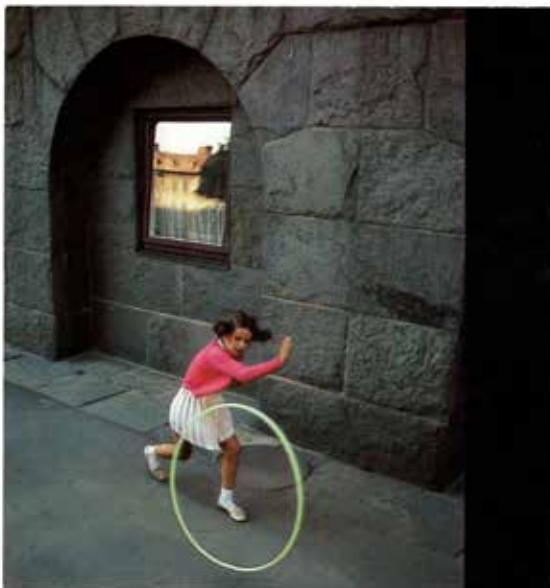
Jean's contributions through the Ombuds office have made a daily difference in my faculty life. I formally mediate seldom, but I navigate conflict often. The skills I learned through the training are ones I use daily.

I'm a faulty human being and thus an imperfect professor, yet I'm better because of what Jean has taught me. Most of what I have learned from Jean has come not through the trainings but through my interactions with her and the way she approaches the faculty life.

She is infinitely patient, even objective, while somehow simultaneously provoking movement in my thinking. During the time that I was a department chair, the chats Jean and I had at the table in the Ombuds courtyard were extremely useful in shaping my thinking and actions to promote more harmony among the department faculty.

UNM is going to miss Jean immensely. Her legacy, though, lies not only in the better climate amongst the faculty because of her and her work but also in the many of us who have learned from her and now practice as she has practiced. §

Jay Parkes



Reflect more. Reflex less.

Jean Civikly-Powell



Life is like a teabag.
You don't know how strong you are until you
are in hot water.

Eleanor Roosevelt

I don't have a particular story to tell, but I'm one of many people who received their mediation training from Jean and went on to mediate as a volunteer at Metro Court and UNM for many years. I've also co-mediated with her and helped with mediation coaching. I've met many people whom she's trained and suspect that she is responsible for the majority of people at UNM who are mediators. What a gift to the UNM community!

What I admire about her is not only her superb skills as a teacher and mediator but also her embodiment of the Serenity Prayer: She has the courage to change what she can, the serenity to accept what she cannot change, and the wisdom to know the difference. I can't imagine a better role model, as a mediator, a human being, and a friend. She's also great at finding interesting restaurants and at keeping in touch by email when we can't get together in person. §

Mary B. Harris



Jean is a treasured beacon of light that has positively influenced both individuals and numerous departments of the university. Under her administration, more than 200 faculty have completed mediation training, and nearly 100 UNM departments have enhanced their capacity to effectively dialogue, promote conflict prevention, and engage in constructive conflict management. It has been such an honor for me to uphold this noble woman and this awesome mission!

It is said that great lessons are both taught and caught. I have personally benefited from Jean's mentorship in both ways. I have had the privilege to work with her to produce wonderful workshops, mediation trainings, and special assignments. In doing so, her strong work ethic and commitment to improving the quality of life for others has made an indelible impression on my life. Jean has that unique ability to help others rise above their challenges, choose/maintain civility, and become their better selves. A remarkable woman who has made an uncommon, unprecedented impact—corporately upon UNM faculty and departments—and personally upon the lives of many. Jean's influence will continue to be felt throughout our lives! §

Nina Cooper





I can't remember when I first met Jean, but I remember very well my understanding that I had met an extraordinary person. We shared an interest in bringing the skills of negotiation and mediation to the faculty of the University.

But Jean's ambition was nothing less than to transform the culture of the faculty so that problems would be resolved at their origins by people whose skills were up to the task. She created the UNM programs that trained mediators and gave them the opportunities to update and improve their skills; that offered mediation services, which have often served as the best advertisement for the effectiveness of the approach; and that have raised awareness among the faculty and administrators at UNM.

Today the Ombuds/Dispute Resolution Services for Faculty are well known and often the first stop for people who find themselves in conflict or dealing with others in conflict. The office is referenced in several Faculty Handbook policies, and is widely respected. This is all because of Jean's ambition to move toward an institution that could manage conflicts constructively because of the skills in negotiation, mediation, and dispute resolution that were possessed by the faculty.

I can't think of anyone who has had a more permanently positive impact on the University. Congratulations to Jean! §

John Trotter

The things they said merely served to camouflage the things they weren't saying.

Luis Alfredo Garcia-Roza

Jean, when I was being bullied as a newly hired untenured professor by someone in my department, I sought to take your training course to try to understand my bully. As you know, your training inspired me to research and write multiple publications on bullying in higher education and to continue serving as a conflict-resolution trainer for others.

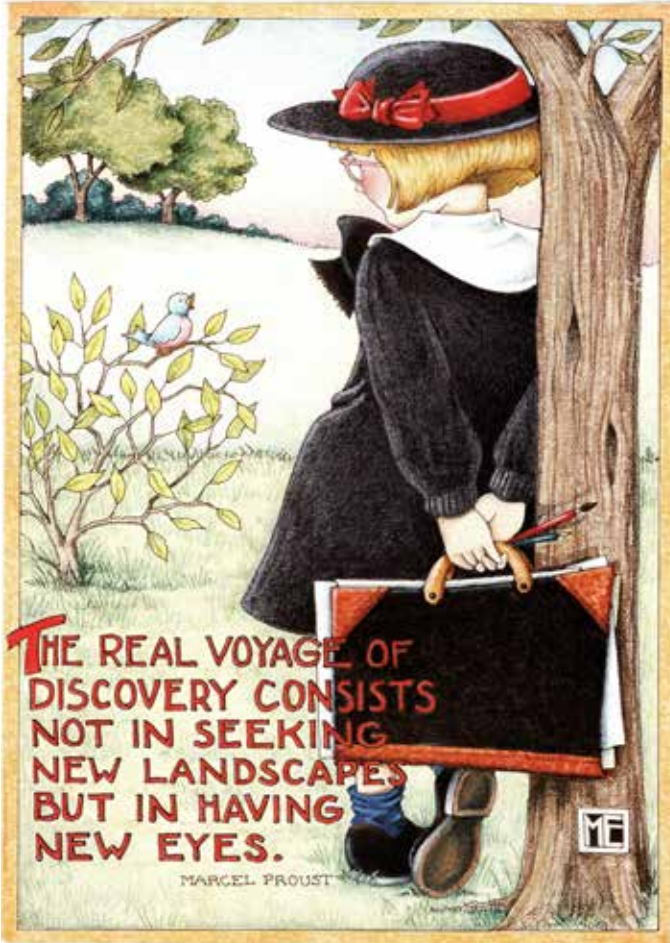
You were such an important resource for me on campus, as you helped me get through those difficult early years and turn a feeling of powerlessness into an agentive response. I'm so grateful for the support you have offered me and other faculty through your important work. Your positive influence will be felt on campus long after your retirement. I wish you all the best! §

Cris Elder



It sounded better in my head.

A six-word story (on Pinterest)



I took Jean's Mediation Training for Faculty ten or fifteen years ago. If there's a word to sum up the impact of the training on me, it's "life changing." From the first session,

I was drawn into the fresh perspectives mediation offers: the focus on process, active listening, and seeking authentic meanings behind the imperfect words we may use to express ourselves. I learned that the mediator strives to bring parties to a place where they can hear, really hear, one another, and trusts that the process (not outcome) is what matters. I came away with new positive relationships and a foundation of new skills to build upon. It seemed that the entire class enjoyed good outcomes because Jean executed the process so well.

The content of the course shifted my go-to thinking in many interpersonal interactions, both professionally and personally. I'm certain that nuggets of my mediation training continue to influence me daily. Even more rewarding than the content, however, was the privilege of working with, and learning from, Jean. Quite a few years after completing the course, I reached out to her as a trusted mentor while I served in a very difficult administrative role. Her counsel, her questions, her insights helped me to find my footing and no small measure of additional courage.

A couple years ago, my husband and I were downsizing, and thus, looking for new homes for many items we value. We had a hand-painted Hungarian espresso serving set that dear friends had bestowed upon us many years prior. We wanted someone else to enjoy the set – ideally, someone who would enjoy its Hungarian heritage, which Jean and I share. It means so much to me that I could give you, Jean, a treasured token of my heartfelt and deep appreciation for all you have given me.

Jean, I hope you'll savor every moment of "real retirement" and I know you'll continue to shine your light brightly upon those fortunate enough to share this part of your journey,

With respect, admiration and warm, safe cyber-hugs! §
Laurie Schatzberg

Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words.
Keep your words positive because your words become your behaviors.
Keep your behaviors positive because your behaviors become your habits.
Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values.
Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny.

Mahatma Gandhi