

Title: \$3,000 grant to help boost mediation
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A grant will help northeast Dutchess County residents settle disputes. The Mediation Center of Dutchess received \$3,000 from the Northeast Dutchess Fund of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

Jody Miller, the center's executive director, said the funds will be used for recruitment and transportation of mediators for services in the towns of Amenia, Clinton Corners, Dover, North East, Pine Plains, Stanford and Washington.

"We are grateful to the Berkshire Taconic foundation for supporting this," she said.

The center conducted surveys of courts in the area and found a need for mediation closer to the residents, she said.

"People find it too far to come (to Poughkeepsie) for mediation services," she said. With the price of gasoline on the rise, it also is getting too expensive to make the trip.

"They did make a good case," said Maeve O'Dea, program director for the foundation.

She said the grant committee felt the center's application met the three criteria for the award: excellence of the project, impact on the community and ability of the applicant to carry it out.

The center was started in 1983 to reduce the need for court intervention for civil disputes. It provides mediation for family, divorce, workplace, elder-care and other disputes.

Miller said the hope is to prevent the issue from going to court.

"Or if it's already in court, we can provide another option," she said.

(Michael Woyton can be reached at mwoyton@poughkeepsiejournal.com)

VOLUNTEER MEDIATORS

The Mediation Center of Dutchess County is looking for new volunteers for its Aug. 11-14 30-hour training, Miller said. It is especially interested in recruiting people from northeast Dutchess communities.

For information, visit www.dutchessmediation.org or call 845-471-7213.

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