Greetings from the Ombuds Office,

It is with a great sense of satisfaction that I share the 2016 annual report for the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Ombuds Office. We had another busy year, which included a 23% increase in visitors as well as a transition for our talented Denver Ombuds, Katherine Greenwood, who accepted a director position at UC Davis in June. The Ombuds team continued to offer confidential, neutral, and informal conflict management tools to members of the University, in addition to proactive trainings related to civility in the workplace, team building and Crucial Conversations. We hosted several out-of-the-box activities during Conflict Resolution Month in October including de-stressing yoga sessions, mini-massages, Zen coloring & co-sponsoring a presentation on the costs of stress in the workplace. Most importantly, we met with over 600 visitors who were experiencing pain due to conflict. We were privileged to hear their stories, provide some empathy, and work with them to address their concerns. This is at the heart of what we do on a daily basis and we are humbled and honored to be given this responsibility. We’re excited to have a Facebook page that offers a variety of information – some fun, some serious – on topics we believe are relevant to the CU community. We have also revamped our website to be more accessible and user-friendly. Check it out at https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds and please feel free to reach out to our office anytime. One final note, Teresa Ralicki will be joining our team at the end of January and will work primarily at the Denver Campus. With extensive training, experience and education in conflict management, we believe Teresa will be a tremendous asset to the Ombuds Office! Wishing everyone a peaceful and fulfilling 2017.

Best,

Melissa Connell, JD
Director, Ombuds Office
Our 2016 Team

Melissa Connell, Director
JD, CO-OP
Melissa has served in the Ombuds Office for over 18 years. Her law professor and founding member of this office, Roberta Steinhardt, inspired her to pursue ombudsing and seek alternative ways to positively resolve conflict.

Lisa Neale, Associate Director
M.S.S., CO-OP
Since 2003, Lisa has been ombudsing and has taken an active role in our training program, including helping develop our Crucial Conversations program at the University. Prior to ombudsing, Lisa was a middle school and high school teacher.

Katherine Greenwood, Ombuds
JD, Ph.D., CPCC, CO-OP
Prior to her departure in June of 2016, Katherine spent her time on the Denver campus increasing student outreach, furthering relationships with faculty and leadership. We wish her the very best in her current position as director of the Ombuds Office at UC Davis.

We are pleased to welcome Teresa Ralicki in January of 2017 as our new Ombuds for the Denver Campus!

https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds
FY16 At a Glance

663
Visitors assisted (exploring options & resources, providing executive & managerial coaching, offering small and large group facilitations, conducting mediations, & acting as a designated confidential resource)

942
People trained in conflict management workshops

2440
Constituents informed about ombuds services and the conflict management tools we provide

Cases per campus: 56% Anschutz, 34% Denver, and 10% undeclared

https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds
How We Differ

We are fortunate that our institution provides several services related to conflict. While most entities at the University are mandatory reporters, the Ombuds Office is a designated confidential resource. What is shared in the Ombuds Office remains in the office, unless expressed permission is given by the visitor. Our only exceptions to this guiding principle are the threat of imminent harm and to the extent of the law.

The Ombuds Office empowers individuals to resolve conflict at the lowest level possible and provides options and resources for visitors both internal and external to the University. In addition, upward feedback is provided on an as-needed basis to appropriate entities and leadership, while protecting individual identities. Visitors feel safe coming to the Ombuds Office because no record is created and no process is initiated by the Ombuds.

We do not conduct investigations, determine outcomes, or advocate for anything other than fair process. We are able to anonymously gather information for our visitors, thanks to our collegial relationships with administration and others.

In accordance with the International Ombudsman Association, the Ombuds Office reports directly to the Provost.

https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds
Utilization of our Office

Our office continues to be actively utilized, with this year showing a 23% increase in visitors from last fiscal year. Note: repeat visits are common yet not calculated into our overall visitor data.

https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds
Groups Visiting Our Office: Anschutz Campus

Faculty 	24%
Staff 	61%
 exempts & classified
Students 	5%
 undergrad and graduate
PRA/Post Doc/Residents 	9%
Parents/Unknown 	1%

https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds
Groups Visiting Our Office: Denver Campus

- Faculty: 20%
- Staff: 49%
  - exempt & classified
- Students: 28%
  - undergrad & graduate
- Parents/Unknown: 3%

https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds
Issues for the Denver Campus (%)

- Supervisory/Performance: 37%
- Interpersonal: 31%
- Organizational: 11%
- Policies/Procedures: 6%
- Financial/Legal: 11%
- Safety: 3%
- Compensation/Benefits: 1%
- Services/Administration: 0%

https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds
Trainings and Workshops

Giving employees the tools to effectively manage conflict minimizes the impact of disputes for the University. The Ombuds Office does not charge for training time, only materials, when applicable. Some of our offered trainings include:

- Crucial Conversations *(University cost = $265/person vs. Executive Forum’s cost = $1200/person)*
- DiSC Personality Assessments
- Bullying and Incivility in the Workplace
- Creating Civility in the Workplace
- Microabrasions and Microaffirmations
- Conflict Management for Supervisors
- Using Conflict Styles Wisely
- Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
- Communication Strategies for Student Leaders
- Creativity: A Code to Crack Conflict
- Comfort Strategies for Conducting Uncomfortable Conversations

*Compared to Colorado firm, Executive Forum’s training fees, the University saved $137,445 for 147 Crucial Conversations participants in FY16. Crucial Conversations is taught in collaboration with Human Resources.*
The Tangible Costs of Conflict

Each year, the Ombuds Office is challenged with demonstrating our effectiveness, a task that is difficult because much of our work is done confidentially and without records. Even though ascertaining the cost of conflict is challenging, we still know it exists. Here are examples of the tangible costs directly related to conflict in the workplace, noting that these are general statistics and individual workplaces may vary in their experiences:

- Recent studies show that more than 44% of managers spend more than 20% of their time addressing workplace conflict issues.
  
  Working Dynamics, April 2014

- The cost savings of avoiding the hiring/retention of a toxic worker is $12,489.
  
  Harvard Business School, November 2015

- From Donna Hicks’ book, *Dignity: The Essential Role it Plays in Resolving Conflict*, "dignity violations", such as ignoring others, gossiping, playing victim affect humans neurologically the same way physical harm does.
  
  Donna Hicks, Ph.D., *Dignity: The Essential Role it Plays in Resolving Conflict*, 2011

- $700,000 is the U.S. average jury award in wrongful termination lawsuits.
  
  Conflict Solutions Center, 2014

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The Intangible Costs of Conflict

Only recently have the intangible costs of conflict begun to gain awareness in the workplace. Increased attention related to workplace bullying and incivility have helped to highlight the consequences of conflict, which include increases in the following symptoms:

- Stress, frustration, anxiety
- Loss of sleep
- Strained relationships
- Absenteeism
- Presenteeism
- Employee turnover
- Loss of productivity
- Employee complaints
- Workplace sabotage
- Injury and accidents
- Disability claims
- Sick leave*

*According to John Ford & Cynthia Barnes-Slater of "Measuring Conflict: Both Hidden Costs and the Benefits of Management Interventions."
www.mediate.com

What is the Actual Cost of Conflict?
Answer the following questions:
1. Looking back over the past 6 months, how much time, each week, on average, did you spend dealing with conflict? ______ hours/weeks
2. What is your rate of pay per hour? $ _____
3. Multiply your answer in #1 by your answer in #2 = _______/week
4. Multiply your answer in #3 by the number of weeks you work each year = _____ This is about 1/4 the cost of conflict for you in the workplace. Hidden costs include poor morale, attrition, wasted/nonproductive time, poor decision making, discrimination, harassment, stress-related medical conditions, workers' compensation claims, violence and lawsuits.

*Conflict Solutions Center, Copyright 2014

https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds
Accomplishments for FY16

- Established quarterly meetings with Legal for case scenarios and hypotheticals;
- In addition to continued work with managers and executives from OIT and Facilities, we assisted 4 new units in assessing their workplace climates, establishing codes of civility for units, and holding focus groups;
- Held several Crucial Conversations refresher courses on both campuses, intended for those who have taken the course;
- Sponsored a finals week snack break and conflict management exercises for students on the Denver campus;
- Sponsored Conflict Resolution Month activities on each campus, including de-stress activities such as yoga and five-minute massages;
- Provided upward feedback to leadership involving several high-stakes cases.

https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds
Accomplishments for FY16, continued

• Presented at the Student Affairs Conference in June;
• Continued leadership roles in our professional organizations
  • International Ombudsman Association (IOA) chairmanships
  • California Caucus of College and University Ombuds convener
    and editor of journal;
• Presented at international and national conferences;
• Recognized for mentoring largest number of new IOA Ombuds;
• Assisted the new Ombuds at the Colorado Springs campus and
  served as a resource for development and growth;
• Collaboration with Facilities, Health Sciences Library and Human
  Resources to sponsor Conflict Resolution Month speakers;
• Facilitated discussions for large departments regarding climate,
  safety, and culture;
• Created a Facebook page for the Denver campus, with an
  Anschutz page to soon follow. Links to the page are available on
  our website: https://www.ucdenver.edu/ombuds