

MELISSA A. KUCINSKI

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POSITIONS

MK Family Law (Washington, D.C. metro area), 2013 to present, *Owner, Attorney, Mediator*

- Represent families in domestic, interstate, and international family matters, including divorce, child abduction, custody, access, relocation, property distribution, support, and uncontested adoption matters.
- Experience in litigation, mediation, and negotiation of complex family matters.
- Mediate family disputes, including complex international family disputes, international parental child abduction, relocation, and custody cases, with specific experience in mediating cases under the 1980 Hague Child Abduction Convention, and use of online dispute resolution.
- Represent children in contested, high-conflict custody matters, including those with relocation and abduction issues.
- Consulted on international family cases.

The Global Justice Initiative (Washington, D.C.), 2007 to present, *Co-Founder, Vice-President*

- Founded 501c3 organization to address access to justice and international family law matters.
- Directs GJI's Mediation Initiative to be a resource on the development and proper use of mediation to resolve international parental kidnapping and cross-border child custody disputes.

The George Washington University Law Center (Washington, D.C.), 2010 to present, *Professorial Lecturer in Law*

- Teach International Family Law course at the law school (LW 533-20)

Global Family Mediation (Mountain View, California), 2013, *Owner, Mediator*

- Mediated family disputes, including complex international family disputes, international parental child abduction, relocation, and custody cases.
- Consulted on international family cases.

The Hague Conference on Private International Law (Den Haag, Netherlands), May 2013 – August 2013, *Consultant*

- Carried out research on particular points of private international law/comparative law, relevant to the operation of existing Hague Conventions and the future work of the Hague Conference.
- Prepared and took part in meetings organized by the Permanent Bureau, including a working group meeting on Article 13(b) of the 1980 Hague Child Abduction Treaty.
- Carried out preparatory work and documentary research for meetings.
- Worked on finalizing working documents and publications for the Permanent Bureau.
- Worked on projects related to mediation and the Malta Judicial Conference.

Bulman, Dunie, Burke, & Feld, Chtd (Bethesda, Maryland), 2007 to 2013, *Attorney*

- Represented families in domestic, interstate, and international family matters, including divorce, child abduction, custody, access, property distribution, support, and uncontested adoption matters.
- Experienced in litigation, mediation, and negotiation of complex family matters.
- Represented children in contested, high-conflict custody matters.

Wendy H. Schwartz & Associates, PLLC (Washington, D.C.), 2006 to 2007, *Attorney*

- Represented families in domestic family matters.

EDUCATION

B.A., 2001, University of Rochester (Cultural Anthropology)

M.A., 2004, American University School of International Service (International Peace & Conflict Resolution)

J.D., 2006, Pace Law School

BAR AND COURT ADMISSIONS

Maryland, 2006

District of Columbia, 2007

U.S. District Court for District of Maryland, 2009

U.S. Supreme Court, 2010

PUBLICATIONS

- American Journal of Family Law, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil: Guidelines for Direct Child Involvement in Contested Custody Litigation, *forthcoming 2014*
- AB Dispute Resolution Magazine, Winter 2014, The Delicate Art of Mediating International Parental Child Abduction Cases
- Co-Author, AB Section of International Law, Year-in-Review, International Family Law (yearly publication)
- Becoming the Tech Savvy Family Lawyer, ABA Family Law Section Book, co-author with Daniel J. Berlin
- American Journal of Family Law, Summer 2012, Vol. 26, No. 2, Creating a Successful Structure to Mediate International Parental Abduction Cases
- Maryland State Bar Journal, "Growth Spurt Hits International Law Related to Children," Volume XLV, Number 1, January/February 2012
- Managing Client Expectations, ABA 101 Series (2010)
- "The Pitfalls and Possibilities of Technology in Mediating International Parental Abduction Cases" (University of Missouri Journal of Dispute Resolution Vol. 2 J. Disp. Res.297 (2010))
- "Culture in International Parental Kidnapping Mediations," Pepperdine Dispute Resolution Law Journal (Volume Nine, Issue III, 2008-2009); Reproduced by International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, IAML Law Journal, Volume 3 – Alternative Dispute Resolution, http://www.iaml.org/newsletters/archive/iaml_law_journal_volume_3/index.html

- “New York’s Recognition of Same-Sex Marriages,” *Family Law Quarterly* (Vol. 39, No. 3, Fall 2005)
- “Evaluation of an Alternative Dispute Resolution Program in a Domestic Small Claims Court,” Masters Thesis, American University (2004)

PRESENTATIONS

- American Bar Association, May 21, 2010 – Mediating International Parental Abduction Cases (Washington, DC)
- King County (Washington) Bar Association, June 23, 2010 – Mediating International Parental Abduction Cases (Teleconference)
- The Centre for Family Law and Practice, July 2, 2010 – Mediating International Parental Kidnapping Cases in the United States: Ethical and Practical Considerations for Mediators on the Front Lines (London, UK)
- American Chapter, International Law Association, International Law Week – October 22, 2010 – Mediating International Parental Abduction Cases (New York, NY)
- Maryland Mediator’s Convention – December 10, 2010 – Cross-Border Disputes: Mediating International Relocation, Abduction and Custody (Baltimore, MD)
- International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, February 18, 2011 – Update on Mediation of International Family Matters (Miami, FL)
- American Bar Association, Dispute Resolution Section, April 14, 2011 – Cross Border Disputes: Mediating International Custody, Relocation, and Child Abduction (Denver, CO)
- International Social Services, November 3, 2011 – panel presentation on international child protection and multi-profession approach to resolving issues (Washington, D.C.)
- Montgomery County Bar Association, Family Law Section, November 29, 2011 – CLE on international child abduction and relocation law (Rockville, MD)
- American Chapter, International Law Association, International Law Week – October 26, 2011 – Recent Developments in International Family Law (New York, NY)
- American Bar Association, Dispute Resolution Section, April 4, 2013 - International Mediation - Why is it Different? (Chicago, IL)
- Association for Conflict Resolution, Family Section Teleseminar, May 1, 2013 - Mediating International Child Abduction Cases
- European Young Bar Association, June 28, 2013 – presentation on the Hague Conference on Private International Law (Den Haag, Netherlands)
- American Bar Association, Annual Meeting, August 9, 2013 - How to Walk the Talk and Change the Conversation: Practical Insights from Women Who Have risen Above the Glass Ceiling (San Francisco, CA)
- Cyberweek 2013 – leading online discussion forum about the use of online dispute resolution in cross-border family cases, November 4 – 8, 2013
- American Bar Association, International Family Mediation Training – Co-Trainer, November 11 – 15, 2011 (Washington, DC)
- Presentation on Child Protection to international delegation with Judges Cathy Serrette and Peter Messitte, U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland, January 29, 2014
- American Bar Association, Section of International Law, June 21, 2014 - Mediating International Children’s Cases: Best Practices, Cultural Implications, and Legal Concerns (Seattle, WA)

- American Chapter, International Law Association, International Law Week – October 24, 201 – Implementation and Realization of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children (New York, NY)

APPOINTMENTS

- U.S. Secretary of State’s Advisory Committee on Private International Law, Member, 200 to present
- Private Sector Advisor to Sixth Special Commission Meeting to review the practical operation of the Hague Conventions (1980 Convention on child abduction and 1996 Convention on the protection of children)
- Member, Family Law Committee, International Law Association
- Member, Planning Committee, Women’s Bar of DC Annual Meeting 2014
- American Bar Association
 - Family Law Section – current Chair, International Law Committee (past Executive Member and Vice Chair); CLE Committee Member
 - Section of International Law – Senior Advisor, Family Law Committee (past Co-Chair, past Senior Advisor); Past Deputy to the Chair for Task Forces
 - Chair, AB Section of International Law Task Force on International Family Mediation
 - Member, Joint Editorial Board on Uniform Family Laws with the Uniform Law Commission
 - Observer, Drafting Committee of the Uniform Law Commission for the UCCJEA due to the signing of the 1996 Hague Child Protection Convention
 - Liaison between ABA Family Law Section and Section of International Law
 - Member, Drafting Committee for ABA Model Child Relocation Act
 - Member, Drafting Committee for ABA Model Third Party Custody Act
 - Chair, International Families Conference, May 2012, Washington, D.C. – Award for ABA Section of International Law 2012 Outstanding Stand Alone Program
 - Co-Chair, International Families Conference, June 2014, Seattle, WA
 - AB Advisor, Uniform Law Commission’s Drafting Committee on Recognition and Enforcement of Canadian Domestic Violence Protection Orders
 - AB Section of International Law Liaison/Observer, Uniform Law Commission’s Task Force, Joint Study Committee on Harmonization of the Law of Caribbean Nations and the U.S. Concerning Enforcement of Child Custody and Child Support Orders
 - Co-Chair of ABA Section of International Law’s Spring 2015 meeting

ADDITIONAL SKILLS, TRAININGS

- Training in Mediation, Facilitation, Collaborative Family Law, Child Access and Custody Mediation, International Family Mediation
 - 4 hour basic mediation training, Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution (Maryland), 2003
 - 2 hour child custody mediation training, Maryland Institute for Continuing Professional Education for Lawyers (Maryland), 2009
 - hour facilitation training, Keybridge Foundation (Washington), 2003
 - day collaborative law training, Janis Pritchard (Virginia), 2004

- Strategic Negotiation, Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution Professional Skills Program (Maryland), 2013
- International Family Mediation Training, American Bar Association Section of International Law (Washington, DC), 201 (Co-Trainer)
- Training as Maryland Child Advocate, Best Interest Attorney, Child's Privilege Attorney, 2008

AWARDS

- Maryland Super lawyers 2012, 2013 Rising Star
- Avvo Rating 10.0/10.0 Superb
- Outstanding Contribution to the Section Award, ABA Family Law Section, 2012
- Chair of Most Improved Committee, AB Section of International Law Family Law Committee, 2006 - 2007
- Chair of Best Use of Committee Listserve, AB Section of International Law Family Law Committee, 2007-2008, 2008-2009
- Chair of Planning Committee, Award for AB Section of International Law 2012 Outstanding Stand Alone Program

MEMBERSHIPS

- Maryland Program for Mediator Excellence (Member)
- American Bar Association (Family Law Section, Section of International Law, Dispute Resolution Section)
- Women's Bar Association of Maryland (Montgomery County Chapter)
- Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia
- Association for Conflict Resolution (Practitioner Member)
- International Law Association

VOLUNTEER WORK, INTERESTS

- Volunteer, Attorney Network, Department of State, Office of Children's Issues
- Volunteer, International Child Abduction Attorney Network, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- Volunteer Mediator, District Court of Maryland ADR Program
- Alumni Mentor, Pace University School of Law
- Career Office Mentor, University of Rochester
- Volunteer – U.S. Caselaw updates to INCADAT database with the Hague Conference
- Pro Bono Custody Guardian A Litem, Children's Law Center