Karen Davis Cunningham
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Education, Certifications & Specialized Knowledge

JD, Washington & Lee University School of Law, 1986
M.A. in Sociology, Kent State University, (ABT) in progress (Current GPA - 3.806)
BS, Criminal Justice, Kent State University, 1982 (magna cum laude)
PHR, Human Resource Certification Institute, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2007

Computer knowledge: Use both Mac and Windows computer environments; experienced with WebCT Vista, WordPerfect, Lotus, Excel, SPSS, Stata, NeoOffice, Pages, Keynote, PowerPoint, Word, Filemaker Pro, ABRA HR. Have built and upgraded computers, set up a wireless network at home, administered a Novell Network, and created websites.
Business and legal knowledge: OSHA compliance and recordkeeping, personnel recordkeeping, labor & employment law, sexual harassment, Americans with Disabilities Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, lead awareness, fair housing, team building, customer service, developing orientation and training programs, total quality management, coaching and teambuilding skills, and other topics.

Experience

Assistant Professor - Applied Conflict Management — **Fall 2001 - present**
Instructor - Applied Conflict Management (part time) — **Spring 2001**
Assistant Professor - Applied Conflict Management (part time) — **1995 - 1996**
Assistant Professor - Peace & Conflict Studies — **1990 - 1994**
Kent State University, Kent, OH

Teach courses concerning conflict management and resolution processes, communication and persuasion skills, and sociological and psychological theories related to conflict and conflict management. Developed courses devoted to negotiation skills training, conflict in the workplace and careers in peace and conflict studies. Counsel and advise students. Serve as faculty advisor to student organizations. Serve on various committees. Concurrently working on thesis for Master's degree in Sociology.

Courses Taught

- Introduction to Conflict Management
- Cross-Cultural Conflict Management
- Negotiation
- Conflict in the Workplace
- Conflict Theory
- Nonviolence: Theory & Practice
- Mediation
- Strategic Planning
- Special Topics (3)
- Internship
- Individual Investigation
- Individual Honors Work
- Research (graduate level)

Honors, Awards & Achievements:

- Nominated for Outstanding Teaching Award, 2006 and 2007, and Distinguished Teaching Award, 2008
- Inducted into the Pi Gamma Nu (Social Sciences) and Alpha Kappa Delta (Sociology) Honor Societies, 2005
- Completed Academic Advising Workshop, 2004-2005
- Nominated for Outstanding Faculty Award from Ability Unlimited, Spring 2004
- Increased course enrollments and number of ACM majors/minors
- Biography included in the 1992 edition of Who's Who Among Rising Young Americans
- Paper entitled "A Comparison of Durkheim & Weber: Views on the Role of Law & the Legal System in Society" was nominated for a Fleming award in 1992

Workshops, Seminars & Programs Conducted:

- Guest speaker, Nonprofit Management Certification class (Spring 2006 and Spring 2007)
- Guest speaker, EXCEL program (Fall 2006)
- Met with leaders from several African nations to provide an overview of the establishment of the Center for Applied Conflict Management and programs offered (March 2003)
- Organized and moderated four discussion forums in response to the events of September 11, 2001 (Fall 2001)
- Conducted strategic planning sessions for health care and educational groups in collaboration with Collaborative Management Systems, Inc., raising money on behalf of the Center for Peaceful Change (1992)
- Conducted several mediation workshops for community and church groups and governmental agencies between 1990 and 1991

Publications:

- "Kent State and May 4: Lessons Learned, Lesson Forgotten?." *Fellowship*, Vol. 69, No. 9-10, September/October 2003.

Additional University Service:

- Served on May 4 Visitors Center Committee (2007 - 2008)
- Faculty advisor for May 4 Task Force (2005 – present) and ADAPT (2004-2005)
- Served on search committee for the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences (2007)
- Serve on CACM (Center for Applied Conflict Management) Committee (2001 - present)
- Served on Honors Thesis Committee, Spring 2006
- Served as faculty observer during student demonstrations, and testified before Kent City Council and at court trials regarding events of May 4, 2003
- Assisted in revision of departmental curriculum
- Handled complaint intakes and administrative duties for community mediation service
- Assisted with peace marshal training for students
- Compiled nonpartisan resource directory of information and services related to the first Gulf war
- Helped coordinate May 4 candlelight vigil for 1991, 1992, 2006 and 2007
- Trained as facilitator for cultural diversity focus groups
- Organized fundraising efforts for the Center for Peaceful Change

Organizational Performance Consultant (part-time) **2001 - 2007**
Staff Development & Training Director **2000 - 2001**
Employee Relations Director **1997 - 2000**
Personnel Manager **1994 - 1997**
Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority, Akron, OH

As Organizational Performance Consultant: Responsible for monitoring organizational performance and compiling statistical data related to the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) and compiling data submitted to HUD. Made recommendations on strategies for improving organizational performance.

As Staff Development & Training Director: Responsible for assessing training needs, developing curriculum and coordinating training for staff. Also responsible for scheduling and facilitating team and area management meetings, assisting teams in dealing with organizational change and meeting agency goals, and helping to resolve conflict within teams. Oversee OSHA safety policy and training for agency.

As Employee Relations Director: Responsible for the overall operations of the Employee Relations Department. Responsible for employee discipline, hiring, terminations, grievances, contract negotiations, labor relations, development and enforcement of policies and procedures, legal compliance, strategic planning, training and development, coordination of performance appraisal process, departmental budget and goal-setting, supervision of recordkeeping and benefits administration. Also continued to perform functions of Personnel Manager (listed below).

As Personnel Manager: Responsible for employee training and development, interviewing and hiring of personnel, compliance with employment law and regulations, and conflict prevention and management. Assess training needs and develop/review/coordinate training programs to meet those needs. Review all incoming job applications, select candidates for interviews, conduct interviews, order background investigations and evaluate resulting data, make hiring recommendations, and make offers of employment. Assess personnel practices of the agency, determine needed changes, offer recommendations, and implement changes. Review laws and regulations to determine if agency policies and procedures are in compliance with current legislation. Assist with grievance hearings and labor/management relations.

Accomplishments:

- While serving as Organizational Performance Consultant, AMHA was recognized as a "High Performer" in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006.
- Conducted training needs assessment and developed successful curriculum-based approach to training for various jobs within the agency.
- Successfully negotiated contracts with two unions — AFSCME Local 2517 (Service & Maintenance) and AFSCME Local 3707 (Clerical & Technical). Instituted regular labor-management meetings with both unions; achieved and maintained good labor relations.
- Successfully resolved employee grievances; listened to employee concerns and recommended action to resolve issues. Grievances filed were reduced by 2/3 after becoming Employee Relations Director.
- Instituted on-site nursing program and Employee Assistance Program. Reduced costs of health insurance programs by joining larger insurance group. Added voluntary supplemental life insurance program. Instituted procedures for processing of FMLA leave requests.
- Developed new and more comprehensive job application form, affirmative action tracking form, more efficient means of conducting background checks, and interviewing guidelines and forms to improve efficiency, ensure legal compliance, and provide more consistency in interviewing practices.
- Researched laws and regulations and prepared recommendations for changes in personnel policies and practices; drafted revised policies, including more comprehensive sexual harassment policy, non-fraternization policy, and FMLA guidelines.
- Coordinated employee training on the Americans With Disabilities Act, Lead Awareness, Fair Housing, OSHA, PC skills, Drug Awareness, Sexual Harassment, Ohio Ethics Law, Teambuilding, and Customer Service. Set up and coordinated training offered through HTVN (Housing Television Network). Conducted pilot of management training program. Developed and implemented Employee Orientation program. Trained supervisors on union contract provisions; trained employees on new personnel policies and Family and Medical Leave Act. Designed and implemented use of training needs survey to assess additional training requirements.
- Handled difficult employee performance and discipline issues which had been previously ignored. Dealt with issues of alcoholism, drug abuse, serious health conditions, mental disabilities, workplace violence, insubordination, and other problems. Assisted employees in obtaining treatment for substance abuse and other health conditions.
- Researched and reviewed Human Resource software packages; recommended purchase of software which greatly enhanced ability to record and track all personnel information, including attendance racking, benefits tracking, applicant tracking and training tracking. Participated in selection and implementation of new payroll system.
- Served as team facilitator for North Summit County team.
- Implemented Cooperative Office Education program to utilize high school interns for clerical support.
- Served as network administrator for Employee Relations network server and set up ABRA software. Developed first web page for agency.
- Chaired United Way campaign for four years.

Independent Consultant/Trainer **1992 - 2001, 2007**
Individually and with Collaborative Management Systems, Inc.,
Mogadore, OH

Provided conflict intervention, facilitated strategic planning processes, organized conflict management programs, developed and conducted training seminars, and provided consulting services for organizations and businesses. Compiled statistical data related to the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) for the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority submitted to HUD in 2007. Also served as Vice President of Business Affairs, Treasurer, and Co-Owner of Collaborative Management Systems, Inc. (CMS), a conflict management and strategic planning firm. Duties for CMS included preparation of corporate legal documents; setting up and maintaining computerized accounting system; tax preparation; computer design of brochures, letterhead and business cards; setting up and maintaining filing systems; contract preparation; and seminar design and implementation.

Projects:

- Developed personnel policy handbook for engineering consulting firm (12/00)
- Developed workshop curriculum and brochure for college financial aide service (6/94 - 9/94)
- Developed materials for and conducted seminars in "Negotiation Skills Training" for attorneys through Continuing Education at Kent State University (approved for Continuing Legal Education credit, as well as CEUs for counselors, social workers, and psychologists; 1993-94)
- Project Manager for the reorganization of the Student Mediation Service at Kent State University (2/93-5/93)
- Designed and presented seminar entitled "Teambuilding, Conflict Management, and Strategic Planning: Basic Tools & Techniques" for human service organization (3/93)
- Designed "Alternatives to Litigation" seminar to be presented by members of the American Arbitration Association through Kent State University (approved for CLE credit) (3/93)
- Conducted strategic planning and conflict management session for educational group in collaboration with the Center for Peaceful Change at Kent State University (11/92-12/92)
- Conducted strategic planning session for hospital group in collaboration with the Center for Peaceful Change at Kent State University (8/92)

Human Relations Director **Summer 1993**
American Health Care Centers, Inc., Wadsworth, OH

Provided conflict prevention and intervention on behalf of sixteen nursing facilities throughout Ohio. Facilitated communication with employees, families, residents and the community. Assessed the human relations needs of the corporation and the facilities owned by the corporation, determined problem areas, offered recommendations, and followed up with corrective action. Reviewed laws and regulations to determine if facility policies and procedures are in compliance with current legislation.

Employee relations: Conducted employee surveys and analyzed them to identify problem areas and determine necessary changes; recommended appropriate changes in policies and procedures to enhance employee relations; assisted with development and operation of Quality Circles; investigated and resolved employee grievances and issues; evaluated incentive and reward programs; conducted new benefits in-service at each facility; reviewed proposed and existing benefits and made recommendations as appropriate; attended social functions.

Resident/family relations: Investigated and resolved issues on behalf of residents and family members; attended Resident Council meetings; attended social functions at each facility; made recommendations regarding resident/family services.

Community/public relations: Evaluated "first impressions" given by facilities; served as liaison between facilities and outside agencies and organizations.

Accomplishments:

- Developed more comprehensive format and more efficient and cost effective methods of analysis for employee surveys
- Successfully resolved employee grievances and family/resident issues
- Researched laws and regulations and prepared recommendations for new patient abuse reporting and investigation policies and procedures, which were being implemented corporate-wide
- Researched and presented information on the Family and Medical Leave Act at annual meeting; developed checklist for determining eligibility for FMLA leave to assist facilities in ensuring compliance
- Reviewed interviewing/hiring practices at each facility; summarized findings and made recommendations for improving recruiting and retention
- Compiled a management resource library

Long Term Care Ombudsman **1988 - 1990**
Area Agency on Aging, Akron, OH
and League of Older Americans, Roanoke, VA

Developed and implemented the first local ombudsman program in Roanoke, Virginia. Investigated and resolved complaints on behalf of nursing home residents and other long term care recipients. Dealt with such issues as quality of care, residents' rights, billing problems and insurance matters. Advocated on behalf of victims of abuse and neglect. Counseled clients on effective self-advocacy. Provided information about and referral to services. Conducted educational programs for community groups and service providers. Worked closely with social service and regulatory agencies. Redesigned reporting forms and developed resource center for greater office efficiency.

Accomplishments:

- Negotiated resolution of almost 87% of cases handled in 1989, exceeding the statewide average of 78%
- Increased rate of self-advocacy counseling by 103% in 1988 and 53% in 1989
- Handled 240 calls for assistance and provided 7 educational programs in 1989
- Secured Medicaid approval in one day to prevent unlawful discharge of nursing home resident
- Successfully represented nursing home resident in discharge hearing

Legal Assistance Coordinator
League of Older Americans, Roanoke, VA

While serving as ombudsman during the 1988-89 fiscal year, took on the additional responsibility of expanding the legal services program for the elderly. Provided legal advice and counsel in such areas as wills, Medicare & Medicaid, supplemental health insurance, and powers of attorney. Made referrals and provided supportive services to legal services providers in the area. Coordinated presentation of legal education programs.

Accomplishments:

- Successfully assisted client in terminating a guardianship, which set the precedent used to remove the "advanced age" provision from Virginia's guardianship statute in 1989
- Provided legal services for 71 senior citizens during the fiscal year
- Coordinated presentation of 13 hours of legal education for the elderly

Workshops, Seminars & Programs Conducted:

- In-service training for nursing home staff on residents' rights
- Speeches to senior citizens groups on the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, nursing home resident rights, and the rights of health care consumers
- Seminar on Advocating for Victims of Elder Abuse and Neglect
- Speech to civic group on pre-planning for disability

Publications:

Article for Senior Focus, April 1990, "Agency Addresses Nursing Home Consensus (sic)", by Karen Cunningham and Rose Purses (no byline given)

Attorney (Still maintain current license in Virginia) **1986 - 1987**
Law Offices of L. Richard Padgett, Jr., Salem, VA

Engaged in general practice of law, including real estate, wills, contracts, criminal defense, incorporations, landlord/tenant, and personal injury. Performed case investigation, legal research, drafting, case analysis and trial work.

Accomplishments:

- Conducted successful negotiations with insurance companies, businesses and individuals
- Earned the respect and appreciation of clients, attorneys, and even opposing parties by treating clients with respect and working diligently to serve the best interests of all parties involved

Law Clerk **1983 - 1986**
Law Offices of L. Richard Padgett, Jr., Salem, VA

Interviewed witnesses, worked with attorneys and government agencies, conducted legal research and case investigation and prepared cases for trial. Also developed extensive experience in real estate.

Accomplishments:

- Rehired each summer until completed law school and passed bar exam
- Promoted to associate attorney in 1986

Professional Affiliations

Member, Pi Gamma Nu International Honor Society in Social Sciences, 2005 to present
Member, Alpha Kappa Delta International Sociology Honor Society, 2005 to present
Member, American Association of University Professors, 2003 to present
Member, Association for Training and Development, 2000 to 2002
Member, Society for Human Resource Management, 1995 to 2002
Member, National Association of Female Executives, 1991 to 2001
Member, Virginia State Bar, 1986 to present
Member, American Bar Association, 1986 to 1991

Volunteer & Service Work

- Served as chat monitor and community leader for Geocities Capitol Hill internet community (1997-1998)
- Participated in planning stages of a community mediation center in Roanoke, Virginia (1989)
- Drafted new bylaws for Roanoke County SPCA (1989)
- Intern with Portage County Prosecutor's Office (1982)
- Volunteered with battered women's shelters in Akron and Ashtabula, Ohio (1979-1980)

Media Exposure and Publications

- Interviewed by Reuters about the Iraq war, March 2007
- Interviewed for article on May 4th memorial, radio programs on May 4 events (2006 and 2007)
- Guest column in Daily Kent Stater, October 20, 2005
- Interviewed for Fall 2004 Blood 'n' Thunder article, "Frederick C. Davis: Grand Master of the Pulpwoods." Research regarding Frederick C. Davis' work was published as a comprehensive story index in same issue.
- Article entitled "Kent State and May 4: Lessons Learned, Lessons Forgotten?" appeared in Fellowship, September/October 2003
- Article for Senior Focus, April 1990, "Agency Addresses Nursing Home Consensus (sic)", by Karen Cunningham and Rose Purses (no byline given)
- Profile of work as ombudsman appeared in "Taking Care of Mom & Dad", The Roanoker, November 1989
- Appeared on local talk show discussing local long term care ombudsman program,"On Record", WDBJ-TV, Roanoke, VA - 1988
- Appeared on local talk show discussing preplanning for disability, "Newsmakers", WSLS-TV, Roanoke, VA - 1988
- Appeared on local talk show discussing local long term care ombudsman program, "The Gary Minter Show", WFIR-radio, Roanoke, VA - 1989

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST