

## **Philip Moses – Introduction of Bernie Mayer, Keynote Speaker**

### ***CADRE's Fifth National Symposium on Dispute Resolution in Special Education***

***October 26-28, 2011 – Eugene, OR***

**PHILIP MOSES:** So 11 years ago, CADRE convened our first national symposium on dispute resolution, bringing what to that point was an occasional chat closer to a conversation, and eventually I think a national dialogue. Along the way, we've evolved from a chat about mediation to a conversation about other collaborative approaches to managing conflict, to a dialogue around early and innovative methods of preventing and resolving disputes. And now, five symposia later, we're able to shine a light on practices that really work that have meaningful outcomes for the participants. And along the way, we've been visited upon by various luminaries in the field such as Baruch Bush, Edie Primm, Dudley Weeks, Carrie Menkel-Meadow, Peter Adler, pioneers all in helping to further a noble cause, a cause that has few equals in my mind: that of the peaceful resolution of disputes. For people most affected by the dilemma are offered an opportunity to partner together, to be given a voice. Each of these pioneers leaving more than a lasting impression. And others have visited with us. John Paul Lederach, urging us to find moral imagination, to create authentic community. And I suspect many of you will remember Mary Parker Follett through Albie Davis, our friend, encouraging us to embrace conflict as opportunity by reminding us that the sound of a violin is made through friction, that all polishing is done through friction. And today, we are incredibly privileged to have yet another pioneer visit with us. He has kindly agreed to come and further our national dialogue, to challenge us to consider and reconsider our roles as agents of social change. In recent years, Bernie Mayer has focused much of his attention towards exploring mediators and facilitators, pacemakers, and other practitioners, their interventionist roles, and the traditional approaches these conflict resolvers have used. And along the way, he has encouraged us, dared us perhaps, to think bigger than these typical roles. Rather than function tactically, he has suggested we think strategically, to reconceptualize our entire purpose. The notion of, say, a mediator who parachutes into the fray to temper hostilities, to get in agreement, to resolve the matter, has been confronted by Bernie Mayer in a way that few others have. He is not asking us to abandon our values, the core values that have driven this field for decades such as

empowerment, respecting diversity, staying optimistic, facilitating creativity, promoting social justice. He is asking us to consider these values more deeply, to better understand their implications, to recommit to these values in a way that gives us a new and perhaps more meaningful purpose. So let me tell you no more, rather let Bernie speak for himself. It is our lasting good fortune to have him here to talk with us today and inspire us to take a more exemplary approach to the critically important work that we do. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Bernie Mayer.