



# Melora Bentz

Melora Bentz is a mediator, employee relations consultant, and restorative justice facilitator with a focus on solving problems via creative collaboration. She has 20 years' experience as an attorney with a passion for social justice.

## PROFILE

### Hometown:

Youngstown, Ohio

### Law School:

Case Western Reserve University School of Law

### Lives in:

Denver

### Works at:

Middle Path Mediation, LLC

### Practice Area(s):

Mediation, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Indigent Criminal Defense, Restorative Justice

### CBA Member Since:

2016

### What do you like best about your practice area?

I appreciate the mediators' mindset of "Can I help these opposing parties to better communicate and effectively express what they need?" It sounds simple, but it requires juggling many moving parts, like the nature of the conflict; the parties' individual life experiences, personalities, and emotional intelligence; and their abilities to compromise and distinguish their positions from their interests.

### What organizations are you involved in?

I serve on the board of directors for Colorado Humanities, a nonprofit that seeks to inspire Coloradans to explore ideas and appreciate our diverse cultural heritage through programs that promote community connections, create dialogue, and foster an appreciation for the humanities. I'm chair of the CBA ADR Section's EDI Committee. I provide employee relations consulting for the Democratic National Committee and conduct contract criminal defense work for the Office of Alternate Defense Counsel. And I'm a mediator for Court Mediation Services and a restorative justice facilitator for the Conflict Center.

### How do you like to spend your free time?

One thing I love about Coloradans is that we do not let the weather hold us back from getting outdoors. I like to hike, bike, ski, garden, practice yoga, meditate, read, write, play guitar, love on animals, and get out into nature.

### Last movie you watched:

I recently watched *My Octopus Teacher*. It's a documentary by filmmaker Craig Foster that beautifully captures the unusual friendship he develops with an octopus living in the South African kelp forest. I highly recommend it.

### Favorite spot in Colorado:

One of my favorite spots is the Great Sand Dunes National Park in Southern Colorado. It's an other-worldly place offering beautiful vistas from the dunes, soft sand between your toes, sledding or "moon-hopping" down the dunes, and a cool foot bath in Medano Creek (if you're there at the right time).

### What's your favorite thing to cook?

Lately my favorite dish to make is caçõ é pepe. It's a rich, delicious Italian dish made with very few ingredients—pasta, pepper, pecorino cheese, butter, and salt.


### What is your dream career?

I still dream about writing a novel and traveling the world.

### If I had a dime for every time I heard (blank), I'd be a rich person.

"Where are you from?"

### Why are you a dues-paying member of the CBA?

The CBA offers an impressive array of learning and networking opportunities. In the past year I've taken better advantage of these than ever before. I still have one year before my CLE credits are due to be reported, and I've already fulfilled them all. The ability to attend virtual CLE presentations on the most relevant, current topics is a great benefit. And I've enjoyed professional networking this past year, conveniently and safely from my home. I'm grateful to the CBA for offering us a wide variety of opportunities to connect with fellow members in a way that allows us to stay safely engaged in Colorado's legal community. 

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