

2022 Volunteer Mediator of the Year

Jim Guinn, III

The TAM Board of Directors introduced a new award in 2021 to recognize the tremendous value of volunteer mediators and the critical role they play in the Texas mediation community. The award is given annually to a mediator nominated by a Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) or similar alternative dispute resolution organization in Texas.

The Volunteer Mediator of the Year for 2022 is Jim Guinn. Jim was nominated by Tori Ellis, the Director of Training and Development for the Brazos Valley DRC. In her nomination of Jim Guinn for this award she wrote, "Eleven years ago, a force of happy energy named Jim Guinn started volunteer mediating with the Brazos DRC. Jim signed up for every mediation he could. No case was too difficult, and no settlement took too long. Jim's energy can lift up the entire room, and we have never seen him have a bad day. He brings this energy not just to every mediation but to promoting the alternative conflict resolution process as a whole. Every year, Jim continues to offer his services as a volunteer mediator, never asking for anything in return. Jim has completed hundreds of mediations with the Brazos DRC and represented the Center at conferences, speaking events, and meetings.



"2020 was a bad year for most businesses with the COVID-19 shut down and widespread fear of in-person contact. The Brazos DRC was no exception and closed for several months before switching over to virtual mediations. Even with the addition of virtual mediation, the DRC struggled to stay afloat.

"In 2021, the Brazos DRC hit a record low spot. The Executive Director resigned, the Case Manager left, and mediations were at a three-year low. Without a qualified support staff, the day-to-day operations came to a halt. Jim met with the Board of Directors and worked out a plan to keep the Center operating. He staffed the Center with employees from his own company until a new staff could be hired and trained. Jim himself spent hours on nights and weekends working to get the Brazos DRC back in order. He switched around his work schedule to cover any mediations that another volunteer could not mediate. Without Jim Guinn and his generous efforts, the Brazos DRC may not have survived."