**2012 MOWAA Annual Conference | August 23, 2012**

*Difficult Conversations: Understanding and Leveraging Conflict in Volunteer Organizations*

Presenter: Corinne N. Berry, M.A., Adjunct Professor, George Mason University

Outline for Workshop:

1. Introductions & Activity - Why “effective communication” can be so challenging
   1. Interpersonal Communication 101
2. Communication Competence – we can only seek to improve ourselves

*“Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.”*

*– James Arthur Baldwin (Novelist and Playwright)*

* 1. Knowledge – By understanding communicative behaviors (our own and others) and the environmental impact, we are better positioned to shape the outcomes of difficult conversations.
     1. Communication styles
     2. Context & Culture
  2. Motivation – By continually increasing our self-awareness and renewing our commitment to dialogic communication, we can potentially reduce the frequency of personal conflicts.
     1. Sensitivity & Commitment
     2. Approach/Avoidance
  3. Skills – By practicing communicative skills that are appropriate and effective for the given context, we are more likely to experience positive outcomes and improved relationships following conflict.
     1. Verbal and non-verbal messages
     2. Active & Empathic Listening (Listening barriers)
     3. Adaptability

1. Reframing Conflict – Challenge or Opportunity?

*“Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict -- alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence.”*

*– Dorothy Thompson (Renowned Journalist)*

* 1. Conflict styles
  2. Identifying and Managing conflict (DICE)
     1. Discover
     2. Interpret
     3. Clarify
     4. Explore solutions
  3. Tips and tactics for preventing conflict

1. Recap and Discussion