

## **Mediation, Maps and Mysteries: Have Mediators Lost Their Way in the Forest?**

Have mediators lost their way in the trees? In this keynote address, longtime scholar/practitioner Michelle LeBaron will examine recent developments in the field through the lenses of the four elements always present in the forest. Fire illuminates questions about motivating passions, central values and effectiveness of mediation. How do contemporary mediation practices match parties' needs and aspirations, and what new ideas are catching fire that could transform practice? Air reminds mediators that suppleness and responsiveness to change is an essential element of practice. How responsive are mediators to the needs of diverse and changing populations with whom they work? Water reveals the importance of emotions and of beauty. How emotionally fluent are mediation processes in increasingly structured settings? Earth keeps mediators practical; what are the short and long term effects of mediation in relation to fairness and durable change?

This keynote address will include opportunities for TAM participants to reflect on their practices including how the four elements feature in their work.



**Michelle LeBaron** is a tenured professor at the UBC law faculty and is Director of the UBC Program on Dispute Resolution. She joined the Faculty of Law in 2003 after ten years teaching at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution and the Women's Studies program at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. From 1990-1993, she directed the Multiculturalism and Dispute Resolution Project at the University of Victoria. Professor LeBaron has lectured and consulted around the world on cross-cultural conflict resolution, and has practised as a family law and commercial mediator. Her current research focuses on using expressive arts practices – particularly movement and dance –to intervene in disputes. She holds a JD from the University of British Columbia, an MA in Counseling Psychology from Simon Fraser University in Canada and a BA from Chapman University in California. She was called to the Bar of British Columbia in 1982 after articling at Campney and Murphy in Vancouver. Professor LeBaron is the author of several books including *Bridging Troubled Waters*, *Bridging Cultural Conflict*, and *Conflict Across Cultures*. Her new book, *Dancing at the Crossroads*, will be published in 2012 by the American Bar Association.