



BIOGRAPHY

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

PAUL J. FIRMAN

Mr. Paul J. Firman is the Chief of Conflict Management & Dispute Resolution (CM/DR) at the Air Force Negotiation Center, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. In partnership with the Air Force General Counsel's office, he is charged with designing and delivering negotiation, CM, and DR courses to Department of War (DoW) and Federal Government audiences around the world. As the lead agent for the Air Force's traveling Mediation and Conflict Management courses, he not only directs curriculum design, but is the chief academic instructor. He also serves as a federal mediator handling cases for multiple agencies to include the DoW, VA, Defense Logistics Agency, Criminal Investigative Service and other state and local agencies to include civil court cases. He is currently one of a few handpicked mediators to oversee sensitive DoW cases.

His experience includes teaching at the Air Command and Staff College, Air War College, the First Sergeant Academy, Chief Leadership Course, and multiple schools that include State Department and international students. One of Mr. Firman's many accomplishments includes completely revamping the Air Force's Negotiation & Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) course delivered to 60 DoD lawyers annually. He also designed a DR program for senior Air Force leaders, delivering a three-day program, seven times a year to 700+ students, impacting the entire Air Force community. He was also recruited by the Army General Counsel's office to guest instruct during their Basic Mediation program.

Mr. Firman also provided cross-cultural negotiation training to Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Foreign Area Officers assigned to Embassies across the globe. Finally, he has the privilege of serving as an adjunct professor at Faulkner Law School in Montgomery, AL, is a member of the Alabama State Court Mediation Roster, and was awarded (Level III, Expert), the highest Air Force mediation certification.

While on active duty, his overseas assignments began in Asia, serving at Kunsan Air Base, Korea, as a news producer and morning radio show host. Next, he served at Yong San Army Garrison, Seoul, producing an award-winning travel magazine program. In 1997, Mr. Firman moved to Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, as the Broadcast Operations Manager. His last overseas assignment took him off the coast of Portugal to Lajes Field, Azores, where he refined his leadership and conflict resolution skills as the broadcast detachment onsite commander.

His stateside experience began as a broadcast instructor and director of television operations at the United States Air Force Academy. Next, he was selected to serve as the Chief, Air Force News Pentagon Bureau in Washington, DC, where he was the lead consultant for presidential news coverage and directed/hosted multiple television interviews with the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff. Mr. Firman was then hand selected to become the Superintendent, Air Force Entertainment Liaison Office, Los Angeles, Calif., where he negotiated Air Force depiction in film and television. Finally, he left Public Affairs to become a leadership and communication instructor at the Air Force Senior NCO Academy, earning multiple degrees and certificates in pursuit of teaching excellence. Mr. Firman retired in 2010.



EDUCATION

1998 Joint Communication Course, University of Oklahoma, Norman.
2005 Associate in Applied Science, Public Affairs, Community College of the Air Force, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
2006 Bachelor of Science, Liberal Arts, Excelsior College, Albany, N.Y.
2008 Associate of Applied science, Instructor of Technology & Military Science, Community College of the Air Force, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2009 Master of Arts, Adult Education, Trident University, Cypress, Calif.
2010 Occupational Instructor Certificate, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2010 Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication, Reed College, Wash.
2012 Program on Negotiation, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Mass.
2012 Air Force Basic Mediation Course, Air University, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2012 Master's Certificate, Instructional Systems, Trident University, Cypress, Calif.
2014 Alabama General/Civil Mediation & Conflict Resolution Course, Birmingham, Ala.
2015 Crisis & Hostage Negotiation Federal Certification Course, University of North Florida, Jacksonville, Fla.
2015 Advanced Mediation Skills, Justice Center of Atlanta, Atlanta, Ga.
2018 Negotiation Master Course, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Mass.
2023 USAF Special Operations School Senior Fellow of International Communications, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

CAREER CHRONOLOGY

1. January 2010, Retired from Air Force Active Duty (22 years & 10 Months of Service)
2. January 2010 – January 2012, Curriculum Developer/Instructor, AF Culture & Language Cntr., Maxwell AFB, Ala.
3. January 2012 – June 2016, Training Programs Developer/Instructor, USAF Negotiation Center, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
4. June 2016 – Current, Conflict Management & Dispute Resolution (CM & DR) Chief, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters
Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters
Army Commendation Medal
Joint Service Achievement Medal
Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

2019 General Counsel's Alternative Dispute Resolution Award for Negotiation & Conflict Resolution
2022 Awarded (Level III, Expert) Air Force Master Mediator
2023 General Counsel's Negotiation & Dispute Resolution Individual Workplace Award

PUBLICATIONS

"Conflict Management and the Air Force Leader," The Air Force Journal of Military Conflict Transformation, May 2022 Volume 3.
"Communication in Diverse Environments: A Perspective in Civil Discourse," The Air Force Journal of Military Conflict Transformation, December 2023, Volume 5.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Alabama State Court Mediation Roster - Civil Court Mediations

(CURRENT AS OF FEB 2026)