FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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University of Houston Law Center to hold international mediation forum

Practitioners in fast-growing legal field will discuss topical issues and best practice techniques.

March 21, 2014 -- Mediators from Houston and around the world will gather today at the University of Houston Law Center to share their experiences and expertise in the field. The event is being organized by the UIA (International Association of Lawyers) Mediation and Conflict Prevention Commission with the support of the law school. It is the 19th meeting of the UIA forum which includes members from more than 110 countries.

“Hosting this program gives us a great opportunity to showcase the Law Center, and Houston, and to connect with the expanding global practice of mediation,” said Jim Lawrence, director of the school’s Blakely Advocacy Institute.

The Law Center is home to the A.A. White Dispute Resolution Center, which offers 40-hour CLE mediation training sessions throughout the year for lawyers and other professionals. The Center is directed by Ben H. Sheppard, Jr., a recognized authority in mediation and commercial arbitration. Professor Emeritus Thomas C. Newhouse is director of the weeklong mediation courses. Tasha Willis, alternative dispute resolution director and mediation clinic professor, also leads a free mediation program initiated by Interim Dean Richard M. Alderman that allows law students to receive basic mediation training.

According to the seminar’s program, Houston was chosen as this year’s site because it “has been at the forefront of the modern mediation movement and is home to some of the best and most experienced mediators in the world.”

One of those veteran mediators, Jeffry S. Abrams, a 1982 Law Center graduate, is a member of the organizing committee for this week’s international forum. He annually sponsors the Jeffry S.
Abrams National Mediation Competition which allows top law students nationwide to put their mediation skills to the test before a team of judges.

The two-day forum gathering will have a decidedly Houston and Texas flair with presentations by local attorneys and judges including “Mediation Texas Style” and “Energy Mediation in the Energy Capital,” and dinners of Mexican food and mariachis one night and blues and Texas barbeque the next.

“The legal profession is realizing that mediation plays an important role in the dispute resolution process in that it is the last stage of the process where lawyers and clients craft their own solutions to the problem,” Lawrence said.

For more information on UH Law Center mediation training and continuing legal education programs visit, http://www.law.uh.edu/cle/homepage.asp.

For more information on UIA, email uiacentre@uianet.org or visit uianet.org.

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**About the University of Houston**

The [University of Houston](http://www.uh.edu) is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized by The Princeton Review as one of the nation's best colleges for undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation’s fourth-largest city, UH serves more than 40,700 students in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region in the country.
About the University of Houston Law Center

The University of Houston Law Center is the leading law school in the nation's fourth-largest city. Founded in 1947, it is a top-tier institution awarding Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees. The Law Center is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.