

Get to Know Claudia Hagadus Long, Esq.



With more than 40 years in the legal profession and over 3,000 matters handled across litigation and alternative dispute resolution, Claudia Hagadus Long, Esq. brings exceptional depth, empathy, and practicality to every case she mediates. Known for her tenacity, incisive analysis, and deeply human approach, Claudia has built a distinguished practice spanning business, construction defect, employment, real estate, banking, and trust and estate disputes. Fluent in both Spanish and French, and widely respected for her ability to navigate emotionally charged conflicts, she is a mediator who understands that successful resolution requires more than legal expertise alone—it requires understanding people.

“There’s no winning and no losing in mediation. There’s only resolving.”

We sat down with Claudia to learn more about the experiences that shaped her path to dispute resolution, her approach to impasse, and what continues to motivate her after decades of helping parties find their way forward.

Q: Tell us about your path to becoming a mediator. What drew you to dispute resolution?

Claudia: I began my legal career in the litigation section of Bank of America, where I spent six years handling civil disputes. From there, I moved into private practice, focusing on construction defect, commercial, banking, and real estate matters.

After 25 years as a litigator, it became clear to me that what I most enjoyed was finding solutions.

Early in my career, a mentor told me, “Never miss a chance to settle a case.” I took that to heart. Even while litigating, I was always looking for ways to help parties reach common ground. Eventually, I realized that was where my strengths truly lay.

“I found myself seeing solutions whenever I was litigating. I knew that was my path forward in the law.”

Q: What do you consider your core strengths as a mediator?

Claudia: Empathy is at the center of everything I do. I’m also a quick study of complex issues, and I work hard to get to the heart of a matter—both legally and emotionally.

Many disputes are not just about the law. They are about frustration, fear, pride, and feeling unheard. My role is to understand what is truly driving the conflict and help the parties move through it.

Q: You handle many emotionally charged cases. How do you help parties move past impasse?

Claudia: The first step is understanding why there is an impasse. Sometimes the issue is legal. Sometimes it is emotional. Sometimes the parties

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simply are not ready.

There are certainly techniques we all use—brackets, homework, mediator’s proposals—but tools only work if you understand the reason for the stalemate.

I often use humor to help break tension, though carefully and only when appropriate.

“The most important thing is to understand why there’s impasse, and work on that.”

Q: What is your philosophy when it comes to mediation?

Claudia: My philosophy is grounded in law, facts, economics, and humanity.

“The ideal resolution is one that is legally sound, economically rational, and supported by both parties’ willingness to end the conflict.”

We’re not there to win the case, or make the other side lose. That’s for trial. In mediation there’s only resolving. That mindset helps keep everyone focused on the purpose of the process: moving forward towards solution.

Q: How do you prepare for mediation?

Claudia: I read everything that is sent to me.

I don’t need formality—I need candor. I want attorneys to be frank about the real issues in the case, both strengths and vulnerabilities.

If counsel sends it, I will read it.

That preparation allows me to engage meaningfully with the dispute from the moment the session begins.

Q: What does your follow-up look like if a matter doesn’t resolve the same day?

Claudia: I rarely consider a case truly over just because it doesn’t settle on mediation day.

Often, I give the parties “homework”—perhaps they need to finish a deposition, obtain a missing document, or an appraisal needs to be completed.

Then I follow up.

Sometimes what parties need most is time and space to reassess their goals.

A thoughtful follow-up email can reopen productive conversations without anyone feeling they have lost face.

Q: Outside of your legal background, what makes you particularly effective as a neutral?

Claudia: Being fully bilingual in English and Spanish allows me to work directly with monolingual Spanish-speaking clients, which can be incredibly important in building trust.

Beyond that, I read widely, and I think imagination is underrated in mediation.

The ability to understand perspectives very different from your own is essential to helping people resolve conflict.

Q: What do you enjoy most about this work?

Claudia: The most meaningful moment is when someone says, “*Thank you for understanding.*”

Whether the case settles that day or not, knowing that the parties felt seen and heard is deeply important to me.

Claudia Hagadus Long brings to every mediation the rare combination of seasoned legal judgment, emotional intelligence, and unwavering commitment to resolution that has defined her remarkable career. With decades of experience spanning complex civil litigation and thousands of mediated matters, she remains driven by a simple but powerful purpose: helping people move beyond conflict toward practical, dignified solutions. At ADR Services, Inc., Claudia continues to be a trusted resource for counsel and clients alike—valued not only for her incisive legal mind, but for the empathy, humor, and humanity she brings to the resolution process.