Internal Co-Parenting Plan Builder

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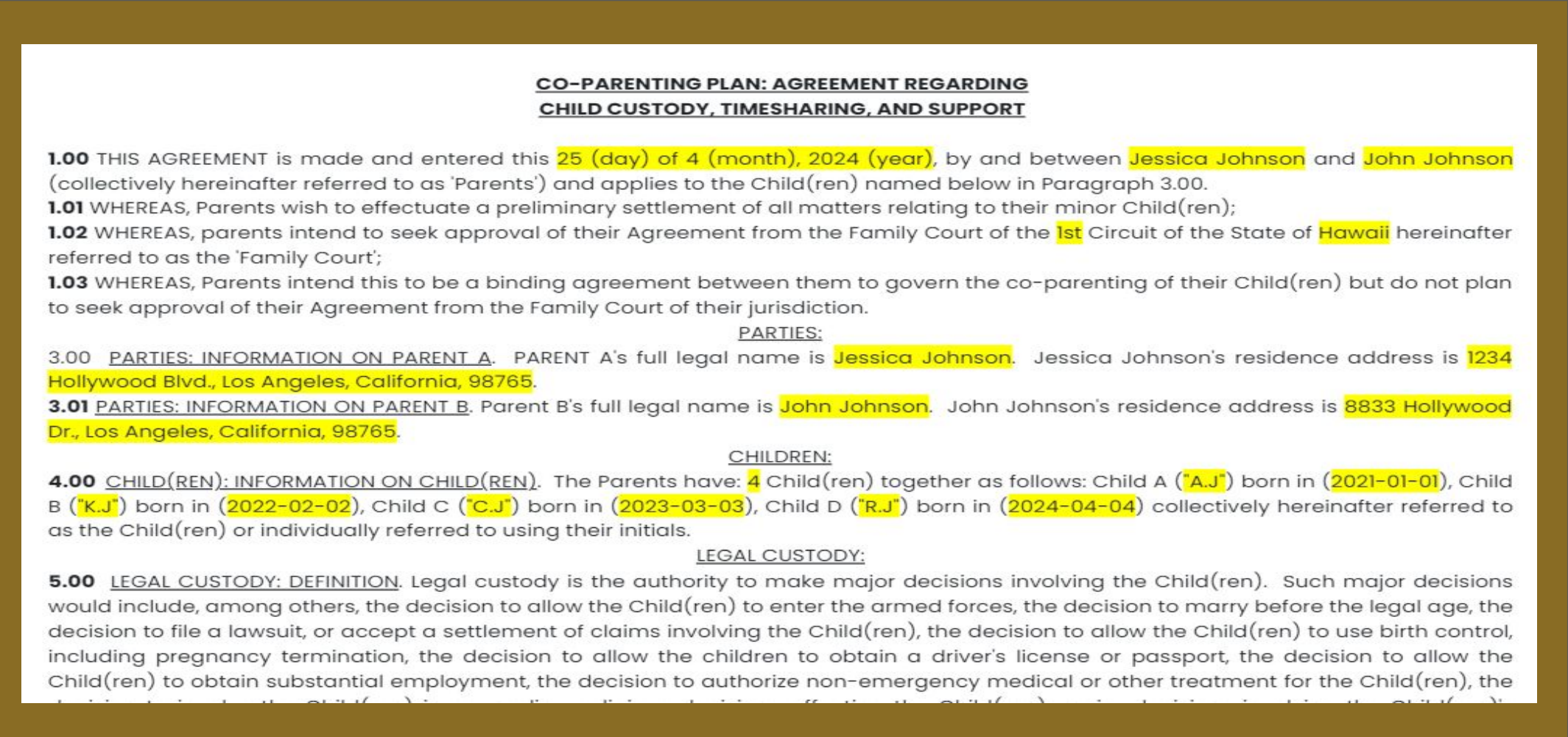Information and Computer Sciences Department - University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Sponsor: Katie Bennett
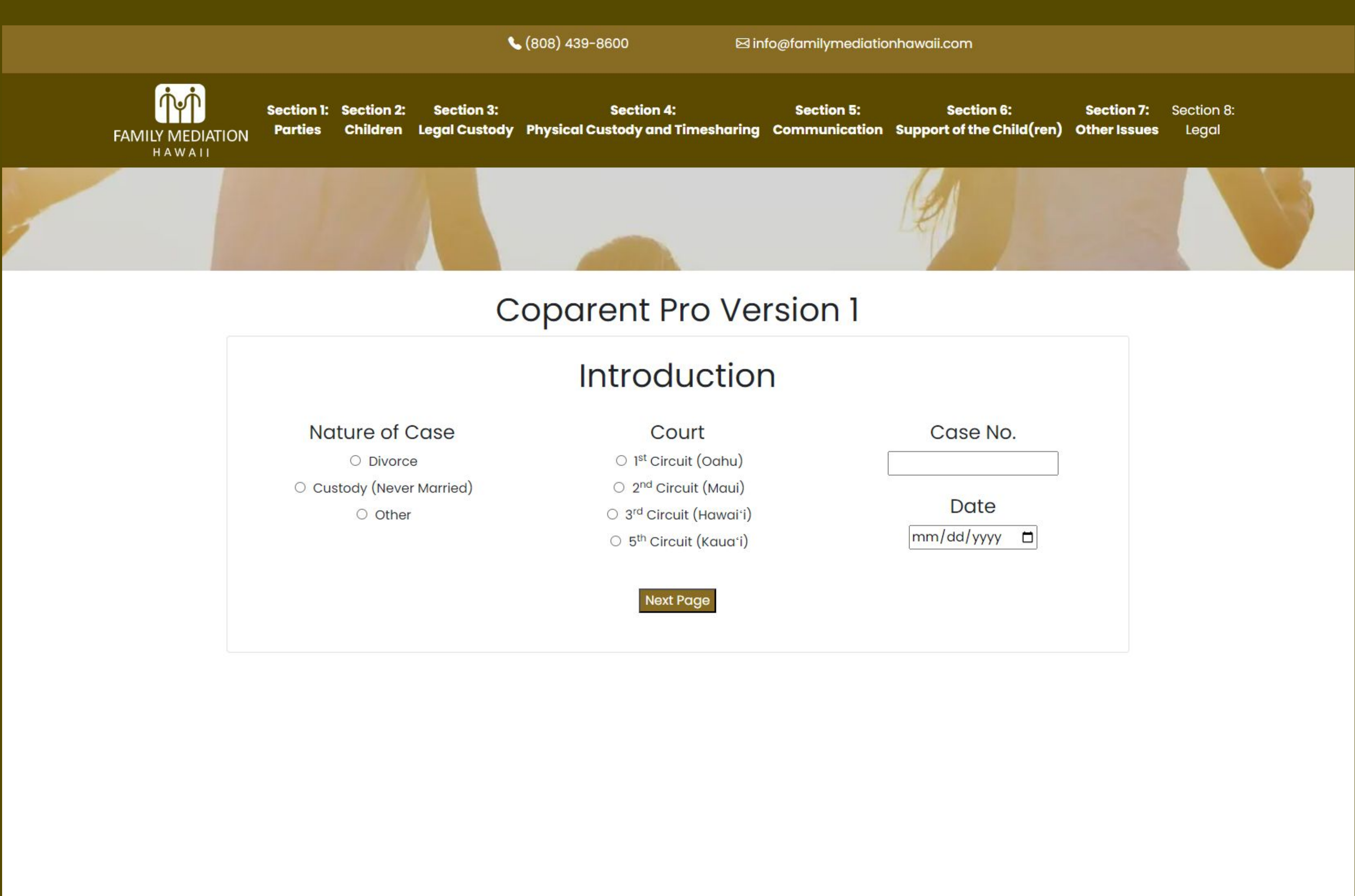Bennett Law Group LLLC, dba Family Mediation Hawaii

Introduction:

Our project aims to create a web application to streamline the process of creating legal agreements for divorcing couples. Its main purpose is to simplify and modernize this process as the mediators must go through complex questions with the clients to fill in a co-parenting plan template. The online form will reduce the need for intensive manual effort to repeatedly fill in all sections of the template.

Accomplishments:

- Enables mediators to download multiple versions of the Co-Parenting Plan in formats including DOCX and HTML
- Enables a dynamic number of children to be listed and used throughout the form
- Secures deployment via a local network that mediators and other authorized users can access through a VPN
- UI stays consistent with the Family Mediation Hawaii's website theme
- Enforces validation so that all required fields must be completed before moving forward (to avoid any unexpected issues)

Process:

1. Meet with sponsors via Zoom to discuss project specifications and obtain a Word Doc of their generic co-parenting plan template
2. Decide on a technology stack
3. Develop the frontend interface
4. Deliberate strategies for implementing software logic
5. Decide on a mechanism to list out the different sections of the legal template based on the form input
6. Implement an abstract base class that provides logic for child classes, and determines whether or not a section will be outputted to the final document
7. Populate the HTML Generator child class with all functions from the abstract class
8. Repeat the process for the Word Doc Generator
9. Set up the concatenation mechanism in each function such that the final output string will be ready to save under each filetype (HTML or Word Doc)
10. Create and implement any additional features that come up in meetings with our sponsors

Technology Stack:

- PHP (Front/Back End)
- Javascript (pagination)
- MySQL (temporary database)
- CSS (Front End styling)
- HTML and Word Doc (output formats)

Challenges:

- Generate a Word document from the application page
  - Solution: Using XML snippets to create the Word document based on mediator input
- Enable a dynamic number of children in both document generators
  - Solution: Implement functions that will output individual entries if and only if the session variable is set

Next Steps:

- Enforce validation for each optional field if it is selected
- Add PHP tests for each session's variable
- Make the application public facing instead of in house, considering security implications
- Develop separate application where parents fill out questionnaire and it subsequently compares their responses