Mean - the mean salary rate is the average. That means you add up all of the salaries and divide by the number of people. If you have three people, one of whom earns $1, one of whom earns $2, and one of whom earns $1000, the mean salary is $334.33 ($1003/3).

Median - the median salary rate is the salary that is exactly in the middle if EVERY person is placed in rank according to salary (let's say lowest to highest salary). In the example above, you'd have:

- person 1 $1
- person 2 $2
- person 3 $1000

The median salary is $2. Half the people have salaries above the median and half the people have salaries below the median.

The median is useful when salaries are unequal. For example, when someone is paid a lot more than others, like in this example, the mean is strongly influenced. When you say the average is $334, it looks like everyone is doing OK. The median is more reflective (so, you know, for example, that half the people do worse than $2) in this case.