2010 Annual Report

Empowering Whatcom County Community Members to Resolve Conflict Peacefully



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Executive Director's Report

Creativity, growth, resourcefulness and flexibility marked the 18th year of the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center's existence. At a time when community resources appear to be limited the DRC staff, volunteers, board, and supporters have increased their efforts – engaging the public and themselves in a quest further strengthen and grow our support, partnerships and services. I am grateful for their efforts and appreciative that I was able to comfortably step away for an entire quarter to focus on my new daughter! I am amazed but not surprised with the impressive accomplishments 2010 held for us. This past year the Center:

- Engaged 62 active volunteers who contributed more than 5,000 hours of service.
- Hosted a community dialogue with local law enforcement, other public servants and peace activists to create opportunities for shared understanding of interests, values, perspectives and concerns when considering citizen activism.
- Hosted our first Family Mediation training in more than 10 years.
- Had our most successful Peace Builder Awards event in its 8 year history, raising 50% more than previous years.
- Hired a new permanent small claims case manager.
- Hired a temporary youth program assistant to strengthen our boy's program curriculum and build our volunteer capacity for boy's groups.
- Received a grant for two AmeriCorps positions, including a new Outreach Specialist.
- Hosted several meetings with local civil legal aid organizations and courthouse staff to clarify service offerings and improve support for low-income clients.

I look forward to 2011 with enthusiasm as we work together to continue providing Whatcom County with high quality and affordable mediation, training and facilitation services.

With warmth,

Moonwater

Our Mission

The mission of the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center is to promote understanding, tolerance, and healing in the community by helping people transform conflict into creative and harmonious outcomes. To this end, the center will work to increase community understanding of the processes and alternatives to peaceful conflict resolution, educate and train people to the purposes of such conflict resolution, and provide for competent and neutral third parties to mediate or otherwise assist or empower disputants to resolve conflict in just, equitable, and cooperative ways.

Our Impact

"(Prior to this course) I hadn't analyzed my approach to conflict very deeply. This gave me insight into my actions I hadn't been conscious of before." - Understanding Conflict Training Participant

" This training was incredible! It was the best (and) most powerful professional development experience I've participated in...ever" - Professional Mediation Training Participant

"Thank you very much for meeting the needs of our situation. Communicating can be very challenging when two parties are unable to see eye to eye, this service is amazing!" - *Family Mediation Client*

"The process was fair, impartial and met the needs of our organization. I feel like we took a giant step forward." - *Commercial Mediation Client*

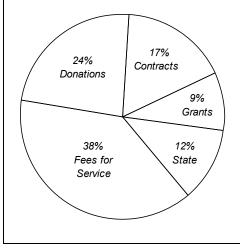
"The WDRC and all of its staff were very professional, unbiased and courteous. We appreciate your time and effort." - *Small Claims Mediation Client*

"Mediation was a good thing for us. It opened up good lines of communication with our neighbors, which is something we did not have before." - Community Mediation Client

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| The Year in Numbers | | Our Impact | |
|--|----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Total People Served Directly: 3,819 | | As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we distribute exit surveys to each of our mediation clients. The responses to the questions below represent the percent of clients that answered "yes" or "somewhat". There were 416 surveys collected. | |
| Total Mediation Cases Opened:788Total Mediated Cases:190 | | Were the mediators fair and impartial? 99% | |
| Total Mediation Sessions: Small Claims Mediations: | 213 97 | Was the situation improved by mediation? 81% | |
| Family Law Mediations: | | | 83% |
| Total Workshops Provided:97 | | Did mediation help better understand the issues? 87% | |
| Total Training Participants: Total Volunteer Hours: | 1,504 5,134 | Would you recommend mediation to others? 97% | |
| | -, - | The following results are from participants who have taken our "Understandin workshop. We collected 130 surveys. Percentages indicate affirmative response. | |
| Balance Sheet December 31, 2010 | | Did the workshop help you understand how you approach conflict? | 93% |
| | | Do you have a better understanding of different conflict strategies? | 99% |
| <u>Assets</u> Total Checking/Savings | \$60,730 | Do you have new skills you can use for effective communication? | 95% |
| Total Accounts Receivable Total Fixed Assets | \$23,597 \$19,255 | Do you have a better understanding of the root of conflict? | 89% |
| Total Other Assets\$20,000Total Assets\$127,937 | | We conducted 52 workshops for 455 elementary, middle and high school youth in 2010. Those youth self reported the following: | |
| <u>Liabilities</u> Total Liabilities \$4,203 | | 84 % Learned ways of solving problems without hurting or scaring others. | |
| | | 72% Have new skills they can use to listen to others. | |
| <u>Equity</u> Fund Balance \$122,410 | | 78% Have new skills they can use to tell others how they think and feel. | |
| Net Income Total Equity | \$1,323 \$123,734 | "(This training helped me) to understand the true meaning of my words ." $-Ada$ " I learned a lot about self control, stress, anger management, communication." - | olescent boy – Adolescent girl |
| Total Liabilities and Equity | \$127,937 | | |

Revenue by Source 253,510



Conflict Prevention Services

The WDRC is committed to building the capacity of community members to better manage conflict as it arises and to teach them skills to prevent it from escalating. To that end, in 2010, the WDRC trained 1049 adults, and 455 youth through school, community and workplace workshops.

Overview of Services

Conflict Intervention Services

Recognizing that conflict is a normal and natural part of life, the WDRC is committed to providing intervention services when individuals need assistance with conflicts they are experiencing. To that end, in 2010, the Center provided mediation services for a variety of cases including dissolutions, parenting plans, small claims, neighbor-to-neighbor, victim-offender, workplace, union/management, landlord-tenant, and more. In doing so, the WDRC served our local courts, schools, businesses, families, neighborhoods, and governmental agencies.

In 2010, the WDRC had an overall 80% success rate in helping parties reach comprehensive resolutions. The majority of the remaining 20% found the session (s) to be helpful and valuable despite not reaching a formal resolution.