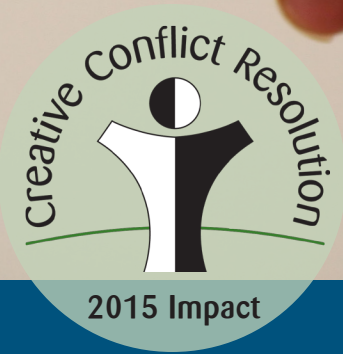


Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center

360.676.0122 | whatcomdrc.org | 13 Prospect Street, Ste. 201 | Bellingham, WA 98225



Imagining Peace in Whatcom County



Imagine Laura, a single mom, facing a life threatening condition... Imagine the love and pride she has for her three beautiful daughters. Imagine the pain of telling them she may only have months to live. Imagine the conflict of divorce. Imagine the strain of a restraining order prohibiting communication. Consider all you'd want to tell the parent of your children.

Now, imagine Robert, who loves Laura deeply... Imagine how he has wondered and prayed about Laura's health. Imagine the fear of losing the mother of his children. Imagine the guilt he felt for the conflict that tore apart their family. This may have been the last time he would speak with Laura. Imagine his questions and concerns.

Imagine the comfort and intensity of sitting down together, making agreements about how to support their children.

In mediation, Laura shared everything going through her mind—when to drive her eldest to her new college dorm room; how to help her youngest with homework; which women she wanted to encircle her daughters after she passed. Each request was a cathartic release. Trusting that dad would be there for their girls gave her peace of mind to prepare for what was to come.

They left the mediation with a list of what needed to happen for the girls. They also left after having the opportunity to say *I'm sorry, I love you, and goodbye.*

Greetings Friends & Supporters,

The past year brought many reminders of the ways in which divisive conflict continues to permeate our world, our country, and our community; including adversarial court battles that no one wins, bullying harming our youth, workplace conflict costing time and resources, and vicious divorce tearing at the fabric of our families, leaving children in limbo.

It doesn't have to be this way. In addition to building our community's communication and conflict resolution skills, the WDRC provides a safe, confidential space, with the help of neutral mediators to hold space for conversations to move forward peacefully. **More and more community members are turning to us to help transform their conflict into productive outcomes.**

Within this Annual Report, you will find highlights of the impact of our work in 2015. These facts are important and at the same time, it's the people, and their needs, that matter most. The story on the cover is a mediation that the WDRC had the privilege of providing this year.

This space, these moments in time – bringing people together to talk about their most intimate fears and hopes is what we do every day at the WDRC. At the heart of every parent, every young person, and every co-worker lies the need to be heard and the ability to problem solve when given the opportunity and the support.

We are able to create this space, at little or no cost to those we serve, because of community support. On page 6, you will find information about how you can contribute. **We ask that you join us in imagining peace in Whatcom County, so we can move forward to strengthen our community, together.**

Warm regards,

Moonwater
Executive Director

Andrew Olive
Board President



Moonwater receiving an award for 10 years of service as the WDRC Executive Director and Mayor Kelli Linville presenting the award on behalf of the WDRC Board of Directors



“The WDRC embodies the spirit of Whatcom County—problem solving, cooperation, caring, and community.”

- Kelli Linville, Bellingham Mayor

2015 Numbers

Thanks to community support, 100% of the services we provide are free or low cost.

10,252

People Served* - 195% increase since 2010

897

Mediation Participants

896

Youth Program Participants

1,668

Adult Workshop Participants

*Number reflects each time a person is served, individuals may receive multiple services at the WDRC.

Our Vision

For Whatcom County to be a community in which people approach conflict in creative and healthy ways.



Our Mission

Provide and promote constructive and collaborative approaches to conflict through mediation, training, facilitation, and community education.

Our Values

Impartiality, accessibility, empowerment, collaboration, communication, and integrity.

We offer conflict prevention and intervention services for businesses, organizations, individuals, and families.

Our Work

Conflict Intervention

We all experience conflict. The WDRC provides *interest-based, facilitative* assistance through **Mediation, Facilitation, Restorative Practices & Conflict Coaching**, for a variety of cases, including: family, small claims, parent/teen, foreclosure, workplace, neighbor, and more.

Conflict Prevention

The WDRC builds the capacity of community members to better manage conflict when it arises, and to learn ways to minimize its occurrence. We offer **adult & youth Conflict Resolution Education** to build skills and reduce conflict.



Highlights



1.

Awarded the **2015 Ken Gass Community Building Award** by the Whatcom Family & Community Network.

2.

Received City of Bellingham Housing & Community Development Grant to offer **no-cost Parent/Teen Mediation Services**.

3.

Certified **4 volunteer professional mediators** and admitted a cohort of **6 Mediation Practicum Program students**.

Conflict Intervention

Mediation

Empowering clients to reach mutually beneficial, lasting solutions guided by a professionally trained mediator.

Restorative Practices

236 Whatcom County students participated in restorative practices.

"Our Partnership with WDRC allows us to work restoratively with students & staff."

- Steve Morse, Bellingham Director of Teaching and Learning

Group Facilitation

"The WDRC helped us navigate uncharted waters & make the most of a challenging situation. They created an atmosphere that was safe, thoughtful, and engaging."

- Local nonprofit board member

Conflict Coaching

394 community members received free confidential support to manage emotions and identify steps towards resolution.



Small Claims

49% of the Small Claims Court Trials resolved through mediation.

Foreclosure

64% of families avoided foreclosure and 44% retained their home.

Youth

"We needed a forum to calmly lay out our issues. We got that in Parent/Teen Mediation."

Commercial

100% of workplace clients reported their mediators were fair and impartial.

Community

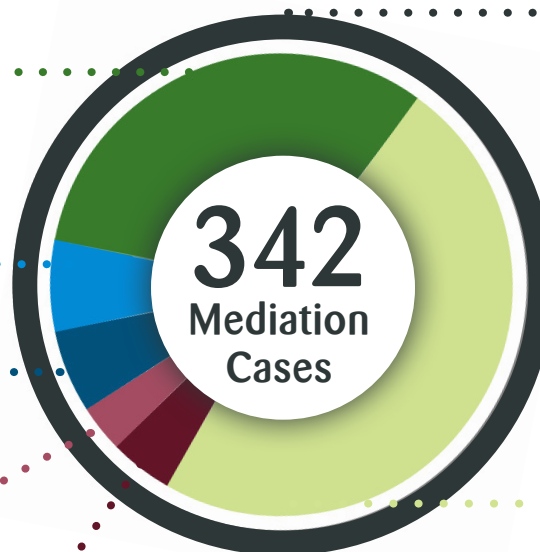
"The opportunity to open communication with my neighbor may result in us becoming friends."

81%

mediation cases reached resolution

62%

mediation clients received further reduced fees



Family

89% reported mediation improved communication with the other client.

"As the WDRC Family Case Manager, I see first-hand how Family Mediation empowers parents to move forward and build once-shattered communication. Increased need is exhausting County Court funds for low-income families each year. In 2015, court funding was depleted by July."

- Cynthia Moore, Family Case Manager



Conflict Prevention

Adult Classes

Building skills to reduce conflict, communicate effectively, and resolve conflict peacefully.

Resources for Parents

"One of the most important things I learned from the seminar is to slow down and really listen to my kids about what they are going through."

- Helping Children Through Family Changes Participant

Community Workshops

"Who would have thought that conflict resolution could be so much fun, thought provoking, and inspiring?"

- Understanding Conflict Participant

Workplace & Professional Mediation Trainings

"I have never been in a learning environment where every single person is so completely committed and present."

- Professional Mediation Training Participant



Spring 2015 Professional Mediation Training Cohort

79 | **1,668**
Classes | Participants

Empowering our young people to resolve conflict without violence and build healthy relationships.

Youth Classes

Juvenile Justice Workshops

75% of youth participants referred by the juvenile court reported that they learned ways of solving problems without hurting others.

School Workshops

"I learned how to act during conflict. Now I know the names of the feelings I'm going through when a conflict happens."

- Healthy Choices for Girls Participant



Shuksan Middle School girls facilitating discussion

63 | **896**
Classes | Participants

100% of our core youth services are free

"The WDRC provides a great resource to help kids manage themselves, develop empathy and understanding for others, gain greater insight, and begin to develop these crucial life skills. For time-strapped staff, this resource is invaluable."

-Beth Bacon, Fairhaven Middle School Counselor

Contribute

Help Whatcom County families face their most public, private, and pressing needs.

Balance Sheet

Assets:\$256,070
 Checking/Savings:\$210,622
 Accounts Receivable: ..\$26,870
 Fixed Assets:\$18,578

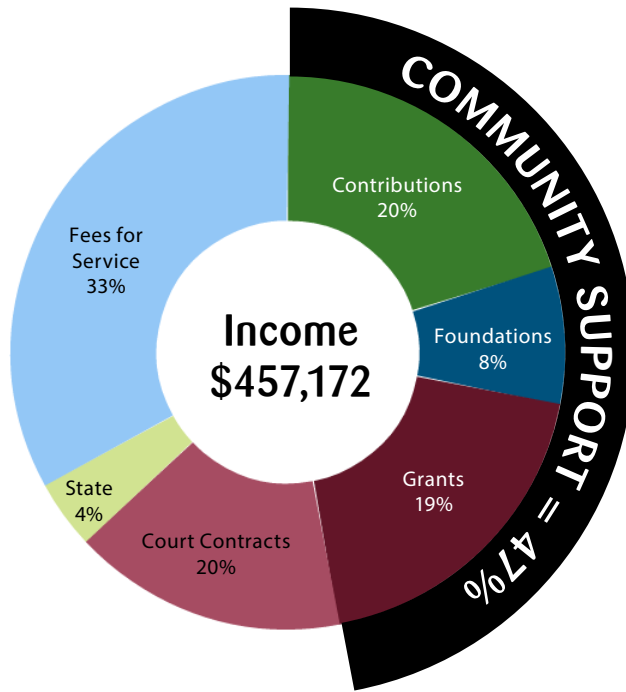
Liabilities:\$9,917

Equity:\$198,938
 Fund Balance:\$192,639
 Net Assets:\$6,768
 Net Income:\$46,746

Liabilities & Equity:\$256,070

In the past 5 years...

Service Increased **195%**
 Income Increased **80%**



Strategic Plan Goals

1. Provide comprehensive & exemplary services
2. Increase the scope & volume of clientele
3. Expand & diversify funding sources

WDRRC Mediation Services saved the Whatcom County Court System
\$507,750

IMAGINE PEACE. JOIN THE WDRRC GIVING CIRCLE



- \$1000** Helps develop programming such as elder mediation & restorative justice
- \$500** Provides free school workshops throughout Whatcom County
- \$250** Helps a family facing foreclosure participate in the mediation process
- \$100** Ensures low-income community members have access to mediation
- \$50** Helps parents build skills to help their children manage family changes
- \$25** Helps neighbors take the first step towards resolution

Make a tax-deductible donation at whatcomdrc.org/donate, by mail, or in person

Upcoming Events

- Bocce Tournament, April 23
 - Cribbage Tournament, Sept. 10
 - Wander to Wander 1K, Sept. 11
 - Peace Builder Awards Gala, Nov. 18
- Find details at: whatcomdrc.org

Fred Meyer Rewards & Amazon Smile

Earn the WDRRC donations at no cost to you. Link your Fred Meyer Card at: fredmeyer.com/communityrewards. Link your Amazon account at: smile.amazon.com

In-Kind Donations

We gratefully accept donations for our programs so we can focus our budget on providing services to those most in need. Find in-kind donation needs at: whatcomdrc.org/donate

"I support the WDRRC because their mission is incredibly important—vital—to creating a peaceful, compassionate, and caring community. The work is creative and courageous. The staff is second to none. I'm so proud to be a part of this community. Please join me. Donate. Volunteer. Take a workshop. Refer a friend. Be a part of peace building."



- Masa DeLara, WDRRC Board Member

Thank you to all of our 2015 Financial & In-Kind Donors

Giving Circle Members

Legacy Leaders

\$1000+

Marian & Graham Exall
Nancy & John Blume
N.F. & Eric Jackson
Phil Montgomery
Wendy & Jeff Robinson

Champions of Collaboration

\$500-\$999

Bruce & Cyndie Shepard
Carlton & Margaret Nathon
Carolyn & Dean Withrow
Catherine Riordan & Phil Thompson
Frank & MaryJane Chmelik
Jack & Cindy Louws
Janet Lightner
Joan Cervisi & Dave Thorngren
Mark & Julie Wiesner
Paula McCandlis

Heralds of Harmony

\$250-\$499

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Barbara Rofkar
Beth & Jerry Brownfield
Bill & Isie Radock

David & Jayme Curley
Debra Young
Glenn Garo
Greg Poulos
Jerry & Truc Thon
Kelli Linville & Will Rohl
Stephanie & Rich Bowers

Proponents of Peace

\$100-\$249

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Bruce & Becky Van Glubt
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Sheila Sondick
Steve Wallace & Jennifer Rosequist
Steve Morse
Steve & Karen Swan
Tana Sabatino
Tracy Dahlstedt-Rienstra

Friends of the WDRC

\$25-\$99

Abigail Stocker
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Barbara Matilski & Jyoti Duwadi
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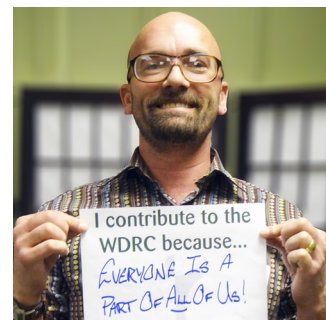
Kelley Denman
Kristine Baker
Kulshan Brewing Company
LaDessa Croucher
LeAna Osterman
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Lisa Osborn
Loren Adkins
Margo Hammond
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Steven Harper & Sue Parrot
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Theresa Kingma
Toby Marston & Jen Stephens
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Bob Wallin Insurance
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Boundary Bay Brewery
City of Bellingham

Lummi Indian Business Council
Samson Estates
Skipping Stone Foundation
The Mary Redman Foundation

The RiverStyx Foundation
Wander Brewing
Whatcom Community Foundation
Whatcom Family & Community Network



Eric Jackson

Event Sponsors, In-Kind, and Other Donors

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Walk In Clinic
WECU
Whatcom Bar Assoc.
Whatcom Sports
Commission
Windermere Management

We sincerely regret any omissions

Special thanks to our **80 volunteers**, who contributed **5,696 hours** of service in 2015!

Mediators & Trainers: Pat Anderson, Kris Bundy, Jeanne Chadwick, Kaitlin Davis, Hope Dean, Mary Dumas, Rose Anne Featherston, Doug Fenton, Deborah Forgays, Francie Gass, Kathy Hilmoie, David Imburgia, Jason Kanov, Mark Lazich, Don Lotze, Howard Lowe, Leah Macaluso, K. Ann McCartney, Angus McLane, Moonwater, Cynthia Moore, Bill Paleck, Mark Polin, Calhan Ring, Vanessa Roebuck, Barbara Rofkar, Sheri Russell, Nancy Waters, Luke Wiesner, Emily Wilson, Irene Wysocki

Practicum Students: Austin Anderson, Mary Burchard, Devin DiBernardo, Nancy Joseph, Sarang Khalsa, Lily Lewison, Jacqui MacConnell, Jeff Maher, Susan Marks, Iris Maute-Gibson, Kate McLean, Alice O'Donnell, John Reid, Wendy Robinson, Laura Singletary, Jacquelyn Styrna

Volunteers: Kendra Anderson, Max Bronsema, Jamia Burns, Kevin Crump, Allison Daily, David Donohue, Megan Fowler, Jaina Gemin, Chris Hovard, Kristin Jager, Sarah Jenkins, Emmanuel Karras, Evan Keen, Sarang Khalsa, Thi Cam Le, Anna Lum, Rifka MacDonald, Alex Machin-Mayes, Mary Jo Maute, Tom McNutt, Patrick Musselman, Ariana Nazari, Claire Poulos, Alva Putra, Vanessa Roebuck, Kelcie Sheriff, Daniel Soloff, Kristin Stevens, Jacquelyn Styrna, Dave Thorngren, Sierra Truesdale, Synnove Vandal, Ariel Weidel, Haley White, Jessica Wilbert, Spencer Willows, Wes, Carolyn & Dean Withrow

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Finding Forgiveness - A Restorative Justice Story

Ian is a quiet student, who has been teased in school. One day he lashed out—threatening to kill Lucas, a fellow student who he barely knew. The school made a safety plan, requiring a no contact order. These measures, while necessary, lacked closure and did not address the cause of Ian’s aggression. The principal called the WDRC to facilitate a Restorative Circle between the boys and their families.



Ian shared his memory of that day. His walled off demeanor slowly changed, emotions surfaced. We asked what he hoped would come from this meeting. He feared that people now saw him as a bad person. He just wanted respect.

Lucas’ parents shared their anger and vulnerability, having to drop off their son at school uncertain of his safety. Ian’s parents shared their shock at their son’s actions and steps they had taken to discipline and support Ian. Lucas shared his confusion and fear.

*We asked Lucas what he needed to repair the harm. He asked for an apology. **Ian made eye contact with Lucas and his parents for the first time. He sincerely apologized for the negative impacts of his threat. Lucas replied, “I forgive you.”***

*Adding to this powerful exchange was Lucas’ father. After entering the conversation carrying anger and judgment, he affirmed Ian’s wish. **He told Ian that he believed he was a good person.***

Restorative practices are vital to building the kind of community we need; one where we care for each other, and when someone is hurt it is addressed in a way that meets everyone’s needs, brings greater clarity to root issues, and the potential for stronger relationships.

- Emily Wilson, Youth Program Coordinator

70%

Drop in suspensions in the Bellingham School District in the past 5 years

“The impact of Restorative Practices in our schools is about more than just reducing suspensions and expulsions. It is about changing the culture in schools and teaching kids to solve problems collaboratively. We are moving away from discipline as punishment to discipline as a learning opportunity.”

- Steve Morse, Bellingham School District Director of Teaching & Learning