

## Board Business Partner Solicitation

### Goals

- Add at least 4-5 new businesses, in addition to renewing current 20 business partners, for 2020.
- Encourage inclusion of the DRC in businesses' 2020 charitable support budgeting (why initial contact ASAP this fall is critical). Some businesses may prefer to give before the end of 2019 for tax purposes.

### Timeframe

- Make initial contact calls to all business prospects by October 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Set up follow-up meetings to best suit their schedule (ideally avoiding holiday period).
- Confirm all new and renewing business partners before March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (for inclusion in program, signage, etc. for April 5<sup>th</sup> *Toast* event). Payment may be sent later, as long as support commitment is obtained.

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### Business Contacts – Steps & Tips

1. Choose 4-5 business prospects from list (identifying any you already have a connection with) - and/or propose additional businesses you have a connection with (to add to our list) - that you will commit to approaching. Think about all avenues of potential business connections – family, friends, work colleagues, places where you do or have done business, etc.
2. Call the contact person noted on the prospect list. If you determine that they are not the decision-maker re charitable donations for that business, identify the appropriate person and contact them.
3. During the call:
  - Identify your role as a Board member and reason for contacting them
  - Determine their level of familiarity with the DRC
  - Try to set up a face-to-face meeting (key goal for call).
4. During the face-to-face meeting (or during call if resistant to meeting):
  - Overview of the DRC's mission and services, based on their level of familiarity (they may know of us only as a mediation service, for example).
  - Share "impact" highlights and stats (reference Community Impact Report).
  - Share your "why" - why you believe in and support the work of the DRC

- Ask for their thoughts about key community needs, their “passions”, and/or the organizations they currently support and why. Tie their responses to aspects of the DRC’s mission and services. (Example: How the DRC’s landlord-tenant mediation can help prevent evictions and reduce homelessness).
  - Stress that the partnership of local businesses is crucial to enable the DRC to respond to increasing and evolving community needs.
5. Emphasize that support from our Business Partners is used to:
    - Provide mediation services to individuals and families for whom cost is a barrier
    - Provide training in communication and conflict resolution skills to individuals and organizations with limited financial resources
    - Expand the DRC’s Youth Empowerment Services and restorative practices training in local schools, which support and mentor the next generation
    - Strengthen the DRC’s capacity to serve the community – such as recruiting and training volunteer mediators
  6. Emphasize that their support may be designated to a specific DRC service (like youth and schools work), if they have a particular affinity, and that the amount and timing of their support can be customized to suit their budget, etc.
  7. Most businesses view their support as charitable giving, although some expect a more traditional “sponsorship” quid-pro-quo model that they see as having some marketing value to them. Share – if asked - that recognition for our Business Partners includes signage, programs, PowerPoint at *The Toast*, as well as logo and link on our website (for \$1,000+ support levels).
  8. Note that the DRC also supports businesses/employers, like them, through workplace mediation, business-customer mediation, staff training, group facilitation and other services.
  9. Share/leave printed information – Community Impact Report, plus brochures, ‘Voice’ magazine article, workshop fliers, etc., as appropriate  
Be sure your marketing tool kit is well stocked.
  10. Invite them to attend *The Toast* (leave Save the Date card) to learn more about the work of the DRC, regardless of whether they are able to financially support us at this time.
  11. Leave the Business Partner Commitment Form. Note support levels. You don’t necessarily need to try to “close” them during your visit/call, but at least try to assess their level of interest in/likelihood of supporting the DRC. Let us know the results of your calls & visits, and coordinate follow-up with Jody and Joe as needed.

**Thank You for all your efforts as our ambassadors and advocates in the community!**