

Community Engagement Update – September 2020

Summer Highlights

Business Outreach

A number of initiatives were launched over the summer to continue to increase the DRC's profile as a resource to businesses and organizations, with an emphasis on workplace mediation, facilitation and training. These included:

- New display ads in the Thurston Chamber's VOICE magazine (distributed to 2,800 area businesses), and a banner ad on the Chamber's website, emphasizing "We're here to help you Navigate the Way Forward during challenging times". These will run through the spring of 2021.

- Presentation by Jody to local business leaders on the topic of Workplace Communication and Conflict During COVID-19, as part of the "Declassified" series put on by the Chamber and the Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC). An article on this presentation was published in JOLT: Journal for Olympia, Lacey & Tumwater. The EDC also featured a profile of the DRC and our resources for businesses in their member newsletter, "Economic Insider".

- Virtual Training Connection events, targeting past custom training clients, to emphasize new online DRC training resources now available to them.

- New online trainings promoted to business/professional audiences - "Conflict Happens! Skills to Move Forward for a Healthy Workplace" (6 workshops presented by Oriana and Lucia) and "Mastering Online Meetings" (donated training by Mike Fraidenburg) - attracted approx. 200 participants, in total.



Community Impact Report

The DRC's 2020 report, "Navigating a Way Forward", was printed and mailed to 2,500 key individuals, businesses and organizations, and was distributed electronically through e-mail and social media.



Community Updates & Special Messages

A major area of communication focus – through targeted e-mail and social media - has continued to be updating both our DRC Family and the broader community on the status of the DRC's services, including our re-tooling to provide our core services online. Special messages to the community from Jody - "Finding Opportunity for Transformation in Times of Heightened Conflict" and "Supporting Communities Through Change" – were also areas of focus over the summer.

Fall Focus

Volunteer Recruitment / Conflict Resolution Month

A proactive PR campaign to raise awareness of the DRC and, in particular, volunteer needs and opportunities (including online mediation), will run in late September through October, to coincide with Community Conflict Resolution Month. This will include:

- PSAs running on 4-5 local radio stations;
- Blurbs in The Olympian, Works in Progress, JOLT, etc.;
- A special profile of Casey Wegner, our Outstanding Volunteer for 2020, in Thurston Talk, including special side-bar on volunteering with the DRC;
- DRC banner hung above State Avenue;
- E-mail and social media re Community Conflict Resolution Month, including Governor's and County Commissioners' proclamations.

Fundraising

Capacity-Building Campaign Preparation & Initial Outreach

Initial steps for the three-year capacity-building campaign will include:

- Development of a Case Statement, laying out the need, vision and case for investment in technology, facilities and staffing upgrades;
- Initial outreach to key individuals, foundations and businesses to seek "lead gifts" and begin setting the stage for major giving commitments after the official campaign launch in early 2021.
- Formation of a campaign committee, whose role will include coordinating "peer-to-peer" fundraising efforts (including by Board members).

WA State Combined Fund Drive

Proactive e-mailings and social media posts targeting state employees and retirees (including DRC volunteers, supporters and training participants) encouraging designating CFD pledges to the DRC. Timed to coincide with the CFD campaign kick-off Oct. 1st.

***Give Local* Campaign**

The DRC will once again participate in the Community Foundation of South Puget Sound's *Give Local* crowdfunding campaign, set to run Nov. 9 - 20. October focus will be building the DRC's profile on the *Give Local* platform and recruiting peer-to-peer fundraising "champions", with November focused on promotion. Our campaign will emphasize tech capacity needs, although will not be specifically tied to the Capacity-Building Campaign.

Year-end Appeal

Our traditional year-end fundraising appeal will launch the weekend following Thanksgiving and run through Dec. 31st – including direct mail, e-mail and social media - with the focus on giving to support the DRC's current operations (vs. future capacity) to finish the fiscal year on a firm financial footing.