

Comprised of and for our Community

Envisioned as a resource created by our community, made up of community members, for the purpose of navigating conflict within our community, the Dispute Resolution Center is a hub for healing, for understanding, for bridging, and for connecting. These are needs we all share, now more than ever.

“We are conveners, facilitators of tough conversations, conflict resolvers, communication skill trainers and restorative practitioners. These are services that heal hearts, deepen understanding, bridge divides and connect community.”

Little did we know just how much our services would be needed back at the beginning of 2020. As the events of the last year and a half have unfolded, we have adjusted, adapted and responded. We have piloted a Restorative Justice Facilitated Dialogue program within our Thurston County DUI/Drug Court. We were part of a

six-county pilot and have since launched with our partners across all of Washington the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program. We have trained a cadre of current and brand new volunteers in effective and meaningful online service provision. We have transitioned all of our mediator trainings, our public trainings and our custom trainings to be given online. We are now an expanded, wonderfully-talented multi-cultural staff team.

Our 140+ dedicated volunteers (which includes 100 professionally-trained and certified mediators), staff and Board of Directors have made and continue to make this transformation happen. We are conveners, facilitators of tough conversations, conflict resolvers, communication skill trainers and restorative practitioners. These are services that heal hearts, deepen understanding, bridge divides and connect community. Please celebrate with us all of the ways that we positively impact our shared community.



Jody M. Suhrbier

Jody M. Suhrbier
Executive Director

Our 2021 Outstanding Volunteer honorees (l-r) Tam Clark, Jo-Anne Costantino, Susan Havens & Cathi Greenwood, with Mediation Manager Alice Sharrett (not pictured, honoree Kitty Parker).



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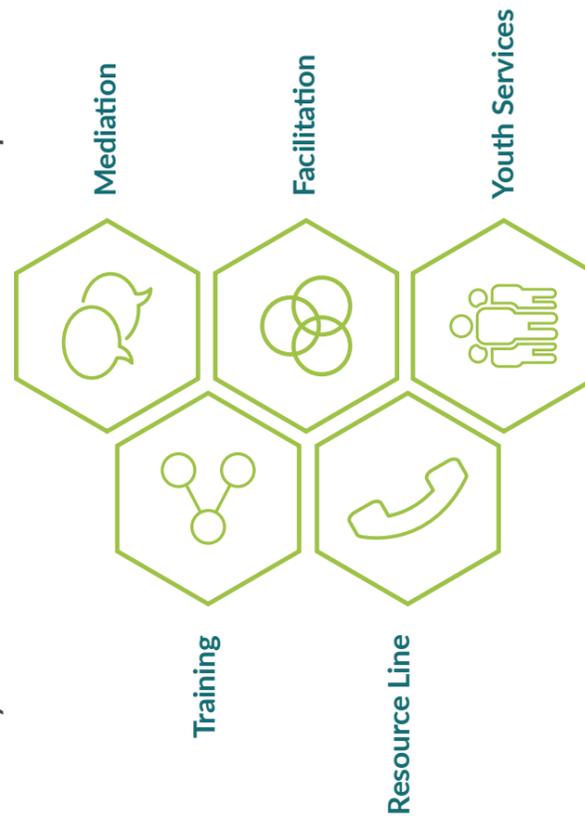
Dispute Resolution Center
OF THURSTON COUNTY
P. O. Box 6184
Olympia, WA 98507



Civic Harmony Starts Here

The Dispute Resolution Center offers a variety of resources to businesses and organizations, individuals, families and the broader community to manage and resolve conflict, to prevent conflict when possible, and to create a more civil and peaceful community.

Many services are now available both online and in-person.



30 Years
of Building
Community


Dispute Resolution Center
OF THURSTON COUNTY

Community Impact Report
2021



Founding Executive Director Evan Ferber and original staff members Joan Swanson and Sydne Cogburn at the DRC's first home on the grounds of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church.

Our Vision

A South Sound Community that has and uses healthy and respectful conflict resolution skills.

Our Legacy

With the roots of community mediation included in the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the story of the Dispute Resolution Center began 30 years ago with the simple notion that residents can settle their own disputes and learn effective communication with the help of others who have learned practical, teachable and highly effective skills as impartial facilitators.

During the 30 years since our founding, tens of thousands of Thurston and south Mason County residents have benefitted from the communication, conflict resolution and conflict prevention skills shared and applied by the DRC's ever-growing family of volunteers, partners and advocates - continually striving to build a more civil and peaceful community.

Our Transformation

Thanks to the creativity and flexibility of our dedicated volunteers and the generous support of our donors and community partners, the DRC responded to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by developing new online dispute resolution and training services, becoming more resilient in the process.

Our Impact

As a result of our transformation to online services and the development of new, innovative resources, **the DRC was able to serve 5,129 members of our community in the past year (July 2020 - June 2021).**



"You guys are absolute heroes for my family. I can't thank you enough for all the help you have given us. We're truly seeing light at the end of the tunnel!"

Eviction Resolution Client

Housing stability remains a significant issue in our community and state-wide. We are partnering with our local courts, volunteer legal services and rent assistance agencies to address this ongoing challenge. Our **Eviction Resolution Pilot Program** facilitates dialogue and negotiations between landlords and tenants to resolve disputes before they lead to court filings and evictions.

"The DRC mediators do great and valuable work. I'm always struck by their ability to reach through the challenges and get the parties to negotiate and resolve their differences."

District Court Commissioner



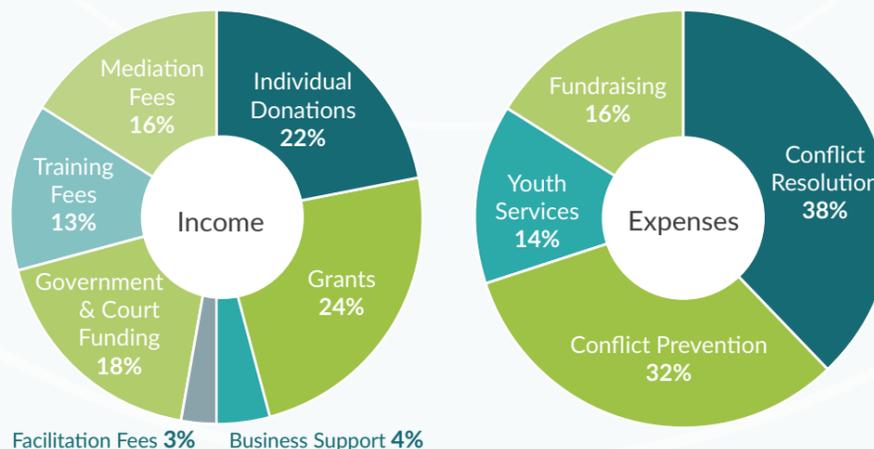
The DRC partners with the justice system by providing mediators at **Small Claims Court** in both Thurston and Mason Counties, facilitating parenting plans with divorcing couples, and healing harm through our new **Restorative Justice Facilitated Dialogue Program** with Thurston County Drug Court. In 2020, services provided by DRC mediators resulted in **savings of \$194,000** to the court system - and to local taxpayers.



Our Support

More than **300** individuals, businesses, foundations and organizations made an investment in the mission and work of the DRC in the past year through their financial support.

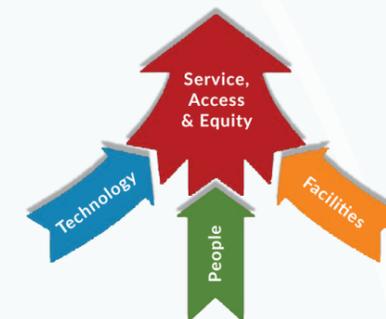
A total of **\$494,065** in financial support was received in 2020 (an increase of 12% from 2019) and used to fund services as shown below:



To learn more about our donors, funders and community partners, visit [MediateThurston.org](https://www.MediateThurston.org).

Our Future

To ensure that the DRC is positioned to serve our community for the next 30 years, we have undertaken a three-year capacity-building effort to make critical investments in Technology, Facilities and People, with the goal of enhancing Service, Access and Equity.



These strategic investments will:

- ✓ Ensure that all members of our community can contribute to, participate in and benefit from the DRC's services, regardless of race, culture, gender, socio-economic status, first language, or access to technology.
- ✓ Enable the DRC to respond to increasing and evolving community needs, as well as new opportunities, in the years to come.

Learn more about the DRC's Capacity-Building Initiative and how you can support it at [mediatethurston.org/capacity-building](https://www.mediatethurston.org/capacity-building)

Our DRC Family

Volunteers have been the heart and soul of the DRC for the past 30 years, and have been critical to our successful transformation to providing online services and developing new resources.

More than 140 active volunteers annually give more than 5,000 hours of their time to help individuals, families and organizations in our community navigate conflict and communicate more effectively.

"I have volunteered with a lot of organizations, but the DRC has been the best, most supportive volunteer experience of my life."

Tam Clark



Get Involved!

Volunteer - If you enjoy helping others solve problems, please consider becoming a volunteer mediator or helping staff our Conflict Resolution Resource Line. The DRC provides training to become a certified mediator, as well as continuing education to advance your skills.

Give - Your financial support makes it possible for the DRC to reach out and serve those in our community who would benefit from our mediation, training and youth services, but have limited resources.

You can give by mail, online at [mediatethurston.org/donate](https://www.mediatethurston.org/donate), or by designating your Washington State Combined Fund Drive pledge.



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Visit:
[mediatethurston.org](https://www.mediatethurston.org)