



Dispute Resolution Center OF THURSTON COUNTY

Executive Director Annual Performance Review

Jody Suhrbier

2021

Part I: Self-Assessment

1. Please comment on three **program efforts/accomplishments** in the past year would you consider the most successful in advancing the DRC mission and vision?

- Preparing for post-Covid operations, moving into expanded space was essential to advancing the DRC mission and vision. We have created access to technology and confidential spaces for community members while also creating opportunities for safe, supportive connection for staff and volunteers. At the start of the new year, staff are back onsite at least 60% of their total time, with the tech, systems and space to support their efforts.

- 2021 was also a year of personnel expansion, leadership development, and reporting relationship changes that are necessary to build the framework for the next 30 years. We are a professional organization with a maturing structure, more transparency in protocol and increasingly competitive pay.

- The continuing implementation and adaptation of the ever-evolving ERPP program has been an opportunity to be responsive to a critically timely community need. The goal for the year was to monitor, support, and adapt as needed, within the Mediation Management department, much as we did in 2020 with the Training Department, with division of duties and capacity-building among the growing staff team. Thurston County is regularly lauded by Resolution Washington, area attorneys and our local judicial partners as a center that has their ERPP program under control, even while adjusting to capacity limitations and changing state and local guidance.

2. Please describe progress made in each of the **three strategic plan success factors**: (Expanding the Circle, Leading the Transformation; Becoming the Pillar) for the prior year.

- We have been intentional in the marked increase in diversity of paid staff (socio-economic, primary language spoken, & cultural background). Several staff members are renters, versus homeowners, which provides valuable insight into how our services impact individuals in our community. Having three bilingual/bicultural staff plus another person of color on the team in 2021 brought us into active practice of breaking out of white supremacy norms and into daily practices of cultural humility and collaboration. This is directly in line with the success factor of Expanding the Circle.

- Our Restorative Justice Facilitated Dialogue pilot completion and efforts to expand the offering by embedding alternative approaches in systems continues aligns with the meaning behind Leading the Transformation success factor. The goal for the year was to ensure a solid foundation on which to grow the partnership in TC Drug Court, building buy-in, demonstrating results and seeking expansion within that court and other therapeutic courts. The DRC's Restorative Justice coordinator has successfully strengthened trust and awareness with local partners while also bringing a level of credibility to the program's analysis due to her background in criminal justice.

- To Become the Pillar in our community requires not only development and stewardship of local connections but also significant collaborative efforts with Resolution WA and many state partners to demonstrate value. We have been committed to securing increased core capacity funds, which affirms our credibility as a trusted resource and were successful in increasing the amount allocated in 2021, with



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additional increases on the horizon for 2022 and beyond. Developing financial stability is a foundational piece of this success factor and our capacity building effort. Relatedly, we also successfully met the individual giving goal 2021, which grows the base of individual support for the long-term.

3. What are **three goals/areas of focus** that you have for yourself in the coming year?

Goal 1: I will develop the Staff Manager to be ready for an associate director role in 2023, which requires bringing her into more of what I do and know, while also continuing to ground her in our practices and culture. This next step builds on last year's growth area of strengthening my confidence in addressing personnel issues that are in alignment with policy and employment law, while also attending to the human relationships involved. My professional development in coaching will continue to support my approach to developing the leadership team and also the staff manager in a new way of supporting and strengthening our organizational leadership.

Goal 2: I will bring the leadership team into a deeper level of awareness and contribution to our sustainability efforts, being now at a higher level of operations, sustainability and stewardship, using multi-year fiscal projections, the strategic plan, and the operations plan. This builds on prior year efforts to steadily grow the team's financial and operational understandings of how our organization functions. This required a significant culture shift, which could not all be undergone at once.

Goal 3: This year, I will map out a new Executive Director succession plan in partnership with the Executive Committee and the full Board of Directors. The goal is to have a clear path and plan ready for implementation, as needed, that is built upon and responsive to the organization's new realities, which are significantly different from the succession plan that supported the founding Director's departure and my hire in 2016. A few of these seismic changes include having gone from a budget of \$350,000 to one over \$1M and having grown our FTE from 4.2 to 11.5.

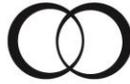
4. What key **leadership development** opportunities are planned for the year ahead?

All Leadership Team members are taking professional development training in human resource law and business ethics for supervisors. The Executive Director and Staff Manager are taking human resource law and workplace harassment prevention training on top of the aforementioned training. The Community Engagement Manager is growing in his role as a major donor steward, and will continue to seek out professional development opportunities which support that role. The incoming Facilitation and Grants Manager is pursuing nomination to the NAFCM Board of Directors, which is a great next step in her development, as someone who has immense potential in future leadership within the organization.

5. Identify **key performance goals for the Board of Directors** for the year ahead.

Key performance goals for the Board from my perspective are:

- A supportive, clear and successful transition of Executive Committee leadership;
- Successful integration of a new youth member & possibly additional adult member by fall; &
- Buy-in and commitment on focused educational learning time in future meetings, built upon clarity from the annual assessment process. A related factor for consideration is a meeting schedule that integrates some in-person time in a manner that is supportive and connecting for Board members.



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Part II: Evaluation of LEADERSHIP criteria.

The scale used in rating performance shall be as follows:

- 4 = Distinguished Performance
- 3 = Proficient Performance
- 2 = Basic Performance
- 1 = Unsatisfactory Performance

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	RATING
<p><u>Standard 1: Community Leadership & Industry Alignment</u> Serve as the organization’s chief professional officer and as spokesperson, using external presence and relationships to garner new opportunities. Recommend advocacy strategies for the organization’s mission and vision. Seek to engage, and integrate the agency with the broader community, and assures active, on-going dialogue with the community that the organization serves. Serve as organizational liaison to statewide association. Maintain connection and alignment with community mediation industry and national association.</p> <p>Executive Self-Assessment: <u> 4 </u></p> <p>Summary statement: Jody exemplifies all leadership behaviors as evidenced by her national, state, and local connections with organizations and individuals committed to the work of conflict resolution, justice, equity, inclusion, and civility. She actively and consistently personifies the mission, vision, and values of the DRC to the highest degree.</p> <p>Additional comments: *Exceeds all expectations *Track record for success, both within the organization and in the wider DRC community *Jody’s become a strong, effective voice and presence for the DRC in the community, state and federal levels. *Strong connections with the Thurston County Chamber, other Non-Profits, and the legal community *NAFCM (National Association for Community Mediation) leadership continues *Resolution Washington leader---legislative testimony, advocacy meetings with legislators and staff, excellent presentation with colleagues to WA Supreme Court En Banc session *Eviction Prevention work with legislators and Supreme Court Justice Debra Stephens *Presentations to Thurston County groups, League of Women Voters. *Participant and leader during the 2021 Board Chairs Academy—many of the best practices promoted were already in place or being developed under Jody’s leadership at the DRC. Jody approached this with a continuous improvement mindset. *Exceptional leadership and vision for taking the DRC from a small, best kept secret niche organization to a visible high performing, transformational non-profit meeting the ongoing and ever-changing needs of the community *Continued leadership providing resources and creating an inclusive process developing the DRC Race, Equity and Diversity Statement.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>4</u></p>



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PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	RATING
<p><u>Standard 2: Programming Health & Staff Management</u> Lead local programmatic excellence, rigorous program evaluation, and consistent quality of service provision and communications. Ensure operational alignment with professional standards as required by RCW 7.75, 7.07 and other applicable law. Lead, coach, develop, and retain high-performance senior leadership team. Ensure effective systems to track scaling progress, and regularly evaluate program components, so as to measure successes that can be effectively communicated to the board, funders, and other constituents. Ensure staff direction, development and oversight including implementation and reporting on annual organizational work plan.</p> <p>Executive Self-Assessment: <u> 3 </u></p> <p><u>Summary statement:</u> Jody has shown continuous growth in this area over the past year as evidenced by managing HR concerns. The results were effective and new policies were developed or modified to standardize expectations. In addition, Jody assessed her team’s skills and abilities, and made the decision to evolve the staffing model by adding appropriate positions to serve the DRC’s needs to serve the community. She has exhibited competence in redesigning the staffing model, supporting education and training for team members to improve knowledge, skills, and abilities, and promoted some team members to a higher level of responsibility. She has already identified a staff member who could be mentored for an associate director position, As the DRC’s services continue to increase, this is an area where it is likely Jody will continue to modify the team structure, learning needs of staff, to support newly yet to be identified programs and services as she addresses the community’s needs.</p> <p><u>Additional comments:</u> *New leadership responsibilities with adding new staff, adjusting and cross training roles and responsibilities. * Developing senior leadership team; managing complexities in the HR realm; strong interest in connecting the Strategic Plan to the Ops Plan. *Great focus on getting diverse staff hired, supported and employed with livable wages *Jody worked with Board (Julie and others) to develop a meaningful race equity document lauded by all board members.</p> <p><u>Opportunities for improvement:</u> *Encourage more transparency with the Board on the effectiveness of DRC programs: restorative justice, drug court efforts, education outreach, Eviction Prevention as it evolves—in addition to income streams help illustrate measures and data sources being used.</p>	<p align="center"><u> 3 </u></p>



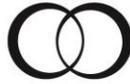
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PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	RATING
<p><u>Standard 3: Functional Operations & Financial Accountability</u> Serve as the chief operations officer, accountable for implementing Board-approved policies and consistent business practices, and assure clients, volunteers. Maintain full compliance in human resource administration, and assure staff and visitors of a safe, orderly, and lawful working environment. Submit and supervise annual operating budget, providing monthly financial statements, an executive dashboard analysis of finances and variances of actual performance against budget targets, while adhering to financial policies and practices approved by the Board of Directors.</p> <p>Executive Self-Assessment: <u>3</u></p> <p><u>Summary statement:</u> Jody has effectively established a smooth, running organization that evolves with the needs as she identifies them. The organizational structure reflects her expectations for how and to what standards she expects the work of the DRC to get done. She has also led the team during retreats and 1:1 conversation to work collaboratively with each other which has led to staff capable of providing assistance and leadership in several operational areas, such as Lucia and Charlotte, Logan, and Jennifer. Jody is prompt in producing financial reports for board meetings based of the strategic work and operational imperatives set out for the year. She communicates transparently and comprehensively with integrity about the details in those reports, including disclosure of significant variances such as utilities oversight. She recognized the importance of having a staff leader focused on Community Engagement and Fundraising and found an experienced person in Joe for the position who has helped grow sources and tactics for increasing financial support for the DRC.</p> <p><u>Additional comments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">*Leads by example*Adaptable to new demands*Adaptable to staff’s needs and to the different approaches of board members*Clear communicator*On top of all policy revisions from job descriptions, employment policies, etc.*Established and uses Essential Functions Calendar*Audit for 2021 was excellent example of adherence to using ongoing improvement—patience and persistence with excellence proved to be an audit to celebrate*Implements plans and follows through <p><u>Opportunities for improvement:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">*Consider augmenting monthly financial Dashboards beyond ‘naked financials’*Increase transparency with the progress of the Capacity Campaign benchmarks and goal	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>3</u></p>



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<p>Standard 4: Resource Development Communication Serves as the chief fund development officer for the corporation, supervises an annual fund development plan, assured a balanced portfolio of charitable revenues, seeks earned income opportunities, provides staff support to actively recruit and involve Board members and key community leaders in fund development strategies. Maintains superior database and contributor records system, and develops, publishes, and widely distributes a case for giving on behalf of the organization.</p> <p>Executive Self-Assessment: __3__</p> <p><u>Summary statement:</u> Jody uses her connections and knowledge of grants and fundraising to create a longterm strategy for growing the reserve fund, establishing the Capacity Building Campaign and helping the DRC Board to shift focus to Community Engagement work of the Board Development Committee. Jody and Joe have worked closely to create and maintain an outstanding series of publications that inform the community, state, and national organizations that educate the community about DRC services and show results in factual data reports. As a result, Jody has lobbied for and obtained significant funding from the Washington legislature, national and local grant funding. Jody received recognition by NAFCM as one of seven DRCs nationally to have rapidly developed and adapted the regular Mediation services program to an on-line Zoom version within 2 months of the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown. The course format is published by the national mediation services organization where Jody maintains an active role in as a past president.</p> <p><u>Additional comments:</u> *Excellent leadership development of CE director’s role with board on resource development—needs continuous communication from the ED as well</p> <p><u>Opportunities for Improvement:</u> *Increase communication on major Capacity Campaign *Provide updates or data on projects like outreach to businesses, Attorney Challenge to help all board members build awareness of our DRC partnerships and sponsors</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">___3___</p>
<p>Standard 5: Strategic Direction and Board of Directors Supports the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and the broader community in an inclusive planning process to assure a community-based approach to achieving the mission, operates from a strategic plan with annual evaluation and updates, and uses the strategic plan as the focal point of the organization’s program implementation and management strategies and culture. Coordinates planning for Board meetings and Board committees, provides support staffing to assure the needs of Board responsibilities are met, including executive governance, strategic planning, and board development.</p> <p>Executive Self-Assessment: 2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">___3___</p>



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<p><u>Summary statement:</u> Jody actively participated in the Board Chairs Academy in 2021 along with the Board President and Treasurer over 6 months. The program was immensely enriching and the fact that 2 board members and Jody attended together speaks to her willingness and time commitment to advance her understanding of Executive Board operations and accountabilities. Jody and the board used several concepts from the course to clarify the work of the DRC. Elements implemented were: The Logic Model; Board Assessment Process; Board Committee Structure; Strategic Plan Format and the Executive Director Performance Review revisions. The area is a joint venture for evolution as more board members attend the Board Chairs Academy, and Board leadership embraces more strategies to improve board functions. Jody continues to evolve her relationship with members of the board and works to assure her Executive position is truly the bridge between the Board’s vision and the ability to lead that vision with a highly talented leadership team and staff.</p> <p><u>Additional comments:</u> *Gracious and respectful of the board/executive relationships recognizing shared and differentiated responsibilities *Great attention of time and details to planning agenda with board president, executive committee *Strong support to all committee leaders and board members. *Commitment to conducting 2:1 meetings with board president to learn strengths and interests of individual board members *Utilizes strengths expertise of board members for organizational dilemmas as appropriate *Very easy to approach and seek support by all board members</p> <p><u>Opportunities for Improvement:</u> *Please feel free to address misconceptions that might surface up at board meetings *Providing ED Reports (new in 2022) at board meetings is a welcomed efforts to further communication with the entire board *Consider ways to expand board committee membership with volunteers from within our pool or other like focused non-profit leaders *Continue to involve executive committee as appropriate, with all major HR issues, new initiatives and other relevant incidents</p>	



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Part III:

Areas of Commendations and Outstanding Performance:

Jody serves in the Executive Director role and consistently demonstrates a deep commitment to the mission, vision, values and fully understands the cause for which the DRC serves the community. As such, she maintain current knowledge, skills and abilities to function in the executive role with high distinction and respect from peers, staff, the Board and community leaders including legislators throughout the state and on a national level. She demonstrates all the characteristics of a transformational leaders at a time when the DRC organization needs this approach with rapidly changing social climate.

The DRC Board is grateful and proud to have Jody Suhrbier as our leader and we look forward to the work ahead together.

Areas, if any, of Demonstrated Need or Performance Improvement:

Identified as “opportunities for improvement” –not requirements or demonstrated needs, but rather attention to best practices are noted in each criteria in this review.

By _____ Date
Executive Director, Jody Suhrbier

Acceptance Approved on _____, 2022, by the Board of Directors

President of the Board of Directors, Mickey Lahmann Date