



# Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center

360.676.0122 | [whatcomdrc.org](http://whatcomdrc.org) | 13 Prospect Street, Ste. 201 | Bellingham, WA 98225

## 2012 Annual Report

Empowering community members to resolve conflict peacefully

February, 2013



### Our Mission

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

### Our Vision

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

### Executive Director's Report

This past year we marked the 20th anniversary of the WDRC. In doing so, we celebrated two decades of listening, learning, empowering and resolving. We had the opportunity to both focus on some exciting internal activities in which the staff and Board engaged, as well as external activities—allowing us to use our creativity to design and strengthen new and existing programs to better serve the community. Some highlights from the past twelve months include:

- In tandem with Resolution Washington, the statewide association of Dispute Resolution Centers, we aligned our practicum program and continuing education requirements to meet the newly revised and rigorous best practices.
- In partnership with District Court, we piloted a new program with a restorative justice focus—the District Court Sentencing Alternative Conflict Class. This conflict resolution and communication workshop gives offenders the opportunity to build helpful skills and reflect upon their actions. Paired with community service and a form of probation, it serves as an alternative to jail.
- We collaborated with Current Media Productions to develop a video highlighting our programs and services.
- We hired a new Youth Program Coordinator to run our youth program.
- Our Board of Directors refined our strategic plan, working with staff to create a shared values statement.
- We trained a record number of youth and adults, 53% more than in 2011.
- We mediated a record number of cases, a 13% increase over 2011.

As I shared at our anniversary luncheon, I believe in this organization. I believe in the work we do and the people who are doing it. I believe in our community and its ability to create a culture of healthy conflict and dialogue. And I know that while over the past 20 years we have touched many lives, we have only just begun. For as long as there are differing opinions and contentious issues, unique personalities and divergent perspectives, and so long as we are committed to living, working, and simply being in this beautiful space we call Whatcom County, there will be a need to focus on working collaboratively together to solve our collective challenges.

The WDRC is here to help do just that. I am honored to be a part of this organization and I truly believe that together we can bring this vision to fruition.

In recognition of this special year, and the significant needs our community has, I am especially appreciative of all of the support that individuals, foundations, and businesses have dedicated to the WDRC. These contributions help ensure the continuation of our programs and enable us to meet emerging needs with flexibility and responsiveness. I look forward to engaging each and every one of you in the myriad ways that exist to help the WDRC continue to thrive.

With warmth,  
Moonwater



# In 2012, the WDRC of CREATIVE

## How does the WDRC serve our community?



### Conflict Prevention

The WDRC is committed to building the capacity of community members to better manage conflict as it arises and to teach them skills to prevent conflict from escalating. **In 2012, the WDRC trained 1175 adults and 931 youth** through our regular on-site classes, as well as through custom trainings requested by schools, workplaces, and organizations.

### Conflict Intervention

Recognizing that conflict will continue to occur, the WDRC is committed to providing intervention services when individuals need support. **In 2012, the WDRC mediated 244 cases,** including issues around parenting plans, small claims, neighbor-to-neighbor, landlord-tenant, parent-teen, foreclosure, workplace, business-consumer, and more.



Top: Staff members Calhan Ring and Erin C. work on curriculum. Middle: Shuksan and Cordata Healthy Choices Group. Bottom: Mediation provides an opportunity to work through challenging conversations. Credit: Marc Griffin, Molly McKay, Marc Griffin

# The WDRC served 7416 people



# celebrated 20 years CONFLICT RESOLUTION

## WDRC's 20th Anniversary

Our June 20th Anniversary luncheon featured a welcome from Mayor Kelli Linville, a commemorative film, stories from our services, and recognition of WDRC founders



Photos from top to bottom: 20th Anniversary Luncheon at Northwood Hall; WDRC birthday cake donated by Let Them Eat Cake; WDRC Mediators Ann McCartney, Felicia Staub, and Jeanne Chadwick pose for a picture; Bellingham Mayor Kelli Linville welcomes attendees.  
Credit: Abbie George



### A Brief History of the WDRC

Throughout the years, numerous people have contributed their time, energy, and talents to make the WDRC what it is today. From serving 616 people and mediating 48 cases in 1993, to serving 7416 people and mediating 244 cases in 2012, the Center has greatly expanded the services offered to our community. Here are some of the most significant milestones the WDRC has achieved since it was first established in 1992:

- 1992:** The WDRC acquires its non-profit 501 (c)(3) status with a mission of “Promoting understanding, peace, wisdom, and healing in the community by helping people transform conflict into creative outcomes.”
- 1993:** Whatcom County Council designates the WDRC under RCW 7.75.
- 1995:** The WDRC mediates 62 Small Claims cases within the first year of offering it as an alternative to going to court.
- 1996:** The WDRC holds its first mediation training program, hires its first youth program staff, and receives its first referral case from the Juvenile Probation system.
- 1998:** Whatcom County Superior Court requires divorcing parents to take the WDRC’s “Helping Children Through Family Changes” class and adopts a new local court rule mandating mediation for all divorcing couples with contested issues.
- 2000:** The WDRC expands services to include Intra-Family Mediation.
- 2003:** The first Peace Builder Awards Gala takes place.
- 2005:** The WDRC begins to offer on-site mediation at Small Claims Court.
- 2008:** The WDRC begins to receive state legislative funds.
- 2011:** The WDRC adopts a new mission to “Provide and promote constructive and collaborative approaches to conflict through mediation, training, facilitation, and community education” and begins conducting foreclosure mediations.
- 2012:** The WDRC celebrates 20 years of service to the community.

To learn more about the WDRC, watch the short film Current Media Productions produced in 2012 featuring Executive Director Moonwater, clients, and mediators.

View it on our website:  
[www.whatcomdrc.org](http://www.whatcomdrc.org).



in 2012.

# Mediation Services

Mediation offers a chance to have challenging conversations in a productive and safe space, guided by a neutral mediator. Our highly trained mediators use an 8-stage, interest-based model to help clients reach mutually agreeable resolutions.



## 2012 Mediations

Total Mediation Participants.....	635
Total Mediation Cases Opened.....	754
Total Mediation Sessions.....	275
<b>Total Mediated Cases.....</b>	<b>244</b>
Small Claims Mediations .....	103
Family Mediations .....	114
Community Mediations .....	13
Foreclosure Mediations.....	14
Mediator Volunteer Hours.....	580

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we distribute exit surveys to each of our mediation clients. Of the 386 mediation clients surveyed in 2012:

- 97% Found the mediators fair and impartial.
- 92% Reported the situation was improved by mediation.
- 89% Said mediation helped to improve communication.
- 92% Said mediation helped them understand the issues.
- 92% Would recommend mediation to others.
- 97% Were satisfied with the process.



**80% of 2012 mediations resulted in resolutions**

**Who comes to mediation? Families, co-workers, businesses & clients, parents & teens, neighbors, housemates, landlords & tenants... No one is ever turned away for lack of funds.**



### What the clients say:

“As an alternative to small claims court, this process fulfills a vital, cost-saving, community-building service. I was very pleased with the outcome.”

**Small Claims Mediation Client**

“This is the best way to resolve any dispute calmly and respectfully.”

**Small Claims Mediation Client**

“You are such a great resource for this community. Thank you for once again creating the possibility for agreement between two people who otherwise would not have been able to without your expertise.”

**Family Mediation Client**



**“IT’S GOOD TO KNOW WE’RE FRIENDS AGAIN.**

**IT HELPED BRING A SENSE OF CLOSURE TO THINGS. VERY RELAXED. I FELT SAFE. EXTREMELY PROFESSIONAL. FAIR AND BALANCED. THANK YOU.**”

### Reaching Resolution: A Mediation Story

A single mom of five was about to lose her home on the courthouse steps in a matter of days. Through the WDRC’s Stable Home Mediation Program, mediators worked with the homeowner and the lender to ensure the correct documents were completed, dated, signed and submitted to the bank in order to review the loan for a modification. The homeowner left the WDRC mediation stating, **“With your help we accomplished more in the past three hours than I was able to on my own in the past 18 months. Thank you.”** To this day, she remains in her home.





# Adult Trainings

Our conflict resolution classes build skills all adults need to communicate effectively and resolve conflict proactively and peacefully.



## 2012 Trainings



Total Workshops Provided.....	52
Professional Mediation Trainings.....	2
Understanding Conflict Workshops.....	4
Helping Children <small>through</small> Family Changes Seminars.....	15
District Court Sentencing Alternative Conflict Classes .....	1
Other/Customized Trainings .....	30
Total Training Participants.....	1175

## Trainings We Offer

- Professional Mediation Trainings:** Advanced conflict resolution and communication skills for professionals
- Understanding Conflict Workshops:** Basic conflict and communication skills for community members
- Helping Children through Family Changes Seminar:** Parenting through divorce and separation
- District Court Sentencing Alternative Conflict Class:** Skills for handling conflict for first-time offenders
- Customized Trainings:** Classes designed for workplaces, organizations, and teams

**Who takes our classes?** Supervisors, managers, HR specialists, human services professionals, community members, teachers, attorneys, mediators, first-time offenders, workplace teams, and more

All trainees have a chance to give us feedback about our classes. Here's what our 2012 trainees told us:

- 100% of Professional Mediation trainees felt they could facilitate the mediation process with ease and confidence.
- 93% of Understanding Conflict Workshop trainees learned new effective communication skills.
- 90% of parents in Helping Children through Family Changes found the class to be helpful.
- 86% of DCSACC students will choose to handle conflict differently in the future.
- 94% of customized training participants would recommend the class to others.



## What the clients say:

"The mediation training has provided me with an amazing set of tools and a tried and true process through which I can better enter into and work with conflict in my life."

**Professional Mediation Training Participant**

"I learned practical, valuable strategies and concepts for living with and being productive in conflicts. [The class was] helpful, and easy to follow and understand."

**Understanding Conflict Workshop Participant**



"Hard to think of a way to improve it...The class was superb. I came grudgingly. I am leaving with appreciation. A gift from WA state!"

**Helping Children through Family Changes Seminar Participant**

"Conflict resolution is extremely important for office environments. I've been to many conflict resolution trainings and this is by far the best."

**Workplace Training Participant**



# Youth Program

Our youth program empowers young people to resolve conflict without aggression and build healthy relationships.



Nooksack Valley Middle School, May, 2012.  
Credit: Emily Wilson

## 2012 Youth Program



Total Workshops Provided .....	53
Number of Youth Participants .....	931
Total Volunteer Hours.....	1928
Total Number of Schools Served.....	14

Of the youth who participated in WDRC workshops and submitted surveys in 2012:

- 88% Learned ways of solving problems without hurting or scaring others
- 87% Have a better understanding of how needs relate to conflict
- 84% Found the workshop helpful



## Who comes to youth classes? 4th-12th grade students at schools in Whatcom County, youth from Juvenile Court and Teen Court

### “ What youth and teachers say:



Eagleridge Elementary assembly presentation, September, 2012. Credit: Ryan Goelzenleuchter

“I have used an I statement with my mom and it really kept the situation calm and helped our relationship stay strong.”

**Adolescent Girl**

“The class taught me that you don’t have to be aggressive to solve problems.”

**Adolescent Boy**

“I love that someone from the community comes and shares how adults have conflict; That these skills are important for everyone, all ages, all backgrounds. It’s good to have a variety of perspectives on how different people deal with and respond to conflict.”

**Teacher**



### Kids and Conflict: A Story from the Classroom

A few sessions into a small group workshop at a local elementary school, one student distanced herself from her classmates. Refusing to participate in the activities, she sat with arms crossed. At the end of the session, this student and another approached Emily, the lead WDRC facilitator,

and asked if she could help talk through their conflict and assist them in collaborating to find a solution like they’d been learning. Instead of avoiding their conflict, they sought help to repair their friendship. They thought of some different ways to keep their close friendship vibrant, and both girls put their new skills to work. These two third-graders headed back to their classroom hand-in-hand.



**New in 2012**  
CUSTOM ASSEMBLY  
PRESENTATION  
at Eagleridge Elem.

**NEW STAFF:**  
Brittany Sullateskee,  
Youth Program  
Coordinator

# The Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center provides high impact services with a modest budget...

## 2012 Financial Review

### Balance Sheet

December 31, 2012

#### Assets

Total Checking/Savings: .....\$93,298  
 Total Accounts Receivable: \$21,371  
 Total Fixed Assets: .....\$17,618  
 Total Other Assets: .....\$21,016  
 Total Assets : ..... \$152,283

#### Liabilities

Total Liabilities: ..... \$4,127

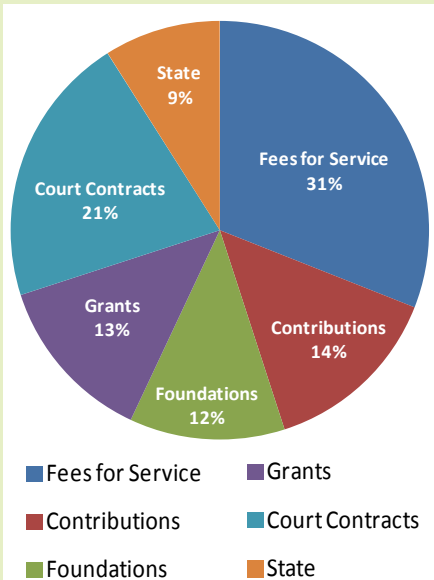
#### Equity

Fund Balance: ..... \$124,361  
 Net Income: .....\$23,795  
 Total Equity: ..... \$148,156

Total Liabilities & Equity: .. \$152,283

## Revenue by Source

Total Income: ..... \$338,822



### We are grateful for the support of our 2012 donors and sponsors:

Kacey Alleman, Deb Alleman, Ryan Alleman, N.F. Jackson, Tom Anderson, Vinessa Andreano, Alfred Arkley, Auburn Bocce, Avellino, Avenue Bread, Back In Motion, Robin Barker, Barkley Boulevard Dental Care, Barkley Company, Bayou On Bay, Bellair Airporter Shuttle, Bellevue Vision Clinic, Bellewood Acres, Bellingham Cold Storage, Bellingham Herald, Bellingham Physical Therapy, Bellingham Police Association, Bellingham Tennis Club, Bio Bug Pest Management, Birch Equipment, Boccecom, Kelly Bjork, Kara Black, Nancy Blume, George Boggs, Debbie & Gary Bornzin, BP Foundation, Robert Brandow, Jim Britain, Ken & Marla Bronstein, Jeffrey Brown, Kris Buettner, Buri Funston Mumford, Carolyn Withrow Counseling, Cascadia Weekly, CAZ Energy Services, Joan Cervisi, Jeanne & Gary Chadwick, Nina Chang, Chicaoji, Chrysalis Inn and Spa, Chuckanut Distillery, Ciao Thyme, Ciel Foundation, Community Food Co-op, Cora and Joe's U-Cut, Eileen Coughlin, David Cunningham & Jeanne Richardson, Current Media Productions, Tracy Dahlstedt, Kaitlin Davis, Andy Day & Connie Cogburn, Jack Day, Deer Harbor Inn Restaurant, Otti Del Pozze, Jacie DeLaruelle, John M. Denooyer, Shellie & John Desmond, Dick's Drive-in Restaurants, David Doll, Robert Doll, David Donohue, Jim Doran, Randy Doucet, Tim & Joanne Douglas, Mary Ann Douglas, Patti Drews, Duane Sammons Insurance Center, Eagle Games, Matt Elich, Everybody's Yoga, Fabulous Healthy Hair, Ryan Farrow, Ferndale Quizno's, Employment Law Compliance, Fairhaven Toy Garden, Gladys Faulkner, Rose Anne Featherston, Ron Feld, Fin Records, Myron & Elka Fink, Renee Firos, Thom Fischer, Seth Fleetwood, Jennifer Flory, Deborah Forgays, Lindsey Frallic, Karen Funston, Deborra Garrett, Jaina Gemin, Julie Goebel, Gold's Gym, Donald Gongaware, Goodsearch, Alex Grant, Haggen, David Grant, Great Harvest Bread Co., Eileen Gribble, Grocery Outlet, Betsy Gross, Ann Hall, Margo Hammond, Hampton Inn, Paul Hanson, Elizabeth Hart, Leon F. Henley Jr, Kate Henze, Kathy Hilmoe-Nevels, James Hoogestraat, Icing On The Cake, Idiom Theater, Kristin Jager, Sarah Jenkins, Johnny's Donuts, Pamela Jons & Mike Cohen, Nancy Joseph, Jupiter Studios, Katie's Cupcakes, Keith Cox Autobahn, Tyler Kerlee, Casey Kilborn, Daniel Kirkpatrick, Barbara Klein, Mike Knapp, Walt & Alicia Kochan, Tim Krell, Pete Kremen, Kulshan Brewing Company, Lafeens Donuts, Valerie Lagen, Robert Langei, Law Office of R. Perry Eskridge, Law Office Of Randy A. Doucet, Mark Lazich, Let Them Eat Cake, Michael Light, Lighthouse Mission, Kelli Linville, Joseph Livesey, Gayle Livingston, Logos Bible Software, Don Lotze, Howard & JoAnne Lowe, Lowe Revocable Trust, Lulu...Wonderful Things, KayCee Luxtrum, Jacqui MacConnell, Ella Mahler, Mallard Ice Cream, Seth Makowsky, Jill May, K. Ann McCartney, Jodi McKay, Abram McKenzie, Marilyn McLean, Mentzer's Greenscape, Chris Mohnkern, Phil Montgomery, Li Moon, Moonwater, Hannah Moore, Catriona Munro & Chris Webb, Carlton Nathon, Terra Nevitt & Patrick Hurley, Northside Dental Care, Northwestern Clinic of Naturopathic Medicine, Mary Ann O'Hara, Andrew Olive, Mark Ortman, Janet Ott, Pacific NW Homes, Mary Passmore, Noel & Steve Paus, PeaceHealth - St. Joseph Medical Center, Pediatric NDT & SI Therapy Services, Raymond Pelletti, PetStop, Pickford Film Center, Playaboule, Sandra Portz, Ted Pratt, Pure Bliss, Bernice Rappaport, Raven's Way Counseling, Mary Rawlins, Michael Rawls, RECO Branding Solutions, Red Mountain Wellness, James Reider, Repanich Dental, RG Design LLC, Chuck & Dee Robinson, Craig Robinson, Rocket Donuts, Barbara & George Rofkar, Roger Jobs Motors, Ellie Rogers, Roundtable Pizza, Peter Ruffatto, Sheri Russell, Tana Sabatino, Paul Sarvasy & Sheila Sondik, Sanitary Service Company, Mary Sass, Paul Schissler, Seafood Producers Co-op, Jill Seager, Meggan Sheble, Schmidt Orthodontics, Silver Reef Casino and Spa, Flo Simon, Simple Help In A Box, Skylark's Hidden Café, Carole Slesnick, Smith & Just, Chuck & Johanna Snyder, Jon Soine, Starbucks, Randy Stegmeir, Ann Stevenson & Michael Berres, Linda Stewart, Tai Stillwater, Stremler Gravel, Surfrider Foundation, Neal Swanson, Sweet Art, Take Four String Quartet, Telegraph Fabrications, Nicole Theberge, The Chimney Sweep, The Creative Frog, The Inn at Mt. Baker, The Leopold, The Majestic, The Northern Light, The Table, The Unity Group, The Woods Coffee, Dave Thorngren, Tollhouse Energy Company, Trader Joe's, Tree Frog Night Inn, Virginia Tucker, Upfront Theatre, Village Books, Vis Seafoods, Walton Beverage, Ted Wang, Nancy Waters, WECU, Lara Welker, Anne Welsh, Fred & Peggy Wepprecht, Whatcom County Bar Association, Whatcom Symphony Orchestra, Heather Whitaker, Elizabeth Wilbur, Hilary Williamson, Windermere Real Estate, Wes Withrow, Chyerl Wolfe-Lee, Susan Wood, Wonderland Herbs, Teas and Spices, Debra Young, Seth Zimmerman

\*We deeply appreciate all of our supporters and regret any omissions.

## Special Thanks to Major Donors and Sponsors of 2012

Boundary Bay Brewery, Jerry & Beth Brownfield, City of Bellingham Tourism Fund, David & Jayme Curley, Marian & Graham Exall, The Mary Redman Foundation, Puget Sound Energy, RiverStyx Foundation, Rotary Club of Mt. Baker, Whatcom Community Foundation, Dean & Carolyn Withrow



## Thank you to our 2012 volunteers:

Arthur Abrahamson (in memoriam), Kevin Alex, Brenna Anderst, Chris Beers, Nancy Blume, Kris Buettner, David Donohue, Patti Drews, Jaina Gemin, Abigail George, Ryan Goelzenleuchter, Mika Greathouse, Elizabeth Hart, Kristin Jager, Leon James, Sarah Jenkins, Joel Litwin, Gayle Livingston, Molly McKay, Tom McNutt, Judy Osmundson, Amanda Pile, Bernice Rappaport, Micah Shanser, Wyatt Shedd-Stewart, Britt Sullateskee, John Summerson, Justin Therrien, Dave Thorngren, Erika Werdal, James Whisenhunt, Wes Withrow, Carolyn and Dean Withrow

## Thank you to our 2012 mediators:

Joel Bergsbaken, Jeanne Chadwick, Sophia Davies, Kaitlin Davis, Randy Doucet, Mary Dumas, Rose Anne Featherston, Doug Fenton, Deborah Forgays, Kathy Hilmoie, David Imburgia, Robert Kelly, Michael Kleps, Jessica Lee, Michael Light, Don Lotze, Howard Lowe, Jean MacGregor, K. Ann McCartney, Moonwater, Cynthia Moore, Mark Ortman, Bill Paleck, Mark Polin, Calhan Ring, Barbara Rofkar, Mark Rogers, Sheri Russell, Felicia Staub, Nancy Waters, Irene Wysocki

## Thank you to our 2012 practicum students:

Sandra Fusman, Nancy Joseph, Jason Kanov, Alice O'Donnell, Ellie Rogers, Ann Russell, Leah Wefer, Emily Wilson, Chyerl Wolfe-Lee, Cat Zavis



Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at Boundary Bay Brewery, December, 2012. Credit: Erin C.

90  
volunteers gave  
5450  
hours to the  
WDRC in 2012

**2012 Board:** Kacey Alleman - *President*, Mary Sass - *Vice President*, Randy Doucet - *Secretary*, Margo Hammond - *Treasurer*, Joan Cervisi, Jacqueline DeLaruelle, David Doll, David Grant, Andrew Olive, Raymond Pelletti, Debra Young

**2012 Advisory Board:** Nancy Blume, Marian Exall, Betsy Gross, Leon Henley, Carlton Nathon, Mark Rogers

**2012 Staff:** Erin C. - *Office Coordinator*, Kaitlin Davis - *Youth Program Manager*, Moonwater - *Executive Director*, Cynthia Moore - *Case Manager*, Calhan Ring - *Program Manager*, Ellie Rogers - *Program Assistant*, Brittany Sullateskee - *Youth Program Coordinator*, Rosanna Wadkins - *Fiscal Support*, Emily Wilson - *Youth Program AmeriCorps Volunteer*

phone: 360.676.0122

fax: 360.676.0783

address:

13 Prospect Street  
Suite 201

Bellingham, WA 98225

email: [wdrc@whatcomdrc.org](mailto:wdrc@whatcomdrc.org)



[whatcomdrc.org](http://whatcomdrc.org)



Annual Board/Staff Retreat, December, 2012. Credit: Moonwater