21 nonprofit Dispute Resolution Centers (DRCs) statewide provide accessible services to all Washington residents as established by the Washington State Legislature and in collaboration with local communities. RCW 7.75 established DRCs in 1984 and set the following Legislative intent:

The legislature finds and declares that:

a. The resolution of many disputes can be costly and complex in a judicial setting where the parties involved are necessarily in an adversary posture and subject to formalized procedures; and

b. Alternative dispute resolution centers can meet the needs of Washington’s citizens by providing forums in which persons may voluntarily participate in the resolution of disputes in an informal and less adversarial atmosphere.
EMPOWERING TOMORROW’S PROBLEM SOLVERS

DRCs support individuals, groups and organizations to manage conflict, improve relationships, and grow a culture of understanding and effective problem solving. Our services are open to the entire state, with a focus on accessibility for low-income residents and youth participants.

2019 IMPACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Value of Volunteer Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,022</td>
<td>$2,027,972</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Clients Reported Mediation Improved Their Situation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Mediations Settled</th>
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<tr>
<td>77%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

“Mediation at Neutral Ground DRC exceeded even my high expectations by an order of magnitude; it saved much time and money, but more importantly, it saved so much energy and good will, and enabled us to get through perhaps the most anxiety-ridden part of the separation process.”

- Family Mediation Client, Walla Walla
CONVENCING COMMUNITIES TO RESOLVE OUR MOST DIFFICULT ISSUES

Resolution Washington’s member DRCs provide a safe space for dialogue, helping individuals and groups build skills around diversity, equity, and inclusion, in addition to communication around challenging community and family issues. We help individuals from different backgrounds truly listen to and build understanding with one another. Because we are embedded in communities across the state, our work reflects local needs. Following are four examples of 2019 solutions member DRCs helped facilitate:

Facilitating Homeless Shelter Planning Community Dialogue

BELLEVUE CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

The issue of homeless shelters had fractured the community. So Bellevue Conflict Resolution Center staff and volunteers facilitated small group dialogue to get input from the community for amendments to the land use code amendment governing shelters. Two new shelters are now being built reflecting the community’s needs, including on-going dialogue. Ten of the 21 DRCs provided dispute resolution or training services directly related to preventing or addressing homelessness in 2019.

Building a Restorative School Climate

DRC OF THURSTON COUNTY | OLYMPIA

“Judge and suspend” was the way conflicts had long been handled at one high school, like many others. The DRC spent two years working with the school, shifting the response from punitive to restorative, giving staff and students supportive and impactful methods to process conflict. The changes resulted in record low suspension and repeated offense rates, and an overall more peaceful school climate. In 2019, 14 DRCs addressed school discipline issues in collaboration with schools and community partners across the state.

Supporting Intercultural Family Decisions

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA DRC OF SNOHOMISH, ISLAND & SKAGIT COUNTIES | EVERETT

Separated immigrants struggling with cultural and legal expectations between their Mexican heritage and American home successfully navigated their values to develop a parenting plan meeting the unique needs of their family with Spanish language mediators. DRCs are committed to providing access to their services, providing Spanish language services, using interpreters, and meeting needs for cases involving domestic violence or other special considerations.

Youth Success through Restorative Juvenile Diversion

DRC OF YAKIMA & KITTITAS COUNTIES | YAKIMA

Rather than stay in the system, first time offenders found jobs, stayed in school, applied for trade school grants and rented their own apartments after being engaged in the court-referred Yakima DRC pilot youth program. Restorative circles helped restore these youth, sparing them lives of shame and incarceration. DRCs directly served 3,322 youth statewide in 2019 through diversion programs, training, restorative practices, parent-teen mediation and peer mediation.
RESPONSIBLE STEWARDS OF PUBLIC DOLLARS.

To be fiscally responsible and engage our communities, the majority of DRC services are powered by volunteers with supervision by dedicated staff. In 2019, DRC revenue included the following sources: 11% state funds, 13% city and county funds, 9% filing fee revenue, 20% contracts, 17% individual fees, 23% grants, 6% contributions, and 2% other.

58,368 PEOPLE DIRECTLY SERVED
12,147 COMMUNITY MEMBERS TRAINED
4,746 DISTRICT, SUPERIOR & JUVENILE COURT CASES MEDIATED
24,186 INFORMATION AND REFERRAL CALLS

CO-PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

While communities across the nation and throughout our State have experienced significant conflict during the past year, Resolution Washington’s 21 member DRCs have worked tirelessly to meet our communities’ rising demand for support. The scope of our assistance and the depth of our impact has continued to grow-permeating throughout homes, schools, courts, businesses, community based organizations, and city, county, state, and tribal governments.

Together, with an expansive network of skilled practitioners, our DRCs have strengthened their respective communities through the provision of mediation services to resolve myriad contentious issues, group facilitation to support courageous conversations, and coaching to offer a confidential listening ear to those in need. Each DRC also has responded to the unique needs of their local area, customizing additional services, waiving fees, and collaborating with partners to ensure access to conflict prevention and intervention supports are available to all. To this end, we were honored to be recognized with the 2019 Access to Justice Community Leadership Award which recognized Resolution Washington for “...playing a strategic, significant and courageous leadership role in improving access to the justice system.”

Our DRCs’ staff and volunteers are steadfast in their commitment to community resiliency. While the issues before us continue to build in their complexity, together we are confident in our communities’ growing capability to work together for a healthy future.

Sincerely yours,

Moonwater
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center
CO-PRESIDENT
Resolution Washington

Astrid Areledo
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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