

# 2009 Annual Report

*Empowering Whatcom County Community Members to Resolve Conflict Peacefully*



## Donors

Many thanks to the following individuals and organizations: Anonymus, 3 Oms Yoga, Allegiant Air, Kacey Alleman, Tom Anderson, Alfred Arkley, Gary Armstrong, Joana Armstrong, Avellinos, Theresa Azevedo, Robin Barker, Barkley Boulevard Dental Care, Kathy Bartlett, Bob Beaty, Cathy Beaty, Bellewood acres, Bellingham Cold Storage, Bellingham Food Co-op, Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship, Ed Bennett, Drew Betz, Ronna Biggs, Kara Black, Richard Black, Blue Moon Ballroom, Ashleigh Bobavia, John Bobovski, Gary Bomzen, Boundary Bay Brewery, BP America, Inc., Jean Brechan, Terri Briant Booth, Anne Brown, Jeffrey Brown, Beth Brownfield, Jerry Brownfield, Jennifer Bullard, Valerie Bynon, Lauralee Carbone, David Carley, Sue Cedergreen, Gary Chadwick, Jeanne Chadwick, The Chrysalis Inn and Spa, Rita Clark, C. Cogburn, Lee Cole, Prentiss Cole, Craig cooper, Lucille Correa, Patricia Craddock, Bob Crites, David Curley, Colleen Curtis, Andrea Dalessandro, Eric Davis, Bob Davis, Reid DeSilva, John Dickerson, Michael Dodson, Andrea Doll, Mary Ann Douglas, Richard Dunlop, Patsy Dyksterhaus, Marian Exall, Doris Feron, Myron Fink, Roger Flescher, Jason Fortner, Nick Foster, Karen Funston, Deborra Garrett, Frances Gass, Sara Geballe, Sylvia Gerry, Harvey Gillis, Gold's Gym, Good Search, David Grant, Linda Grant, Jim Gray, Elizabeth Gross, Haggen, Jonathan Hall, Gary Harden, Michael Heatherly, Sam Hellis, Leon Henley, Daniel Hiestand, Darrell Hillaire, Laurene Honeyman, Cathlina Hope, Laura Horan, Mark Huemawn, Tara Hughes, Joseph Hutchinson, David Imburgia, The Inn at Mount Backer, Victor Inera, Steven James, Richard Jess, Kirsten Jones, Dean Kahn, Lynn Kulpa, Suzanne Lass, Jane Lewinsky, Carrie Lewis, Michael Light, Janet Lightner, Mary Lippiat, Howard Lowe, Jessica Maasen, Ranny Mann, Marie Marchand, Sandy Marr, Justin Marr, Joel Martin, The Mary Redman Foundation, K. Ann McCartney, GaryMcConaghy, Carol McGannon, Heather McKendry, Kate McLean, Eric McRory, Mary Mele, Phil Montgomery, Li Moon, Moonwater, Jane Moudry, Mt. Baker Assoc. Translators, John Murphy, Carlton Nathon, Crystal Neva, Cerise Noah, Nooksack Indian Tribe, Nooksack Salmon Enhancement, North Bellingham Golf Course, Cate O'neal, Patricia Pettcloud, David Pillinger, Sandra Portz, Bernice Rappaport, Diane Rappaport, Crystal Ravenwood, Mark Raymond, Roxanne Read, Riverstyx Foundation, Craig Robinson, Barbara Rofkar, Jolee Rogelstad, Patricia Rose, Rose Construction, Peter Ruffatto, Sherri Russell, Robert Sanborn, Taous Sawyer, Charles Sciafill, David Scott, Les Seelye, Michelle Smith, Doran Smolkin, Julie Smolkin, Charles Snyder, Johanna Snyder, SPIE, St. Joseph's Hospital, Felicia Staub, Christa Summons, SweetArt, Lindsay Taylor, Penny Tillson, Cecilia Thomas, Sherry Thompson, U & Me Dance, Inc., Meghan Ugdismale, M. Utendale, Victor Valadez, Village Books, Vocus, Wal-Mart Foundation, Robert Walston, Brian Walston, Aline wane, Bob Ward, Nancy Waters, Weight Law Offices, Erika Werdal, Kristie Westover, Jim Westover, Whatcom Educational Credit Union, Whatcom Volunteer Center, Carolyn Withrow, Dean Withrow, Wes Withrow, Jack Woods, Warren Young, Cat Zavis, and Tony Zold., Great Harvest Bread

## Executive Director's Report

This past year was one of the busiest in the Center's 17 year history. Not only did we see significant increases in requests for our services, but we also saw that through the support of our volunteers, subcontractors, staff and board we were able to meet those needs with enthusiasm, skill, and commitment to our mission. Notable successes this year included:

- An overall 24% increase in people served directly compared to 2008
- A 52% increase in mediations over the previous year
- A 15 % increase in trainings over the previous year
- A 75% increase in training participants over the previous year
- A 20% increase in volunteer hours contributed over the previous year
- Certification of 4 new mediators, expanding our roster to 21 active mediators

The Center also:

- Sponsored a Parent Coordinator Training in partnerships with Whatcom County Superior Court and the local Parenting Coordinator Workgroup. This training brought the county one step closer in being able to offer another intervention service to high conflict families.
- Began offering Non Violent Communication Courses (NVC) to the community
- Extended the *Compete for a Cause* fundraising series to include Backgammon
- Settled in to our new and expanded office space!

I look forward to 2010 with a deep sense of satisfaction and dedication to this work and our mission. I invite you to join us as we continue to help our community address the challenges it faces in homes, businesses, neighborhoods and schools productively and constructively.

With warmth,  
*Moonwater*

## Our Mission

*The mission of the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center is to promote understanding, tolerance, and healing in the community by helping people transform conflict into creative and harmonious outcomes. To this end, the center will work to increase community understanding of the processes and alternatives to peaceful conflict resolution, educate and train people to the purposes of such conflict resolution, and provide for competent and neutral third parties to mediate or otherwise assist or empower disputants to resolve conflict in just, equitable, and cooperative ways.*

## Our Impact

" I am leaving with new perspectives and strategies ... that can be used in the workplace to make it productive and maintain quality relationships" - *Workplace Training Participant*

"Taking this course is one of the most meaningful things I've ever done. The skills I learned and insights made into myself are something I can carry into all my future conversations, negotiations, and conflicts. - *Professional Mediation Training Participant*

"(The most important thing I learned from this seminar was) understanding the importance of the child's relationship with the other parent, even if it's hard for the parents to get along"  
- *Helping Children Through Family Changes Participant*

"(Our mediator) was excellent. (She) kept us on track, made us respect one another, and helped us make good decisions to move forward constructively" - *Family Mediation Client*

"This was a very difficult situation, mediation was very helpful for me. A door for communication was opened"  
- *Family Mediation Client*

"Excellent alternative to court" - *Small Claims Mediation Client*

"It felt better getting everything out in the open"  
- *Small Claims Mediation Client*

## The Year in Numbers

Total People Served Directly:	4,505
Total Mediation Cases Opened:	785
Total Mediated Cases:	202
Total Mediation Sessions:	216
Small Claims Mediations:	96
Family Law Mediations:	97
Other Mediations :	9
Total Workshops Provided:	146
Total Training Participants:	3576
Total Volunteer Hours:	4,251

## Balance Sheet

December 31, 2009

### Assets

Total Checking/Savings	\$83,680
Total Accounts Receivable	\$16,483
Total Fixed Assets	\$24,839
Total Assets	\$125,002

### Liabilities

Total Liabilities	\$2,591
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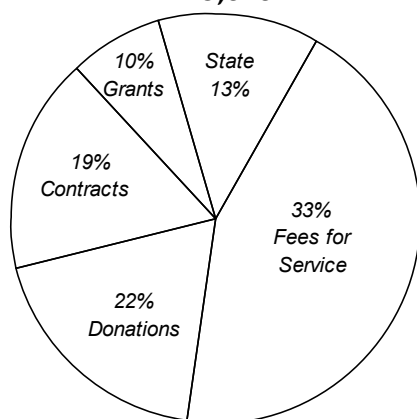
### Equity

Fund Balance	\$109,520
Net Income	\$12,891
Total Equity	\$122,410

Total Liabilities and Equity	\$125,002
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## Revenue by Source

243,848



## Our Impact

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we distribute exit surveys to each of our mediation clients. The responses to the questions below represent the percent of clients that answered "yes" or somewhat". There were 328 surveys collected.

Were the mediators fair and impartial? **99.7%**

Was the situation improved by mediation? **93%**

Did mediation help you communicate with other party? **88.7%**

Did mediation help better understand the issues? **88.4%**

Would you recommend mediation to others? **97.6%**

The following results are from participants who have taken our "Understanding with Conflict" workshop. We collected 199 surveys. Percentages indicate the participants who responded affirmatively:

Did the workshop help you understand how you approach conflict? **97%**

Do you have a better understanding of different conflict strategies? **92%**

Do you have new skills you can use for effective communication? **87%**

Do you have a better understanding of the root of conflict? **97%**

We conducted 38 workshops for elementary, middle and high school youth in 2009. On average:

**93%** Learned ways of solving problems without hurting or scaring others

**89%** Have new skills they can use to listen to others

**92%** Have new skills they can use to tell others how they think and feel.

"(This workshop) helped me learn to talk when I am mad." — Adolescent boy

"(This workshop) helped me control my anger and recognize my triggers." — Adolescent girl

## Overview of Services

### Conflict Prevention Services

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 it from escalating. To that end, in 2009, the WDRC trained 1323 adults, and 469 youth through school, community and workplace workshops.

### Conflict Intervention Services

Recognizing that conflict is a normal and natural part of life, the WDRC is committed to providing intervention services when individuals need assistance with conflicts they are experiencing. To that end, in 2009, the Center provided mediation services for a variety of cases including dissolutions, parenting plans, small claims, neighbor-to-neighbor, victim-offender, workplace, union/management, landlord-tenant, and more. In doing so, the WDRC served our local courts, schools, businesses, families, neighborhoods, and governmental agencies.

In 2009, the WDRC had an overall **87%** success rate in helping parties reach comprehensive resolutions. The majority of the remaining **13%** found the session (s) to be helpful and valuable despite not reaching a formal resolution.