



*Repairing Harm,  
Restoring Communities*

**2019 Annual Report**  
**Jan 1—Dec 1**



# A Message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Since 1983, the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) has been working with individuals, schools, families, and businesses to build peaceful communities throughout Washtenaw and Livingston counties. I've had the great pleasure of working with the DRC for the past 17 years, seeing first-hand the incredible impact our staff and volunteers make.



In 2019, we accepted 445 cases, touching the lives of 1,245 community members. We also saw an increase in cases mediated and a \$10,000 increase in our revenue, offering a glimpse into these successes over fiscal year 2019.

What began in 1983 with a strong focus on affordable and accessible conflict resolution services has largely remained the same. However, we have broadened our organizational purpose in strengthening our restorative justice work, as well as offer more opportunities for our community to manage conflict peacefully. This is particularly important as 2020 has been a difficult year due to COVID-19 and civil unrest.

I hope this report will help you appreciate our longstanding commitment to serving our communities, particularly those facing significant inequities, which COVID-19 has heightened—and most of all, inspire you to be a part of the scope of work that lies ahead.

Our work is urgent, and we could not do it without you. Thank you for bringing more peace into the lives of so many in our community.

Forever grateful,

Belinda Dulin  
Executive Director

# Healing the Harm



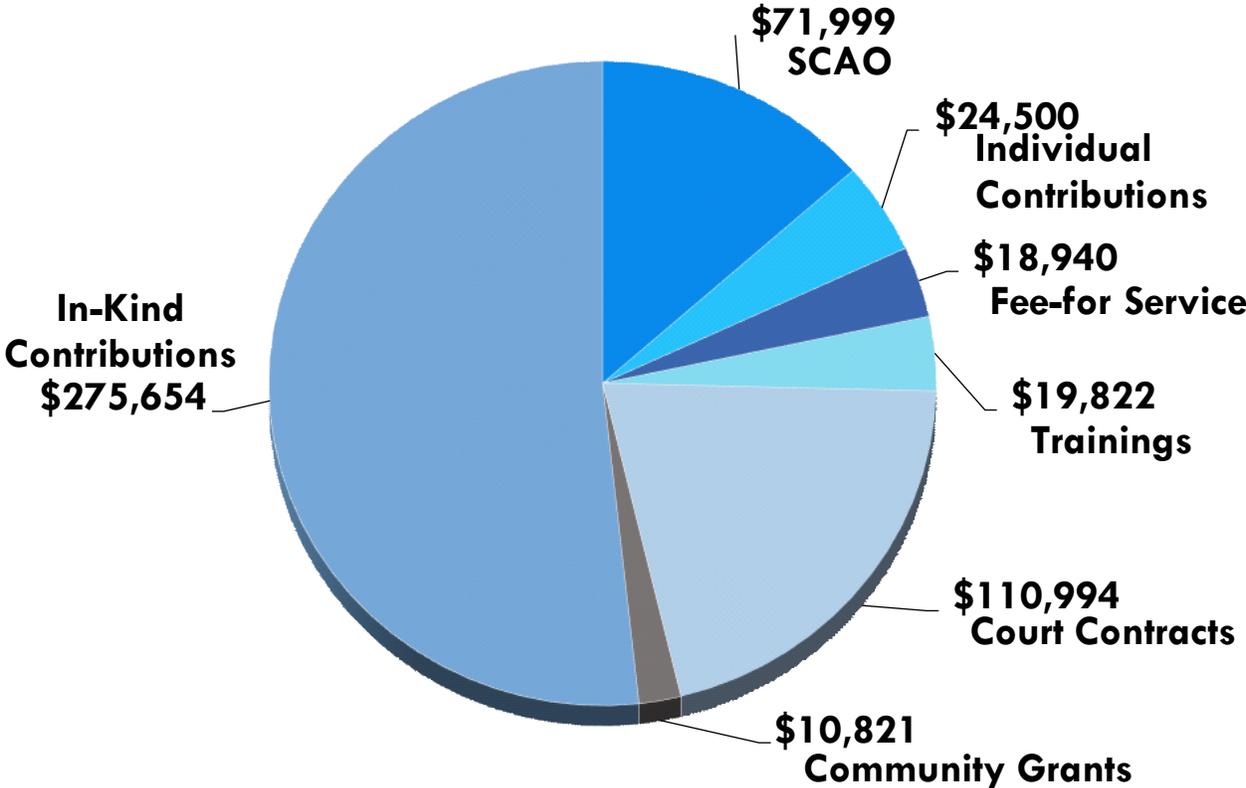
Often times, the DRC helps provide a facilitated session between staff members who are experiencing conflict with one another in the workplace. In a recent situation, two parties were struggling with racial micro-agressions and racially insensitive comments with each other. The relationship deteriorated to the point where both parties could not work with each other anymore. The DRC's mediation services helped to provide a safe space for them to come together and talk through their issues. Both parties eventually come to an understanding and even an agreement of apology.

*“The facilitators provided a space for me and my co-worker to feel heard and skillfully guided the conversation when moments got tough. It felt like the facilitators were trying to show that I was hurt, and to have the other party address that hurt (which they did). I feel like mediation was beneficial to us both and am happy we had the session.”*

*-Past participant*



# 2019 Financial Health Overview



## Total Revenue: \$257, 076

<b>State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) Grant</b> .....	<b>\$71,999</b>
Funds from the State of Michigan, Office of Dispute Resolution	
<b>Individual Contributions</b> .....	<b>\$24,500</b>
Private funders	
<b>Fee-For-Service</b> .....	<b>\$18,940</b>
Mediation, Special Education, and Peacemaking cases	
<b>Trainings &amp; Workshops</b> .....	<b>\$19,822</b>
Mediation Trainings, Restorative Practices workshops with schools, businesses, and private groups.	
<b>Court Contracts</b> .....	<b>\$110,994</b>
Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Saline, Peacemaking Court	
<b>Community Grants</b> .....	<b>\$10,821</b>
Washtenaw Coordinated Funders capacity building grant, First Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Sky Squad grant	

# We directly impacted **1245** individuals in Washtenaw County

& mediated ...

**451**  
cases  
in 2019

Small Claims

**80%**

Domestic  
Relations  
8%

Child  
Protection  
7%

Other  
4%

Schools  
1%

**Small Claims includes:** property, real estate, landlord/tenant, neighborhood, community

**Schools includes:** special education

**Child Protection includes:** abuse, neglect, reunification

**Family & Domestic Relations includes:** adult & child guardianship, post-judgement domestic, divorce no children, divorce with children, other probate matters

# Committed to Restorative Justice

*I like being a Peacemaker because it gives me the opportunity to try and impact someone's life in a positive way. It's hurtful to see how individuals are treating each other, especially in today's times. Circles and the peacemaking process allows us to begin to truly understand where others are coming from. Peacemaking demonstrates how important respect coupled with the power of words can be used to start the healing process.*

*-Claudia Young, Volunteer Mediator and Peacemaker*



*The DRC constantly evolves, yet at their core stays committed to the tenants of restorative justice as practiced through mediation. Bravo to the staff for perceptive, innovative programming, in addition to caring spirits that motivate their team of expert volunteers. I always learn from mediating and feel supported by the trust and assistance available from the organization's expert staff.*

*-Diane Winder, Volunteer Mediator*



# We Support the Black Community

Dear Friends,

Our country has been reeling from the challenges of COVID-19, which have disproportionately affected black and indigenous communities. The pandemic has acutely unveiled many injustices and inequities in our society. And now, the killing of George Floyd and many other black people before him have reopened the wounds we have been ignoring as a nation for hundreds of years.

These events affect each and every one of us nationwide, including those of us living in Washtenaw and Livingston counties. The outpouring of nationwide peaceful protests is one important first step for change. We must work in harmony, have crucial conversations, and unite peacefully to address, acknowledge, and heal the historical trauma and oppression of black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).

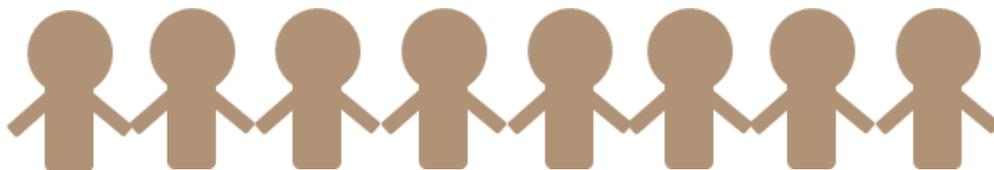
The Board of Directors of the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) condemns violence and police brutality. We hold the morals, values, and principles--on which the DRC was built--of equality and justice firmly in our hearts. We want to see a world that holds those accountable for the injustices that have been perpetrated toward BIPOC. We believe that Black Lives Matter.

We are committed to actively listen, help community leaders with peaceful solutions, and upend the systems of injustice that have so deeply failed our communities of color. Change starts in our own communities. Here at the DRC, that means continuing to offer our conflict resolution and restorative justice services, which are deeply rooted in the beliefs and cultural practices of peacemaking by indigenous communities.

The DRC's commitment to our communities has not waived in our 35 years, nor it will change in this unprecedented time. The Board of Directors stands with the DRC and the communities we serve.

In solidarity,

The DRC Board of Directors



## **Mission:**

The Dispute Resolution Center offers affordable, constructive, restorative and healing approaches to conflict resolution.

## **Vision:**

We partner and collaborate with individuals, families, schools and businesses to build peaceful communities.

## **Values:**

Respect, Integrity, Accessible, Restorative Justice, and Diversity & Inclusion

## **Board of Directors**

### **President**

*LaSonia Forte*

### **Vice President**

*Jennifer Symanns*

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*Michael Fried*

### **Secretary**

*Judy Hallas*

*Gregory Kurtner*

*Muffy MacKenzie*

*Laura O'Connor*

*Susie Paisley*

*Laurie White*

## **Staff**

### **Executive Director**

*Belinda Dulin*

### **Administrative Assistant**

*Germaine Smith*

### **Mediation Services Coordinator**

*Sally Brush*

### **Mediation Services Coordinator**

*Stephanie Myers*

### **Mediation Services Coordinator**

*Carolyn Stilwell*

### **Database Assistant**

## **The Dispute Resolution Center**

4133 Washtenaw Ave, Suite B125

PO Box 8645

Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645

Phone: 734.794.2125 | Email: [thedrc@washtenaw.org](mailto:thedrc@washtenaw.org)

Website: [thedisputeresolutioncenter.org](http://thedisputeresolutioncenter.org)

Find us on Facebook @ DisputeResolutionCenterA2