

## **Resolution Washington Adds Leadership Roles to Support Growth and Statewide Conflict Resolution Programs**

Announced November 2022

Resolution Washington has added new leadership roles to advance the work of the statewide association for Washington's 21 Dispute Resolution Centers (DRCs). The new or enhanced roles will support statewide strategic partnerships, services, and growth over the next five years and beyond.

Washington's DRCs and Resolution Washington recently expanded reach and community impact with intensified conflict resolution services during the pandemic, and housing stability and dispute resolution support for thousands of Washingtonians through the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program. In 2023 and beyond, Resolution Washington is focusing on policies and programs that advance equity, reduce community conflict, and support housing stability including restorative justice programs, implementing equity-focused mediation training, and community facilitations alongside community mediation.

The reorganization and new roles at Resolution Washington will advance organizational structure work and help DRCs successfully navigate future challenges. The new leadership roles include (bios below):

**Jody Suhrbier stepped into the role of Interim Executive Director** where she will direct organizational visioning and strategic planning for Resolution Washington and serve as the statewide DRC program leader for the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP). The role will include supporting DRCs in prioritizing areas of core service stabilization, strategic capacity building, strengthening shared standards and long-term sustainability.

**Sarah Augustine will serve as Director of Strategic Relationships**, a new organizational role, where she will lead development and maintenance of key external relationships. Along with Suhrbier, Augustine will act as a lead steward of external relationships. Her focus will be on access to justice issues and strategically aligned external stakeholders including the Office of Civil Legal Aid.

**Megan Johnston moves into the Association Manager role**, working to achieve Resolution Washington's strategic goals and priorities set by the membership, coordinating operations, and managing association projects and initiatives. Working closely with the Interim Executive Director, Co-Presidents and the Committee Chairs, Johnston plans activities and facilitates communication networks internally and with stakeholders.

**Maartje Peters is now the Programs Data Manager**, responsible for data collection and analysis work to review, understand, and report DRC and association outcomes and impact on communities statewide. She additionally supports coordination of the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP), including internal communications, planning program training and support for DRCs, and meeting external data sharing needs.

Dispute Resolution Centers (DRCs) empower people to shape their own solutions to resolve conflicts through free or affordable services including mediation; community dialogue; neighbor, business, and housing dispute resolution; school restorative practices; parenting plans and family mediations.

Resolution Washington is the member association for 21 Dispute Resolution Centers (DRCs) across Washington state. The association works to bridge divides, resolve disputes, and reduce conflict in our communities by supporting and advocating for mediation in Washington.

## **Detailed information and bios for Resolution Washington's Leadership Roles:**

### **Jody Suhrbier - Interim Executive Director**

In her role as Interim Executive Director, Suhrbier directs organizational visioning and strategic planning for Resolution Washington and serves as the statewide DRC program leader for the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP).

The role drives foundational alignment with RCW 7.75., established by the Washington State Legislature to empower Washington residents to resolve disputes effectively, increase access to justice for traditionally underserved populations, and reduce the burdens of the courts. The role includes supporting DRCs in prioritizing areas of core service stabilization, strategic capacity building, strengthening shared standards and long-term sustainability. As the lead ERPP spokesperson, Suhrbier is the statewide representative of the program and coordinates ERPP oversight and contractual obligations.

Suhrbier is Executive Director of the Dispute Resolution Center serving Thurston and south Mason Counties. She holds a Masters degree in Nonprofit Management and has a 25-year history in the sector including as a past President of Resolution Washington. She is a former officer and member of the National Association for Community Mediation Board of Directors and is a graduate of Leadership Thurston County.

### **Sarah Augustine - Director of Strategic Relationships**

Augustine will lead development and maintenance of key external relationships as Director of Strategic Relationships, a new role to the organization. Along with Suhrbier, Augustine will act as a lead steward of external relationships. Her focus will be on expanding access to justice and strategically aligned external stakeholders including the Office of Civil Legal Aid and Access to Justice Board.

Augustine is the former Executive Director of the Dispute Resolution Center of Yakima and Kittitas Counties and is Chair of the Office of Civil Legal Aid Oversight Committee at the Washington State Supreme Court and a member since 2017. She served as the chair of the Washington State Redistricting Commission in 2021. Within Resolution Washington, Augustine sat on the legislative committee for five years and co-founded and chaired the People of Color sub-committee.

### **Megan Johnston - Association Manager**

Johnston's role as Association Manager works to achieve Resolution Washington strategic goals and priorities set by the membership, coordinating operations, and managing association projects and initiatives. Working closely with the Interim Executive Director, Co-Presidents and the Committee Chairs, Johnston plans activities and facilitates communication networks internally and with stakeholders.

Johnston has worked with Resolution Washington since 2018. She previously managed a dispute resolution center in the Washington, DC area as Executive Director for nine years and served as President Resolution Virginia, the statewide association of DRCs in Virginia. There she worked with stakeholders to develop and launch a juvenile restorative justice program and oversee court- and community-based dispute resolution services and training.

Johnston has a Master of Arts in Peace and Conflict Studies, an Executive Certificate in Nonprofit Management, and a Bachelor of Arts degree. In 2020, she completed the JustLead Washington's leadership academy for individuals working to advance racial equity and access to justice in and around civil legal issues in Washington. Johnston is a member of the National Association for Community Mediation and the National Association for Community and Restorative Justice.

**Maartje Peters, MPA - Programs Data Manager**

As Programs Data Manager, Peters is responsible for data collection and analysis work to review, understand, and report DRC and association outcomes and impact on communities statewide. She additionally supports coordination of the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP), including internal communications, planning program training and support for DRCs, and meeting external data sharing needs.

Peters has worked with Resolution Washington since 2019 and has a Master's of Public Administration from the Evans School of Public Policy and Governance at the University of Washington. She led the design and implementation of data collection and reporting system upgrades at Resolution Washington.

[About Resolution Washington](#)