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West Hawai'i Mediation Center

Report of the Strategic Planning Committee

Jasmin Kiernan, Eric Paul, George Winchell

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Introduction

If you don't know where you are going, how will you know you got there? OR as Yogi Berra said, "If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else."

Those statements are what underlies the need for Strategic Planning. Developing a plan to guide an organization helps to give purpose and direction. A good plan can provide a concrete path to move forward, giving an organization a reason to do what it is designed to do.

The Strategic Plan starts with identifying why it exists – its purpose, its mission. Developing a good mission statement requires a look into the very fabric of the organization. At its core, the mission tells the world around you what you do well every day.

Once the organization has its mission, it can look forward to ascertaining what it's world will be like in the future – its vision. Having a vision is important because then you can begin to develop strategies and set goals with actions that will help you to get there. Succinctly, what is it that the organization wants to be in the world. You plan with purpose involving all stakeholders.

That is a Strategic Plan. Mission, vision, strategies, goals, and action steps – all put into place to give guidance to the board, the executive director, and staff. Plan implementation could be seen as the ultimate conclusion to Strategic Planning but it's not!

Regularly reviewing, gentle tweaking, and reporting to stakeholders – they all lead into a spiral of continuous improvement. The organization constantly adjusts to changing needs both internally and externally. Therefore, it is important, periodically, to do an intensive assessment and update of the Strategic Plan to identify accomplishments, continued needs, and new challenges.

Timeline, Process, and Procedures

West Hawaii Mediation Center began to develop its first Strategic Plan in 2017. Under the leadership of Giovanna Gherardi, Ruth Smith, and Amanda Blount (Interim Executive Director), the plan was completed in early 2018 and adopted by the WHMC Board of Directors in February 2018. Soon after, the Board recruited its new Executive Director, Eric Paul. Together, they began implementing the plan.

As the Strategic Plan implementation became the responsibility of the Executive Director, the Board regularly reviewed progress with the ED. Successes were celebrated while points of focus were addressed.

In early 2020, the Board began preparing for a complete review and assessment of the existing strategic plan. They appointed a planning committee (Jasmin Kieman, Eric Paul, and George Winchell) to organize and lead the planning process.

AND then we were in the midst of Covid. The WHMC office was closed with staff working from home. The Board began to meet electronically via Zoom. The ED and staff had to develop new protocols to meet the needs of our clients. In addition, WHMC was called to address new demands in our communities. New programs were developed to help with landlord/tenant issues and the concerns for evictions. Peer mediation programs adapted because schools were closed. Massive adjustments were forced upon us.

While all these changes were being implemented, the Board continued to move forward with its Strategic Plan review. Numerous discussions, many surveys, thorough assessments of existing strategies by board and staff, multiple readings to identify best practices, retreats involving all stakeholders, and plan updates and rewrites have all led to a new Strategic Plan for 2021-24. These activities began in the Fall of 2020 and concluded in the Fall of 2021.

This document sets forth a course of action with new and revised strategies containing updated goals and new action steps.

Thank you to the Board of Directors, the staff, mediators, and other stakeholders for their mana`o. Their support will help to make this a **working document** and not just a set of papers in a file cabinet.

Participants and Stakeholders

Board of Directors

HOLEKA INABA (PRESIDENT)
BETSY STRANCE (PAST PRESIDENT)
NIEL THOMAS (VICE PRESIDENT)
JASMIN KIERNAN (SECRETARY)
GEORGE WINCHELL (TREASURER)
SEAN DUIM (DIRECTOR)
KARIN SHAW (DIRECTOR)
CHUCK GREENFIELD (DIRECTOR)
RUTH SMITH (PAST DIRECTOR)

Staff

ERIC PAUL (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)
GINA AGUSTIN (MEDIATION PROGRAM MANAGER)
NOELANI ANDERSON (PEER MEDIATION COORDINATOR)
JENNIFER HALLEY (FINANCE MANAGER)
KATE SIMS (LANDLORD TENANT COORDINATOR/MEDIATOR)

Mediators

GIOVANNA GHERARDI
LINDA JEFFREY
LEROY GROSE
KAWEHI INABA

Volunteers

A total of 37 respondents to our community survey

Mission

WHMC helps people resolve conflict

A mission statement is a declaration of purpose for an organization. It is a succinct statement that proclaims what WHMC strives to do in the here and now. The mission is powerful in its simplicity. It strips away all the extraneous and places focus on why we exist. What is it we want to be known for in the community we serve? What do we do every day? For the Board, staff and volunteers, the mission is why we are here. The mission statement boldly announces that as part of the WHMC, *we help people resolve conflict.*

Vision

Trusted partners for a future of peace, understanding, and acceptance.

When an organization knows its purpose, its *mission*, it can look to tomorrow and beyond, its *vision*. A vision describes where we want to be in the future. What does West Hawaii Mediation Center want to achieve in the long-run? The vision provides the foundation for our planning. We set goals that move us toward that future vision. And then strategize on how to best accomplish those goals in order for WHMC *to be trusted partners for a future of peace, understanding and acceptance*.

Goals

Achieving Our Vision

We have a mission for NOW and a vision for the FUTURE. Now, how do we get from here to there? We plan. We develop goals, strategies, and measurable action steps to allow us to achieve our vision. To accomplish this vision, WHMC has identified five goals:

1. Expand community-wide conflict resolution and education with the broad diversity of individuals and families in West Hawaii.
2. Provide effective conflict resolution for youth in schools and with community partners
3. Ensure the highest quality mediation services
4. Identify and diversify consistent funding sources to ensure financial stability
5. Stabilize and strengthen WHMC leadership

Goals and Strategies: An Overview

With the goals established, we can plan on what needs to be done to accomplish the goals. We develop strategies or plans to move us forward. Our strategies identify the path that the Board, staff, and volunteers will follow as we move into our vision. Strategies are the concrete things that we will do to accomplish each goal. A strategy is actionable and evaluative.

Goal 1: Expand community-wide conflict resolution and education with the broad diversity of individuals and families in West Hawaii.

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*Strategy 1: **Grow** restorative justice emphasis to include Victim Offender Conferencing.*

*Strategy 2: **Grow** Restorative Justice emphasis to include Restorative Group Facilitation.*

Goal 2: Provide effective conflict resolution for youth in schools and with community partners

*Strategy 1: **Strengthen** relationships with school partners for successful peer mediation and restorative practices programming.*

*Strategy 2: **Assess** the possibility of providing mediation and/or facilitation services to youth partners.*

*Strategy 3: **Establish** partnerships to conduct conflict resolution education across a range of youth services.*

Goal 3: Improve the quality of our mediation services.

*Strategy 1: **Assess** each component of the mediation services program.*

*Strategy 2: **Solidify** a quality assurance and improvement process for mediators and mediations based on the assessment.*

*Strategy 3: **Increase and improve** the quality and accessibility of our mediator pool*

Goal 4: Identify and diversify consistent funding sources to ensure financial stability

*Strategy 1: **Identify and build** revenue generating activities and calendar with a Board and staff partnership.*

*Strategy 2: **Increase** individual donor pool as a primary strategy for financial stabilization.*

*Strategy 3: **Increase** revenue by building partnerships and expanding marketing efforts.*

Goal 5: Stabilize and strengthen WHMC leadership

*Strategy 1: **Recruit** diverse community leaders for Board service.*

*Strategy 2: **Assess and strengthen** Board committees in alignment with Board assessments and the strategic plan (Development Committee).*

*Strategy 3: Regularly **assess** staff roles and organizational structure to align with strategic plan.*

Goal and Strategies: Detail

GOAL 1: Expand community-wide conflict resolution and education with the broad diversity of individuals and families in West Hawaii.

Strategy 1: Grow restorative justice emphasis to include Victim Offender Conferencing

West Hawaii Mediation Center established a unique partnership with the prosecutor's office of the County of Hawaii to offer Victim Offender Conferencing options to juveniles and adults caught in the criminal justice system. VOC processes bring victims and offenders of crime together in a unique face-to-face meeting. WHMC believes this meets a crucial need in the community to provide space for alternative forms of justice to emerge and commits to establishing the needed infrastructure to expand this focus area; including funding sources, volunteers, solidifying relationships with the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, and any needed staff personnel.

Strategy 2: Grow Restorative Justice emphasis to include Restorative Group Facilitation

WHMC understands that the context of a situation determines the practice used (mediation, facilitation, or victim offender conferencing). Each of these creates a unique space to aid participants to move forward in positive ways. Several times a year, WHMC receives referrals for facilitation services in instances of group conflict — a nonprofit board, a religious organization, or workplaces with multiple employees. In these instances, a different kind of facilitative practice is necessary. Certain tools within a restorative justice framework help navigate challenging conversations with multiple parties. WHMC will assess the viability and needs to implement Peace Circle Processes as the tool for restorative group work.

Goal 2: Provide effective conflict resolution for youth in-schools and with community partners

Strategy 1: Strengthen relationships with school partners for successful peer mediation and restorative practices programming.

After many years of successfully providing Peer Mediation training in partner schools, WHMC will assess our current programs through the lens of established benchmarks in youth conflict resolution programming. Working closely with our partners at the Department of Education, WHMC will examine ways to build our

existing programs, deepen our impact, and evaluate ways we can participate in, and support, systemic shifts that further promote conflict resolution as a catalyst for positive change. As peer mediation is a tier two restorative justice practice, certain schools may need restorative justice support outside of a formal peer mediation program. WHMC intends to adapt to the needs of the community it serves.

Strategy 2: Assess the possibility of providing mediation and/or facilitation services to youth partners.

A Primary focus of WHMC over the next three years will be to assess the feasibility of extending our capacity to offer mediation and/or facilitation services to organizations working with youth when conflict arises. The opportunity to provide conflict resolution services in schools —between administrators, teachers, and families — should remain a high priority. The same capacity to meet conflict needs within educational systems can also be utilized toward other youth organizations. WHMC intends to identify and connect with these communities, both for conflict resolution education and conflict intervention when necessary.

Strategy 3: Establish partnerships to conduct conflict resolution education across a range of youth services.

At the core of all services will be a commitment to provide relevant culturally sensitive and competent programs for those that we serve. To identify and provide services that can effectively serve our youth, WHMC will seek out, strengthen, and expand partnerships with other community agencies, nonprofits, schools, and human service organizations that also serve the youth in our community. WHMC staff and Board will focus attention on cultivating relationships with organizations whose services complement the services of WHMC.

Goal 3: Improve the quality of our mediation services.

Strategy 1: Assess each component of the mediation services program

In the continual effort to ensure that WHMC provides high quality, effective mediations to our clients, we will develop a comprehensive quality assurance plan that establishes protocols and benchmarks for recruitment, training, mediation processes, evaluation, and feedback. This assessment will include program staff, the mediator mentor coach, and senior volunteer mediators. The assessment will directly correlate to the change processes necessary to maintain and improve quality, facilitative services. Furthermore, WHMC will develop internal protocols for mediator advancement that align with training curriculum

and evaluation standards, ensuring all mediators have ample, high-quality training available to them throughout their tenure with the organization.

Strategy 2: Solidify a quality assurance and improvement process for mediators and mediations based on the assessment.

Utilizing the assessment (Strategy 1), an identified process by which mediators and mediations are regularly evaluated by qualified staff and senior volunteers; opportunities for feedback and improvement are made available; and communication loops are established ensuring mediators can share learnings and challenges with the staff and Board.

Strategy 3: Increase and improve the quality and accessibility of our mediator pool

WHMC will focus on a volunteer recruitment process that broadens the volunteer base of the organization. WHMC will work to recruit volunteers who have diverse skills, background, and experience(s). In addition, WHMC will actively recruit individuals to serve as volunteers that accurately represent the communities we represent and serve.

WHMC will make available basic and advanced mediation training to volunteers (and potential volunteers) that adhere to best practices put forth by the Mediation Centers of the Pacific, the National Association for Community Mediation, and other recognized leaders in the field of conflict resolution. Training will be thoughtfully planned and marketed to maximize the potential for volunteers to attend and gain needed skills. The assessment (strategy 1) will include an assessment of WHMC's recruitment process and provide a recommendation in order to strengthen internal protocols for mediator advancement that align with training curriculum and evaluation standards, ensuring all mediators have ample, high-quality training available to them throughout their tenure with the organization.

Goal 4: Identify and diversify consistent funding sources to ensure financial stability

Strategy 1: Identify and build revenue generating activities and calendar with a Board and staff partnership.

WHMC will explore opportunities to increase revenue generation by identifying and providing services that fit within the organization's mission. WHMC will explore the feasibility of providing facilitation services, group or company conflict resolution, mediation for human resources departments, and other services that may bolster the mission while providing an income stream to the organization. The Board and staff will work together to identify the resources,

training, and outreach necessary to effectively provide revenue generating services.

Strategy 2: Increase individual donor pool as a primary strategy for financial stabilization.

It is clear from national data that individual donor pools are an important, sustainable source of funding for nonprofit organizations. To ensure the future financial stability of the organization, WHMC Board and staff will work to build out the individual donor base. This effort will include identifying and stewarding major donors (donors with the capacity to give \$5k or more annually), in addition to mid- and low-range donors. This strategy will be embedded into the overall fund strategy for the organization and will be a primary focus in the next three years.

Strategy 3: Increase revenue by building partnerships and expanding marketing efforts

Partnership development is a key focus for WHMC over the next three years for building funding and marketing opportunities. Partnerships will allow the organization to reach more individuals and groups in the community, furthering WHMC's reach and impact. In addition, partners can inform strategy and approach for WHMC's services. A key focus of this strategy will be to increase the visibility of WHMC through a multi-tiered marketing effort, which may include print and digital media, events, program partnerships, and more. WHMC anticipates that expanded partnerships and increased marketing efforts will increase the flow of clients to the organization; increase revenue; and ensure mission delivery.

Goal 5: Stabilize and strengthen WHMC leadership

Strategy 1: Recruit diverse community leaders for Board service.

WHMC recognizes the importance of diversifying our organization at every level. In an effort to increase diversity, and to represent and understand the needs of the communities we serve, WHMC will develop and conduct targeted outreach to the varied populations in West Hawaii. WHMC will call on the vast resources within our communities to conduct this outreach, including contacting and partnering with cultural leaders, community leaders and associations, area businesses, and other representatives within the communities we serve.

The Board of Directors and Executive Director will work in partnership to identify and recruit individuals for Board service that reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. WHMC will aim to recruit those who are leaders in their respective communities and can add skills, knowledge, expertise, and resources

to the organization during their time as a Board member. A board recruitment process will be mapped out with clear onboarding procedures for new members.

Strategy 2: Assess and Strengthen Board committees in alignment with Board assessments and the strategic plan (Development Committee).

To effectively execute the Strategic Plan, the Board of Directors will assess the committee structure that monitors and supports these strategies, in partnership with the Executive Director. The Board will consider adding non-Board members to committees if they bring expertise to a committee. Staff will work with the Committees and the Board, and provide needed information to the Board committees.

Strategy 3: Regularly assess staff roles and organizational structure to align with the Strategic Plan.

To ensure that quality improvement remains a high priority, the Executive Director is charged with regularly evaluating the WHMC staff and organizational structure to ensure it aligns with the strategic goals. The Executive Director is responsible for making policy and protocol changes when necessary to ensure all aspects of the organization are of the highest quality.