



Annual Report to the General Assembly

Orange County Dispute Settlement Center Celebrating 30 Years of Success

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This report is compiled and produced by the Mediation Network of North Carolina. The meticulous data collection and constant commitment to excellence on behalf of the Community Mediation Centers all across the state are a source of pride and a model of best practice to be envied.

Jody Minor
Executive Director
Mediation Network of North Carolina

In September 2008, the Dispute Settlement Center (Orange County) will celebrate its 30th year. In 1978 there was no practice of mediation in North Carolina; now there is mediation at every level of the NC court system. The Orange County Center was begun by volunteers with a small state appropriation for mediation in criminal district court, arranged by Rep. Patricia Hunt; it now serves over 3500 people a year.

The excitement generated by the founding of the state's first community mediation center attracted many diverse volunteers, including Andy Little and Roy Baroff, who went on to help advance the spread of mediation statewide. Meantime, the Center in Orange County continued to grow, funded by legislative appropriations and increasingly community support.

Today the Carrboro-based Center has a budget of just under one half million with a diverse funding base, a notably low 16% administrative overhead, and the strong support of the local bench and bar. In 1978, then District Attorney Wade Barber made the first referral to mediation, rising

above the initial skepticism of his peers. Now, according to Chief District Court Judge Joseph M. Buckner, criminal district court "could not function" without the assistance of the Orange DSC's staff and volunteer mediators.

The Center has grown beyond its original program to include mediation of a wide variety of interpersonal disputes including separation and divorce, and special education. The Center's nationally-recognized Public Disputes program, 20 years old this year, helps organizations and groups work through difficult issues through facilitation, group mediation, and training. Increasingly, organizations are seeking training and mediation for workplace conflicts that if left unresolved lead to lost productivity and even litigation.

The Center's largest program, however, serves youth. Schools, youth groups, camps, and afterschool programs depend on the Center for conflict resolution and peer mediation training, and mediation of disputes involving students, parents, faculty and staff. Juvenile Services calls on Center

staff for mediation between juvenile offenders and their victims. According to now retired Judge Stanley Peele "these mediations can really turn a young person around." During FY07, the program reached over a 1000 youth.

From a locally-grown idea grew a movement that has helped ease the tremendous burdens on our courts, while building stronger communities. For more information, visit www.disputesettlement.org.



Frances Henderson is the Executive Director of the Dispute Settlement Center of Orange County

Urban or Rural Mediation Works in Communities



Janice Almond is the Executive Director of Deep River Mediation Center and serves as President of the Board of Directors for the Mediation Network of North Carolina

Each center strives to provide alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services that are most needed in the districts each one serves.

Statewide the number of cases resolved through mediation increased 16% from 9,104 for year ending 6/30/2006 to 10,588 for year ending 6/30/2007

Of the 21 mediation centers in North Carolina, no two are exactly the same. All centers are similarly structured in that they each serve the legislative purposes outlined in NC GS §7A-38.5 and are governed by local boards of directors. Each center strives to provide alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services that are most needed in the districts each one serves. Factors such as economy, population, education levels, and access to state and municipal services are some of the many factors that influence the types of ADR services provided by each community mediation center. The difference in services is most readily apparent between rural and urban centers.

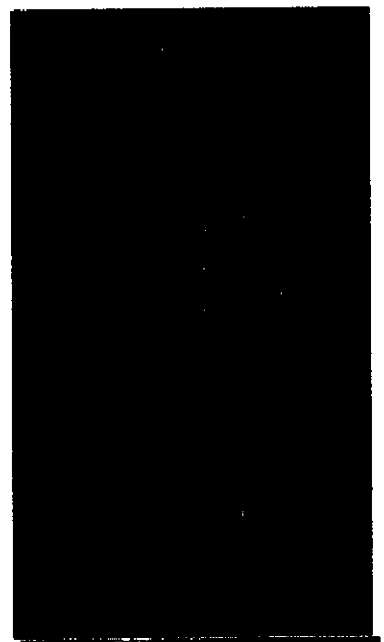
For example, Deep River Mediation serves the largely rural counties of Chatham (Judicial District 15B) and Lee (Judicial District 11). In such rural districts there are many opportunities to offer school programs because the school systems are small and tend to be organized differently than metropolitan areas with large school districts. The communities in Lee and Chatham counties appreciate the opportunities provided by Deep River Mediation for

participating in mediation prior to or instead of going to court. These communities also find benefit in the accessible conflict resolution and anger management workshops offered by the center. By assisting people in learning to resolve their own conflicts, there is a direct benefit to the court in a reduced number cases to be heard and warrants to be served.

Carolina Dispute Settlement Services (CDSS) serves both an urban district (Wake County, Judicial District 10) and a rural district (9B comprising Franklin, Granville, Vance, and Warren Counties). Focusing on the work in metropolitan Wake County, mediation services are readily accessible through a presence in several district courts. With many government offices, professional organizations, and higher education institutions located in Wake County, mediation and conflict resolution training provide a large professional training base. A downtown location and public transportation makes access to the center simple and affordable for most county residents to access the sliding scale services that include help with everything from

mediating family situations (divorce, custody, visitation) to providing conference space for court of appeals mediations.

While the focus of Deep River Mediation and Carolina Dispute Settlement Services differ, they each provide the services requested by their communities. The value to the state of these services may be quantified in any number of ways. The Deep River Mediation Center works to prevent conflicts from escalating and teaching residents how to resolve their own problems without increasing the burden on courts and other state or municipal services. Carolina Dispute Settlement Services court work eases an already overcrowded docket by mediating nearly 20%-



Diann Seigle is the Executive Director of Carolina Dispute Settlement Services in Raleigh

25% of the case docket on the assigned court dates. Both centers provide alternative dispute resolution services and training to poor, underserved communities at little to no cost.

Elementary schools to colleges have incorporated conflict resolution training as part of their curriculum to reinforce the importance of teaching young people appropriate, non-violent ways of resolving their differences. While this report represents the numbers associated with these and other activities, it is difficult to assign precise monetary savings to the state of North Carolina. For example, the cost of a simple misdemeanor trial is not available for each district. We know that if all the funds CDSS received in 2005-06 were used exclusively for district court cases, the cost to the state would be about \$142 per case. Of course, the legislative allotment was also used to service the needs of 2,695 low-income clients during that

same fiscal period. At an individual level, this may be represented as a cost of about \$35 per person just for alternative dispute resolution services. At the Deep River Mediation Center, requests from probation officers, mental health centers, courts and local schools, among others, demonstrate a level of expectation from community providers in regard to the ability of Deep River Mediation to meet their clients' needs.

North Carolina has been a leader in the nation and the world for its effective, cost-efficient, and integrated approach to using alternative dispute resolution methods in courts, schools, and communities. The district criminal court mediation program has raised eyebrows and interest from California to Europe and Asia. We hope

this report demonstrates each center's commitment to representing some of the best services the State of North Carolina offers its citizens.

Magnifying Taxpayer Support Yields Benefits - Last Year JPS Funding Represented 28% of Total Funding Support for Centers Statewide

**Conflict
Resolution
Training reduces
the reoccurrence
of disputes that
clog the courts
and taint
communities.**

**North Carolina
is recognized
nationally for
the quality of
its Community
Mediation
Centers and
innovative
programs.**

Mecklenburg Program Focused On Its Values

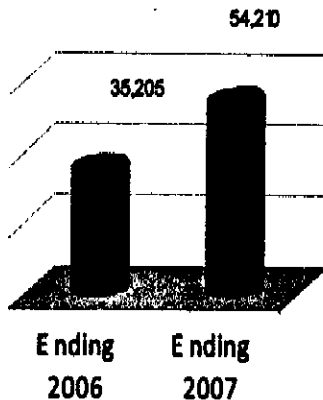
The mission of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee (CRC) is to advocate for an inclusive community where trust, acceptance, fairness and equity are the community norms. CRC's Dispute

Settlement Program (DSP) was designed over 20 years ago to provide the citizens of Charlotte-Mecklenburg with mediation, education and outreach services to promote community harmony.

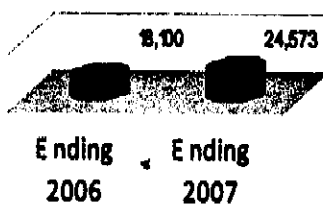
DSP provides mediation services for criminal and civil complaints, landlord tenant, neighborhood, juvenile, school truancy and consumer merchant issues. The program has over 75

**Mobilizing
Volunteers
Saved
Taxpayers
\$857,338 in
FY 2006-2007**

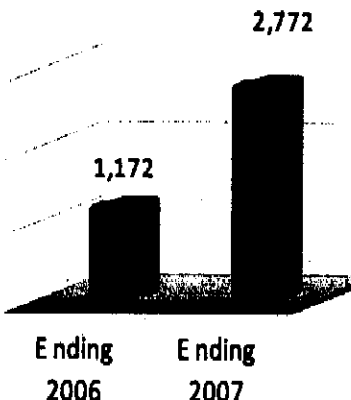
People Served Increased 53%



Intake/Referral Increased 35%



Trainings Conducted Increased 136%



active volunteer mediators who are committed to assisting individuals resolve their own disputes.

Over its 20 year history, DSP has processed over 30,000 mediations and maintained a 90-95% success rate. The program has been successful because it has embraced the following principals of mediation to fulfill its mission:

Developing a sense of trust and acceptance by providing a voluntary, confidential mediation session within a safe environment where participants feel comfortable to share their thoughts, feelings and concerns.

Establishing a sense of fairness and equity by remaining neutral and allowing each person an equal opportunity to share their experiences,

empowering the parties themselves to resolve their own issues.

The program also provides community groups, schools, private and government agencies with conflict resolution education and diversity awareness training which is vital to creating a harmonious community. By giving people the tools to understand conflict, helping them realize positive ways of resolving their issues, and an awareness of the richness that exists among all individuals, community harmony can be achieved.

The program's longevity, educational outreach efforts and adherence to its

mission have inspired confidence and trust within our diverse and rapidly growing community. Building trust takes time and dedication; DSP has committed itself to developing and sustaining partnerships with our local courts, businesses, government agencies, neighborhood associations and school personnel. CRC and DSP will continually enhance service delivery to meet the needs of our changing community but will always strive to remain true to its values.



Mary Williams is the Program Director for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Dispute Settlement Program

Statewide Statistical Summary of Activities

Total Referrals/Intakes Court and Pre-Court	24,573
Total People Served by Centers	54,210
Average Cost Per Person Served	\$27.75
Percent of Cases Resolved in Mediation	89%
Percent of Cases Referred by Courts	51%
Conflict Resolution Trainings Offered	2,772
Total NC Counties Served by Centers	63
Total Volunteer Hours Generated by Centers	45,676
Dollar Value of Volunteer Hours to North Carolina (source, Bureau of Labor Statistics 2006)	\$857,338
Percent of JPS Funding of Total Center Budgets	28%

Mediation Network of North Carolina Board of Directors 2006/2007

Janice Almond, President
Deep River Mediation Center
Pittsboro, NC 27312

Glenn Faison, Vice-President
Dispute Settlement Center
Kannansville, NC 28349

Oscar Lewis, Treasurer
Home Depot, Inc.
Durham, NC 27701

Janet Mahannah, Secretary
Mediation Center of Southern Piedmont
Gastonia, NC 28052

Professor Cathie Witty
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro, NC 27401

Martha Curria
Mecklenburg Clerk of Court
Charlotte, NC 28237

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NC Central School of Law
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Alamance Co. Dispute Center
Graham, NC 27253

Jessie Blackwelder
Cabarrus Co. Mediation Center
Concord, NC 28026

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Mecklenburg Dispute Settlement
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The ADR Center
Wilmington, NC 28403

Tina Estle
Cumberland Co. Dispute Settlement
Fayetteville, NC 28301

Billie Mackey
Moore Co. Dispute Settlement
Carthage, NC 28327

Kate Stockman
Henderson Co. Dispute Settlement
Hendersonville, NC 28792

Todd Weatherly
The Mediation Center
Asheville, NC 28801

Kathryn Lennox
Mediation Center of Eastern Carolina
Greenville, NC 27834

Emery Rann III
Forsyth Co. Mediation Services
Winston Salem, NC 27101

Evan Smith
Guilford Co. Mediation Services
Greensboro, NC 27401

Alexy Farrel
Rockingham Co. Mediation Services
Reidsville, NC 27320

Lorain Johnson
Mountain Mediation Service
Bryson City, NC 28713

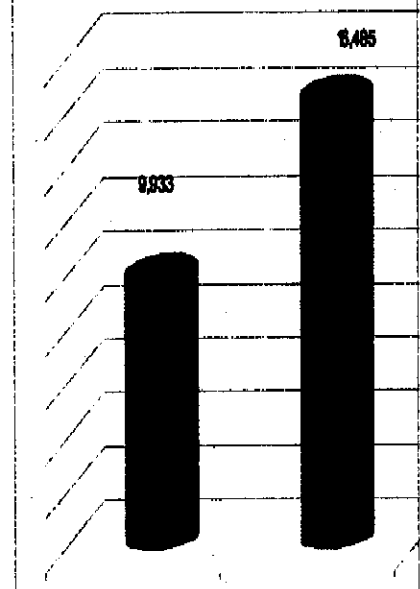
Frances Henderson
Orange Co. Dispute Settlement
Carrboro, NC 27510

Susan Miller
Transylvania Dispute Center
Brevard, NC 28712

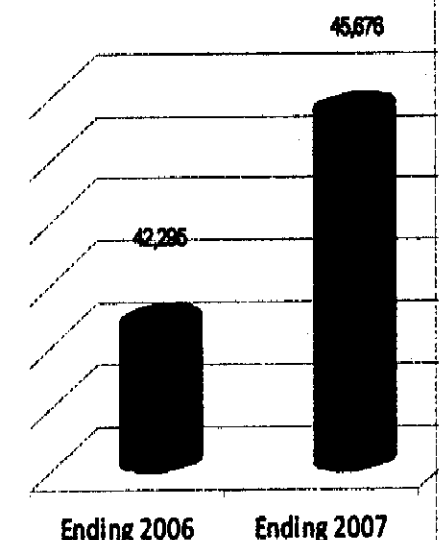
Grace Marsh
Women In Action
Durham, NC 27701

Jody Minor, Executive Director
Mediation Network - Ex Officio

Mediated Sessions Increased 65%



Volunteer Hours Increased 7%



Mission Statement

The mission of the Mediation Network of North Carolina is to promote, strengthen and support community mediation programs in North Carolina through volunteer board development, accountability, visibility, and resource development.

It's About Families

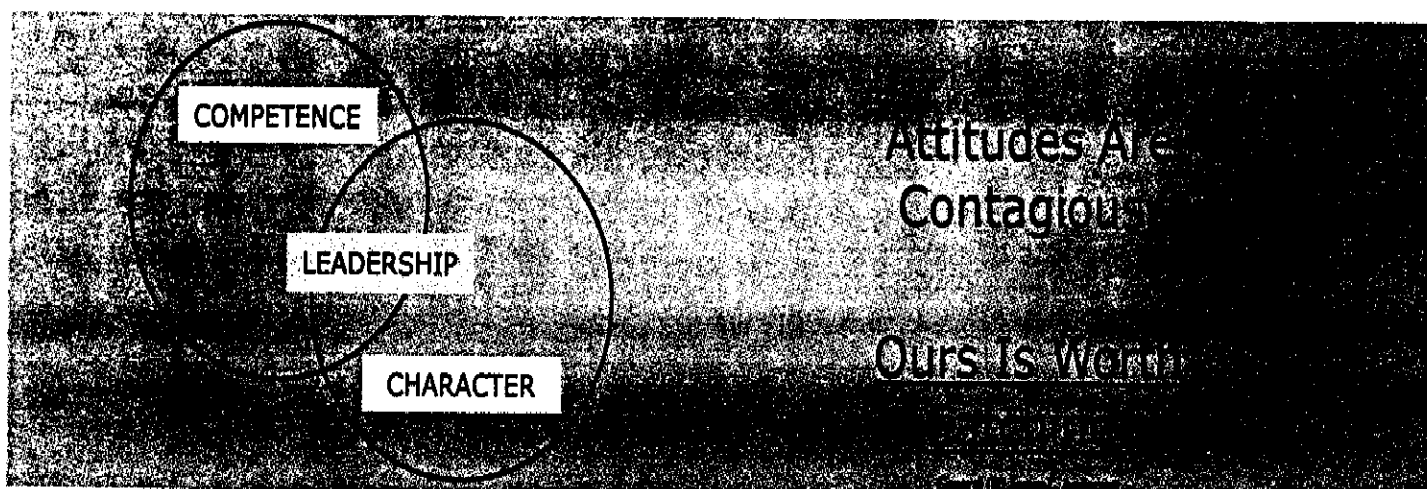


Honoring Volunteer Commitment

About Community



It's ALL About Our Future



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Dispute Settlement Centers	Intake Referral	Mediated Cases	Mediation Sessions	Mediations Resolved	Worthless Checks	Multi-Party CR	Facilitation Cases	CR Training	People Served	Number Counties	Approx. Population	Current Funding	Needed Funding
Orange Co. Disp. Settlement Center	478	312	331	257	0	132	78	44	3,434	1	125,000	84,530	\$100,933.00
Buncombe co. Disp. Settlement Center (The Mediation Center)	1,418	401	428	389	0	3	18	331	1,327	1	222,174	115,000	170,000
Chatham County Disp. Settlement Center (Deep River Mediation Center)	257	154	154	142	0	0	17	47	1,231	2	103,000	51,936	75,000
Wake County Disp. Settlement Center (Carolina Disp Settlement Ser)	5,812	693	790	586	0	346	0	15	5,812	5	960,296	149,532	250,000
Polk & Rutherford Co.'s DSC (Foothills Mediation Center)	312	312	312	312	0	0	0	0	642	3			
Durham Co. Dispute Settlement Center	267	259	289	212	1	0	1	10	1,256	1	246,896	72,878	\$97,878.00
Guilford Co. Dispute Settlement Center	526	527	633	457	3	0	0	4	38	1	451,905	53,000	\$75,000.00
Henderson Co. Dispute Settlement Center	990	252	253	219	0	0	167	58	2,294	1	100,000	57,182	\$75,000.00
Iredell Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Piedmont Mediation Center)	1,211	1,107	1,201	1,044	0	0	32	72	3,874	4	378,654	75,000	150,000
Forsyth Co. Dispute Settlement Center	568	377	356	319	8	6	54	5	719	1	332,355	59,800	\$64,000.00
Cumberland Co. Dispute Settlement Center	606	549	554	366	0	26	0	7	1,187	1	300,000	47,000	\$55,000.00
Mecklenburg Dispute Settlement Center (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Mediation)	1,562	601	601	540	644	39	40	79	5,071	1	1,498,000	70,000	140,000
Alamance Dispute Settlement Center	329	312	312	279	0	5	53	25	1,672	1	146,000	40,000	\$50,000.00
Gaston Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Mediation Center of the So Piedmont)	2,081	1,475	5,787	1,402	533	0	0	148	3,927	3	364,276	91,167	165,000
Transylvania Dispute Settlement Center (Center For Dialogue)	693	210	210	196	0	0	106	5	1,519	1	30,000	37,866	55,395
Pitt Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Mediation Center of Eastern Carolina)	466	333	316	272	0	0	2	10	775	5	463,394	115,000	120,000
Swain Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Mountain Mediation Services)	341	212	222	197	0	0	59	45	2,003	7	187,005	65,000	75,000
New Hanover Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Community Mediation of the Cape Fear)	3,104	688	424	342	0	0	9	797	8,873	3	327,000	58,000	107,000
Duplic Co. Dispute Settlement Center	372	350	350	330	0	0	0	198	1,200	4	277,228	34,000	\$75,000.00
Moore Co. Dispute Settlement Center	884	790	830	770	0	0	0	0	2,272	1	83,162	35,000	\$45,000.00
Rockingham Co. Dispute Settlement Center	877	770	770	770	0	0	0	829	1,425	1	91,928	45,000	\$50,147.00
Watauga Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Blue Ridge Disp Settlement Center)	925	858	1,007	809	0	0	0	23	2,134	9	255,000	67,500	135,000
Cabarrus Co. Dispute Settlement Center	351	326	285	310	0	0	0	0	1,217	1	159,000	43,000	\$43,000.00
Catawaba Co. Dispute Settlement Center (The Conflict Resolution Center)	143	69	70	68	0	6	2	20	308	3	321,000	37,000	70,000
Statewide Totals	24,573	11,937	16,485	10,588	1,189	563	638	2,772	54,210	61	7,423,273	1,504,391	2,243,353

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Dispute Settlement Centers	Court Intake Referral	Court Mediated Cases	Court Mediation Sessions	Court Mediations Resolved	People Served	Non-Court Intake Referral	Non-Court Mediated Cases	Non-Court Mediation Sessions	Non-Court Mediations Resolved	Non-Court People Served
Orange Co. Disp. Settlement Center	200	177	105	85	476	95	87	91	85	258
Buncombe Co. Disp. Settlement Center (The Mediation Center)	938	216	228	208	605	758	179	194	176	602
Chatham County Disp. Settlement Center (Deep River Mediation Center)	206	140	140	141	330	51	14	14	11	156
Wake County Disp. Settlement Center (Carolina Disp Settlement Ser)	613	613	633	530	1,403	2,905	80	157	56	219
Polk & Rutherford Co.'s DSC (Foothills Mediation Center)	312	312	312	312	624					
Durham Co. Dispute Settlement Center	252	251	276	204	611	15	8	13	8	26
Guilford Co. Dispute Settlement Center	512	465	619	453	641	14	9	14	6	31
Henderson Co. Dispute Settlement Center	828	223	215	190	1206	110	29	38	29	164
Iredell Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Piedmont Mediation Center)	1,141	1,037	1,052	1,006	2,108	70	58	58	58	119
Forsyth Co. Dispute Settlement Center	203	166	156	138	319	365	211	200	181	400
Cumberland Co. Dispute Settlement Center	547	490	495	324	1042	66	59	59	42	145
Mecklenburg Dispute Settlement Center (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Mediation)	1,238	474	474	429	863	324	127	127	111	333
Alamance Dispute Settlement Center	324	307	307	274	608	5	5	5	0	8
Gaston Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Mediation Center of the So Piedmont)	1,633	1,071	4,089	1,026	2,484	448	404	1,688	343	1,443
Transylvania Dispute Settlement Center (Center For Dialogue)	338	92	92	86	668	418	118	118	110	851
Pitt Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Mediation Center of Eastern Carolina)	333	244	198	186	471	133	89	90	86	171
Swain Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Mountain Mediation Services)	313	199	207	186	434	26	13	15	11	35
New Hanover Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Community Mediation of the Cape Fear)	2,902	641	315	312	5,804	99	43	105	26	210
Duplin Co. Dispute Settlement Center	192	125	125	120	398	247	225	225	210	542
Moore Co. Dispute Settlement Center	0	0	0	0	0	884	790	830	770	2272
Rockingham Co. Dispute Settlement Center	436	329	329	329	575	441	441	441	257	830
Watauga Co. Dispute Settlement Center (Blue Ridge Disp Settlement Center)	844	796	927	750	1,949	81	62	80	59	162
Cabarrus Co. Dispute Settlement Center	334	312	276	299	1161	17	14	9	11	56
Catawaba Co. Dispute Settlement Center (The Conflict Resolution Center)	141	68	69	67	290	2	1	1	1	5
Statewide Totals	14,780	8,748	11,639	7,655	25,070	7,574	3,066	4,572	2,647	9,038

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Dispute Settlement Centers	Total Budget	AOC Funding	Volunteer Hrs
ORANGE CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$428,258	\$91,456	2100
BUNCOMBE CO. DISP SETTLEMENT (The Mediation Center)	\$372,140	\$117,513	655
CHATHAM CO. DISP SETTLEMENT (Deep River Mediation Center)	\$185,791	\$51,936	1,617
WAKE CO. DISP SETTLEMENT (Carolina Disp Settlement Ser)	\$386,926	\$149,532	1,516
POLK & RUTHERFORD CO.'S DSC (Foothills Mediation Center)			
DURHAM CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$74,696	\$72,878	1336
GUILFORD CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$128,026	\$53,000	270
HENDERSON CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$98,196	\$57,182	
IREDELL CO. DISP SETTLEMENT (Piedmont Mediation Center)	\$189,289	\$81,144	171
FORSYTH CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$129,555	\$59,800	1055
CUMBERLAND CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$124,113	\$43,147	2500
MECKLENBURG . DISP SETTLEMENT (CharlotteMecklenburg Mediation)	\$390,894	\$70,000	2,227
ALAMANCE CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$374,375	\$40,000	598
GASTON CO. DISP SETTLEMENT (Mediation Center of the So Piedmont)	\$238,715	\$95,654	332
Transylvania Co. Disp Settlement (Center For Dialogue)	\$142,512	\$37,866	1,437
PITT CO. DISP SETTLEMENT (Mediation Center of Eastern Carolina)	\$785,004	\$124,418	10,861
SWAIN CO. DISP SETTLEMENT (Mountain Mediation Services)	\$181,142	\$65,000	2,062
NEW HANOVER . DISP SETTLEMENT (Community Mediation of the Cape Fear)	\$465,557	\$58,000	388
DUPLIN CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$121,700	\$35,673	3500
MOORE CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$77,711	\$37,866	954
ROCKINGHAM CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$141,236	\$50,147	2816
WATAUGA CO. DISP SETTLEMENT (Blue Ridge Disp Settlement Center)	\$310,000	\$73,026	985
CABARRUS CO. DISP SETTLEMENT	\$113,775	\$46,549	6896
CATAWBA CO. DISP SETTLEMENT (The Conflict Resolution Center)	\$117,000	\$40,032	1,400
State Wide Totals	5,576,611	1,551,819	45,676