



CENTER FOR DISPUTE
SETTLEMENT
peace it together

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

The Business of Peace



A MESSAGE FROM

The President/CEO and Board Chair

The Peace Advantage: The Business Case for Peace in Our Communities

This year, our work at the Center for Dispute Settlement has focused on a clear premise: investing in healthy relationships isn't just the right thing to do; it's good business sense.

CDS has proven itself to be a leading provider of alternative dispute resolution services, not just within our 8 county region in Rochester and the Finger Lakes, but across the state. Our funders and partners put their trust in CDS because they know that preventing conflict at the earliest possible time results in the best possible return on investment. Our partnerships with state agencies including the NYS Unified Court System, Education Department, Division of Human Rights, and Office of Mental Health demonstrate that our services represent the gold standard in conflict management services.

Through our work with government agencies, businesses, nonprofits, schools, universities, and community organizations, we supported teams to develop the communication and conflict skills they need to thrive. We provided anti-bias trainings that prompted hard but necessary conversations about diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. When disputes happened, we offered mediation,

arbitration, facilitation, and conflict coaching services that helped de-escalate conflict quickly and productively, minimizing disruption and restoring collaboration.

The results speak for themselves. Individuals and families who choose mediation save time, money, and stress compared to litigation. Organizations that prioritize communication and conflict skills see higher retention, increased job satisfaction, and stronger team cohesion. Employees who feel respected and heard are more engaged, more productive, and more likely to stay.

Peace isn't just our value. It's our strategic advantage.



SHIRA MAY
President/CEO



PARRIS BRYANT II
Board Chair



ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The Center for Dispute Settlement

Our Mission

To use and promote peaceful dispute resolution processes throughout our communities.

Our History

Established in 1973 during the Civil Rights movement

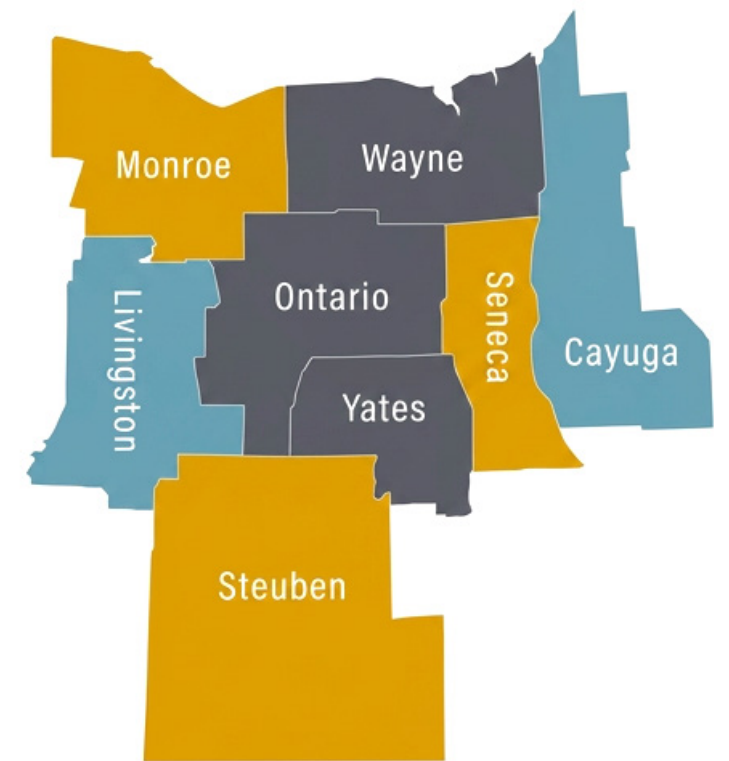
1st Community Dispute Resolution Center in NYS and 3rd in the country

Who We Are

18 staff
42 volunteer mediators
12 Board of Directors

Our Locations

We serve the 8 counties of the New York State's 7th Judicial District



ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR)

Services Provided

- Custody & Visitation Mediation*
- Divorce Mediation & Arbitration*
- Special Education Mediation*
- Early Intervention Mediation*
- Community Mediation*
- Community Dialogue Facilitation*
- Conflict Coaching*
- Restorative Practices (Circles)*
- Lemon Law Arbitration*
- Commercial Arbitration*
- City of Rochester Demolition Hearings*
- Surrogate Decision-Making Committee*
- ACCES-VR*



Training Topics

- Initial Mediation Training*
- Custody & Visitation Mediation*
- Divorce Mediation*
- Peer Mediation*
- Restorative Practices*
- Conflict Skills*
- Anger Management*
- Anti-Bias Training*
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (DEIB)*

ADVANCING PEACE

In the Workplace

"This was the best training I have taken in 18 years in the field."

Training participant comments:

"[It is a] struggle to manage the highly polarized and politicized environment right now. The information and nuance on biases and ways to think about them... as well as the detailed dive into microaggressions, was really helpful."

"Starting with a full circle process the very first morning [illustrated] the principle of learning through experience that was emphasized later... Every person working in education today should experience this training."

"I loved the gentle guidance and willingness to answer all of our questions. I learned a lot through watching [the trainers] lead and think aloud."

This year, CDS facilitated:

- 51 client trainings
- 18 open to the public trainings
- 21 tailored training topics

Referral sources:

- Government agencies
- Nonprofit organizations
- Human resources departments
- DEI offices
- Colleges and universities
- School districts

NATIONAL REPRESENTATION

Expanding *Our* Reach



Local, state, and national presentations

This year, CDS presented at the American Bar Association’s Dispute Resolution Section Conference, New York State Association of Resident Service Coordinators Conference, Western NY Coalition of Farmworker Serving Organizations, New York State Dispute Resolution Association Conference, Agents of Nonprofit podcast, and Poder 97.1 FM Su Hora Informativa.

Partnership with the NYS Division of Human Rights

CDS continued to serve as Lead Facilitator of the Finger Lakes Regional Council of the NYS Division of Human Rights, and met with our local youth council representative at DHR’s state summit.



Daniel’s Law Pilot Program

CDS was the recipient of a historic \$500,000 contract from the NYS Office of Mental Health funded through Daniel’s Law. CDS will serve as the fiduciary and administrative agency for HOPE First Roc, a peer-led crisis response program serving Rochester’s 19th Ward and Genesee-Jefferson neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Outreach *and* Events



Film screening partnership with Indigenous Peoples’ Day Committee



Board and staff fundraiser at TRATA, Rochester



Pittsford Pride



Casino Night Fundraiser

BY THE NUMBERS 2025-26

Our Impact

Total cases closed: 1,547

Cayuga:	93
Livingston:	120
Monroe:	395
Ontario:	353
Seneca:	75
Steuben:	324
Wayne:	127
Yates:	58
Other:	2

Referral sources

Family Court:	40%
City Court:	13%
Prior Client:	11%
Word of Mouth:	10%
Public Agency:	8%
Walk In:	7%
Website:	6%
Other:	5%

93%

of our mediation clients were satisfied with their experience and would recommend mediation to others.

"Very efficient very professional and super organized! Very understanding compassionate. Appreciate their help so much. Made this so much easier."

"[CDS] made the whole process really simple. The court house complimented how organized everything was multiple times."

"[Our case manager] was very patient and followed up very well. She was essential in this process, I would recommend her and the whole office to anyone."

WITH GRATITUDE

To Our Partners

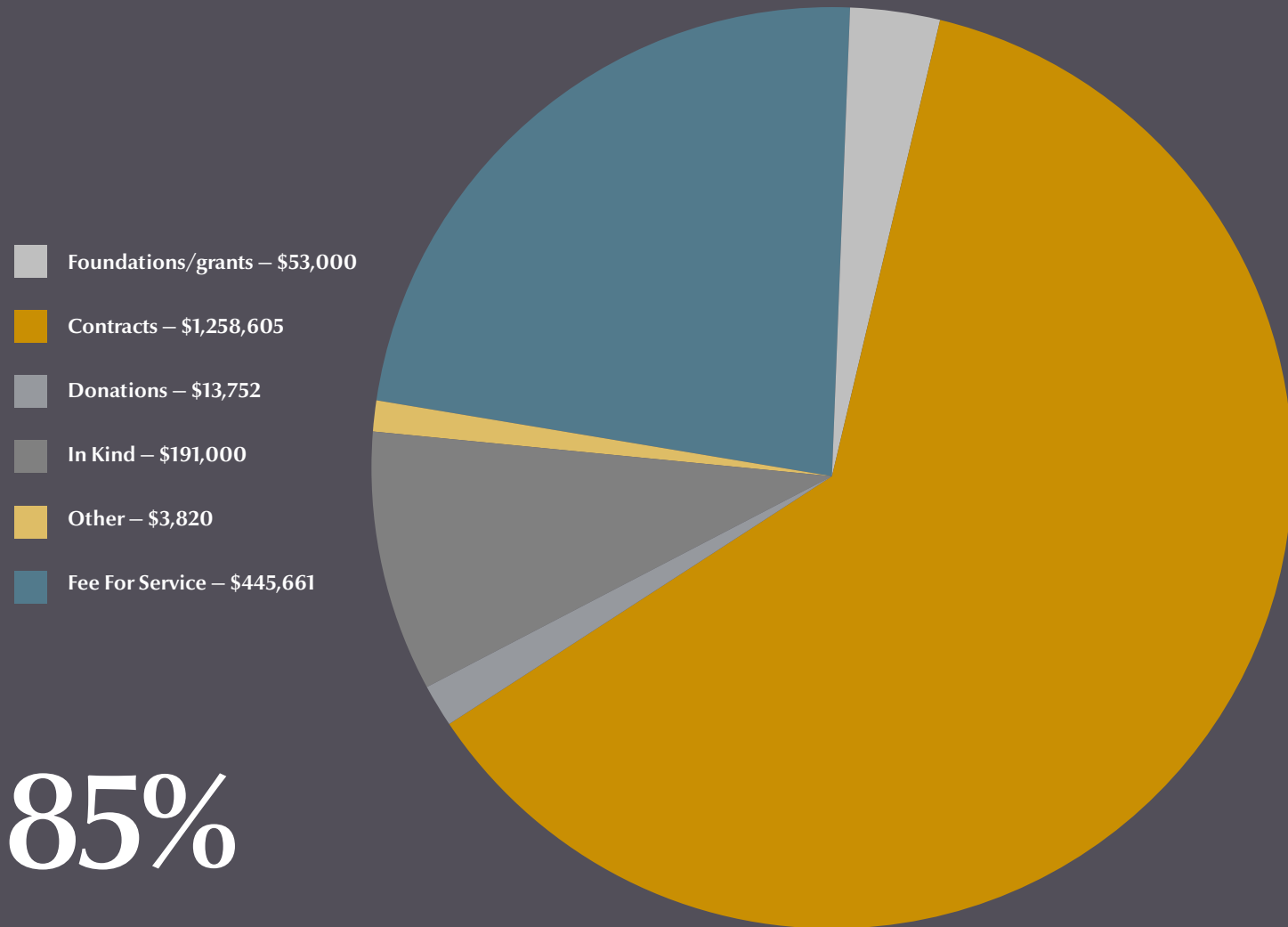
- A Better Calm
- ACR-GNY
- AspireHope NY
- Better Contractors Bureau
- Brockport Central School District
- Canandaigua City School District
- CCSI
- City of Rochester
- Episcopal SeniorLife Communities
- Family Counseling Service of the Finger Lakes
- Greater Rochester Association of Realtors
- Greece Central School District
- Harley School
- Hobart William Smith College
- HOPE First Roc
- Hope Hall School
- Konar Properties
- M. K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence
- New York Peace Institute (NYPI)
- Northeast College of Health Sciences
- NYS Agricultural Mediation Program (NYSAMP)
- NYS Dispute Resolution Association (NYSARA)
- NYS Division of Human Rights
- NYS Unified Court System, 7th J. District
- Ontario County Probation
- Ontario County Youth Court
- Partners in Restorative Initiatives
- Pittsford CommUNITY
- Police Accountability Board
- Pre-Trial Services
- Resolution Center of Jefferson & Lewis Counties
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- South Asian Youth, Women and Allies
- Steuben County Department of Social Services
- Steuben County Probation
- SUNY Brockport
- SUNY REOC
- Trillium Health
- University of Rochester
- Urban League
- Young Women's College Prep

Coalitions:

- Domestic Abuse Review Team
- Ontario County Restorative Practices Collaborative
- Rochester Restorative Administrators Group (RRAG)
- RESTORE New York

LOOKING AT OUR

Revenue Sources



85%

Over the past 3 years, an average of 85% of expenses was spent directly on programs.



PLEASE JOIN US

In Giving

- \$10,000** Provides one school with a year-long Peer Mediation Program
- \$7,000** Covers the trainer fee for our 35-hour Initial Mediation Training
- \$1,500** Provides one workplace with Implicit Bias Training
- \$1,000** Provides one community with a Restorative Justice process
- \$800** Provides one small business with a retainer for an Arbitration process
- \$150** Provides one nonprofit professional with workplace conflict consultation
- \$100** Provides two neighbors with a Community Mediation
- \$50** Provides one co-parent with Conflict Coaching

3 ways to make your gift:

Donate online at www.cdsadr.org and click Donate

Mail your check to:
Center for Dispute Settlement
16 E. Main St., Suite 800
Rochester, NY 14614





CENTER FOR DISPUTE
SETTLEMENT
peace it together

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

The Business of Peace

(585) 546-5110
info@cadsadr.org

Center for Dispute Settlement
Reynolds Arcade Building
16 East Main Street,
Suite 800
Rochester, New York
14614