

SEEDS

Cultivating Common Ground

Community Resolution Center

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Will you help bring peace to our community?

Dear SEEDS Friend:



I'm writing to you today because I care about SEEDS, and I know you do too.

Right now, thanks to a generous offer from SEEDS board of directors, you and I can make a donation to SEEDS and see that gift doubled. For every dollar you and I give this month, board members will match it, dollar for dollar, for the first \$1,000 in donations received.

I'm very motivated to help SEEDS thrive, and I hope you are too. You see, SEEDS unlocked a new world for me, a world based on effective communication practices so that we can all live in a more peaceful community.

As a non-profit, community-based agency, SEEDS has provided free and low-cost conflict resolution services since 1983. These programs are offered to people from diverse backgrounds throughout Alameda County. While SEEDS is open to any resident who needs them, I never thought I'd be walking through their doors and asking for help.

But two years ago, that's what happened. I had just completed a three-year teaching certificate program that taught non-verbal communication through dance. I was stressed, hurt, and overcome with frustration due to an unresolved conflict I had with the director in my school.

Eventually, these feelings manifested in me physically and I was bedridden for three weeks. As you can imagine, I knew I needed help.

A friend recommended I call SEEDS. I learned that SEEDS helped thousands of people just like you and me to resolve a wide range of conflicts every year. And the need for SEEDS is growing – in fact, so far this year alone, SEEDS has handled more than 400 cases and worked with 900+ clients.

As I shared my situation, SEEDS' skilled and supportive case developers and mediators made me feel heard, supported, validated and safe. The mediation that followed gave me a new understanding of a conflict that I realized had been brewing for years. At the end of the mediation, I left feeling at peace.

As I thought about how profoundly SEEDS had helped me, I realized I wanted to use my newfound sense of peace to help other community members find peace too, so I called SEEDS to volunteer. I now volunteer at SEEDS in the Community Mediation and Training programs, and help out with fundraising drives and events.

I deeply believe that if you transform enough individual lives, you transform an entire community. I believe in SEEDS' mission because I've seen first hand how it can transform a person's life. That's why I'm supporting SEEDS with my donations and my volunteer time, and that's why I'm asking you to join me in supporting SEEDS too.

This year, I was invited to be on the coaching team for SEEDS' 2010 Conflict Resolution & Mediation Skills training. As you can imagine, this was a personal highpoint for me. After all, it was just two years prior that I sat before a mediation panel myself, desperately needing help. And now, I was training participants to provide the same service – skilled mediation – that changed my life.

At SEEDS, we pride ourselves on providing our training to a diverse pool of people at affordable costs. SEEDS has already held 12 trainings so far this year. At our popular 40-hour Conflict Resolution & Mediation Skills training, SEEDS awarded full or partial scholarships to two-thirds of the participants – in fact, no one was turned away due to lack of funds thanks to the financial support of people like you and me.

I've realized that conflict resolution work is my forte. As a mediator, I find I am more deeply integrated into the world. I now see myself as an instrument to promote peace. My long-term goal is to take SEEDS' teachings to my native Colombia, so that I can offer skilled conflict resolution trainings – and ultimately, a sense of peace and possibilities – to women and even entire communities displaced by violence.

You see, this is the magic of SEEDS. When you and I make a donation, those funds not only help people in conflict right now – but also train and empower the next generation of peacemakers throughout our community, and even across the globe. As you can see, every dollar you donate today will have a peaceful impact in our society.

This is why SEEDS needs your support today – to continue fostering effective communication and conflict resolution principles in Alameda County, and beyond.

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your gift today. Or you can visit our website, www.seedscrc.org, to give online. And remember, SEEDS' board of directors is providing a dollar-for-dollar matching gift for the first \$1,000 in donations we receive. By giving today, you can double the impact of your gift!

Here is how your gift will make a difference for SEEDS and the people we serve. Your support will help SEEDS to:

- provide need-based scholarships for our training programs
- continue building our Restorative Justice Program
- provide complimentary training and seminars for our volunteers
- provide our services on a sliding scale
- design and launch a Spanish-language Conflict Resolution training

I believe in SEEDS, and I hope you do too, and that you find it in your heart to express that support – to invest in SEEDS' mission – by joining me in making your donation today. While gifts of any amount are deeply appreciated, I urge you to give as generously as you can, so that others may find peace too. Thank so very much for your generous support.

In peace and gratitude,

Claudia Mar Ruiz
Volunteer at SEEDS Community Resolution Center

P.S. Please give as generously as you can today to help foster peace in our community. And remember – the first \$1,000 in donations this month will be matched by SEEDS' board of directors – a great way to double the impact of your gift! Thank you so much for your support.

Mediation Facilitation Restorative Justice Training
Services that Encourage Effective Dialogue and Solutions