

# 36th Annual Report 2008-2009

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## Whittlesea Community Connections

**Whittlesea Community Connections is a not-for-profit community based organisation providing a range of services and programs designed to increase community participation and to address disadvantage within the municipality of Whittlesea.**

### **Our core services and programs consist of:**

- Information, support and referral services
- The Emergency Relief Service
- Settlement Support Programs
- The Whittlesea Connect Community Transport Service
- The Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service
- The Whittlesea Community Legal Service

Cover image is from a photograph by Suzi Duncan (local artist, resident and volunteer) of images symbolic of the resilience and recovery of communities from the Black Saturday Bushfires

## Our Vision

WCC's vision is for a Whittlesea in which people and agencies work together to make a positive difference to their community, ensuring that everyone has equal access to the community's resources and services.



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## Committee of Management 2008-09

<b>Raziye Baftiyar</b>	President	Volunteer and Social Work and Human Services Student
<b>Greg Godfrey</b>	Treasurer	Mr. Greg Godfrey, Dip. Financial Planning, Financial Information Services Officer - Centrelink
<b>Maureen Corrigan</b>	V. President/Public Officer	Ms Maureen Corrigan OAM, Ass Diploma SACS Electorate Officer, the Office of Peter Batchelor MLA, Member for Thomastown. President of The Olive Tree Community House, President Thomastown Traders Association, Member of Northern Hospital Corporate Fundraising Committee, International Women's Day Convenor (Whittlesea Community Connections)
<b>Sam Alessi</b>	Official City of Whittlesea Representative	Cr. Sam Alessi BA, BEd, Dip. Teach, Grad. Dip. Computing, City of Whittlesea Councillor from 1997, Mayor of City of Whittlesea 1997/8, 2000/01 and 2004/05, Teacher, Vice President Municipal Association of Victoria, , Deputy Chairperson Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service.
<b>Rolf Peake</b>	Ordinary Member	Federation Computer Resource Facilitator, Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service (graphic design and promotion, International Volunteer Day Working Group), Secretary, Link Community Transport Board of Management, Treasurer, Lalor Living & Learning Centre Committee of Management, Northern Transport Links Steering Committee Member, COW Cultural Bridges working group Member.
<b>Sebastian (Dinny) Jaconis</b>	Ordinary Member	Community Information Worker; front desk reception, emergency relief assessor, Whittlesea Community Engagement Reference Group
<b>Charles McLean</b>	Ordinary Member	Retired: Vice President Swimming Victoria – Metro West; Qualified Official Australian Swimming Incorporated; Community Member Retired Ambulance Assoc.; Member of Ambulance Historic Society; Volunteer Link & WCC Community transport.
<b>Lena Garganno-Reddy</b>	Ordinary Member	13 years volunteering at WCC; volunteer representative on WCC Volunteer Standards Committee; Whittlesea Community Engagement Reference Group; Member of Whittlesea Disability Network and International Disability Day Committee; Parents and Friends Committee, Concord School
<b>Martin Booth</b>	Volunteer Representative	Graduated 2005 Bachelor of Behavioural Science (major psychology) from La Trobe University, Bundoora. Recently completed Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Presenter, 2-day training course on Emergency Relief. Volunteer with WCC since 2007.
<b>Jan Cleeland</b>	Co-opted Ordinary Member	Staff Member Office of Senator, the Hon Stephen Conroy

## Staff

Jemal Ahmet	Manager
Nivedana Achuthan, (nee Srikantha) (to Jan 2009)	Outreach Solicitor, Law Reform Project Worker
Jenny Alexiou	Finance and Administration Officer
Emma Antonetti	Community Development & Access Worker (Teamleader Settlement Programs)
Lucinda Antony	Community Development Worker (Community Participation)
Michael Apout (to Dec 2008)	Soccer Project Worker
Celeste Brierty	Community Lawyer
Sue Campion (to June 2009)	Community Lawyer
Robert Frajsman	Community Legal Education Worker/Act Teamleader WCLS
Annette McKail	Acting Coordinator, Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service
John Mirabile (to Feb 2009)	Volunteer Placement Worker (New Arrivals)
Grozda Nedeljkovic	Settlement Support Worker (Family Support)
Susan Perkins	Community Development Worker (Community Engagement)
Silvana Prestia (to Feb 2009)	Principal Solicitor, Teamleader Whittlesea Community Legal Service (from January 2008)/Community Lawyer
Philippe Roussel	Youth Worker (New Arrivals)
Emma Sampson (to Dec 2008, on Maternity Leave)	Coordinator, Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service
Dalal Sleiman	Settlement Support Worker (Arabic Speaking Communities)
Peta Temouskos	Acting Community Development & Access Worker (Community Programs & Client Services)
Vanessa Torzillo	Coordinator of Legal Service Administration and Volunteers,

## Volunteers

Abdo, Souliman	Legal Service Solicitor
Aderbehman, Parizad	Legal Service Day Team
Ahilaeswaran, Abarna	Tax Help
Alderson, Elaine	Federation Computer Room. Volunteer Resource Service
Amarasekera, Bhanuka	Legal Service Day Team
Antonetti, John	Community Transport Service
Azmitia, Fatima	Settlement Team, Learning Support Program
Baboulos, Gale	Volunteer Resource Service
Babu, Sindu	Legal Service Day Team
Backory, Hanshila	Tax Help
Baddeley, Barbara	Community Information Team, Administration, Settlement Team
Badi, Raya	Settlement Team
Bandaru, Trinadh	Legal Service Day Team
Beatty, Marianne	Mentor
Belot, Veronica	Legal Service Day Team
Bismyf, Janet	Mentor
Bithell, Cathy	Mentor
Booth, Martin	Community Information Team
Bray, Kelly	Legal Service Day Team
Buhagiar, Kelly	Legal Service Day Team
Buizetti, Bernice	Settlement Team
Burger, Lauren	Legal Service Day Team
Byron, Bill	Community Transport Service
Calvitto, Ben	Legal Service Day Team
Campbell, Vivien	Legal Service Day & Night Team
Capewell, Yvette	Legal Service Day & Night Team
Carlsson, Reinhold	Community Information Volunteer; Emergency Relief
Ceccomancini, Coby	Legal Service Day Team
Challenger, Dorothy	Community Transport Service
Chamatakundil, Jay	Legal Night Service Team
Chapell, Eddie	Community Transport Service
Chetcuti, Helen	Legal Service Solicitor
Chitgar, Rabeh	Legal Night Service Team
Ciuffettlie, Dino	Administration
Clear, Denis	Community Transport Service
Cohen, Charles (Alby)	Community Transport Service
Colaluca, Eveline	Community Information Team, Community Engagement
Comito, Marie	Legal Service Solicitor
Collins, Jenny	Legal Service Day Team
Craik, Jessica	Legal Service Day Team
Crvenkovic, Tania	Legal Service Day & Night Team
Cvetkovski, Saso	Community Information Team, Federation Computer Room
Das, Ajanta	Community Information Team, Tax Help
Dasanayaka, Chamila	Community Information Team, Tax Help
Dellios, Paul	Legal Service Solicitor
Deo, Arvind	Settlement Team, Learning Support Program
Dhanapala, Sulaiika	Legal Service Solicitor
Di Toro, Teresa	Legal Service Day Team
Dimoska, Lydia	Community Information Team, Tax Help
Dober, Erik	Legal Service Day Team
Donoghey, Adrian	Legal Service Day Team
D'Ortenzio, Rosa	Legal Service Day Team
Dosky, Meriam	Legal Service Day Team
Dunstone, Evette	Community Transport Service
Edwards, Lachlan	Legal Service Day Team
Ellul, Lawrence	Settlement Team
Estevan, Fadi	Settlement Team
Fallar, Jessica	Legal Night Service Team
Farid, Rosemary	Settlement Team
Fitzgerald, Bernie	Community Information Team, Volunteer Resource Service
Fitzpatrick, Julie	Community Transport Service
Foster, Adam	Legal Service Day Team
Frilay, Peter	Legal Service Day Team
Fusca, Nella	Legal Service Day Team
Gargano-Reddy, Lena	Community Information Team, Committee of Management
Georgiadis, Sylvia	Legal Service Day Team
Georgiev, Natalie	Legal Service Day Team

Geralovski, Natasha	Settlement Team, Learning Support Program
Ghodraty, Ramin	Legal Service Day Team
Giakimis, Jenny	Community Information Team
Gilliland, Kim	Legal Service Day Team
Giovannini, Lidiana	Settlement Team
Glover, Carol	Community Engagement
Godfrey, Paul	Legal Service Day Team
Golland, Maurice	Community Transport Service
Goodlet, Stephanie	Legal Service Day Team
Goodrick, Delwyn	Community Engagement, Strategic Planning
Goodwin, Andrew	Community Information Team
Grech, Christine	Community Information Team
Guizetti, Bernice	Settlement Team
Guthrie, Marnie	Settlement Team
Gunasena, Bhagya	Settlement Team
Habas, Jan	Legal Service Day Team
Habsyi, Huda	Community Information Team
Hachim, Razzaq	Community Transport Service
Hammond, Karen	Settlement Team
Hancock, Frank	Community Information Team
Harba, Anthony	Legal Service Day Team
Harmer, Trevor	Community Information Team
Havrilova, Maja	Legal Night Service Team
Hawkins, Gary	Community Transport Service, Mentor
Haywood, Lauren	Legal Service Day Team
Hedley, Roland	Tax Help
Helgesen, Carl	Community Transport Service
Henderson, Kevin	Community Transport Service
Hill, Jim	Community Transport Service
Holland, Julie	Community Engagement, NMIT Student Placement
Holmes, Daniel	Legal Service Day Team
Howarth, Edward	Legal Service Day Team
Improso, Aline	Volunteer Resource Service
Hughes, James	Settlement Team
Jaconis, Sebastian (Dinny)	Community Information Team, Emergency Relief; Community Engagement, Committee of Management
Jayasinghe, Kanthi	Legal Service Day Team
Jayasuria, Dinuke	Tax Help
Jayasuria, Shanaka	Tax Help
Jones, Alex	Legal Service Day Team
Kaias, Andrew	Legal Service Day Team
Karafillis, Amanda	Legal Service Day Team
Karolidis, Nick	Legal Service Day & Night Team
Kaur, Amandeep	Legal Service Day Team
Kaur, Gurvir	Legal Service Day Team
Kaur, Kamalpreet	Legal Service Day Team
Kenna, Paul	Legal Service Solicitor
Kodituwakku, Lakshinee	Legal Service Day Team
Kolandayan, Shaun	Community Transport Service
Kotanidis, Sofia	Mentor
Kubat, Kaitlin	Legal Night Service Team
Kuganesan, Kumithini	Tax Help
Lamaszewska, Joanna	Legal Service Day Team
Lai, Sylvia	Settlement Team, Learning Support Program
Lavery, Bernadette	Mentor
Lee, Jonathon	Legal Service Day Team
Leek, Peter	Community Transport Service
Leine, Kate	Legal Service Day Team
Le, Kim	Legal Service Day Team
Lenarcic, Vanessa	Legal Service Day Team
Li, Emily	Settlement Team, Learning Support Program
Lim, Suryani	Community Information Team
Lo, Belinda	Legal Service Solicitor
Lograsso, Robyn	Community Information Team; Volunteer Resource Service
Luo, Ross	Tax Help
MacDonald, Jan	Settlement Team, Mentor
Main, Barry	Community Transport Service
Malavisi, Italo	Community Information Team
Mallia, Frank	Community Transport Service

Mallia, Mary	Community Transport Service
Mandawala, Kasun	Legal Service Day Team
Maniero, Loretta	Legal Service Day Team
Mapa, Nadeesha	Legal Night Service Team
Maxwell, Sheena	Mentor
McGorrery, Paul	Legal Service Day Team
McLean, Charles	Community Transport Service
Miller, John	Community Transport Service
Minihan, Ainslee	Legal Service Day Team
Mitrovic, Gordana	Legal Night Service Team
Montalti, Joseph	Community Transport Service
Moran, Shaun	Legal Service Day Team
Morkos, Michael	Legal Night Service Team
Moses, Ashley	Mentor
Mudiyanselage, Chamila	Tax Help
Muhsen, Thiab	Settlement Team
Murgano, Peter	Community Transport Service
Murray, Peter	Community Transport Service
Murray, Sara	Legal Service Day Team
Muscat, James	Legal Service Day Team
Musleh, Bassam	Legal Service Day Team
Musleh, Mary	Community Information Team
Nangle, Rebecca	Volunteer Resource Service
Nassar, Mohamed	Settlement Team
Neophytou, Marie	Settlement Team
Ng, Clement	Legal Service Day Team
Niall, Gareth	Legal Service Day Team
Nicholson, Sarah	Legal Service Day Team
Knight, Sara	Legal Service Day Team
Ntostas, Margarita	Legal Service Day Team
Nuro, Gemila	Settlement Team
Nwankwo, Mary	Mentor
Odgers, Felicity	Settlement Team
Omasaraswatee Cusima, Deepty	Settlement Team
Ozturk, Samli	Legal Service Day Team
Parrish, Craig	Legal Service Day Team
Pascoe, Shaun	Legal Service Solicitor
Passantino, Lorretta	Legal Service Day Team
Peake, Rolf	Federation Computer Room, Volunteer Resource Service, Community Transport Service , Committee of Management
Perkins, Melissa	Community Engagement
Petrovska, Hristina	Legal Night Service Team
Petrucelle, Madeine	Community Transport Service
Phemister, Jeaninne	Community Transport Service
Pirvu, Claudia	Legal Service Day Team
Potenza, Natalie	Legal Service Day Team
Powell, Jamie	Mentor
Prasad, Chandrika	Community Information Team
Prendergast, Trevor	Community Transport Service
Quirk, Jenette	Community Information Team
Rachman, Robyn	Community Information Team
Rajapaske, Tanya	Community Engagement
Ramirez, Clementina Josephine	Settlement Team
Rawlin, Siobhan	Legal Service Day & Night Team
Regos, Andrew	Community Information Team
Reid, Janet	Community Transport Service
Renshaw, Mary	Community Engagement
Rhim, Ghayda	Settlement Team
Richter, Melisa	Settlement Team
Ridgeway, John	Mentor
Risoli, Daniela	Legal Service Day Team
Roberts, Alan	Emergency Relief, Community Information Team, Community Transport Service
Roberts, Carol	Emergency Relief, Community Information Team, Community Transport Service
Roberts, Dylan	Legal Service Day Team
Romero, Alejandra	Legal Service Day Team
Rosos, Kimberly	Legal Service Day Team
Ross, Lisa	Legal Service Day Team

Ross, Megan	Legal Service Solicitor
Sagoo, Upinder	Mentor
Sanchez, Liz	Mentor
Selim, Jimmy	Community Transport Service
Sgarlata, Andrew	Legal Service Day Team
Sharma, Tina	Mentor & Legal Service Day Team
Shehata, Sandy	Legal Service Night Team
Shokor, Majid	Settlement Team, Community & Police Partnership Project
Shulkes, Rachel	Legal Service Solicitor
Sia, Samuel	Community Information Team
Sidrak, Shoukry	Tax Help, Community Information Team
Simmons, Rosemary	Settlement Team
Singh, Suckhjinder	Settlement Team, Learning Support Program & Supervisor Driver
Sinclair, Anna	Legal Service Day Team
Sivashambu, Kajan	Mentor
Slyvester, Radhini	Settlement Team, Learning Support Program
Smith, Gabrielle	Community Information Team
Soloman, Zoe	Legal Service Day Team
Southurst, Glenys	Mentor
Spiteri, Adrian	Settlement Team, Supervisor Driver
Spry, Jacqueline	Legal Service Solicitor
Sribalachandran, Nadarajah (Bala)	Community Information Team, Federation Computer Room
Srikantha, Vallinayaki (Valli)	Emergency Relief, Mentor
Stankovksi, Alex	Legal Service Night Team
Stayner, Julie	Legal Service Day Team
Stelmach, Tanya	Legal Service Day Team
Stojanova, Nadia	Legal Service Day Team
Stove, Caitlin	Legal Service Day Team
Strahan, Cliff	Settlement Team, Learning Support Program
Subramanian, Gomathi	Community Information Team
Suriyakumarar, Parvathi	Legal Service Day Team
Szatkowski, Krystyna	Community Information Team
Tadros, Sherien	Settlement Team
Taig, Chris	Legal Service Day Team, Community Information Team Emergency Relief
Terrell, Joan	Mentor
Townsend, Tony	Community Transport Service
Treadwell, Andrew	Mentor, Settlement Team
Trunavuckarasu, Aravindan	Legal Service Day Team
Tsantevski, Lidija	Community Information Team
Umbadhi, Taylan	Mentor
Van Arkadie, Jarrod	Legal Night Service Team
Vassiliou, Maria	Legal Service Day & Night Team
Vavouris, Angelo	Community Information Team; Federation Computer Room
Vidakis, Nina	Community Information Team, Community Engagement
Vyas, Shiv	Legal Service Day & Night Team
Walcott-Taylor, Ekumi	Community Information Team
Waldie, Owen	Settlement Team, Community Transport Service
Walia, Charanjit	Community Information Team
Wati, Saras	Settlement Team
Whelan, David	Settlement Team, Supervisor Driver
Wighton, Michael	Legal Service Solicitor
Wijesinha, Ranjit	Emergency Relief
Wilkinson, Isaac	Legal Service Day Team
Williams, Robert	Legal Night Service Team
Woodlock, Tysen	Legal Service Day Team
Woon, Sarah	Legal Service Day & Night Team
Yasmeen, Shahida	Settlement Team, Learning Support Program
Yekenkurul, Neve	Settlement Team
Zorzi, Elio	Community Transport Service

## President's Report



Thanking my fellow committee members, staff and volunteers for their hard-work during the year does not seem to be enough. There have been many highlights for Whittlesea Community Connections this year but I would like to focus on and emphasize the great commitment and dedication of our staff and volunteers. This has been the driving force behind our achievements and the key to maintaining an exceptionally well run and accountable organisation.

Whittlesea Community Connections continues to grow and meet the growing needs of a growing community, whilst recognising and valuing the contribution of all volunteers. A successful volunteer family picnic was held at Hawkstowe Park and the International Women's Day Awards again acknowledged the outstanding work of individuals within our community who selflessly contribute and support others in their community.

In February this year the tragic events of the Black Saturday Bushfires impacted on many communities in our region. On the Monday following the Bushfires we joined the effort to assist the many individuals and communities needing help. We worked alongside local people, the local Council and other agency and government partners. Our role centred on supporting volunteers, assisting with information provision, providing legal advice and providing financial assistance to those affected. As President of WCC, it is with great pride that I can report to you that WCC staff, volunteers and Committee of Management were united in our solidarity with all those affected and that we will continue to respond and participate throughout the long recovery period ahead.

I'll finish as I began by acknowledging the work of our dedicated team of workers who, as in previous years, have worked long and hard to respond and meet the growing needs of the Whittlesea community through service delivery and program development. I would like to make special mention of our Team leaders who have been instrumental in securing funding for the services within their program areas. All program areas have at one stage or another been understaffed and under considerable strain during the year however, through the efforts of our staff, WCC has continued to deliver and expand its programs and services to meet the needs of the community.

I look forward to working with all staff, volunteers and fellow committee of management members in the coming year.

**Raziye Baftiyar, President**

## Manager's Report

This Annual Report highlights the work of Whittlesea Community Connections from the period from July 2008 to June 2009. As you read through the activities of our programs and staff you will appreciate the scope and range of our work, the dedication and commitment of our staff and volunteers and the growing importance of this organisation to the fabric of our community.

Learning Support Programs for young people, Driving Program for the newly arrived, Refugee Support Group for African new arrivals and support for Arabic Speaking and Chaldean women are just some examples from our settlement team of a strength-based approach where we bring people together in a learning and supportive environment. The delivery of intensive support and complex casework services also expanded during this period and our settlement team continues to deliver innovative, responsive and high quality services.

Our volunteer resources team handled an increased number of registrations for volunteering (up by 26% on the previous year). In addition, the team provided training opportunities and information sessions to a total of 367 individuals. The team also assisted the community to celebrate the contribution of volunteers to the community. The achievements of this team are all the more remarkable with the staffing shortages that occurred throughout the year.

Our community legal service team too had staff shortages and vacancies, and their ability to maintain the level and quality of service and respond to the unplanned workload created as a result of the Bushfires is a testament to their dedication and commitment to the community. We look forward to even greater things from our dedicated legal team as we move forward to achieving a full staffing compliment.

The community transport service, in its third year of operation achieved another year of growth. The service transported more individuals and groups, covered more kilometres and recruited more volunteers. Though this service is not supported financially by any level of government, its value to the community has been proven over and over again throughout its three years of operation. A significant number of the journeys assisted with have been to support people to attend essential health and medical appointments. WCC remains committed to the service and will work with the community to ensure we can continue to develop and resource this vital area of our work.

Work on the Whittlesea Community Engagement Project entered a new phase this year. Following on from the rewarding process of working with the Whittlesea community to develop Whittlesea's Community Engagement Principles last year, this year we used the principles to undertake two collaborative projects with two of the areas key agencies.

In September 2008, we were engaged by the City of Whittlesea to conduct an independent audit of the consultation and engagement practices in Councils' Community Plan processes (part of Council's legislative obligations to prepare a Council Plan to guide priorities, service delivery and inform planning). The audit identified existing practices and made recommendations for how these practices can be improved. This work was informed by the principles of the Whittlesea Community Engagement Framework. The final report was well received and had some influence on the Council's 'Shaping Our Future' community planning process in 2009.

Plenty Valley Community Health's proposed development of a community and therapeutic centre and gardens as part of the Farm Vigano site in South Morang is a unique opportunity to create an inclusive, sustainable space that increases local community participation and enhances health and social well-being. To ensure the site is developed in a locally relevant way and to meet the visions and needs of local people, we were contracted by PVCH to provide a review of findings from engagement with local organisations and schools and to conduct community consultation. We once again used the Whittlesea Community Engagement Framework and principles to inform this work and the report was used in a successful submission by PVCH to obtain government support for the project.

The work of this organisation grows each year. Our reach into the community grows each year and our commitment to that work and to Whittlesea grows each year. This is possible because of the work we do with many of our partners, but also because of the hard work and dedication of our staff teams and our amazing pool of volunteers. The opportunity given to me by the Committee of Management to lead such an organisation is something I greatly value and my heartfelt thanks goes to them for their support and guidance throughout the year.

**Jemal Ahmet, Manager**

# Settlement Programs Report

## Volunteers

More than 1,254 hours of work have been contributed to settlement services through volunteer support. Volunteer roles have grown to include English tutoring, homework support, transport, child - care, driving mentors and assistance with group facilitation and coordination. Volunteers are integral to providing sustainable and holistic community- based services. In addition, volunteering has paved the way for developing improved relationships between new arrivals and the broader community.

## Client Services

374 clients have been assisted through settlement services in 2008-2009. Of these clients:

- 67% had been in Australia for less than five years
- 53% arrived in Australia through the humanitarian program
- Top countries of origin were Iraq (35%), Sudan (19%), West and Central Africa (9%) and Macedonia (6%)
- Top suburbs of settlement within the City of Whittlesea were Lalor (26%), Thomastown (24%) and Epping (23%)
- Assistance provided through information, referral and advocacy led to greater access to essential services in relation to income, accommodation, education and training, health, legal and family reunion.

In addition, 276 group sessions were facilitated this year. Group sessions assisted to develop social support networks and enhanced the confidence, skills and opportunities for new arrivals to participate more broadly in the community.

## Complex Casework

Complex casework services were provided to humanitarian entrants facing a range of issues such as homelessness, interventions with the justice system, mental health and break down in family relationships. These cases were managed in coordination with relevant service providers and through planning processes enabling individuals and families to identify and prioritise their own needs.

## Supporting Arabic Speaking Women, Children & Families

The Arabic Speaking Women's Group, now the Whittlesea Arabic Speaking Women's Association, became incorporated on 6 April 2009. A committee of management has been established with Arabic speaking women now taking on greater leadership roles. The newly formed association is currently consulting with its' members to plan activities and directions for the coming year. The women are also supporting other new arrival refugee women such as the Chaldean women, a growing refugee community in Whittlesea. In addition, the Arabic speaking playgroup continues to provide support and connections for new arrival young families and is a vital link to kindergarten, maternal child and health and children's services.



## Supporting Refugee Communities

A support group established on weekends for emerging refugee communities and families provides a range of activities that develop social connections across different communities and generations. What binds these communities together is the common goal provided through activities such as sewing, art and craft, computers and homework support.



## Learning Support Program (LSP)

Four LSPs were coordinated on a weekly basis in partnership with Epping, Lalor North, Merrilands and Reservoir District Secondary Colleges. The program supports new arrival migrant and refugee students with language barriers and experiences of disrupted learning. An additional homework program was established on weekends for new arrival VCE students requiring specialist support. Links with LaTrobe University Education have been invaluable in linking committed and supportive volunteer tutors to the program. As well as improving learning outcomes, the LSP has improved working relationships between students, teachers and the community.

## Settlement Programs Report

### **The Harmony giving voice to local Arabic speaking communities**

Working with talented and skilled local Iraqi Journalists Amir Rashad and Khalid Al-hilli, Whittlesea Community Connections launched **The Harmony** Arabic language newsletter. The Harmony enables Whittlesea's Arabic speaking communities to remain informed of their local community, events and services. Copies of The Harmony are available from key community facilities, WCC offices and soon can be downloaded from the agency website.

### **Swimming Program**

A swimming program for refugee young people & children was coordinated in 2008 in partnership with Thomastown Recreation Centre and Mill Park YMCA. This provided an opportunity for Sudanese youth to gain important life and safety skills. In addition, a Life Saving Victoria program was run with 20 Sudanese young people. Participants learnt basic life saving techniques.



### **Community Partnerships & Police Project (CPPP)**

The CPPP was an idea initiated by Victoria Police to improve mutual understanding and connections between new arrival youth and the police. The young people involved helped plan a range of activities, establishing relationships between new arrival youth local police and services. As a result of the CPPP, police and participants gained greater understanding of pre-migration experiences of justice as well as policing and community safety roles in Australia. A DVD highlighting project learnings and outcomes was produced with the valuable support of Majid Shokor. Copies of the DVD are available through WCC.



### **Driver Education Program**

Funded through the TAC Community Safety grants, the Driver Education Program assisted new arrival humanitarian entrants with driver education and practical experience. Participants have come from Iraq, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Macedonia. Single-headed households were the primary target for this program, in recognition of additional participation barriers. Of all participants, 68% were women, half of which were single parent households. To date, 13 people have gained a Learner's Permit and 5 have gained their licence. This has been achieved through both formal driving instruction and 130 hours or 6,000kms of volunteer driving support. The driving program has made a significant contribution to new arrivals' level of independence and capacity to participate.

### **Celebrating Refugee Week**

Whittlesea's Refugee Week Event 2009 was celebrated through music and dance and with more than 200 community members and service providers. Financial support from the City of Whittlesea and the Victoria Multicultural Commission ensured the on-going success of this event. We look forward to seeing you there next year!



# Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service

The WVRS has experienced a very busy year, with lots of staff changes and unexpected challenges. In December Emma Sampson, the backbone of the WVRS, went on maternity leave and later gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. Then in February the Black Saturday bushfires occurred and it was all hands on deck as hundreds of people volunteered their time to help with the relief effort. John Mirabile finished up his role coordinating the volunteer mentor program. With all the upheaval we would like to thank all the volunteers that worked tirelessly over this period and were integral to all the achievements made this year.

## **Volunteer information, referral and support**

The WVRS had more than 500 client contacts during the 2008/09 year (excluding bushfire response volunteers addressed in separate section). WVRS has ensured that those facing disadvantage have access to its services, and are supported to overcome barriers in order to effectively volunteer. Of Whittlesea residents accessing its services this financial year;

- Over 63% are from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds
- Over 45% are newly arrived migrants and refugees
- 7% identify as living with a disability
- 18% are young people under 25 years.

While our client group is diverse, so too are the reasons why people volunteer. Many clients see volunteering as an opportunity to stay active, contribute to the community and learn new skills. For new migrants and refugees, volunteering is increasingly seen as a valuable way to gain local work experience and make connections and networks.

## **Volunteer Training**

During the course of the year the WVRS conducted 17 volunteer information sessions with 147 volunteers and potential volunteers participating. These sessions provide a good introduction to volunteering and people come away with an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as volunteers. Training is also important to assist volunteers in their roles and provide them with opportunities to develop and gain new skills. More than 220 volunteers received training this year. The training calendar included:

- Working with Senior Citizens
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- Basic Computer Applications
- Food Handling, Level 1
- Reception and Office skills
- Emergency Response
- Driver training
- Wheelchair Hoist Training for drivers
- First Aid training
- Working with interpreters
- Child Care
- Dealing with Grief and Loss
- Working with People with Disabilities

## **Volunteering & Mentoring for Newly Arrived Migrants & Refugees**

Volunteering continues to be a pathway to settlement, employment and community connectedness for newly arrived migrants and refugees. Of the over 100 new arrival and refugee clients that we saw for volunteering information, intake and assessment, more than 60 were supported into a volunteer placement. Clients came from 49 different countries, the most common being India, Iraq and Sri Lanka, and assistance has also been provided around employment, housing, and access to appropriate education and training. The 'shadowing' role developed so that newly arrived migrants could practice their English and get exposure to the local workforce, has continued and we hope to expand this into other areas.

WCC's mentoring program continued to be a source of assistance and support to refugees and new migrants in accessing and understanding services and systems, in looking for work and in searching and applying for private rental accommodation. In particular the mentoring program has focused more and more on employment support. Of the new arrival and refugee clients seen by the WVRS, 70% came from professional backgrounds. In response to this the Career Pathways Working Group was created to bring together employment services, industry and employer groups, training and service providers and community members to work on improving the processes and resources that enable skilled migrants and humanitarian entrants to find and stay in work.

## Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service

### Building the capacity of local volunteer-involving organisations & groups

The Whittlesea Volunteering Forum has continued to provide an opportunity for local organisations to share volunteer-related information, advocate on the needs of local volunteers, & develop capacity to involve & support volunteers. Guest speakers during the period provided presentations on police checks, volunteer small grants, volunteering in emergency management and risk management.

As part of our ongoing work, meetings are held with local organisations to encourage them to develop volunteer programs. Support and assistance is given around issues of insurance, volunteer policies and best practice.

### Volunteer promotion & recognition

Volunteer promotion and recognition is an important part of our role as a volunteer resource service. Some highlights this year included:

- The Whittlesea Whisper Volunteer Newsletter – produced by volunteers for volunteers.
- The Whittlesea Volunteer Expo held as part of National Volunteer Week. 16 local organisations and groups participated to promote volunteering and their services.
- The Whittlesea Volunteer Picnic as part of International Volunteer Day. Organised in partnership with the City of Whittlesea, Parks Victoria and local volunteers, to recognise and say thank you to all the volunteers in Whittlesea. This year was attended by approx 300 volunteers and their families, who were served lunch by local politicians and dignitaries. One of the highlights of this event was hearing some of the volunteers' talk about their experiences.



WCC Volunteers receiving Commonwealth Volunteer Awards from Harry Jenkins MP, Member for Scullin and Speaker of the House of Representatives

### Whittlesea Community Engagement Project

In November 2008 participants came together for an evaluation and celebration of the achievements of this project which involved an extensive consultation with the local community to establish a Community Engagement Framework and a set of principles that reflected the way people in the City of Whittlesea wish to be involved and engaged in their local community. Agencies continue to sign on to the Community Engagement Principles and we continue to work with local agencies on how to implement the Framework.



2008 Volunteer Day Picnic

One outcome was that WCC was contracted to audit the Council's community plan process. This has now been completed and is being used to inform the development of the next City of Whittlesea Community Plan. This was the first trial for the Audit Tool that was developed to assist agencies in the implementation of the Framework. The Tool assists organisations to reflect on their current strengths and areas for improvement, recognising that community engagement is an ongoing process. The tool aims to assist in developing mechanisms and strategies to improve and sustain the organisations' community engagement in Whittlesea.

### Volunteers and the Bushfire Response

By far the biggest challenge faced by the Volunteer Resource Service this year was the response required by the Black Saturday bushfires which devastated parts of Whittlesea and surrounding areas. WCC was asked by the City of Whittlesea on the Monday following the fires to coordinate volunteers. We worked to put processes and procedures in place and began registering people wanting to volunteer. The community response was overwhelming and in total we registered approximately 1500 people offering to volunteer.

In the days after the fires, volunteers spontaneously started filling gaps and working to respond to the needs of people who were fire affected. We provided support, assistance and coordination to the large numbers of spontaneous volunteers and tried to link them, where possible, with organisations so that they were covered by insurance. A team consisting of some of our existing volunteers and some newly recruited volunteers helped to staff the phones, register volunteers and respond to requests from agencies for more volunteers. Usually the time frames were short and it was not unusual to receive a request for multiple volunteers needed immediately. We were humbled by the amount of people who gave so generously of their time to respond to this emergency situation and it is hard to imagine what the response effort would have looked like without them.

## Whittlesea Community Connections

## Whittlesea Community Legal Service

The Whittlesea Community Legal Service (WCLS) has continued to meet the needs of the community through quality and dedicated service in the following areas:

- Information
- Referrals
- Casework
- Advice
- Law reform

The achievements of WCLS are admirable given the challenges of staff coverage and the unexpected tragic events of Black Saturday. The dedication of staff and volunteers has ensured that the service has continued to respond to the needs of the community.

### Staffing

The start of 2009 saw the departure of Silvana Prestia (Principal Solicitor) and Nive Achuthan (Outreach Lawyer). Both were instrumental in the ongoing development of the legal service through their professionalism and passion.

As a result of these departures, Sulaika Dhanapala returned to the legal service in the role of locum Principal Solicitor. She has maintained this role on a part-time basis. By February 2009, the legal service comprised of Sulaika, Vanessa Torzillo (Volunteer Coordinator), Sue Campion (Community Lawyer) and Robert Frajsman (Community Legal Education worker).

In March 2009, the service welcomed Celeste Brierty in the role of Outreach Lawyer. Celeste has since become a vital member of the legal team through her professionalism and drive, which have been crucial in re-establishing the outreach services at Anglicare and Mill Park Community House. Following the departure of Sue Campion in June 2009, Celeste assumed the role of Community Lawyer, whilst maintaining her outreach commitments.



In the absence of a permanent Principal Lawyer, Robert Frajsman was appointed Acting Team Leader in May 2009 to oversee the daily running of the service. During this period, the legal service was heavily involved in the recruitment of new staff, which was completed by August 2009. Although this falls outside the reporting period, it is important that the following staff are acknowledged a Bushfire lawyer, Victims of Crime (VOCAT) project worker and Outreach lawyer. Whilst these positions have been filled after the reporting period, the service wishes to acknowledge each new member in this report.

Bushfire Lawyer – Ann Lightowler  
Victims of Crime (VOCAT) Project Worker – Rachel Storey  
Outreach Lawyer – Daniel Beecher

### Bushfire crisis

The bushfire crisis was another example of WCC and its WCLS team responding to the needs of the community. The unforeseen tragedy of Black Saturday saw the WCLS coordinate a legal advice service at the Whittlesea Relief Centre. As part of the Bushfire Legal Help (BLH) team, a combination of lawyers from private practice, Victoria Legal Aid and other community legal centres we offered assistance to those affected by the fires. For a period of four weeks, the BLH offered daily advice, seven days a week. Since then, our agency has continued to assist bushfire clients through its outreach location at Whittlesea and referrals to our main office in Epping.

To assist the ongoing needs of those affected by the fires, WCLS received one-off Commonwealth funding to help recruit a “bushfire lawyer”, Ann Lightowler, for a 12 month period and Ann’s work will be crucial to supporting the communities of Whittlesea, Kinglake, Kinglake West and other surrounding communities as they work to recover from this great tragedy.

### Law Reform

In November 2008, Nive Achuthan completed her two year law reform project focusing on the impact of the “Welfare to Work” reforms that were introduced in 2006.

In the meantime, the WCLS secured a grant from the Legal Services Board (LSB) to undertake a research project on victims of crime (VOCAT) compensation. The project was deferred until mid-year, as a result of the bushfire crisis. Rachel Storey has since been appointed with her role involving casework, community liaison and developing best practice manuals and materials for professionals and the public.

### Casework

WCLS has continued to see high numbers of clients at the main office at Epping Plaza and outreach facilities. This includes seeing clients by appointment as well as accepting urgent client matters without appointment.

### Casework statistics (1 July 2008 – 30 June 2009)

Number of advice undertaken:	593
Number of files opened:	284
Number of files open as at 1 July 2008:	161
Number of information and referrals:	713

**Total number of people assisted: 1,751**

### Night service

The night service operates every Monday evening to assist clients who may otherwise not be able to access legal advice. Vanessa Torzillo combines her day duties as the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure that the night service is manned by volunteer paralegals and solicitors. Demand for the service remains consistent, as clients are able to attend without making a formal appointment.

### Outreach

The outreach services at Anglicare, Mill Park and Kildonan were suspended in early 2009 due to lack of staff. A limited service at Whittlesea was maintained, with the Anglicare and Mill Park facilities re-established following the appointment of Celeste Brierty in March 2009. Plans have been made to recommence the outreach service at Kildonan with other locations to be explored for future outreach opportunities.

### Migration law

The WCLS has broadened its scope by providing migration law advice to clients who have been referred by other program areas in the Whittlesea Community Connections fold. There has been a gradual rise in demand, which is handled by our Settlement Support worker and qualified migration agent, Grozda Nedeljkovic.

### Community Legal Education (CLE)

The provision of legal information remains an important component of the legal service. Through the CLE program, information sessions and publicity campaigns have been held on a variety of issues, including family law, consumer issues, privacy, wills and powers of attorney. Sessions have been tailored to the needs of each community group, particularly those who are at risk of disadvantage such as new arrivals, students, women's groups and senior citizens. A number of these sessions have been held with other service providers, which include the Cancer Council of Victoria, Family Relationships Centres and Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre. During the reporting period, 50 sessions were held with the bushfire crisis limiting the number of CLE activities that would normally occur.

### Volunteers

The legal service continues to rely on volunteers to ensure that the day and night services are able to operate. WCLS has a steady pool of 45-50 volunteers who reflect the diverse community. Their skills and desire are utilized in a variety of tasks that are of immense value to the legal service.

Training sessions are provided to volunteers and the legal service is firmly committed to providing on-going support and supervision. For the purposes of flexibility, induction sessions are held throughout the year.



## Whittlesea Connect – Community Transport Service

The transport service continued to grow over 2008-09 with the service providing transport on more than 700 occasions. The service continues to increase the number of trips from 8-10 trips per week in 2007-08 to 10-14 trips per week in 2008-09. Overall, the service provided 568 individual trips in the last year, and 208 trips for groups that meet in the City of Whittlesea. The regular run from Whittlesea Township to Epping Plaza every Tuesday has successfully run throughout the year and continues to be a valued service by Whittlesea Township residents.

Whittlesea Connect operates as a community transport service to assist those who are transport disadvantaged in the City of Whittlesea. The service aims to provide support and assistance to those who are unable to access public transport and would otherwise not be able to attend appointments and support groups. The Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service recruits and trains volunteer drivers and assistants to deliver a quality service using two mini-buses.

Amongst the group bookings, we provide regular transport to the weekly Arabic speaking Women's Group as well as to a group of indigenous clients and their children attending a playgroup at Plenty Valley Community Health. We also provide regular trips for individuals attending regular groups as part of a NEAMI program.

Through our well-established Hire Out Policy, we have been able to provide our buses to several not-for-profit organisations throughout the year, including the Indigenous Play Group and The Darebin African Resource Centre.

Our Volunteer Resource Service continues to work with our volunteer drivers and assistants to maintain a model volunteer-involving service. Over the year, 33 volunteer drivers and assistants have been recruited and trained, contributing more than 3,395 hours to the service. Our volunteers also participate in decision making, advocacy and fundraising for the service. In the last year, WCC held 2 sausage sizzles to raise funds for the service at Bunnings Warehouse and outside the Epping Plaza. We managed to raise over \$800 for the service on these two occasions.

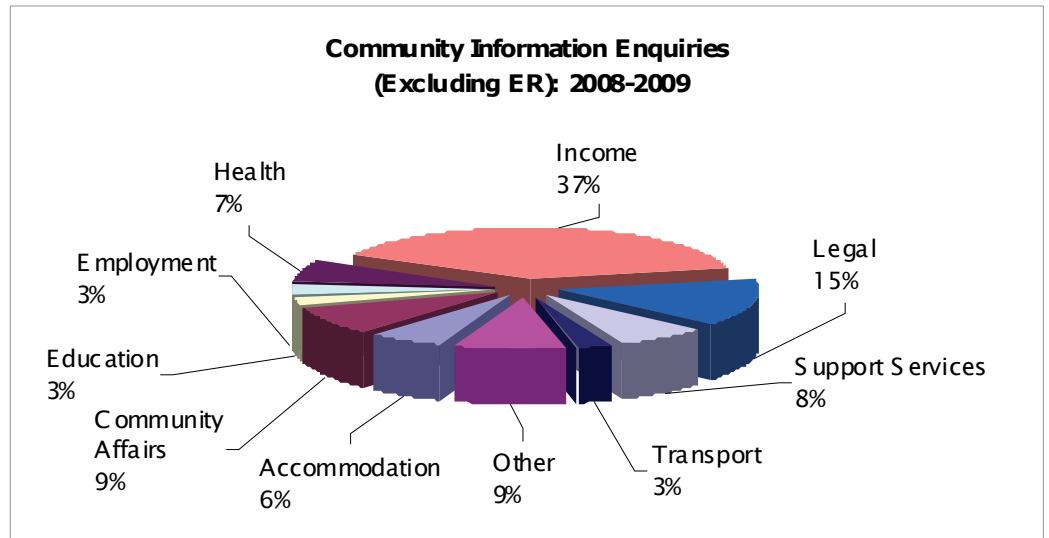
Local people have supported the service and have ensured that the service can provide much needed transport to those who face transport disadvantage in the City of Whittlesea. Through generous donations given by the community and the ongoing commitment from our committee of management we have been able to continue running the service in the absence of commitment by any level of government to fund the much needed service.

We thank all of our volunteers for their time and commitment to providing a valuable service that assists so many of our community members.



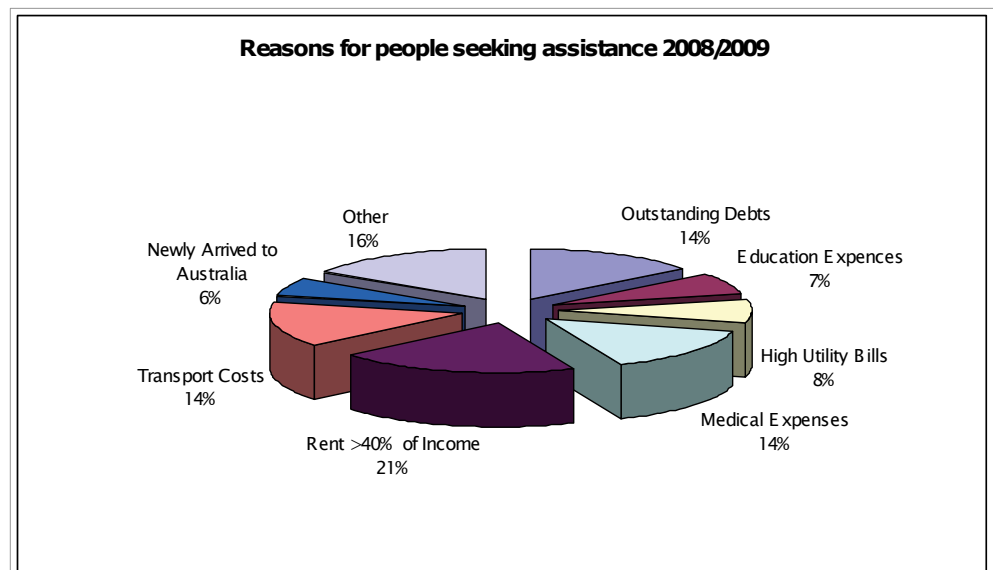
## Emergency Relief

Unfortunately the Emergency Relief service continues to be much needed in the City of Whittlesea. The 2008/2009 year saw the situation for many people on Centrelink or other low incomes continue to deteriorate. Lack of housing affordability continues to be a significant contributor to poverty in the area. Of those clients accessing our services that were in the private rental market or were paying off a mortgage, 64% were paying more than 40% of their income on housing costs. In reality many of these clients were in fact paying between 50% and 80% of their incomes on rent or mortgage. The ER service also saw an increasing number of people being forced to live in crowded, unsatisfactory conditions in rooming houses.



More than \$102,000 (funds primarily attained from the Federal Department of Housing, Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs -FaHCSIA) was distributed in assistance on 1,559 occasions to 894 residents. ER assessors were also successful in attaining close to \$10,000 in assistance from the Queens Fund for individual clients meeting their criteria. Demand for service still outstrips the available funds and in this financial year we had to turn people away on close to 1,000 occasions.

In addition WCC was able to distribute financial assistance, thanks to the Lord Mayor's Foundation, to people in financial hardship as a result of the devastating Black Saturday fires. WCC began regularly providing ER assistance to bushfire affected people in April 2009. A drop-in service was established at the Emergency Hub in Whittlesea Township two afternoons a week. Many families who lost their homes in the fires were relocated to various suburbs around Melbourne. In response to this ER assistance was also made available by appointment at our Epping office.



Our Emergency Relief service is staffed predominantly by volunteers. Members of our local community in their roles as Volunteer ER assessors receive training and support so that they can provide an ER service that prides itself on being non-judgmental and respectful of the rights and dignity of clients. ER assessors provide clients with referrals where necessary as well as individual advocacy to other service, utility providers and housing providers. They also assist clients with filling in forms and applying for other grants. During this financial year the service had 7 dedicated ER volunteers who met regularly to discuss issues and share knowledge.

## Information & Referral Services

### **Information and Referral Service**

Staffed by committed volunteers our Information and Referral service continues to respond to daily information enquiries by local residents. Volunteers received more than 5,000 information enquiries, while also providing reception for the many services now provided at WCC. Information resources were also replenished and kept up to date by volunteers.

All our information volunteers receive training and must undertake a 9 week course which prepares them for work in a Community Information Centre. There was only one course conducted at Lalor Living and Learning Centre this financial year and from this, the Information and Referral service received 8 new volunteers. All new volunteers are linked up with a mentor to provide them with ongoing induction and support. Volunteer meetings are held regularly and provide an opportunity volunteers to share knowledge and contribute to the ongoing development of the service.

The majority of enquiries continue to be for emergency relief, either for our service or referral to other services in the area. This year emergency relief took up 56% of total enquiries. The following graph indicates other enquiries received throughout the year.

The Information and Referral Service would not be able to run without the incredible commitment of our volunteers. We would like to thank all those that dedicated their time to the service this year.

### **Federation Public Access Computer Room**

The Federation Computer Room continues to operate as a valuable community resource, providing free computer and Internet access to residents in the City of Whittlesea. The computer room is operated by a small team of IT facilitators who provide assistance and support for those who need help using the computer and/or internet.

This year, over 531 community members accessed the Federation room, amounting to over 956 hours spent on the computers. The main programs used by clients were Microsoft Office and Internet/mail. Through training provided by the Volunteer Resource Service, the Federation Room was used to conduct 2 Introduction to Computers training sessions. Furthermore, the Settlement team has been able to use the federation room to assist people from Refugee and Migrant backgrounds with job search opportunities. Community members accessing the service represented 25 different ethnic backgrounds and an increase in women accessing the service continues, as does the number of people over the age of 40.

Thank you to our dedicated team of volunteers assisting in the Federation Computer Room.

### **Tax Help Program**

Every year WCC participates in this Australian Taxation Office program. Volunteers are trained to assist people on low incomes to complete their tax returns. This year, we welcomed the return of some of our existing volunteers from the 2007 program including Chamila, Shoukry, Shanaka and Abarna. WCC continues to run as one of the largest tax help centres in Victoria. This year, 8 tax-help volunteers assisted to complete more than 523 tax returns from July to October.

We were able to provide appointments from Monday to Friday each week, with a night service on Thursday evenings for those who cannot access the service during the day. Our tax-help volunteers spoke 8 different community languages, making it easier for clients who may not speak English as a first language to access the service.

Thank you to all our Tax Help volunteers who assisted so many of our community members.

### International Women's Day Awards

We had the pleasure of inviting Ms Katy Barfield, Executive Director for Second Bite, to be our guest speaker at the Award Ceremony this year.

Now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year, the Whittlesea International Women's Day Awards continue to grow with over 30 nominations being made and more than 60 people attending the Awards Ceremony. The awards provide an opportunity to acknowledge the incredible contribution women make to our local community through their voluntary efforts. This year, in order to recognise the contribution local newly arrived women make to the area through volunteering, despite the difficulties involved in settling in a new country, we introduced the *Newly Arrived Women's Award*.

This year's award recipients were:

**Whittlesea International Women's Day Award-** Dawn Ciechomski (*nominated by Deborah Jane Azzopardi*)

**Young Achiever Award-** Deepty Cusima (*nominated by WCC*)

**Senior Citizen Award-** Elizabeth Pratt (*Nominated by Honor Mackie*)

**Rural Women's Award-** Gail Short (*Nominated by WCC*)

**Personal Achievement Award-** Grace David (*Nominated by Christine Stow*)

**Newly Arrived Women's Award-** Janet Bismyf (*Nominated by Olive Dixon*)

Congratulations to all those who were nominated and thank you for the valuable contribution you have all made to the local community.



Dawn Ciechomski, CFA Volunteer and Whittlesea International Women's Day Award Recipient 2009

The financial statements of Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2009 marks another year of sound financial performance. Though our grant income shows a decrease of \$49,003 from the previous year, this does not include \$413,592 (made-up of Grants received in advance and unexpended grant funds) which has been carried-forward to fund 2009-10 activities.

A commitment to fund essential services not supported through government grants saw us utilise \$32,329 of our accumulated reserves, bringing our reserves down from \$307,166 at June 2008 to \$274, 837 at June 2009. Our response to the Black Saturday Bushfire crisis impacted on this performance with the agency spending to support the activities of staff in their response to the crisis.

Distribution of Emergency Relief financial assistance to eligible clients rose sharply in 2008-09 by \$33, 521. This was chiefly due to increased activity to support those impacted on by the Black Saturday Bushfires but also in response to rising demand from the general community. The increase in expenditure was supported by additional income from FAHCSIA, The Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund and the Queens Fund. The Bushfire crisis will continue to impact on emergency relief and general expenditure as we remain committed to responding to community needs.

For the future, the agency remains committed to making planned and responsible use of cash reserves for the provision of services to the Whittlesea Community. Our Community Transport service will remain the main beneficiary of this policy in 2009-10 both to sustain and grow the service.

Having already introduced paid maternity and parenting leave and reduced the qualifying period for long-service leave in previous years, the committee have committed to further improvements in staff conditions. A professional development fund will be created in 2009-10 to supplement staff training budgets. This fund will be maintained at 2.5% of our staffing costs and in 2009-10 will mean \$27, 498 allocated for this purpose.

**Greg Godfrey** *Treasurer*

# Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2009

## Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2009

### Operating Statement for the Year Ended 30 June 2009

Revenues	Notes	30 June 2009	30 June 2008
Grants	1	\$ 1,056,482	\$ 1,105,485
Interest		\$ 24,162	\$ 26,707
Fundraising		\$ 2,097	\$ 3,172
Other	1A	\$ 78,918	\$ 89,838
<b>Total Revenues</b>		<b>\$ 1,161,659</b>	<b>\$ 1,225,202</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee and Labour related Costs	2	\$ 855,543	\$ 826,958
Telephone		\$ 17,384	\$ 15,782
Postage		\$ 2,598	\$ 2,692
Stationery		\$ 6,549	\$ 6,594
Rental -City of Whittlesea		\$ 12,468	\$ 12,468
Advertising		\$ -	\$ 1,992
Accounting & Audit		\$ 22,009	\$ 14,024
Project Costs		\$ 28,531	\$ 14,001
Staff Training		\$ 5,802	\$ 2,010
Volunteer Training		\$ 5,606	\$ 5,883
Subscriptions & Memberships		\$ 4,378	\$ 5,354
Staff amenities		\$ 1,421	\$ 1,045
Security Costs		\$ 1,716	\$ 1,010
Bank Charges		\$ 35	\$ -
Depreciation		\$ 8,310	\$ 8,483
Emergency Relief Community Support	12	\$ 120,878	\$ 87,357
ER Admin. Expenses		\$ -	\$ -
Printing and Photocopying		\$ 6,668	\$ 4,377
Legal Practising Certificate		\$ 982	\$ 698
Legal Library		\$ 3,967	\$ 3,730
Strategic Planning		\$ -	\$ 10,000
Information Technology		\$ 5,392	\$ 291
Project Management Costs		\$ 21,202	\$ 19,196
Community Transport (leases, fuel and maintenance)		\$ 35,196	\$ 28,300
Other	4	\$ 27,360	\$ 78,809
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$ 1,193,988</b>	<b>\$ 1,151,053</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets resulting from Operations</b>		<b>(\$ 32,329)-</b>	<b>\$74,149</b>

### Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2009

		30 June 2009	30 June 2008
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash	5	\$ 716,227	\$ 420,199
Receivables	6	\$ 40,044	\$ 3,489
Investment-Shares in PCCU	7	\$ 60	\$ 60
Payment in advance-Salaries		\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>\$ 757,231</b>	<b>\$ 423,748</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Equipment	8	\$ 35,027	\$ 5,157
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>\$ 792,258</b>	<b>\$ 428,905</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Creditors	9	\$ -	\$ -
GST Liabilities		\$ 3,128	\$ 14,377
Payroll Liabilities (Super Plus PAYG)		(\$ 1,318)-	\$ 19,307
Grants Received in Advance	10	\$ 231,661	\$ 30,675
Grants Carried Forward	10A	\$ 181,931	\$ -
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>\$ 415,401</b>	<b>\$ 64,359</b>
<b>Non Current liabilities</b>	11	\$ 102,019	\$ 99,823
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>\$ 517,421</b>	<b>\$ 164,181</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>\$ 274,837</b>	<b>\$ 264,723</b>
<b>Equity-Accumulated surplus</b>		<b>\$ 274,837</b>	<b>\$ 307,166</b>

### Statement of Changes in Equity for the Year Ended 30 June 2009

Balance at start of Financial Year	\$ 307,166	\$ 233,017
Transfer to Accommodation (Building) Fund	(\$ 35,000)-	-\$ 35,000
	\$ 272,166	\$ 198,017
<b>Accommodation (Building) Fund</b>	<b>\$ 35,000</b>	<b>\$ 35,000</b>
Add Change in Net Assets resulting from Operations	(\$ 32,329)	\$ 74,149
<b>Balance at the end of Financial Year</b>	<b>\$ 274,837</b>	<b>\$ 307,166</b>

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements For the Year ended 30 June 2009

1. Grants

The Following Grants Received Funded	30 June 2009	30 June 2008
<b>Core Operations</b>		
SGP Employees & Programs-DIAC	\$ 289,086	\$ 336,358
General WCC Employees & Programs		
City of Whittlesea (Main Grant)	\$ 154,500	\$ 120,600
City of Whittlesea (International Womens' day)	\$ -	\$ 2,300
CoW-FVMM trng,Arab Women's Group	\$ 10,113	
Grant from DPC - Arab Women's Group	\$ 5,000	
TAC - Community Transport Grant	\$ 18,909	
VMC(Refugee Week Grant)	\$ -	\$ 2,200
VICNET (Public Internet Access Program)	\$ 6,750	\$ 1,875
City of Whittlesea Strategic Planning Grant	\$ -	\$ 10,000
Emergency Management Project	\$ 73,972	\$ 51,292
Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service		
City of Whittlesea Grant	\$ 66,300	\$ 64,100
FACSIA VMP Grant	\$ 53,083	\$ 53,126
Volunteering Australia	\$ -	\$ 1,000
DVC-VRC's Funding	\$ 43,750	\$ 70,000
Whittlesea Community Legal Service	13	\$ 271,856
Victoria Legal Aid	\$ 277,972	
Emergency Relief Program		
DFACS /Emergency Relief Grants	\$ 193,994	\$ 78,803
The Queens Fund	\$ 11,640	\$ 10,601
Donations	\$ 30	\$ 700
Whittlesea Connect Community Transport Grant		
LGV Community Transp.Grant	\$ 30,675	\$ 30,675
Community Transport Donations Voluntary and Passengers	\$ 2,639	
Unexpended Grants carried forward to next year	(\$ 181,931)-	
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>\$ 1,056,482</b>	<b>\$ 1,105,485</b>
<b>1A. Other Income</b>	<b>30 June 2009</b>	<b>30 June 2008</b>
Community Directory	\$ 35	\$ 112
Reception Services	\$ -	\$ 1,599
Service Generated Income	\$ 20,596	
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 16,070	\$ 56,510
Management Fee	\$ 21,202	\$ 19,196
Grants from Swinburne,Police & New Arrivals,School foc. Yth	\$ 20,052	\$ 10,683
Legal consultant reimbursement	\$ 328	
Other- Int. Women's Day Donations	\$ 500	
Donations Received	\$ 135	\$ 1,757
	<b>\$ 78,918</b>	<b>\$ 89,838</b>
<b>2. Employee &amp; Labour Related Costs</b>		
Salaries	\$ 753,658	\$ 721,536
Workcare	\$ 7,799	\$ 10,059
Superannuation	\$ 67,573	\$ 64,547
Travel Claims Reimbursed	\$ 7,279	\$ 5,987
Prov. For LSL,AL Loading, Parental and SL	\$ 17,270	\$ 16,584
Recruitment costs	\$ 1,964	\$ 8,244
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 855,543</b>	<b>\$ 826,958</b>
<b>4. Other Costs</b>		
Annual Return Fee/AGM	\$ 1,154	\$ 4,732
Insurance	\$ 875	\$ 1,159
Interpreting & Translations	\$ 5,967	\$ 6,966
Equipment Purchase	\$ 5,005	\$ 2,773
Room Hire	\$ 1,543	\$ 802
Internet fees	\$ 1,871	\$ 1,882
Legal Information Sessions	\$ -	\$ 13
Volunteer Expenses	\$ 1,061	\$ 1,917
Meeting Expenses	\$ 660	\$ 1,102
Refurbishment Costs	\$ -	\$ 45,145
Federation Room Running Expenses	\$ -	\$ 22
Reference material	\$ 505	\$ 150
Fund-raising expenses	\$ -	\$ 1,440
Catering	\$ 7,145	\$ 3,893
Sundry Expenses	\$ 370	\$ 1,102
School support Costs	\$ 672	\$ 795
Furniture and Fittings	\$ 227	\$ 4,222
Police and Work with Children Checks	\$ 506	\$ 693
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 27,360</b>	<b>\$ 78,809</b>
<b>5. Cash</b>		
Bank of Melbourne	\$ 19,570	\$ 1,478
PCCU Cash Management Account	\$ 535,300	\$ 288,689
PCCU Multi-Term Investment Account	\$ 160,650	\$ 150,000
Petty Cash	\$ 708	\$ 32
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 716,227</b>	<b>\$ 420,199</b>

	30 June 2009	30 June 2008
<b>6. Receivables</b>		
Pledges Receivable	\$ 8,900	\$ -
Receivables on sale of Comm. Directories		\$ -
City of Whittlesea-Rec.Service Fees		
Victoria Legal Aid		
Sundry Debtors	\$ 28,455	
Other Receivables	\$ 3,589	\$ 3,489
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 40,944</b>	<b>\$ 3,489</b>
<b>7. Investments</b>		
Shares in Plenty Credit union	\$ 60	\$ 60
<b>8. Equipment</b>	<b>30 June 2009</b>	<b>30 June 2008</b>
Family Resource Donation		
At Valuation	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(\$ 5,999)-	\$ (5,999)
Net Value	\$ 1	\$ 1
<b>Federation Room</b>		
Computer Systems	\$ 35,853	\$ 29,817
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(\$ 29,984)-	\$ (26,427)
Net Value	\$ 5,869	\$ 3,390
<b>Others</b>		
At Valuation/Cost b/f	\$ 15,208	\$ 15,208
Accumulated Depreciation	(\$ 15,207)-	\$ (13,730)
Net Value	\$ 1	\$ 1,478
<b>Volunteer Resource Service</b>		
At Cost	\$ 14,657	\$ 14,657
Accumulated Depreciation	(\$ 14,656)-	\$ (14,656)
Net Value	\$ 1	\$ 1
<b>Whittlesea Comm.Legal Service</b>		
At Cost b/f	\$ 29,105	\$ 18,264
Accumulated Depreciation	(\$ 18,492)-	\$ (18,263)
<b>Net Value</b>	<b>\$ 10,613</b>	<b>\$ 1</b>
<b>General</b>		
At Cost b/f	\$ 24,045	\$ 2,744
Accumulated Depreciation	(\$ 5,503)-	\$ (2,458)
<b>Net Value</b>	<b>\$ 18,542</b>	<b>\$ 286</b>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$ 124,868</b>	
<b>Total Accumulated Depr.</b>	<b>(\$ 89,841)-</b>	
<b>TOTAL EQUIPMENT(NET VALUE)</b>	<b>\$ 35,027</b>	<b>\$ 5,157</b>
<b>10. Grants Received in Advance</b>		
Legal Services Board - VOCAT legal position	\$ 50,000	\$ -
NACL - Vic bushfire allocation	\$ 87,000	\$ -
LGV - Community Buses Funding	\$ -	\$ 30,675
DFACS - Bushfire Volunteer Position	\$ 94,661	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 231,661</b>	<b>\$ 30,675</b>
<b>10A. Grants Carried Forward</b>		
SGP Employees & Programs-DIAC	\$ 21,652	
City of Whittlesea (Main Grant)	\$ 5,621	
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 3,305	
TAC - Community Transport Grant	\$ 8,106	
Grants from Swinburne,Police & New Arrivals,School foc. Yth	\$ 12,908	
Emergency Management Project	\$ 51,972	
Emergency Relief Grants	\$ 78,368	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 181,931</b>	
<b>11. Employee Entitlements</b>		
Long Service Leave	\$ 62,326	\$ 52,558
Sick Leave	\$ 29,640	\$ 30,042
Annual Leave	\$ 8,153	\$ 8,218
Parental Leave Provision	\$ 1,901	\$ 9,005
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 102,019</b>	<b>\$ 99,823</b>
<b>12. Emergency Relief</b>		
Emergency Aid	\$ 102,011	\$ 87,357
Bushfire Relief	\$ 18,867	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 120,878</b>	<b>\$ 87,357</b>
<b>13. Community Legal Service (Recurrent Funds)</b>		
<u>Income</u>		
Victoria Legal Aid	\$ 277,972	\$ 271,856
Interest Income	\$ 5,350	\$ 7,110
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 6,798	\$ 7,710
City of Whittlesea	\$ -	\$ 15,535
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 290,121</b>	<b>\$ 302,211</b>

	30 June 2009	30 June 2008
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Salaries	\$ 227,614	\$ 202,268
Superannuation	\$ 19,578	\$ 17,839
Salary On Costs	\$ 3,375	\$ 4,544
Rent	\$ 5,480	\$ 5,831
Other Premises Costs	\$ 797	\$ 60,990
Staff Training	\$ 2,770	\$ 1,373
Staff Recruitment	\$ 678	\$ 3,641
Communications	\$ 9,118	\$ 6,932
Office Overheads	\$ 7,369	\$ 6,971
Insurance	\$ 313	\$ 308
Finance,Audit and Accounting fees	\$ 10,048	\$ 6,472
Library, resources and Subscriptions	\$ 8,524	\$ 8,047
Travel	\$ 2,093	\$ 2,038
Depreciation	\$ 229	\$ 62
Programming and Planning	\$ 2,051	\$ 4,961
Other	\$ -	\$ 2,877
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 300,017</b>	<b>\$ 335,156</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (9,896)</b>	<b>\$ (32,946)</b>

**Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 30 June 2009**

	30 June 2009	30 June 2008
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Receipts from Grants Donations and sundry charges	\$ 1,470,074	\$ 1,074,810
Interest Received	\$ 24,162	\$ 26,707
Other	\$ 59,814	\$ 93,010
Total	\$ 1,554,049	\$ 1,194,527
<i>Payments for employees and administrative expenses</i>	<i>\$ (1,219,841)</i>	<i>\$ (1,189,289)</i>
<b>Net Cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>\$ 334,208</b>	<b>\$ 5,238</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Purchase of fixed assets	\$ 38,180	\$ -
Net Cash provided by investing activities	(\$ 38,180)-	\$ -
Net Increase (Decrease) in cash held	\$ 296,028	\$ 5,238
Cash at beginning of financial year	\$ 420,199	\$ 414,961
Cash at end of financial year	<b>\$ 716,227</b>	<b>\$ 420,199</b>
<b>NOTES TO STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS</b>		
(a) Reconciliation of cash		
Cash at bank and in hand	<b>\$ 716,227</b>	<b>\$ 420,199</b>
(b) Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities to operating surplus		
Operating surplus	(\$ 32,329)-	\$ 74,149
<u>Non-cash flows in operating activities</u>		
Depreciation	\$ 8,310	\$ 8,483
Provision for Annual Leave Loading/Sick Leave/Long Service Leave	\$ 2,197	\$ 16,584
<u>Changes in assets and liabilities</u>		
Decrease/(Increase) in receivables	\$ (37,455)	\$ 8,117
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors and provisions	\$ 355,305	\$ (59,653)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>\$ 296,028</b>	<b>\$ 47,680</b>
Cash at beginning of Financial Year	\$ 420,199	\$ 414,961
Cash at end of Financial Year	\$ 716,227	\$ 420,199
Increase in Cash during year	<b>\$ 296,028</b>	<b>\$ 5,238</b>

**Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2009**  
**Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

a) Basis of Accounting: The financial statements are a general purpose financial report which has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. The Financial Statements have been prepared on the basis of historical costs. b) Reporting Entity: The results in this financial report includes all funds over which Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. controls resources to carry out its functions. Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. is a not-for-profit incorporated association and public benevolent institution providing information services, settlement services, Community Legal Services, a Volunteer Resource Service, an emergency relief program and other support services. The agency is staffed by a combination of paid staff and volunteers. Paid staff during the year have included a Manager, Settlement Support and Community Development and Education workers, solicitors and a casually employed accountant/bookkeeper. The primary source of funding is government grants. The entity is incorporated under the Incorporation Act 1981, with a Management Committee responsible for governance. c) Taxation: The Agency is an Income Tax Exempt organisation endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient and Public Benevolent Institution. d) Equipment: Acquisition of assets are initially recorded at cost. The entity adopts a threshold of \$1,000 when recognising equipment e). Investments: All investments are recorded at cost. Interest revenue is recognised as it is received. f) Employee entitlements: Liabilities for employee entitlement to wages and salaries, annual leave, long service leave and other entitlements which are accrued at balance date and are expected to be paid or settled within 12 months of balance date are accrued at nominal amounts calculated on the basis of current wage and salary rates, inclusive of associated on-costs. Liabilities for other employee entitlements which are not expected to be paid or settled within 12 months of balance date, are calculated as per Australian Accounting Standard AAS30; Accounting of Employee Entitlements: The liabilities are calculated at the present value of the expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to balance date. In assessing future payments, regard is given to experience. g) Superannuation: The Superannuation expense for the reporting period is the amount of the statutory contribution the entity makes to the superannuation plan which provided benefits to employees. h) Cash for the purpose of the Statement of Cash Flows: cash includes cash deposits which are readily convertible to cash on hand and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value which are used in the cash management function on a day to day basis. i) Grants: Grants are recognised as revenues when the entity obtains control over assets. Outstanding grants over which the entity has control are recognised as receivables and recorded at nominal amounts. j) Creditors: These amounts represent unpaid liabilities for goods received and services provided to the entity prior to the end of the reporting period. These amounts are unsecured and are normally settled within 7 days. k) Comparative information: Comparative information, where necessary, has been reclassified to comply with the 30 June 2006 financial statement presentation.

## INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

### TO THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT WHITTLESEA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS INC.

#### Scope

I have audited the financial statements of Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2009.

The Treasurer of the governing body is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and information contained therein. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to the Committee of Management.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

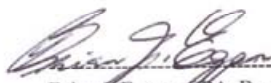
My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates.

These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial report presents a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements (Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views) which is consistent with my understanding of Whittlesea Community Connections Inc's financial position, the results of its operations and its cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

#### Audit opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements present a true and fair view of the financial position of Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. as at 30 June 2009 and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year, in accordance with the requirements of Section 30(3A) of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981* and the Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

 7, 10, 2009  
Brian J. Egan CPA, Reg. Tax Agent  
Plan Act Grow Pty Ltd



