

A close-up photograph of a middle-aged man with grey hair, wearing glasses and a large black headset. He is looking slightly to the left with a focused expression. He is wearing a dark red and grey striped V-neck sweater over a white collared shirt. The background is blurred, showing other people in a community setting.

Making a positive difference everyday

Annual Report 2018-19



Whittlesea Community Connections is a place based not for profit incorporated association and an income tax exempt organisation endorsed as a Public Benevolent Institution and a Deductible Gift Recipient.

ABN 49881724827

Registration No. A0008867P

Telephone

03 9401 6666 General

03 9401 6644 Emergency Relief (Mondays and Fridays from 9am only)

03 9401 6655 Legal

03 9401 6633 Women in Work mobile childcare

03 9401 6622 Community Transport

Locations

**Shop 111, Pacific Epping,
571 High Street, Epping VIC 3076**

**Thomastown West Community Hub,
98 Main Street, Thomastown VIC 3076**

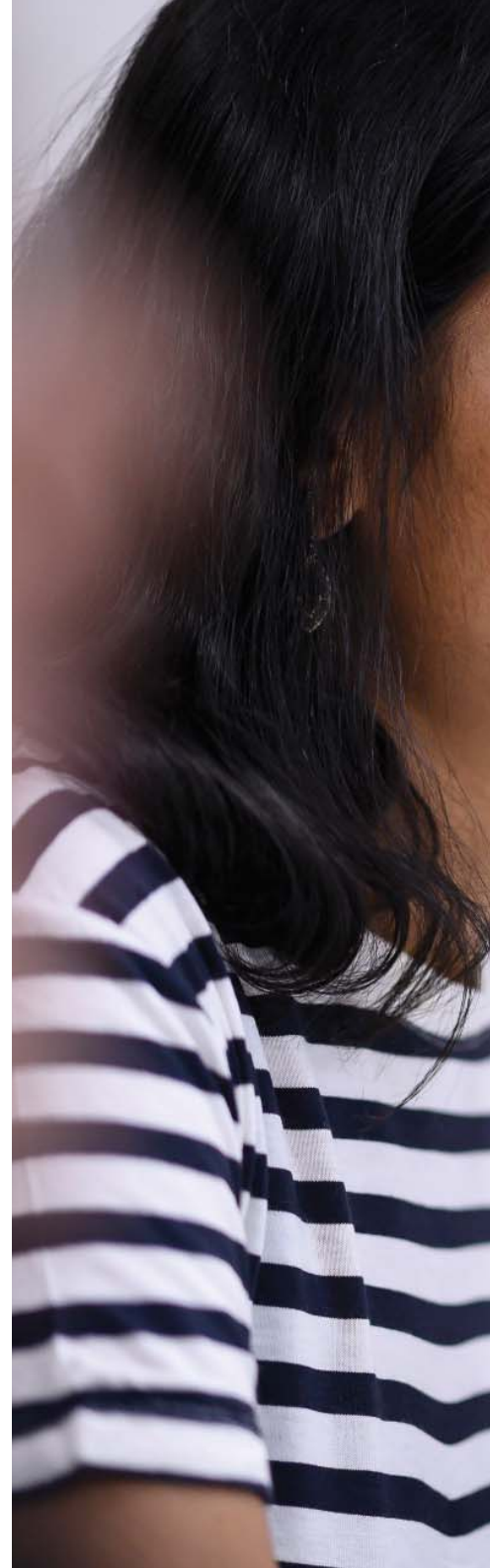
**Mernda Community House,
2 Heals Road, Mernda VIC 3754**

Information

www.whittleseacc.org.au

facebook.com/whittleseacommunityconnections

Whittlesea Community Connections acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we provide our services, the Wurundjeri Willum Clan of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and express our hope for reconciliation, justice and the recognition of the living culture of all Aboriginal people.



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Snapshot

31,440

CLIENT
CONTACTS

9,710

INFORMATION
OR TRAINING
CONTACTS



Our clients are from **56** different countries and they speak **42** languages including English

This would not have been possible without the involvement of more than



282

LOCAL
PEOPLE

who contributed approximately



90,770 HOURS
of volunteer time, more than

\$2,269,250

worth of passion and dedication to the local community by the local community.



We made a difference by providing:

11,281 free community transport trips (medical, social, allied health, volunteering, shopping)

**TRANSPORT
AND ROAD
SAFETY**

2,150+ hours of learner driver mentoring



**CAPACITY
BUILDING**

42 women (5 groups) with **\$19,000** in grants to encourage participation of culturally and linguistically diverse women

5 community groups with up to **\$5,000** each to improve

6 community groups matched with Good Governance mentor

25 hours leadership training for Women's Advisory Group

393 childcare jobs for women from refugee backgrounds

1724 hours of childcare provided

ENTERPRISES



681 legal advices given to clients

262 clients received legal casework

35 court appearances

22 VOCAT cases opened

124 migration cases

19 community legal education sessions

19 Espresso Legal community visits

LEGAL



COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SETTLEMENT



798 new clients and **1,022** existing clients
317 active settlement clients and **1373** settlement casework appointments
2242 hours of community education through Group work for Whittlesea's new refugees and migrants
1,541 general casework appointments
555 people seeking asylum provided with assistance
3,168 front desk enquiries
206 inquiries for Tax help and **177** Tax help interactions

1,485 Emergency Relief appointments that provided **\$144,680** in financial support and vouchers

Two biggest presenting issues - Material wellbeing and managing money **40%** and Housing **18%**
627 warm referrals made to external services
13 local tertiary students with a student placement opportunity
4600 hours of supervised student placements and internships – **3500** hours completed by social work students and **1100** hours by community services and youth work students with **94** hours direct supervision by the lead caseworker

THOMASTOWN WEST COMMUNITY HUB

165 children participated in art and craft based activities over school holiday periods.
302 children with the opportunity to participate in literacy, numeracy, chess, gardening and STEM

VOLUNTEER RESOURCE SERVICE & VOLUNTEERING



92 face to face interviews with local community members were conducted.
79 participants have attended information sessions
94 have attended volunteer trainings

34 community organisations and agencies supported to engage new and existing volunteers.
14 students who otherwise would not be able to afford tutoring have been matched with 11 volunteer tutors

3 volunteer expos
5 Bi-Lingual Volunteers trained in media and public speaking, to become champions and examples to other volunteers

Volunteer profile videos have been posted to social media nearing **1,000** views, promoting volunteering and its benefits



54 young volunteers from **12-25** have experienced volunteer opportunities within the City of Whittlesea

15-20 members from a centralised youth advisory group (THE LOT – The Leaders of Tomorrow)
5-8 members (14-17 year olds) of the Lalor Secondary College youth group (LYC – Lalor Youth Committee) have identified and are training to deliver an AOD program to deliver to children as a preventive measure



Our Board

Our Board members (as at June 2019)

Nessie Sayar

President

Elissa Andreacchio

Vice President

Harry Jenkins

Treasurer

Rosa Harrison

Secretary

Paul Tysoe

Member

Lena Gargano

Member

Teresa Farid

Member

Suzanne Bevacqua

Member

Vicki Selvaggio

Member

Max Lee

Member

Holly Cussigh

Member, Volunteer representative

David Williams

Member, Volunteer representative

Sam Alessi

Member, City of Whittlesea representative

Thank you to former members Rolf Peake, Stella Gorham, Randa Rafiq, Rita Jaup and Ginette Beguely for their contributions and a special acknowledgement to the contributions of Paul Tysoe who has been missed by Whittlesea Community Connections since his passing in June 2019.

It is with great pleasure I write this President's Report for the year 2018 - 19. It has been another productive year for the Board and I am pleased to report our work continues with a strong focus on governance, policies, advocacy, financial reports, various projects, fundraising and strategic priorities to better support the organisation and growing needs of the community.

I am pleased to advise the Board is confident WCC's consolidated financial statement presented for the year ending 30 June 2019 is sufficient and can meet its debts as and when required.

WCC's funding successes during this financial year ensures the continuation of current, new programs and projects will be delivered to the community, and the Board is very pleased with the ongoing progress in all areas of WCC's work. I congratulate Alex Haynes CEO for the initiatives and achievements as she continues to build strong and healthy relationships with WCC's funding bodies, partners, stakeholders and sponsors. With this, I am confident we will continue to see excellent developments for WCC, and the wider community.

It is always great to see successful events organised throughout the year by WCC for our community and new & emerging communities which is strongly focused on empowerment, respect, harmony, multiculturalism and diversity. One of the annual events for this year I have once again had the great pleasure to organise and host with WCC staff and volunteers was the International Women's

President's report



Day Celebrations held at the Barry Road CAC, bringing together over 200 of our communities culturally diverse women and their groups. Suffice to say, it was another successful day of engagement, performances and great food which was enjoyed by all. Many thanks to our fantastic guest speakers for taking the time to share their empowering stories and celebrating "women and their achievements" with us.

In my third year as President, I feel humbled and privileged to serve the Board of WCC. As a resident of the Whittlesea municipality for over 44 years it is wonderful to be in this role and see the great achievements come to fruition over the years. We have come a long way since it's inception adapting to all needs and changing requirements of the community, and can be proud of the vital work delivered.

Personally, it has been a great year of growth, and I look forward to another and final year as President, and then getting back into other volunteer positions to help support WCC and the community.

I would sincerely like to thank all current Board Members of 2018 - 19, Harry Jenkins AO, Max Lee, Rosa Harrison, Vicki Selvaggio, Paul Tysoe whom we sadly and unexpectedly lost, Elissa Andreacchio, Cr Sam Alessi, Suzanne Bevacqua, Teresa Farid, Lena Gargano, David Williams, and Holly Cussigh for their significant contributions to WCC. It has been a great privilege to work with you.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their commitment and another successful year of excellent work delivered to the community. Congratulations, and well done.

Warm Regards,



NESSIE SAYAR

President, Whittlesea Community Connections

CEO's report

The drive and commitment of our volunteers is such a strong constant through our history - their can do attitude, the desire to serve, their willingness to respond to changing needs, doing the little things that make a difference to individual people's lives, at the same time as helping us to advocate around big things.

This annual report highlights the contributions of our volunteers, their experiences of volunteering and the positive impact they have. Our strength comes from our connection and relevance to our community and a lot of that comes from what we learn from our volunteers.

Just as little things make a difference, individual people make a difference and WCC could be described as thousands of individual efforts united by a strong sense of purpose and values. Most of those individuals are volunteers, from the Board members right up to reception volunteers. One of our special individuals, Paul Tysoe, passed away during the year. Recently retired from Victoria Police he was a driving force on the WCC Board with his unique set of skills and a strong sense of justice. For me as the CEO there were several times during the year he was a tremendous support and guiding hand and I miss his advice, genuine concern and friendship.

This year has been fast and furious with significant growth directed to progressing our new strategic priorities. Significant work on housing and homelessness, equity of access, gender equity and enterprise development has been coupled with an increase in support and opportunities for young people. We have also worked hard to be more accessible across the LGA – with a new neighbourhood house in Mernda, more regular outreach and extending our L2P driving program to Whittlesea, Kinglake and surrounds.

We have built strong connections with the services who work with us at Shop 111 – Banyule Community Health, Campbell Page, Berry Street, Victoria Legal Aid, Cabrini Outreach and Northern Centre for Sexual Assault. We have strengthened our relationships with La Trobe University Law School, Bubup Wilam, Thomastown West Primary School, Epping Secondary, Spectrum, Melbourne Polytechnic, Victoria Police, PRACE, City of Whittlesea

and Foundation House and developed new relationships with Eastern Metropolitan Primary Health Network, Yarra Valley Water and Deakin University. Thank you to everyone who has supported us through this year.

We work to enable those who live, work, study and volunteer in Whittlesea to come together to achieve a community that is inclusive, a community that supports those who are disadvantaged and a community able to advocate for its own needs and aspirations. I am proud of the way we hold ourselves to account to our community and work everyday to make our place, our community, a more connected and compassionate one.



ALEX HAYNES

CEO, Whittlesea Community Connections

OUR VISION

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

About Us

Our values

- Self determination
- Independence
- Not for profit
- Confidential
- Non judgmental
- Diversity

Our approach

- We welcome everyone in our community
- Our services are free
- We keep your information private
- We have bilingual workers and volunteers and use interpreters
- We support your rights
- We stand independent from the government or any other organisation
- We support you to build hope and confidence

What we do

WCC identifies and breaks down barriers to accessing information and specialised support services and works towards building individual and community resilience. As a client-centred, community-led organisation, WCC works alongside individuals, families and groups to create opportunities to access information and services and to build and strengthen connections through:

- Community Development activities and events
- Community Support, Information and Referral
- Community Transport
- Emergency relief and casework support
- Housing brokerage support and no interest loans
- Legal information, advice, casework and legal education
- Migration advice and casework
- Road Safety, L2P and Adult Driving Programs
- Settlement advice, casework and support groups
- Social work casework service
- Tax Help
- Volunteer Resource Service
- Youth work, Homework support and one + one tutoring
- Women in Work childcare social enterprise
- DriverED driving school social enterprise
- OurBUS community bus hire social enterprise

Community Support team connects community members with the information, services and referrals they need. Through emergency relief, housing brokerage no interest loans and case management we provide financial and other support to those experiencing financial hardship. The team provides support, casework, advocacy and referrals to newly arrived migrants and refugees to assist them with settlement in Australia. The team supports people to gain information, establish new connections and networks and address the settlement issues they face as they make a new life for themselves.

Legal Services team provides community education, advice and casework in areas including family law, family violence, fines and infringements, immigration, motor vehicles and crime compensation across six locations and a range of student clinics in partnership with La Trobe University Law School.

Community Engagement and Volunteering team works in partnership with the community and relevant stakeholders to increase the opportunities for community information, engagement and participation. The team includes volunteering resources, community projects, youth work and community led and place based initiatives like the Thomastown West Community Hub and Mernda Community House.

Community Transport and Enterprise team provides community transport across the city, L2P driving program for young people and bike and road safety programs. They have six buses, 4 cars and more than 40 bikes and 55 trained volunteer drivers and mentors. Community Enterprise was a focus in 2018-19 to identify and develop social enterprise opportunities to create supported employment and generate income to support new community programs.

Where we are

- Shop 111 Pacific Epping, Epping (Monday to Friday) - All services
- Thomastown West Community Hub, 98 Main Street, Thomastown (Monday to Thursday) – Learning Clubs and Homework support, Adult English, school holiday programs, community meeting space
- Mernda Community House, 2 Heals Road, Mernda (Monday to Friday) – Community activities, Volunteer and learning opportunities and WCC services including Community Information and referral, Emergency Relief and Casework
- General legal advice and casework offered in Mill Park, Epping, Laurimar, Whittlesea township
- L2P driving education offered across Whittlesea with cars stationed in Epping, Whittlesea township and Kinglake
- Casework support at Melbourne Polytechnic (Monday to Thursday)
- Espresso Legal mobile coffee van offering information and advice across Whittlesea LGA
- www.whittleseacc.org.au
- www.facebook.com/whittleseacommunityconnections



Alan Roberts

Volunteer at WCC since 2007

Alan began volunteering with Whittlesea Community Connections 12 years ago. He was walking past the WCC office at Epping Plaza and saw a sign on the door; he decided to drop in and find out more about the organization and was informed there was a community information workers course starting in a few days.

He went along and enjoyed it. Alan started volunteering on the front desk at reception and in a few months he became an Emergency Relief Assessor, a role he continues today 2 days a week.

Alan's role as an Emergency Relief assessor is to complete the intake and assessment of each client accessing emergency relief so he can offer the most suitable help. Help may be financial, a referral to another WCC program or external organisation. He may also provide advice on a path to help solve / reduce the issue they are having; this is always done in a non judgmental way and in strict confidence.

Alan has seen many changes over the past 12 years including the growth of WCC, changes to the way ER is delivered and an increase in clients needing help. When Alan started volunteering clients would present to ER needing help due to experiencing a crisis. He is now seeing a lot more clients who are in need of financial assistance with what could be described as top

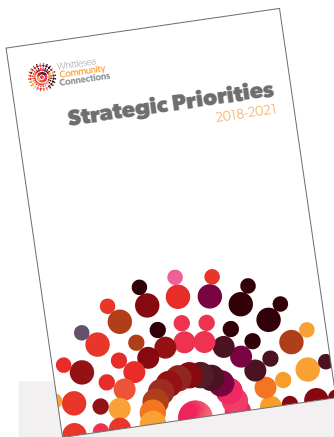
up support, due to people's household incomes being inadequate and the cost of living having increased so significantly in the 12 year period. Alan explained he had a client present who is on Centrelink and receives \$1036 per fortnight to support a family of 3. His wife is ineligible to receive any payments for another few months and their rent is 70% of his income, so it is very hard to make ends meet.

Alan believes that WCC is the best responder in the area as we offer the same help to all clients and take notice of what the community needs are. Alan would like to see an increase in funding to be able to provide more significant financial assistance and to meet the needs of so many new clients that are presenting.

Alan enjoys his role very much and he believes it is good for both mental his health and well being. He enjoys the interaction with the staff and volunteers and is happy that he can help reduce some of the stress that clients are going through.

We love having Alan as part of our team and were delighted when he was inducted onto the Community Information & Support Victoria (CISVic) Honour Roll, which recognises people who have made a significant contribution to the community information and support sector through their work at the local, regional and/or state level.





Strategic responses

In June 2018 the Board approved our new Strategic Plan 18-21 which has driven our focus over the last twelve months. We have 7 key priorities, all of which we have made significant progress with this year.

We will work to...

Improve access to Housing and reduce Homelessness



Actively engage in strengthening Multiculturalism



Improve equity of access to information, support and services



Increase Gender Equality in community settings



Improve opportunities and outcomes for Young People



Increase local employment through enterprise



Improve access to Mental Health services and support and reduce stigma



Our challenge is to create opportunities to connect with those who both give and need support, the agencies and the funders who want to make a difference and the policy-makers and planners who have the power to shape our environment and community for the better.

Improve access to Housing and reduce Homelessness

Family Violence Housing Brokerage Project

Funded by the Ian Potter Foundation, 2019 -2021

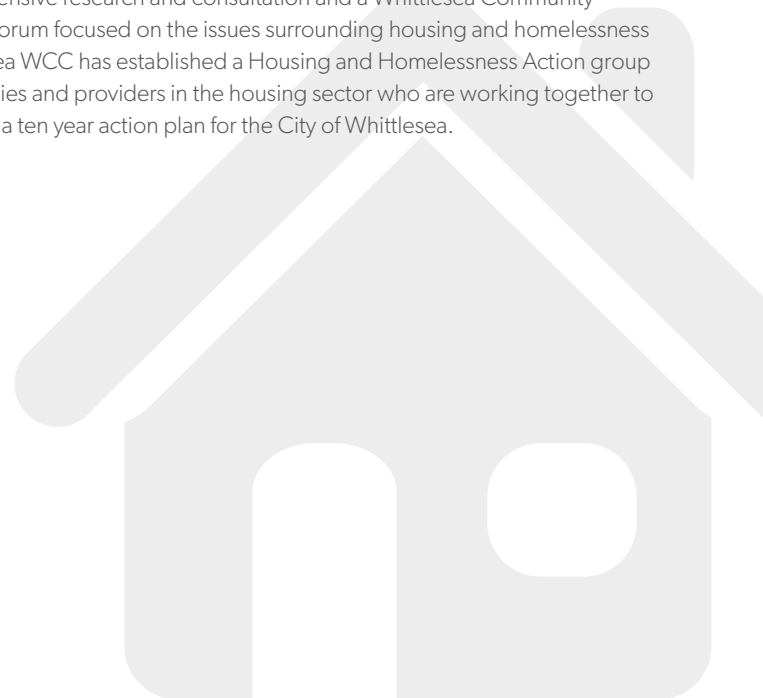
This new project delivers intensive support to women in the first 6 weeks of entering the program to assist them with obtaining private rental accommodation and establishing themselves (and any children) in a rental property; an additional 6 weeks of casework support is provided to ensure women have adequate supports in place. This project builds on our existing builds on our successful Housing Brokerage loan scheme and our ongoing efforts to improve our response to those experiencing and recovering from family violence.

The project aims:

- To reduce barriers for women that have experienced family violence in accessing and/or maintaining tenancy in private rental housing.
- Build relationships with real estates with the aim to increase their knowledge about the housing challenges women experiencing family violence face.
- Provide case work support focussing on housing. This includes assisting with property searches, inspections, general education on renting and no-interest-loan provision).
- Provide financial literacy education to women including individual advice on budgeting, saving, expense management.
- Provide ongoing casework support to women to maintain tenancy and grow their connections with their community.
- To support a total of 80 women per annum and 240 women over the 3 year period.

Referrals into the FV Housing Project are accepted from Berry Street Northern Family and Domestic Violence service and WCC services. The Referring program/agency completes the project referral form, consent form along with a project rental readiness assessment form.

After extensive research and consultation and a Whittlesea Community Futures forum focused on the issues surrounding housing and homelessness in the area WCC has established a Housing and Homelessness Action group of agencies and providers in the housing sector who are working together to develop a ten year action plan for the City of Whittlesea.



Improve equity of access to information, support and services

Koru project – Supporting people seeking asylum

Partly funded by Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion (MASC), 2018-2020 and the Bundoora Rotary Club

The Koru project works with asylum seeker communities living in the City of Whittlesea and surrounding areas in Melbourne's outer-north. 13% of Victoria's asylum seeker population lives in the City of Whittlesea, this equates to 1093 Bridging Visa E Holders (March 2019). Whittlesea's asylum seeker community there is a great deal of diversity with people coming from countries such as Iran, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Vietnam (this does not include those that are stateless). This project is building a bridge across cultural, ethnic and religious communities, and work with men, women, young people and children.

The asylum seeker community is experiencing extreme levels of vulnerability and uncertainty. The Department of Immigration and Border Protection reduced the Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS) program significantly by the end of June and those now without income are highly vulnerable with some families facing destitution without capacity to meet basic living expenses. In addition 245 people are projected to be refused protection visas in Whittlesea. Some will launch Federal Court appeals but will be cut off from SRSS payment while they wait, which could take 1-2 years.

Many are living on no visa at all and those on bridging visas have varied conditions. As a result people seeking asylum living in our community are feeling fearful and uncertain about the future, experience poor mental health and remain isolated without connections to the broader community.

The Koru project creates a space for people seeking asylum to come together in a way that is positive and based on self-identified needs and aspirations. It provides opportunities to develop invaluable support networks and access information about available services. Participation in the asylum seeker and broader community is be supported through volunteer information and training.

Khalyani who volunteers with the Koru project and is an excellent cook. She has also joined WCC's Women's Advisory group



Hume Whittlesea Pharmacy Waiver program

Funded by Hume Whittlesea Primary Care Partnership, Cabrini Outreach and WCC

Critical support for people seeking asylum living in Whittlesea and Hume is being provided through a new pharmacy waiver program operating on Mondays and Fridays from Whittlesea Community Connections. The program is delivered through a partnership between Cabrini Outreach and Whittlesea Community Connections established in February 2019.

Recent changes to the Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS) program have resulted in asylum seekers gaining work rights but losing income support while they are awaiting the outcome of their claim for protection. Despite best intentions, we anticipate many will have difficulty finding work resulting in a high risk of homelessness and destitution.

One of the effects of having no income is the inability to fill pharmacy scripts. A Pharmacy Waiver Program involves providing eligible clients with authorisation (that is, a waiver) to have the costs associated with filling their prescription billed to Cabrini Outreach by the nominated pharmacy. The health needs of people seeking asylum include high levels of chronic pain, non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder.

In the main, asylum seekers affected by the changes in the SRSS program will maintain access to Medicare. Many already have an established relationship with a culturally appropriate general practitioner. The goal in establishing a Pharmacy Waiver Program is to enable these clients to maintain their primary

care relationship.

This collaboration is a targeted integration of health expertise and place based services to address a key gap in the health system for a particularly vulnerable group of people. There is little point in general practitioners prescribing medication that asylum seekers cannot afford to buy. Whittlesea Community Connections has clients accessing other free services saying they are not accessing medical services because they know they can't afford medication or follow up treatment.

The Cabrini Outreach-Whittlesea Community Connections partnership is improving the health and wellbeing of people seeking asylum. We foresee we can improve access to community health and specialist services (for example dental, optometry, allied health, infectious diseases & paediatrics) as well as social services and material aid through other local partnerships.

Through the evaluation of the first 100 days, it was revealed that if it were not for the Program, 66% of clients would simply not purchase medication. This is of particular concern seeing that thirty-eight clients have ongoing medical conditions (for example, Cardiovascular) and require regular prescription filling.



Cabrini
OUTREACH

Hume & Whittlesea Pharmacy Waiver Program

Operated by Cabrini Outreach
in partnership with
Whittlesea Community Connections

Hume Whittlesea Primary Care Partnership
2018-19 Grant Program Recipient



ASYLUM SEEKER HEALTH NEEDS

1667

Asylum seekers in Whittlesea & Hume (end of 2018)

Health needs include high levels of chronic pain, poor general health, depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This pilot aims to prevent clients' health worsening due to financial hardship, isolation and fear, and uncertainty about their future.



ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Asylum seekers are not eligible for health services Australians take for granted

While some asylum seekers are eligible for a range of health services through GPs and community health these do not include pharmacy. Recent changes to SRSS eligibility will see many with no income support at all. This pilot is a targeted response to help local asylum seekers access free medications that support their physical and mental health.



MEDICATION SAVES LIVES

Prevention and early intervention matter

Facilitating access to free medications when the person needs them, in a safe and supportive service run by Cabrini outreach at Whittlesea Community Connections in Epping will make a real difference to the health of local asylum seekers.



HEALTH IMPACT

Medication saves lives

Good physical health is essential to good mental health. The health outcomes of local asylum seekers that access free medication from the new Epping service will be measured in this pilot.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Volunteer or donate now

Volunteer or donate to Whittlesea Community Connections at:
www.whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au

Donate to Cabrini Outreach at:
www.cabrinioutreach.com.au

MORE INFORMATION - CONTACT

Sonali Dahiwalé on 03 9401 6666 Mon-Fri 10am-2pm

EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

WWW.HWPCP.ORG.AU



Strategic responses (cont.)

Mernda Community House

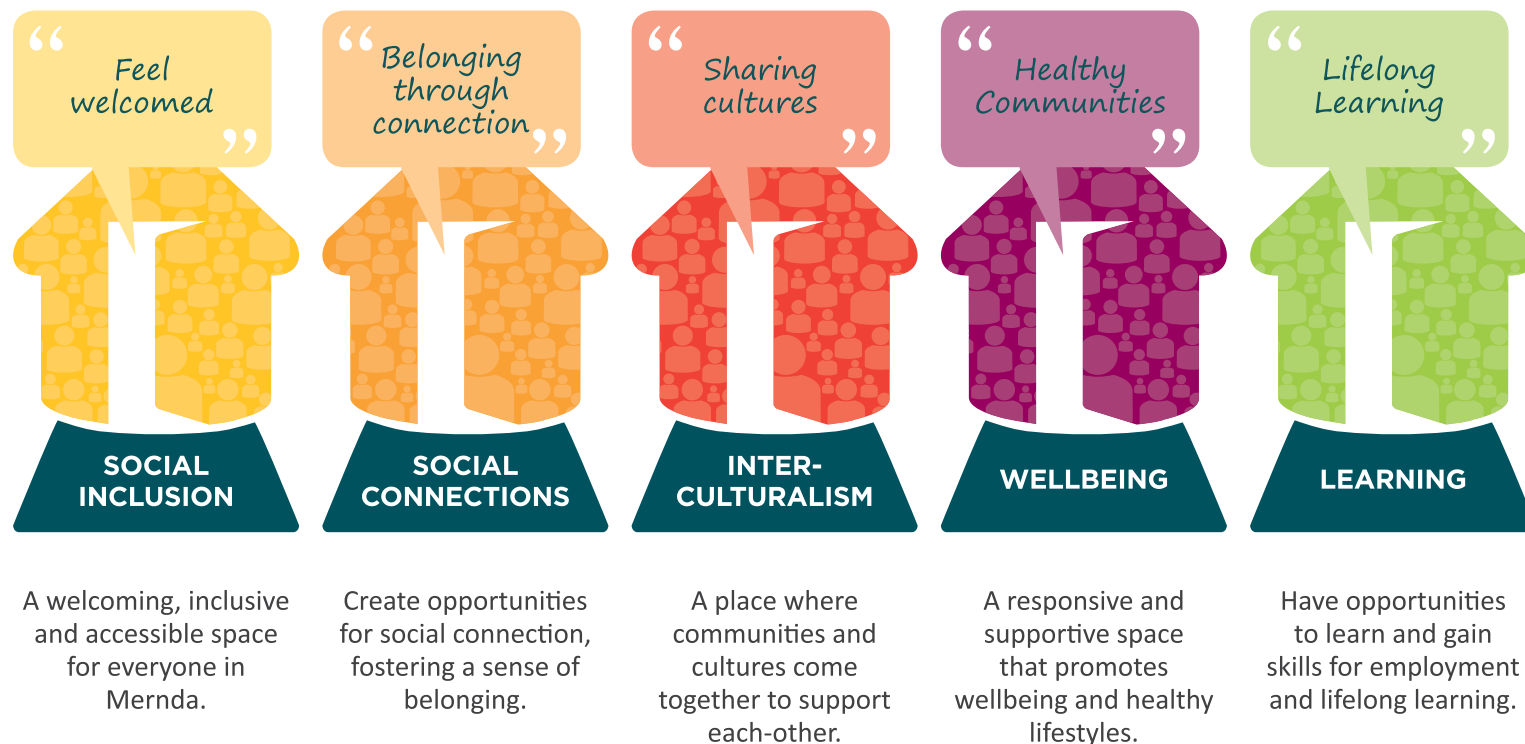
Funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), from October 2018



In August 2017 we started a new community information and referral service from the Mernda Villages Community Activity Centre 3 days a week. The aim was to provide a locally accessible information, referral and casework service for people living in Mernda and surrounding areas. We got to know the community much better by being there, listening and supporting where we could. We learnt what the challenges and opportunities were and identified the need for more community activity to help people connect. In October

2018 we were successful in securing funding from the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services to establish a new Neighbourhood House in Mernda. With the City of Whittlesea's support to use Mernda Community House in Heals Road, Mernda we started operating in February 2019. We have a range of term time activities and are building an advisory group of local community members. They held a planning day in July 2019.

THE COMMUNITY'S VISION FOR MERNDA COMMUNITY HOUSE...



Increase Gender Equality in community settings

Women's Advisory Group and CALD Women's Group grants program

Funded by Sunshine and Crocodile Foundation and WCC

As part of the Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project (WCCFVP) we established the CALD Women's Group grants program and the Women's Advisory Group (WAG) development that provides advice to WCC. The WAG is a diverse group of women who are passionate about issues impacting on women, women's leadership and community development.

Quotes from group members

"It is a space where women from all areas of the different cultures can come together to have their voices heard, support one another and have some fun! It encourages women empowerment. It is a great opportunity for a women to work in a comfortable environment and enhance their skills and share some experience",

"I am very lucky being a part of this group because I meet with new people and exchange views about life, family and community which is very good. I love their company now we are friends. I never thought about to learn swimming but now I am learning and I feel that someone gave me wings to fly thanks to WCC who gave women's this opportunity",
2019 Grant Recipient

"We are women with different background, experience, interests and at the same time we share care about the community that we live and we are united by the idea to work on prevention and early intervention of domestic violence"

"Being part of this group has given me insight into and understanding of the issues experienced by women from different ethnic backgrounds. The difficulties they face are vast and varied. I enjoy the interaction amongst the members and the lengthy discussions. Everyone is passionate for women to be heard"

"Listening to various opinions, taking responsibility for making decisions with everyone together and sense of closeness and kindness"



Improve opportunities and outcomes for Young People

In 2017 there were 42,743 young people aged 10 to 25 years living in the City of Whittlesea. For those aged 15-24 years 13% were unemployed and 9.2% were disengaged from education and employment (Victoria 8.1%). Higher levels of youth disengagement are found in Lalor 14.5%, Thomastown 12.8% and Epping 12.0% (ABS Census 2016). There are high birth rates for 19 to 24 year olds and the median age of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is 21 years. In order to have an impact on current trends WCC determined a greater focus on vulnerable young people before they enter the tertiary service system was needed.

Much of the service system delivered in the City of Whittlesea responds to young people at risk or already in crisis. There are few services that operate from within the municipality meaning young people have to travel or wait for services located outside the municipality to be able to respond. Access to services is made more difficult within the context of a growing population where new communities have insufficient infrastructure.

In 2018 we were successful in securing two streams of funding from the Victorian Government's Office of Youth, namely Empower and Engage. This has enabled WCC to strengthen its connections with young people and identify ways to make a difference to their lives and opportunities.

Empower project

Funded by Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Youth

The Empower project aims to:

- Provide an opportunity to young people who do not have the information, confidence or support to engage with programs and services,
- Increase young people's understanding of and confidence to access programs and services,
- Support young people to achieve self – identified goals, and
- Increase young people's participation in education, training, employment, volunteering or other community participation opportunities.

The Empower youth worker uses multiple strategies to engage vulnerable young people and enable participants to self-identify goals to improve health and wellbeing and pathways to social, civic and economic participation opportunities. This includes assertive outreach to build trust, group work to develop social and peer support, information sessions that facilitate connections to services and youth led social events that build on young people's strengths and celebrate achievements. WCC's established Youth Advisory Group, the LOT, is keen to provide leadership and peer support to project participants.

One+one tutoring program

Funded by Westpac (2018) and WCC (2019)

One + one tutoring matches volunteer tutors with secondary school students in a library setting to provide additional learning support and encouragement.



The Engage project

Funded by Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Youth

In January 2018 we started 'Engage' which aims to increase young people, and in particular young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, understanding, engagement and capacity to volunteer in the City of Whittlesea.

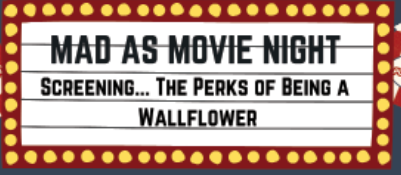
To understand how young people engage in formal and informal volunteering more than 80 young people have been consulted about their thoughts, motivations and barriers to volunteer. Research findings have helped guide the direction of the project along with direct involvement of young people through Youth Advisory Groups (YAGs).

Three YAGs were established in early 2018 to inform the development and delivery of the project that together engage over 40 young people at any one time. Each local YAG has their own identity and structure in response to needs and aspirations as identified by young people participating and include for example advocacy around local community issues and developing supports for other young people as they transition from and out of school.


Through the project young people have been working on their leadership skills including working together in group/ team settings, helping to run meetings (eg setting agendas), public speaking and identifying issues for further action. Young people have gained knowledge of different community service organisations available in their local area. Intentional conversations about volunteering have also highlighted the benefits, rights and responsibilities of being a volunteer as well as the range of opportunities that exist locally.

In addition to volunteering as part of the YAGs eight young people have been supported and linked to appropriate volunteer roles and more recent experience indicates that young people in our community are definitely keen to volunteer – they just need support to find the right role.









MAD AS MOVIE NIGHT
SCREENING... THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER



Are you 15-25 and live, work or play in the City of Whittlesea? Join us for a fun movie night for mental health awareness.

FREE EVENT. EXCELLENT SNACKS PROVIDED.
THURSDAY FEB 21, 2019 - 6-9 PM
LOCATION: 40 MCFARLANE CRESENT, EPPING (GREENBROOK COMMUNITY HOUSE)

Email your name and age to thelotyag@gmail.com or text 0473 019 831 to save your spot!



CULTURAL YOUTH MUSIC NIGHT

*FULLY SUPERVISED
 *DRUG/ALCOHOL/SMOKE FREE
 *NO PASS OUTS
 *MANAGEMENT HAS THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ENTRY

MUSICAL PERFORMANCES
DJs
FOOD

FRIDAY 21 JUNE, 2019
6.30PM-10.00PM
BARRY ROAD COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTRE
36 BARRY ROAD, THOMASTOWN
(SECONDARY SCHOOL AGED) 12-25 YEARS
DOORS CLOSE AT 8-830PM


FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT 9401 6666 OR DMARAND@WHITTLESEACC.ORG.AU

This event is in partnership between WICC and Baseline For Young People - City of Whittlesea Youth Services









Jason, volunteers with our one on one tutoring program supporting secondary school students. On recommending volunteering -

"I definitely would. It is a fulfilling way to not only teach, but to learn."

**young
people and
volunteering**

Quotes from young volunteers

Marianne (14) on volunteering at The LOT and its importance - "It helps with the community and also gives the community a perspective from the teen. It has shown me that I have a voice in the community even at such a young age"

Jibreel (14) came to WCC in June of 2018 wanting to volunteer and has been a mainstay since. He joined the youth group (The LOT) as a 13 year old and has always expressed himself on youth matters thoughtfully and with community in mind. For Jibreel, the youth group was about giving back to community and working on developing skills for later on in life.

"...Social networking, learning skills and helping those in need is what brings me back week after week."

Like the LOT, Jibreel has had the opportunity to meet and express his thoughts with the Mayor, Council workers, Health professionals, Lawyers, Local Musicians and community members. Jibreel has grown as a leader at such a young age and when in sessions, he has the attention and respect of the group.

"...Really informing and interesting. I love the group of people I work with. The ideas and focus for youth is exactly why I joined. I've found it fantastic."

9 years ago, Loar (25) came to WCC as a young kid with his family through our settlement team. Last year he played a big role in setting up WCC's youth group – The LOT.

"Whittlesea Community Connections has played a massive role in my development throughout my youth. It has not only empowered me to have confidence in myself and my abilities as a migrant but seeing me as an individual with great value and purpose. So I would like to thank WCC for all their hard work and effort throughout the years. WCC has been and will continue to be my Mount Rushmore of organisations that have added massive value to myself and to my family."

Young people are important stakeholders in our community. Widening our doors to young people allows us to work with our next leaders.

Anthony (18) on volunteering at Thomastown West Community Hub - "Volunteering at the Hub has helped me in so many ways like learning to help and care for other people, to be able to communicate and socialise and also has helped me so much with my confidence. It has made me feel important because I can make a difference to other people who need help too. I am also very happy I've been able to make so many new friends."



Strategic responses (cont.)

Increase local employment through enterprise

In line with our strategic priority to increase employment opportunities through enterprise we have refined our Women in Work mobile childcare enterprise to increase profitability, and restructured our community bus hire enterprise and relaunched it, OurBUS. In early 2019 we started a driving school, DriverED.

Women in Work

Women in Work is a mobile childcare service that provides qualified women from migrant and refugee backgrounds to provide car to children whose parents are attending services, programs, education and training group activities. This program continues to be in demand in the local community.

OurBUS

OurBUS community bus hire service provides low cost, safe and reliable buses and/or drivers for community groups and organisations. 23 Community groups regularly used our vehicles over the last financial year.

DriverED

DriverED is a friendly, trusted and professional driving school that helps people learn the skills they need to get their driver's licence. This social enterprise commenced in late February 2019 and with consistent growth we have delivered 283 lessons since then.

We help people that find it hard to practise driving for a range of reasons, such as lack of access to a car, difficulty finding a suitable instructor, and the high cost of regular driving lessons.

We match people with a fully trained, qualified driving instructor, so people can be sure they're learning from a professional that will help get them the experience they need. Everyone is welcome to take part and we can tailor lessons to make sure they are right for each individual, by providing instructors who are multilingual, from different cultural backgrounds or a particular gender. We have specialised experience in working with people who are migrants, refugees, or don't speak much English.

DriverED is an initiative of Whittlesea Community Connections. Our aim is to help people confidently prepare for their driving tests or give them the experience they need to take part in other driving programs, such as L2P. By supporting people to practise the skills to get their licences, we can help open up opportunities to get out and about independently, take part in other training and employment, and participate more in the community.



Anelita and Zeinab, our DriverED instructors



Extending our impact

The two projects described below demonstrate new ways WCC is sharing its experience, supporting other community organisations and working collaboratively with new partners. While they are very different projects they build from our local knowledge, experience and use our community development approach.

African Family Violence Leadership Project

Funded by Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion (MASC), from March 2019 to June 2020

Whittlesea Community Connections values the importance of working in the primary prevention space for violence against women. Earlier this year WCC we were appointed by MASC as the 'Support Agency' working with 15 African Community Organisations (ACO) to foster leadership and capability in the delivery of their Family Violence (FV) prevention activities and promotion of safety in the delivery of these activities. Through this project we have the opportunity to be involved in increasing the understanding of FV among the ACO's, raise awareness of safe practices in prevention activities, increase ACO's knowledge in development & delivery of prevention projects, development of more culturally appropriate prevention activities, development of sustainable links between ACO's and FV specialist services & Mainstream services, and a communities of practice between the ACO's. We believe community led projects lead to real and valuable change for prevention of violence against women and children.

The 15 ACO's WCC are working with are:

- Africa Day Australia
- Africa Media Australia
- African Advancement Victoria
- African Australian Welfare Bureau Inc.
- African Family Services
- African Women's & Families Network
- Australian Coptic Families Social Club Inc.
- Community Abundance Inc.
- Family Strengthening & Violence Prevention Community Initiative
- Fur Social & Cultural Community
- Hadaf Family Services (auspice Somali Community Inc.)
- Kontiki Cultural Women Empowerment Inc.
- Oromo Relief Association Australia – South Pacific Region Inc.
- South Sudan Voice
- Unity Care Australia

Whittlesea Community Farm and Food Collective

Building from our leadership of the Emergency Relief Network we engaged with Yarra Valley Water, City of Whittlesea and Melbourne Polytechnic to try to realise our idea of a community farm and distribution centre. A strong partnership has developed and is progressing the concept of the Whittlesea Community Farm and Food Collective as an integrated model including food production and distribution, plant and food based enterprises. It will develop new agricultural practices suitable for peri-urban areas, based on recycled water and renewable energy, improving productivity and driving employment growth in agricultural areas adjoining cities. It will provide quality fresh food for 2,030 households facing food insecurity each year; training opportunities for 300 students;

increased health, community connections and work readiness through 200 volunteer roles, and enterprise and employment opportunities in the Farm and Distribution operations; and demonstrate models of community farming, food enterprises and recycled water use.

The project will create a safe community setting that connects people with something that enables them to see a more positive future, see choices, opportunities to volunteer, spend time with others, build their confidence and connections and access information about education and training and employment. The project is a platform that connects people from across the spectrum of advantage and disadvantage, and has enormous potential to reduce the shame and further marginalisation that can happen when

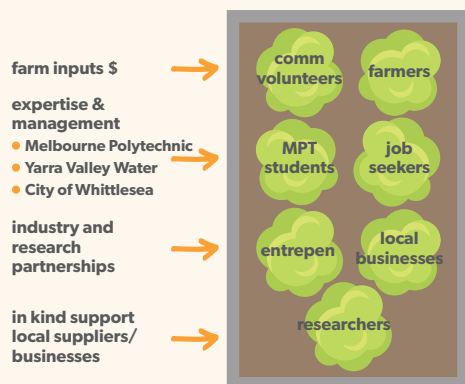
people seek help. The diversity of partners provides clear pathways from volunteering into education and training, employment and enterprise.

We are working hard on getting Stage 1, the Whittlesea Food Collective, operational by February 2020.



FARM

2. Building a strong local economy through farming innovation and enterprise



FOOD COLLECTIVE

1. Providing integrated and responsive support to people in need



Vicki Ann Selvaggio

Volunteer at WCC since 2013

I have had a varied full time working career since the age of 14 years old. From working on and managing factory floors, to office administration and reception roles, and finally some 20 years in Sales, including as an on the road Sales Representative.



I worked full-time and also raised four children. My husband managed our own tyre business during this time. Life was certainly busy!

When my children were younger, I volunteered in local events for the schools that they attended. However, I did not initially think of this as real "volunteering", as it was to benefit my children's school or program in some manner. A large part of my efforts was focused around assisting the lives of working mothers. I could relate to be a working mother and I understand how

important it is to find a supportive network which encourages and supports women who want to be mothers and also have a career.

I focused on identifying areas in my children's schools and the local community which I believed required reform. I then worked towards bringing about that change. I was involved in bringing a 'before and after school care program' to St. Peter's in Epping. I presented to the Parish of St. Peters regarding the need for such a program and explained how it would benefit working

families by helping to relieve stress on parents, thus improving the whole family unit. Soon after, St. Peter's instigated a before & after school care program for working parents. That program continues today.

I have also volunteered with Bundoora Extended Care ("BECC"). I became a Community Visitor in my spare time from 2004 to 2009, visiting 2 elderly ladies in Aged Care Facilities. The main focus of this volunteer position was to provide these ladies with companionship, something which most human beings crave but unfortunately, may not have much of as they grow older. I visited often and we chatted for hours about their lives, their upbringings and their families. My younger children often joined me on my visits to these ladies on special occasions, including on each of their birthdays and at Easter and Christmas. We brought cake and presents for them to celebrate these special occasions with them, as they often had no family to celebrate these events with. This was an immensely rewarding experience for both myself and the ladies I visited, who I came to see as wonderful friends.

February 2009 saw me volunteering at the Diamond Creek Relief Centre for 2 weeks after the tragic 'Black Saturday' bushfires. I set up and managed the packing floor and dispatch area with a myriad of dedicated and hardworking volunteers from all walks of life. My experience in setting up and managing sales areas and factories held me in good stead for this challenge. At that time, my professional connections within the packaging industry gave us the benefit of a huge donation of boxes, pallets, transport services and other goods donated generously by Richard Pratt of Visyboard.

I worked 18 hours a day over that two-week period, with 3 shifts of Volunteers per day. It was empowering to see the community come together after such a tragic event to help those survivors in desperate need of essentials, such as clothing and toiletries. The sense of grief and loss was at times overwhelming. However, the outpouring of support that followed in the aftermath of Black Saturday was uplifting and certainly strengthened our faith in the community.

In February 2013, I joined Whittlesea Community Connections ("WCC") as a volunteer for 2 days a week. I first started as a receptionist and then moved on to become an Emergency Relief Assessor, a role I have volunteered in for about 3 years. As an Emergency Relief Assessor, I meet with members of the community in need of assistance, primarily financial assistance. I assess where they should be referred to within WCC for further assistance and advice. I also refer people to other external agencies, if appropriate. While I have at times found this position to be challenging, it is also hugely fulfilling. I have found that sometimes, just listening to a person's story, providing words of encouragement and empowering them with knowledge about their

options and the avenues for assistance is all that is required to bring about a huge change in their lives and in the lives of their families. Helping them to help themselves. This is the impact that WCC has on a daily basis.

During 2016, I began volunteering as Business Partnership Co-ordinator at WCC. This position focuses primarily on reaching out to organisations and businesses in the community for donations. Donations come in the form of goods, services, discounted goods and services and/or financial assistance towards a program within WCC.

2017 brought about a totally new challenge for me from a volunteering perspective, as I embarked on a year of Community Leadership Training with Rivers & Ranges. The training program involved attending classes all over Victoria, including regional and country areas. The final part of the training involved a trip to Canberra to meet with and pose the 'hard questions' to Parliamentarians. This was a wonderful opportunity for me and certainly not one I would have had if not for my involvement with WCC.

My journey with Rivers & Ranges taught me more about the processes available to advocate for change within the local community, from local Government level all the way up to Federal level. The program reiterates that yes, you have a voice and yes, there are avenues available to you to be heard and to bring about positive change within your community. What's more, the program made me acutely aware of the challenges faced by people within our regional areas on a day to day basis. I have formed a great network of alumni within the program to whom I can reach out to for assistance and advice, if required.

I have been a member of the Board of WCC from 2016 to present. This position has certainly presented a huge learning curve for me. I have thoroughly enjoyed being involved with WCC at this level. I have learned so much about WCC's directions and the capabilities of changing our community for the better. It also provides me with insight into the hard working and dedicated individuals who work tirelessly in WCC to bring about positive and long-term change. I am honored to be involved in the Board and am thoroughly enjoying this role.

My personal life is a busy and interesting one, having nine young Grandchildren varying in age from 8 years to 18 years old, and a large extended family. I find that volunteering gives that extra layer to life - like icing on a cake!

To me, volunteering is chance to make a difference in the local community, big or small. Despite what some may think, volunteering is not just for those feeling alone or lacking a purpose in life. The sense of camaraderie and the genuine friendships that I have made during my time at WCC and in past volunteering roles has not only enriched my life, but also the lives of my family, who have also assisted when they can, including volunteering for WCC as gift wrappers at Christmas.

If you are keen to become a volunteer but are not sure of what skills you can bring to the table or how you can assist, feel free to reach out to WCC and make an appointment with our co-ordinator, who will talk you through all the volunteer positions available within WCC and externally. We have something for everyone, and all are welcome.

Highlights from ongoing programs



The Community Support team - Belinda, Hiba, Deepty, Jess, Ginette and Katriece, (and Caterina and Katie not in photo)

Expanding Community Support

Funded by the City of Whittlesea, Australian Department of Social Services and WCC

As the City of Whittlesea population continues to grow, residents need support to access current and relevant information that will enable them to access services and activities to strengthen their health and wellbeing, social connections and opportunities to pursue volunteering, learning and employment pathways. With Council's financial assistance WCC has been providing this information and support to residents, groups and services across the municipality for many years.

Many people that live, work, volunteer or study in the City of Whittlesea experience significant access barriers to information and support. These barriers include, but are not limited to:

- Language barriers - Many people who are not proficient in English may experience difficulties communicating their support needs and understanding mainstream information provided to them.
- Digitalisation - With information, processes and support becoming increasingly digitalised, many people are being left behind. Lack of access to digital devices and limited knowledge as to how to use them can disadvantage individuals.
- A complex service environment - People needing support may not recognise they are eligible for formal help. Furthermore, when a person actively looks for support they may not understand how to navigate service systems in order to access the help they need (especially in complex cases when a person has numerous needs, which may require referral to multiple services).
- Ineligibility - Support services in the City of Whittlesea are often restricted in regards to the people they can help and how. Service eligibility criteria can exclude individuals and groups that are already vulnerable or disadvantaged (e.g. people seeking asylum).
- Disconnectedness - Individuals, groups and services with a limited social network can find it difficult getting help and may find themselves unsure of where to turn.
- Lack of trust - Sometimes it's not a lack of knowledge or ability that prevents people from accessing help, but rather weariness of systems that for whatever reason have not met their needs previously.

WCC's Community Support team bridge the gap between individuals and families, community groups and service providers in the City of Whittlesea – helping them to connect. Our support is generalist in nature and provides timely and responsive help to anyone in the local community, from help to fill in a form to dealing with a number of complex issues.



Highlights from ongoing programs (cont.)

Building on our long history of Volunteering support

Funded by the City of Whittlesea, Australian Department of Social Services and WCC

WCC is a Volunteer Resource Centre that works with, and supports community members, services providers and the broader community to build a commitment to and a culture of volunteering, based on community needs and aspirations.

Community members are supported by WCC to connect to and remain engaged in local volunteer opportunities. Community members are interviewed and provided with follow-up support to identify their skills, interests and aspirations for community participation and employment that are matched to local volunteer opportunities. Free information sessions and training are delivered to build volunteer knowledge, skills and capacity.

Not-for-profit service providers and community organisations are supported by WCC to develop relevant and appropriate volunteer roles, recruit and engage volunteers, adhere to the national volunteer standards and remain informed of sector relevant regulations, evidence and best practice. This happens through the provision of information, referral, training, advice and secondary consultations. We are currently working with Council and their emergency planning team to ensure volunteers and requests for assistance are well managed and matched during an emergency.

WCC engages with the broader community to promote volunteering particularly with individuals and groups who may experience barriers to participation. We have developed a local approach to volunteering starting with the development of a directory of volunteer roles for the Thomastown/Lalor area to promote volunteering locally and through local expos.

As part of building a stronger culture of volunteering across the City we established a Volunteer Champions program that directly involves community members to tell stories of volunteering that speak to and are relevant to different communities and increasingly build the confidence and capacity of diverse communities to volunteer or be engaged.



Volunteering and Community Engagement team – Hiba, Michelle, Nina and Dean (and Sarah not in photo)

Becoming a registered Community Transport provider

Funded by the Australian Department of Health, Victorian Department of health and Human Services and Community donations

Throughout the 2018-19 period the Whittlesea Community Transport Service continued to provide safe and efficient transport assistance to community members through tailored transport solutions five days per week. This enables people get to where they need to go - attend medical, social, allied health and other appointments, as many as resources allowed. We continue to offer a free service for community members who are in need. In addition we provide an opportunity for community members to volunteer by doing something that is practical and helpful in their local area. We assist people who live as far north as Humevale, Donnybrook, Whittlesea Township, and Doreen.

The demand for transport assistance continues to grow. In the last year we completed 11,281 trips. Referrals through My Aged Care portal (MAC) now form the lion's share of our trips. We have a fleet of six vehicles and a team of volunteers who are drivers, transport assistants and administration assistants.

We are aiming to achieve 13,000 trips in the next financial year. We are a registered Service Provider through the CHSP (Commonwealth Home Support Program) funded by the Australian Department of Health. We would like to thank the City of Whittlesea for their support to transition from being a Council subcontractor to establishing a direct contractual relationship with the Department effective 1st July 2019.

Extending the reach of our Legal service

Funded by Victoria Legal Aid through the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services with Attorney-General's Department and Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety

In addition to the core work of providing concrete legal help on Family Law, Civil and Criminal matters, WCC has been involved in a number of new initiatives and projects to improve access to justice and legal assistance.

Through ongoing work with Whittlesea Community Safety and Crime Prevention Working Group WCC has worked closely with Victoria Police and a stakeholder group to identify a cluster of suicides and potential factors and responses. WCC's involvement included issuing of Coronial Proceedings and the ongoing carriage of those proceedings including a meeting with the Coroner and followup submissions being made by stakeholders.

Student Clinics in partnership with La Trobe University

WCC has, in conjunction with La Trobe University, conducted three clinics, being the General Clinic; Wills and Wishes Clinic and Fines Clinic. All the clinics involve the La Trobe University students dealing directly with clients by way of taking instructions and giving advice, under the auspices of the solicitors.

- General Clinic provides four appointment places per week for generalist non-family law matters. They involve crime; motor car accidents; debt and consumer issues. Clients are seen at the Northern Centre for Health and Research (NCHER), located at 187 Cooper St, Epping. Clients are advised by La Trobe University students under the guidance of a practicing solicitor, all advices and files are overseen by the WCC's Principal Solicitor. The clinic is now in its third year and continues to thrive.
- Wills and Wishes Clinic provides completed wills and powers of attorney for vulnerable clients, responding to a clear need in the Whittlesea region. The clinic operates at the Northern Hospital and Whittlesea Community House
- Fines Clinic provides advice and casework for clients facing infringement fines, including fielding applications to the Fines Registrar on 'Special Circumstances' grounds for Family Violence and Mental Health matters.
- Following the success of the 3 clinics we established a divorce clinic in August 2019 from our Epping office.

Highlights from ongoing programs (cont.)



Expresso Legal

Seed funding from Victoria Law Foundation

Expresso Legal involves a mobile coffee van providing barista service free coffee, dispensed by lawyers, principally Moses and Chris, who are available to provide legal advice upon all areas covered by the legal service itself, with the possibility of opening files for those clients. The service visits new developments and isolated communities on the urban rural fringes of the City of Whittlesea, chiefly by way of its libraries, schools, neighbourhood houses and markets. The service often provides a legal education session in tandem with delivery of advice along with, of course, the coffee. A recent partnership with the Department of Justice and Community Safety has enabled a pilot “Fix-it Friday” project, based at Whittlesea Community House.

Dressing up for publicity shots, Chris, Des and Emma from WCC

Launch of Expresso Legal, with Andrew Falconer Victoria Police Local Area Commander, Chris Howse WCC, staff from Mernda Central, Andrew Giles Federal MP Scullin, Lynne Haultain, Victoria Law Foundation, Alex Haynes WCC, Bronwyn Halfpenney Victorian MP Thomastown and Nessie Sayar WCC

Reducing Gambling Harm in our community - No Pokies at the Commercial Hotel in South Morang

In 2017 Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC) invested our resources into a joint advocacy venture with Council and other community service agencies in the City of Whittlesea. This shared effort sought to prevent 40 electronic gaming machines from being installed at the Commercial Hotel in South Morang – City of Whittlesea’s last hotel without pokies.

WCC recognises that electronic gaming machines are causing significant harm in the local community, with residents losing over \$110.9 million, (\$303,715 a day) in the last 12 months alone. Our agency also witnesses first hand the impact that gambling harm is having on local residents – affecting not only their finances but also their relationships, work and overall quality of life.

In response to this growing community issue – WCC recruited the help of our legal team’s Principal Solicitor and drew on the support of partner agencies to advocate on behalf of our community at the court proceedings, that would determine the success or failure of the Commercial Hotel’s application for pokies. After the Victorian Commission of Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR) refused the Commercial Hotel’s gaming licence application in December 2016, the applicant appealed this ruling and the matter was elevated to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). WCC applied for party status at this hearing, and was given it. This allowed us actively participate in the hearing and support council’s argument that more electronic gaming machines in our municipality would have a negative social and economic impact.

Following a marathon 11 day hearing, VCAT issued an order which upheld the ruling of VCGLR to not permit electronic gaming machines at the Commercial Hotel in South Morang. This was a landmark decision and WCC commends Whittlesea Council, VCGLR and VCAT for their leadership on this case. WCC was proud to have been involved and to represent the interests of our community to prevent further gambling related harm.

Expanding our student program

Funded by WCC

The overall purpose of WCC’s program is to provide diverse placements for local students covering a range of areas and activities across WCC, covering elements of community development, youth work and social work.

The program has three key aims:

- Students experience a meaningful placement.
- The program contributes to students knowledge, understanding and practice in their particular field of study.
- An increase in service capability for the organisation e.g. Increased client access to casework and increased capacity to deliver projects and services)

Overall, we are contributing to the strengthening of the future workforce in the community sector, and particularly building a workforce with greater knowledge on local needs, services and community characteristics.

In May 2019 WCC was chosen to participate in the Enhanced pathways to family violence work project, funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services. This has enabled us to expand our student placement program and build supervision capacity in our staff.

It is hoped this project will achieve real benefits for students on placement, early graduates and workers in specialist and non-specialist family violence organisations by strengthening workforce pathways into the family violence and community services sector.

Current students Eliza, Martha, Patricia and Tanaka



Highlights from ongoing programs (cont.)

Reinvigorating our settlement program

Funded by Australian Department of Social Services

In December 2018 we were funded to deliver the Australian Government's Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program through an existing sub contracting arrangement with Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre. The SETS program aims to equip humanitarian entrants and other vulnerable migrants in their first five years in Australia with the knowledge and skills to identify, understand and take action to address their identified settlement needs. The program has a focus on social participation, economic well-being, independence, personal well-being and community connectedness.

In 2019 we have strengthened our partnership with Melbourne Polytechnic where humanitarian entrants study English. WCC staff work from MPT's Epping campus Monday to Thursday offering information, referral and casework support as well as computer classes in partnership with PRACE and Road Safety. We worked with MPT's SLACK team to deliver a successful Harmony Day celebration.

We facilitate a range of fortnightly groups and activities, additional English classes, a very popular Citizenship and Civics program, and excursions. We have a renewed focus on young people and learning and employment pathways. We are developing Road2Work, an internship program for people from refugee backgrounds to help them gain professional work experience and ideally employment in the long term. Businesses located in or within close proximity to the City of Whittlesea can sign up to the program to host a Road 2 Work internship, receive free cultural awareness training for staff and gain access to a pool of highly motivated and skilled interns that can make a positive contribution to local businesses.

For the twelve months to June 2019 the team has been involved in the Whittlesea Refugee Early Years Community Advisors Project. It is a collaborative project between the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (Foundation House), City of Whittlesea Maternal and Child

Health and Whittlesea Community Connections. The project aims to increase the inclusion and participation of children and families from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds, into early years services.

Operating from May 2018 until June 2019, the Whittlesea Community Advisors Project established and supported a Community Advisors Group, made up of newly arrived Syrian/Iraqi parents with young children, who have settled in Whittlesea. Similar to other newly arrived communities, there is some evidence of low participation rates in early years services in education and care, health and community services. By facilitating dialogue between families and early childhood service providers, barriers and solutions were explored.



The team – Oreste, Norma and Aiman (Dalal and Hiyah not in photo)



Volunteering at any age and stage

Volunteering really is for everyone – we are very lucky to have so many amazing local people of all ages and stages volunteering with Whittlesea Community Connections. They share their unique personalities, skills, local knowledge, connections, sense of humour and enthusiasm with us and in doing so make our organisation better and our community stronger.

Mari, Community Transport volunteers

"After 15 years of working for Coles Supermarket I had to retire from a physically demanding job as was suggested by my General Practitioner because of a shoulder and a back injury I sustained during the course of the work I was doing over the years. I felt I was too young to retire at age 62 because "I was". I immediately sat in front of my computer at home and typed out an impressive resume, so it seemed, and sent as many copies as I could to as many employers even if the job did not match my qualification in hope of finding something suitable..... I was desperate. This continued for two years until I woke up from a dream that did not feel like it would ever become real so I then decided that what better way to make myself useful to humanity than to help the sick, the needed and the less fortunate. This was the moment I thought of dedicating some of my time to volunteering work for a great cause. After just a day of searching, I believe that with divine guidance, without difficulty I was able to come across the "Whittlesea Community Connections" website among a long list of organizations that provide

compassionate service to the community. I was immediately attracted to the many different areas they catered to. I rang the office in Epping and got me an appointment and an interview with the Transport Manager, Parry Williams who gave me the opportunity and the privilege to serve as a volunteer with the Transport Team.

After two years and three months of volunteering, I can say that I never enjoyed more working as a volunteer than in any paying job I have ever done since coming to Australia. I have met lovely and interesting people in my community doing this work both the volunteers I work with and the people we serve in the community. The work has also taught me to listen, to understand and to focus on other people's needs rather than my own. The work has trained and prepared me to administer First Aid in the event that the situation may require and because of the knowledge and expertise I have acquired as a member of WCC Transport Department, I always wake up excited to get to work on days I volunteer, which explains my true dedication to the job.

I thank WCC Transport management and staff for the work they do to enable us volunteers to provide our loved and most valuable members of our community with a high standard of service they very much deserve. I specially thank the volunteers who I work with..... you make the days shine brighter."



Julie, Community Transport volunteer

"I started volunteering 7 years ago for WCC after seeing an advertisement in the local paper. I was home recovering from a health problem and found that I could not go back to full time work. This sort of job interested me as I looked after 3 school buses and drove students at times on excursions.

I just love being in the bus with the elderly. I have always been interested to be with them, even as a little girl, and made my first elderly friend when we lived by the sea. I still have that letter she wrote to me when we went back to the countryside to live. Being on the bus and interacting with them, but most of all caring and showing them love and concern about their well-being. I always look forward to every Tuesday. I have had wonderful feedback from them and keep in contact with some of them as well, who are not able because of age or health to come on the bus anymore.

My goal is just to be able to go on bus every week, for as long as my health will let me. I have had some wonderful drivers to assist with this work in WCC and we have a great team in the office to co-ordinate our jobs as volunteers."

Hirohito, L2P volunteer

"I'm an engineer by trade and most of my experience in the last 15 years has been in manufacturing. Just recently I joined my local council (Whittlesea) and it has been very rewarding. Working to improve my own community is great.

I love to drive and I remember I had many doubts and fears when i started but had no access to this kind of program. I decided to take advantage of L2P to help young drivers feel more confident behind the wheel. Volunteering for L2P is humbling because it is a constant reminder of how vulnerable you were back when you were learning.

The young drivers I share with are very cool people. More than just a formal mentor/mentee duo we are a pair of guys who go for a drive once a week and talk about anything as we go. It's a way to disrupt your routine, engage with a different generation and understand the world as they see it. Of course, you also get to share a bit of what you know and learn some new things too.

You realize how much you can influence the future of these drivers; they need your time and patience because they don't know what you already take for granted. As we depend more and more on cars for transportation, very quickly you realize that you're helping shape their future, their habits and safety, the safety of their family, the community, etc., so you feel rewarded by that thought. The cars are well maintained, the process is very simple and hours are flexible."



Tala

"I started volunteering mid last year (2018) as I wanted an activity outside of school that can allow me to give back to the community and be able to help those in need. I enjoy my volunteer work as I am able to meet different people and expand my knowledge. My volunteer work has positively impacted my life as I am able to work with people who are extremely thankful for what I do and it gives me a sense of belonging. I believe that any sort of volunteer work can help any job search in the future. At this stage of my life, volunteer work is helping me apply for universities but also keep me humble."

Tala and Ahmed volunteering after school



Tala, Nick, Norman, Denis and Ahmed



Tala and Nick



Financial statement

A photograph of a classroom or lecture hall. In the foreground, a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a light yellow turtleneck sweater, is looking off to the right with a focused expression. Behind her, several other students are visible, including a woman in a black hijab and another in a black and white patterned top. They are all seated at desks, and the woman in the foreground is holding a pen over a notebook. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**Statement of Profit or Loss
and Other Comprehensive
Income for the Year Ended
30 June 2019**

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
Income			
Grants received		3,272,959	2,607,684
Donations		42,780	46,395
Interest		20,277	18,033
Service generated income		110,570	151,039
Other revenue		117,045	80,895
Profit on disposal of fixed assets		4,539	22,500
		3,568,170	2,926,546
Expenses			
Accounting & book-keeping fees		17,400	10,500
Advertising & marketing		47,646	42,578
Audit fees		5,650	5,500
Bad Debts		1,323	3,407
Bank charges		482	485
Depreciation		67,567	51,606
Interpreting services		4,394	3,958
Information technology		38,699	35,836
Insurance		9,163	3,424
Legal practicing certificate		2,048	2,058
Legal library		114	1,255
Meeting expenses		5,257	5,103
Motor vehicle expenses		87,237	93,860
Printing and stationery		14,715	14,578
Police and working with children checks		3,166	1,519
Postage and couriers		3,066	3,919
Program costs		288,708	241,982
Rent and outgoings		86,189	55,837
Repairs and maintenance		12,247	11,277
Statutory fees		412	228
Subscriptions and memberships		34,899	14,341
Sundry expenses		3,663	6,346
Telephone and internet		21,730	20,277
Volunteers' expenses		6,490	8,908
Wages and related costs		2,617,304	2,422,415
Total expenses		3,379,569	3,061,197
Operating surplus (deficit) before income tax		188,601	(134,651)
Income tax expense	2(e)	-	-
Operating (deficit) surplus for the year		188,601	(134,651)
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income (loss) for the year		188,601	(134,651)

Financial statement (cont.)

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
Current Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents		1,574,252	1,290,520
Trade receivables		110,874	117,159
Sundry receivables		55,244	24,631
Housing loans		4,595	4,292
		1,744,965	1,436,602
Non-Current Assets			
Plant and equipment	4	248,225	193,061
Investments		60	60
		248,285	193,121
Total Assets		1,993,250	1,629,723
Current Liabilities			
Trade creditors		44,758	54,719
Sundry creditors and accruals		37,952	20,511
Grants to be carried forward	5		662,405
Provision for employee entitlements	6	528,900	425,700
		1,338,261	1,163,335
Total Liabilities		1,338,261	1,163,335
Net Assets		654,989	466,388
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		466,388	601,039
Current year surplus (deficit)		188,601	(134,651)
Total Equity		654,989	466,388

Statement of Changes in Equity for the Year Ended 30 June 2019

	Accumulated Surplus \$
Balance as at 1 July 2017	601,039
Surplus for the year	(134,651)
Balance as at 30 June 2018	466,388
Deficit for the year	188,601
Balance as at 30 June 2019	654,989

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 30 June 2019

Cash flows from operating activities

Receipts from operations

Interest received

Cash inflows

Payments to suppliers and employees

Net operating cash flows

Note

2019
\$

2018
\$

3,944,804

3,225,002

15,672

17,233

3,960,476

3,242,235

(3,558,552)

(3,202,846)

3(b)

401,924

39,389

Cash flows from investing activities

Net payments for plant and equipment

Net investing cash flows

(118,192)

(108,915)

(118,192)

(108,915)

Net (decrease)/increase in cash held

283,732

(69,526)

Cash at the beginning of the financial year

1,290,520

1,360,046

Cash at the end of the financial year

1,574,252

1,290,520

The full audited financial statement with accompanying notes is available on our website.



Thank you to Allen Gerson (accounting) for his ongoing support.

Our volunteers

We are an organisation founded by local volunteers and led by volunteers. Our ability to connect and engage with the community is largely because of the contributions of our volunteers. The care, attention, expertise and commitment of our volunteers keeps WCC strong and focussed on responding appropriately to our local community's needs and aspirations.



Smiling faces at reception - Shayna, Shoukry and Jane

- Sarah Abbasinjad
- Eman Abdalla Geberabi
- Souliman Abdo
- Eliana Abi-Yaghi
- Samia Abo
- Zeinab Adelpour
- Abarna Ahilaeswaran
- Berjitta Ajang
- Prajwal Ajjampur
- Kinan Alayche
- Rowayda Albadri
- Narjas Albahrani
- Fadhil Albakri
- Maha Alburhari
- Sam Alessi
- Noof Alrabaiai
- Rocqiya Alsadani
- Syeda Sadia Amjad
- Elissa Andreacchio
- Agok Angok
- Eisa Anwari
- Faisal Anwari
- Jacklyn Assaf
- Ebony Attard
- Amanat Azfar
- Deborah Azzopardi
- James Baddeley
- Niveditha Balachandran
- Samia Barakzai
- Nicholas Barazzutti
- Louisa Bartolome
- Angela Bausch
- Suzanne Bevacqua
- Jaiden Bishop
- Marcus Bordinon
- Marianne Bottroos
- Alyssa Britnall
- Paul Brownrig
- Brittany Carter
- Romina Ceballos
- Kranthi Chaklam
- Aya Cheikh Hussein
- Yanwei Chen
- Bradley Chircop
- Kate Clark
- Janelle Collins
- Justin Collins
- Sebastian Connolly
- Tara Crockford
- Holly Cussigh
- Humira Dad
- Sonali Dahiwal
- Michael Damcevski
- Lachlan Davine
- Michael Dean
- Anthony De Santis
- Paul Dellios
- Loar Deng
- Samita Dhanapala
- Sulaika Dhanapala
- Laura Di Lorito
- Claudia DiMichele
- Victoria Dimitrova
- Hamzah Din
- Cindy Do
- Emily Do
- Liam Doherty
- Peter Dupes
- Jeanette Dusube
- Norman Dykes
- Quratulann Ehtsham
- Jason Eid
- Solmaz Eslami
- Betty Faklari
- Teresa Farid
- Maram Fayrooz
- Melissa Fernandes
- Moses Florendo
- Iliana Flores Flores
- Tanya Francis
- Judy Franklin
- James Gamm
- Lena Gargano-Reddy
- Alanah Garzia
- Preeti Gaur
- Mina Gebraeel
- Evan Gellert
- Lisa George
- Sylvia Georgiadis
- Stefani Giangregorio
- Emma Gilmour
- Stella Gorham
- Robert Gray
- Denise Griffith
- Hirohito Guerrero
- Sehar Gupta
- Natalie Gurrisi
- Rubina Habib
- Ahmed Hamad
- Jiselle Hanna
- Farzana Haque
- Rosa Harrison
- Zeinal Hassan
- Abel Al-Rahman Hassan
- Renae Hayes
- Thomas Heidt
- Jasmine Hermiz
- Jane Hopton
- Tony Howell
- Taylor Huggard
- Bill Hutchins
- Tuiloli Isaako
- Sibel Islay
- Jodie Jackson
- Sebastian (Dinny) Jaconis
- Christian Janev
- Harry Jenkins
- Niroula Jitendra
- Jessica Jong
- Soha Kalek
- Joylyn Karunakaran
- Supreet Kaur
- Liz Kennedy
- Sarah Kerr
- Angus Kerr
- Zara Khan
- Ghad Khouri
- Mohita Kinra
- Henry Kupper
- Janet Lack
- Que Phoun Lam
- Max Lee
- Wayne Leech
- Kenneth Lennox
- Monique Lobosco
- Reza Madady
- Aisha Mahmood
- Dahlia Mahmoud
- Atoar Majuar
- Rana Makhoul
- Mari Marco
- Trizia Martin
- Michelle Martinez Burns
- Anupama Mathew
- Jan McDonald
- Andrew Treadwell
- Zach McGuinness
- Karen-Gail McKenzie
- Natasha Medved
- Tala Messade
- Lenka Mitrevska
- Julia Mollica
- Maria Morabito
- Shaun Moran
- Sayna Mosavi
- Anne Mouawad
- Roja Mudundi
- Vheremu Mukatsa
- Patricia Munyao
- Peter Murray
- Paul Muscat
- Ayub Nasir
- Syed Navqi
- John Neil
- Grace Newman
- Adam Newman
- Hung Nguyen
- Lachlan Nichols
- Atena Nissi
- Murray O'Callaghan
- David O'Meara
- Melva Ouliaris
- Gloria Ozogwu
- Nick Parisi
- Julie Parry
- Michelle Patching
- Glenys Peart
- Martina Petrovaska
- Katherine Polazzon
- Natalie Potenza
- Jibreel Rafiq
- Randa Rafiq
- Renuka Ram
- Ziane Ramadan
- Hanin Ramadan
- Dilan (Angelo) Ratnasinghe
- Rohan Ratnayake
- Aron Raward
- John Reagan
- Fatima Rehtmulla
- Carl Reid
- Daniel Reljic
- Courtney Remington
- Chloe Ristevski
- Liljana Ristevski
- Alan Roberts
- Ruchita Ruchita
- Mansour Sadri
- Jamie Sagar
- Sinem Sahin
- Aiman Said
- Nitika Saini
- Adolf Samsa
- Stephanie Samsa
- Seyedeh Fatemeh Sanaei
- Carmel Sannino
- Nessie Sayar
- Kimberly Scully
- Sonali Sehgal
- Vicki Selvaggio
- Valentina Shamoan
- John Shannon
- Niati Sharma
- Jim Sharp
- Mary Shlemon
- Michael Siciliano
- Shoukry Sidrak
- Anna Sinclair
- Akash Deep Singh
- Mandeep Singh
- Ryszard Soltys
- Jessica Sorrenti
- Anne Stone
- Bienka Surdoski
- Katelyn Sutton
- Kaukab Taha
- Rachelle Taha
- Jiaqin Tan
- Fatemah Tanzadeh
- Afreen Taqvi
- Sara Tebano
- Indiana Tegovski
- Ruvee Tharushie ratnayake
- Suzanne Thomas
- Nioka Thorpe-Williams
- Xuwen Tong
- Frank Torcasio
- Christine Traianos
- Huu Loc Tran
- Hung Tran
- Tony Tran
- John Tullio
- Mark Tunstall
- Kaif Ul Wara
- Ponifasio (Poni) Lau Vaka
- Fred Venturini
- Sneha Vinod
- Frank Virgona
- Rocco Volpe
- Owen Waldie
- Gary Walpole
- David Wani
- Glyniss Warren
- Sarah Wassouf
- Lance Watson
- Amelia Watters
- Brittaney Webb
- David Whelan
- Leeanne White
- Ronald Geoffery Williams
- David Williams
- Paul Wilson
- Ray Wilton
- Susan Wojciech
- Ray Wyatt
- Tarek Zeino
- Mohamad Zeyad Zeine
- Erwin Zuber

Our staff (as at July 2019)

Abril Garcia Negrón

Aiman Said

Alex Haynes

Ann Lightowler

Belinda Leon

Bezy Mathew

Bianca Opasinis

Caterina Angelis

Chris Howse

Chris Ryan

Dalal Sleiman

Dean Marando

Deepty Cusima

Despina Kouroso

Data Analysis and Evaluation Coordinator

Settlement Worker

CEO

Community Lawyer

Manager Community Support

Community Transport Assessment Worker

Strategic Projects Coordinator

Social Worker

Principal Solicitor

Community Lawyer

Team Leader Settlement

Team Leader Volunteering and Engagement

Caseworker

Community Lawyer (seconded to VLA)

Edmond Babatunde

Emma Antonetti

Emma O'Neill

Georgianna Brooks

Ginette Beguely

Grozda Nedeljkovic

Hiba Ayass

Hiyah Rahman

Janelle Dunstan

Jenny Williams

Jess Bigby

Katie O'Brien

Katricee Bolden

Kim Lai

Team Leader Road Safety

Manager Community Engagement

Family Violence Lawyer

Community Transport Assessment Worker

Emergency Relief Coordinator

Migration Agent

Caseworker

Quality and Integration Leader

Community Projects Coordinator

Community Lawyer

Youth Worker

Social Worker

Lead Caseworker

Office Coordinator



Mandy Clement
Michael Kinyua
Michelle Newton
Michelle Patching
Moses Florendo
Nina Lim
Norma Medawar
Oreste Pompetti
Paras Christou
Parry Williams
Rema Panaligan
Sonali Sehgal
Vanessa Galea

Women in Work Coordinator
 Asylum Seeker Project Worker
 Volunteer Engagement Coordinator
 Volunteer Coordinator
 Community Lawyer
 Volunteer Resource Coordinator
 Employment Pathways Coordinator
 Volunteer and Learn Local Coordinator
 Mernda Community House Coordinator
 Manager Community Transport and Enterprise
 Community Lawyer
 Community Transport Support Worker
 Volunteer Coordinator (maternity leave)

Thank you to the staff we farewelled in 18/19

Hayley Bateman
Behrouz Harvasi
Jessica Jong
Randa Rafiq
Tanya Francis

Youth Worker
 Settlement Worker
 Thomastown West Community Hub Worker
 Quality and Improvement Coordinator
 Community Lawyer

Thank you to Finrea (IT support) and Ariel Vourdoumpa-Kritsanotis (social media).



Our staff (cont.)

Women In Work childcare workers

Fawzia Abukalam
Midia Ahmad
Awatef Alhalfee
Seham Ameen
Kranthi Chakilam
Donia Darwish
Raifa Hussein
Lina Ida
Nagwa Kori
Rachel Kori
Vivian Yang Lee
Wilma Mana
Asia Melabow
Ahlam Mina
Mahnaz Mousawi
Emilienne Nibigira
Hiba Noti
Gemila Nur
Salma Toma
Samira Turkian Zadeh
Nafiso Said
Lina Salem

Driver ED driving instructors

Anelita Fono
Zeinab Adelpour

On the 12/9/18 at Government House, Whittlesea Community Connections received the Meritorious Services Award - Victoria's Multicultural Awards for Excellence 2018 for our initiatives to support disadvantaged people and emerging communities in Melbourne's outer North. This award is a great tribute to WCC's 45 years serving the community. Special thank you to Mandy Shields from Hume Whittlesea Primary Care Partnership for nominating us.





Our spaces

Shop 111 Pacific Epping

Over the last twelve months we have been lucky to share our office with Banyule Community Health including LIFT mental health team and Gamblers Help, Cabrini Outreach, Campbell Page Disability Employment, Eastern Metropolitan Primary Health Network (Suicide Prevention Pilot team), Northern Centre for Sexual Assault, Northern Family Violence Service – Berry Street and Victoria Legal Aid. We have developed strong partnerships with these services and having them working with us provides significant benefits to clients and the broader Whittlesea community.

With financial support from Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion and the Stronger Communities Program we were able to increase the number of interview rooms we have for clients and significantly improve the sound proofing of our existing rooms.

Thank you to Mark, Sarah and the team at Dasch Associates Design Studio and Tony and his team from Sharpshoot - Design, Fitout and Construction for fitting out our Community Room, Shop 112b and soundproofing our interview rooms, Shop 111.

Community Room, 112b Pacific Epping

In June 2018 we leased a vacant tenancy next to our Epping office and fitted it out as a community room for meetings, training and group activities. With its own kitchen and toilet it has been busy since it was ready for use. We worked with Natasha to do the fantastic artwork for the wall.



Community Room 112b, Pacific Epping

Thomastown West Community Hub, Main Street Thomastown

With financial support from the Federal Government's Stronger Communities Program we were able to develop an outdoor workshop and garden area at the Thomastown West Community Hub.

We are trying to green our offices and activities – our Enviro Network has initiated energy and waste saving measures across our office and saved over 700 disposable plastic items from landfill by utilising ours and council's catering kit at our International Women's Day, asylum seeker dinners and volunteer celebration events. We will continue to use this kit at our annual events. We also have some brand new bins to help us recycle and have lots of Boomerang Bags to shop with.



Edible garden at Thomastown West Community Hub

Our partners and supporters

Thank you to all the people who generously donated throughout the year and to all those clients who supported our community enterprises.

Service Delivery and Project Partners

- Albury Wodonga Volunteer Resource Bureau
- Banyule Community Health
- Cabrini Outreach
- Campbell Page Disability Employment
- Cancer Council Victoria
- Centre for Participation Horsham
- City of Whittlesea
- Community Information and Support Victoria (CisVIC)
- Deakin University
- Eastern Metropolitan Primary Health Network (EMPHN)
- Epping Secondary College
- Kinglake Neighbourhood House
- Haven Home Safe
- Hope Street
- i-Feed refugees
- InTouch - Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence
- La Trobe University Law School
- Refugee Council of Australia
- Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre
- Thomastown West Primary School
- Thomastown Language School
- PRACE
- The Smith Family
- Melbourne Polytechnic
- Monash University Department of Social Work

- Northern Centre for Sexual Assault (NCASA)
- Northern Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Service – Berry Street
- Victorian Legal Aid
- Victoria Police
- Whittlesea Community House
- Women's Legal Service Victoria
- Yarra Valley Water

Funding Partners, Donors and Sponsors

- Australian Department of Health
- Australian Department of Home Affairs
- Australian Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
- Australian Department of Social Services
- Anthony McKee Photographer
- Bunnings
- Capital Tyres South Morang
- Centre for Multicultural Youth
- City of Whittlesea
- Craig Parker
- Commonwealth Bank (South Morang Plenty Valley Branch)
- Hume Whittlesea Primary Care Partnership
- Ian Potter Foundation
- Jaap Jonkman, Conversant Consulting
- Melbourne City Mission
- Northern Kia
- Rotary Club of Bundoora
- Rotary Club of Whittlesea

- The Queens Fund
- Traffic Accident Commission
- Stockland CARE
- Sunshine and Crocodile Foundation
- VicRoads
- Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
- Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety
- Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion
- Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Youth
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Victoria Legal Aid
- Ward Ambler Foundation
- Westpac
- Yarra Valley Water
- Youth Affairs Council of Victoria

WCC staff accepting a donation from the Commonwealth Bank South Morang Plenty Valley branch





Volunteer

We are always looking for new volunteers of all backgrounds and experience to join our WCC team. There are always opportunities as drivers, driver mentors, community information workers, homework tutors, English teachers, fundraisers, media and communications volunteers, legal services and shorter term project roles.

Donate

Please contact our CEO, Alex Haynes, if you would like to invest in the work we do with the residents of the City of Whittlesea. You can also donate via the link on our website.

Become a member

Members of WCC contribute to the community ownership and direction of this unique local and independent organisation. Our strength lies in the support given by local people. Joining is easy. Contact us or download a membership form from the website.

Partner with us

The needs and aspirations of our growing community are significant and we cannot respond alone. Get in touch if you are interested in partnering with us to deliver services, activities or create new opportunities for Whittlesea.

Get involved

Information

whittleseacc.org.au

facebook.com/whittleseacommunityconnections





Whittlesea Community Connections

Making a positive difference everyday



Making
a positive
difference
everyday