

SydWest
Multicultural Services Inc
Connecting cultures. Building community.




25 years
1985-2010



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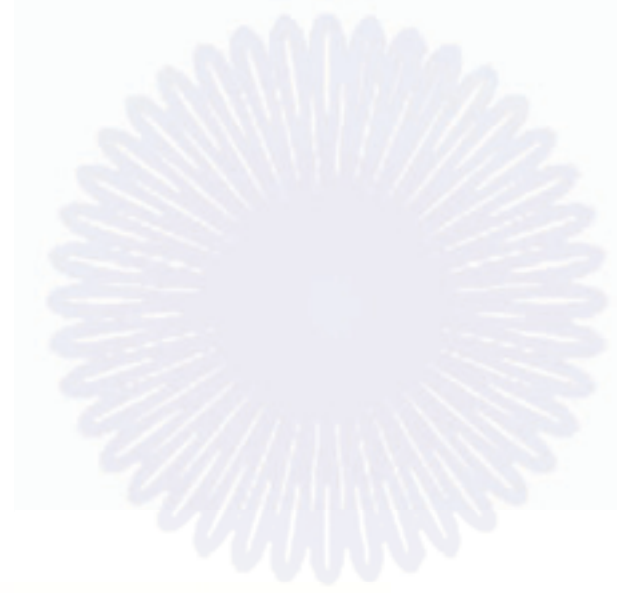
We at SydWest MSI would like to pay a warm tribute to its generous and dedicated students and volunteers who have over the year contributed to its success. Not only do they obtain experience in working with our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) clients, but SydWest MSI benefit greatly from their efforts.

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Chairperson's Report



I would like to give my cordial welcome to you as readers of this 25th anniversary edition of the SydWest MSI Annual Report.

The organisation, formerly known as Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre, has undergone quite a bit of transformation since its inception. The changes over the years have been positive so that it has evolved to its present state as an extremely good resource centre, as acknowledged by the government representatives who attend our offices on a regular basis. One can attribute the success of the organisation's development to the cooperation of local management, centre management and the Board, which have a productive and smooth relationship. Of course there is also the excellent staff, which through good financial planning, hard work and dedication has brought the centre to a very strong financial position, which is especially notable in these days of economic uncertainty.

As you may be aware, SydWest MSI has recently been granted Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) and Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) status, allowing it to receive tax deductible gifts and donations for its work assisting disadvantaged people in Sydney's west. This augers very well for the future of the organisation, as the board is always looking at possibilities for future expansion.

There is a beautiful symmetry between the Board's decision making and the desire to see SydWest MSI's main offices all housed together to streamline its operations. The present Board has excellent representation from local police, TAFE, council, industry and the welfare sector.

The broad input from this balance of members has led SydWest MSI into its currently strong position.

In my role as Chairperson over the last five years the organisation has grown from

strength to strength, and I have experienced the utmost cooperation and goodwill from centre management and staff.

I consider it an honour to have been in this leading position at SydWest MSI in the role of Chairperson, which terminates in December. It has provided a valuable education for me personally, and I am extremely grateful to all those I have worked alongside.

Yours Sincerely

Lalli Sethuram



Manager's Report



This celebration of the organisation's 25 years of service to the community provides a chance to review where we have come from and where we hope to go. I would like to acknowledge that many people over the years have strived to create a place which embraces the ideals of diverse people living in harmony and helping to create our society. Formerly Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre (MRC), we now call ourselves SydWest Multicultural Services Incorporated (MSI), and by virtue of the many cultures and languages within the organisation it now epitomises a functioning multicultural society. We live it every day and therefore know it is worth working towards. We respect each others' cultures and share a passion for Australia.

I would like to acknowledge all those who preceded us here, and who were brave enough to take on the issues confronting migrants in the outer west. I would also like to acknowledge the current Management Committee who has steered this organisation through an accelerated rate of growth. Thanks to the hard work of the staff and Management Committee, it is an incredible honour to be the Centre Manager of this vibrant, proactive organization. Over the past few years I have met a number of SydWest MSI's former Management Committee members and I have been able to learn that they share a sense of 'wow factor' in regards to what has been achieved for refugees, humanitarian entrants and migrants in our area. Many feel what has been done exceeds their dreams. SydWest MSI will continue to embrace new arrivals, while also supporting our original clients through our aged care division.

Some points of achievement for our organisation over the past year include:

- The partnership with Auburn Diversity Services Inc to assist its provision of linguistically and culturally appropriate social support for the aged in Auburn.
- The strides taken in helping people integrate into Australian society while maintaining their own cultural identity.
- The close working relationship with Blacktown City Council, Blacktown Police, TAFE, Centrelink and many local schools run through the SGP program.
- the intergenerational conflict program which is run through Settlement Grants Program.
- The youth programs and our close working relationship with other youth service providers and the local police in relation to youth.
- The development of our aged care service which utilises a totally holistic approach to service delivery.
- The recognition of our senior citizens' valuable contribution to society.
- Families NSW in their assistance of families to support and develop parenting skills.
- The work done with Blacktown Hospital to identify the great trauma being caused to our refugee women in their most vulnerable and frightening time: pregnancy.

There are many, many more items I could highlight but what I would mainly like to draw attention to is the solid ground level effort which is the foundation of the successes achieved within the communities of the outer west.

Yours Sincerely

Susan Vogels



SydWest MSI has recently been granted tax deductible status (DGR) which benefits those offering gifts or donations for our

SydWest MSI

SydWest MSI is a not for profit community association which provides practical assistance and services for the relief of poverty, distress and misfortune to disadvantaged and marginalised people in the western Sydney area. It has been established to provide direct assistance and support for refugees, humanitarian entrants and migrants in the process of settlement or at other critical times. SydWest MSI works to empower people irrespective of their ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds so they can participate equally in Australian society.

work assisting disadvantaged people in Sydney's west.

This means that if you are an organisational representative or individual interested in supporting the not-for-profit works SydWest MSI carries out assisting the aged, disabled, refugee and humanitarian entrants of Blacktown and surrounds, you can now make a tax deductible donation to us.

SydWest MSI Accountant Marilena Rubbo says this is beneficial to SydWest MSI's clients because it gives more scope to conduct projects outside existing funded work programs.

"Any moneys involved would be used for disadvantaged clients, mainly refugees, humanitarian entrants and aged migrants. We have reached a new phase in our development which involves a new structure in our operations," she says.

A re-structure occurred and a new division, SydWest Aged Care Disability and Refugee Support, was established. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) granted it public benevolent institution status (PBI) due to a large part of its activities being considered benevolent in nature. As a result the division has been recognised as being able to receive gifts which are tax deductible to the donor.

For further details about benevolent donations please visit the ATO website. To make a donation to SydWest MSI please contact: Marilena or Nikolayka on (02) 9621 6633 or email marilena@sydwestmsi.org.au or nikolayka@sydwestmsi.org.au

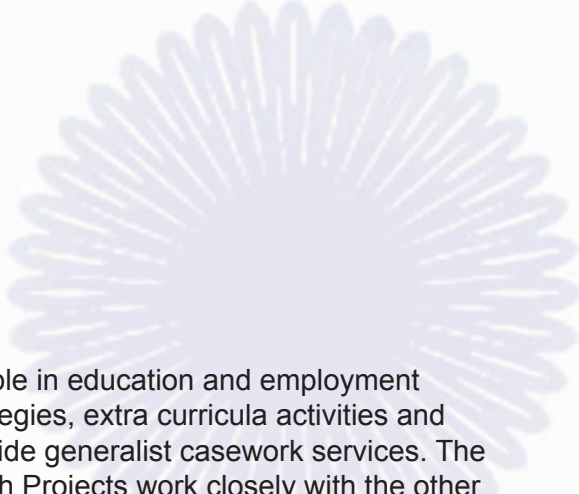
Settlement Services

Settlements Grants Programs Highlights

The Settlement Grants Program (SGP) has been one of the key contributors to the advancement and growth of SydWest MSI. Funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), the SGP provides settlement assistance and support to newly-arrived refugee, humanitarian and family entrants in western Sydney. The project provides a voice to the voiceless by championing the needs of refugees and other marginalised people, through its consulting and advocacy services to government and non-government agencies. The project works with its clients to overcome challenges facing them in their settlement process by offering casework, referrals and information sessions. Ultimately it assists communities to build social capital and community structures, as well as providing skills enhancement and linking community members to allied services tailored to help them integrate into the broader Australian community. The project also aims to meet the need for community members to reach their full potential in order to contribute meaningfully to their new country.

SydWest MSI Settlement Services has three main components:

- African Projects, including two projects that target refugees and humanitarian entrants from the African continent and a third, ethno-specific project, that targets Sudanese men and families;
- Generalist Projects. There are three in total, with one targeting women and each working with refugee and humanitarian entrants across all communities; and
- Youth Projects, which engage young



people in education and employment strategies, extra curricula activities and provide generalist casework services. The Youth Projects work closely with the other projects to provide a holistic approach to problem solving for families. See more information on the Youth Projects on page 14.

The current SGP team comprises a Team Leader, two coordinators and several bilingual community project workers. The team provides services from the Blacktown Main Street office as well as outreach locations in Mount Druitt and Kingswood.

African Projects

Overview

The African Projects comprise three separate projects funded through the DIAC SGP program and includes:

- African Orientation Project;
- African Communities Development, and
- Sudanese Men and Families.

The African Projects work with all eligible African refugees, humanitarian or family entrants, with the team comprised of workers from Sudanese, Sierra Leone, Liberian, Ethiopian and Congolese backgrounds and



Settlement Services

language groups.

The Projects aim to improve access for eligible African humanitarian entrants in Blacktown to mainstream services through casework, information and referrals, group information sessions and cultural transition activities. They facilitate community development through community education and training programs; assistance to community leaders and members to engage with mainstream service providers; mentoring programs and support with the development of commercial enterprises.

Highlights of project activities and key programs

Casework

A total of 1020 clients were provided with effective case management and 168 information sessions were held with 1927 clients participating. About 50 percent of these clients were from Sudan, with others from Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Ethiopia Congo, Burundi and Liberia. The key issues addressed in casework included assistance with documents, material/financial matters, accommodation, education, vocational training and employment. Clients were given maximum exposure to mainstream service providers, and a marked increase in their confidence and ability to negotiate these services were observed. Overall evaluation demonstrated

increased ability of participants to address their settlement needs in the long term without relying on caseworkers.

Information sessions

Information sessions were held on a wide range of topics including: consumer rights and obligations; health care complaint procedures; Centrelink payments; positive parenting; the Australian legal system; financial management; citizenship; gambling and proposing family members from overseas.

Ongoing weekly programs

The African Projects have increased the capacity of community members and leaders through monthly Leaders and Elders meetings and the African Women on the Move organisation, as well as the weekly African Senior Women's Group. Weekly community education programs include public speaking seminars through the Gavel Club, driver education programs in different African community languages and the Primary School Homework Support Program, which runs in partnership with the



Youth Project.

The African project provides opportunities for community advocates to meet politicians and service providers to advocate for their communities on relevant issues. Other programs run this year have included Media and Leadership Training workshops and Families in Cultural Transition training in partnership with STARTTS, three separate community forums in partnership with the Attorney-General's Department, Community Relations Commission and the Department of Education Employment and Training. The African Projects also facilitated information sessions and recruitment for African foster carers in Sydney.

The project also partnered with Blacktown City Council, the Migration Heritage Centre and the Community Relations Commission to deliver the Sudanese Stories Project which documented the diverse Sudanese community in Blacktown.

Generalist Projects: Overview

The three Generalist Projects at SydWest MSI are:

- The Blacktown Generalist Project;
- The Blacktown and Outer Western; Sydney Generalist Project; and
- The Women's Project.

These projects are funded through the DIAC SGP programs and their overriding aim is to improve access to mainstream services through ongoing casework and group information sessions for eligible refugee and humanitarian entrants and their families. Project workers support all clients in the target group which is primarily from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, however to overcome language and trust barriers among newly arrived communities the project has specific workers for the Tamil, Iraqi, Afghani, Burmese, Pakistani and



Sudanese communities. The project has also worked closely with members of the Bhutanese community in Blacktown.

Community development and integration has been achieved through consultations with the target groups and the tailoring of programs to meet those needs. Members of target communities were involved in program design and implementation to ensure ownership and active participation. The project works with local services and Interagencies to help meet the needs of new and emerging communities in Blacktown and outer western Sydney.

Community development was facilitated through activities like the establishment of skills development, training programs and mentoring programs. An advocacy program and sporting activity was also established to assist entrants to integrate into the broader community. This project improved access to mainstream services by conducting casework, making relevant referrals and by running information sessions to help participants understand Australian society. Community development has been achieved through activities that included mentoring programs. Services also included employment pathways workshops and advocacy services to assist entrants to integrate into the broader community.

Settlement Services

Casework

A total of 1727 clients were provided with effective case management and 212 information sessions with 4198 participants attending these sessions. The dominant issues raised by the clients during casework included the need for support with documents; language; finances and migration information to facilitate family reunion; education training and accommodation. Through casework, clients have gained increased knowledge and the ability to navigate and access mainstream support services. They have gained confidence in solving issues related to housing, utility bills, Centrelink and finances.

Information Sessions

Information sessions focused on employment, financial management, exercise and healthy lifestyles, nutrition, domestic violence and support available for victims, parenting teenagers, understanding Australian values, the police, housing, family harmony, the Australian legal system, child protection, community services and the NSW health system. These sessions increased the personal capacity of clients and their knowledge and ability to navigate and access mainstream services.

Weekly programs

English conversation, flower arrangement and sewing classes were held weekly during school term, with two sets of reading and writing classes, as well as English for work classes held once in a week during school term. The English Language classes were held in partnership with North West Community College. In Kingswood weekly language classes were held in partnership

with Nepean Community College. Other weekly programs included a Multicultural Women's Program organised in partnership with the Family Safety Project and a Senior Women's Group. Workshops to enhance employment skills featured: flower arrangement; sewing; computer skills; Certificates III and IV in Aged Care; Food Safety Level 1; and driving and resume writing. Participants in the Aged Care courses achieved 90 percent employment outcomes. The programs also work with SydWest MSI's Youth Projects to deliver ongoing sporting activities for young people.

Special projects

Some of the special projects that the SGP workers have developed include Cancer Awareness and the Preventative Health Forum for Tamil Women. This forum, titled 'Prevention is Better than Cure', was organised by SydWest MSI and the Tamil Women's Welfare Association with a small grant from Cancer Council NSW. The forum was held at the SydWest MSI offices in Blacktown in April 2010. Guest Speakers Marj Freeman and Sue Woodward gave presentations on healthy lifestyles, cancer prevention, support services for cancer patients and more. The session attracted 89 Tamil community members which exceeded expectations by over 10%.

Cultural awareness between police and the African Muslim community

Funded by the Australia Human Rights Commission through the Community and Police Partnership Program (CPPP), the program provided 11 information and cultural awareness sessions involving 225 participants. Fifteen meetings and three events were held in total. Project highlights

included the cultural awareness session organised by the African Muslim Community and the Blacktown Police Force. Held at SydWest MSI's Blacktown office, the event attracted 70 African Muslim community members and a strong presence from Blacktown Police including the Local Area Commander. The event offered the community members an understanding of the Australian law enforcement system, and the police an education on the culture, traditions and values of African Muslims. Both parties made a mutual commitment to work together to combat crime in the Blacktown LGA.

Goulburn Police Visit

This year the Settlement Grants Program (SGP) has continued its commitment to assist clients and other community members to source job opportunities and employment. In partnership with Blacktown Police, SydWest MSI organised a police recruitment information session at the police training facility in Goulburn. This involved 40 unemployed Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) people having a tour of the police college and given an information session. The latter focused on the police recruitment process and featured inspiring stories from new recruits. A viewing of police horses and dogs, dormitories and court rooms took place. The visit provided an opportunity to learn about access and employment possibilities for CALD people within the NSW Police Force.



Driver Education Programs

Commencing in July 2009, the Driver Education Program organised and delivered a range of driver knowledge test education sessions. Classes were attended by African, Afghani, Iranian and Tamil clients on a weekly basis. One hundred clients were involved in the sessions this year and 80 have received their Learner Permits, and of these 50 have received their Provisional Licences. The workshops comprised an explanation of the road safety handbook, a DVD of interactive questions and answers, and an online trial of the practice test with explanations in community languages. Periodic workshops were also provided by Blacktown City Council Safety and a Blacktown Highway Police Patrol on safe driving, speed limits and the consequences of drink driving.

Other projects run by the Settlement team

Other projects targeted key issues faced by refugee and migrant communities in their settlement process. These projects are run within the wider Settlement team and provide information sessions, programs and community training on issues ensuring that the programs are culturally and linguistically relevant to their target audience. This year the projects focused on inter-generational conflict through the Family Harmony Program and a new domestic violence program through the Family Safety and Strength to Strength projects.

Settlement Services

Family Harmony 'Conflict Resolution' program

The Family Harmony 'Conflict Resolution' program has this year worked very closely with CALD parents and young people across the Blacktown LGA and its environs. Funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), the program focused on allowing families to learn new, or enhance existing skills, to achieve their individual and family needs and to build confidence and assertiveness to assist them in their interactions with children and other family members.

Over the past year approximately 300 people from Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Iran, Congo, Burundi and Sudan were directly assisted through our CALD volunteer facilitator training program, community workshops, special events and celebrations. Program activities were conducted in the Blacktown LGA.

The Family Harmony program, in collaboration with other service providers such as the Macquarie Community College, Centrelink, Breakthru Employment Solutions, Relationships Australia, Hillsong City Care, Blacktown City Council participated in the Harmony Day celebrations held at SydWest MSI.

The key focus for partnering was on community capacity building and promoting social connectedness. Working in partnership with some of these services assisted many newly arrived refugees and migrants to see beyond their established ways of doing things, and move towards a better understanding of Australian systems. These partnerships have also contributed substantially to the recruitment of volunteers from local communities. The program

continues to train volunteers to work closely with CALD community members.

The Family Safety project

Commenced as a pilot project, the Family Safety project assisted communities in preventing violence in families and helps victims access appropriate support services. Funded by the Office for Women's Policy, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, the project provided casework and support to victims of domestic violence and held information sessions in partnership with the SGP workers from different language groups. Project participants were from Bhutan, Congo, Fiji, Sierra Leone, Pakistan, Iraq, Liberia, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Sudan.

The project initially targeted women, however decided to also consult men in order to seek strategies to prevent family violence. Overall approximately 150 men and women from the above-mentioned communities participated in the consultation process. One suggestion was to focus on educating the younger, rather than older, family members as they might be more open to change.

Training/workshops

The project held training sessions on family safety for community and religious leaders, elders and workers. Two workshops took specifically for community members took place with Family Counsellor Eric Hudson as Facilitator. Sixty-six men and women from African and Asian communities such as Bhutan, the Congo, Fiji, Sierra Leone, Pakistan, Iraq, Liberia, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Sudan participated. The training and workshops provided a forum for the community leaders and members to discuss

family violence. An important outcome was that 21 community leaders who participated then volunteered to assist SydWest MSI in providing support for those who experience family violence. Evaluation demonstrated that there was an increased awareness and understanding of family and domestic violence in the targeted communities.

Women's and Daughter's Camp

In October a three day and two nights camp at Narrabeen for women and their teenage daughters was organised by SydWest MSI in partnership with the Family Safety and SGP Programs for refugee and humanitarian women. Participants came from Bhutan, Nepal, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan Afghanistan, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Liberia at the NSW Sports and Recreation Centre in Narrabeen. The camp was the first opportunity for most of the participants to travel outside of Blacktown since their arrival in Australia. Seventy women and girls participated in the camp. Sessions focussed on exercise, nutrition and domestic violence. The camp afforded the women an opportunity to increase their networks and to break social isolation. Evaluation revealed participants enjoyed all aspects of the camp. The following two projects below were formed as a result of this camp.

Multicultural Women's Group

The Multicultural Women's Group initially met every fortnight, and then every Wednesday. Activities have included excursions, art and craft-making, information sessions featuring topics like family violence and family law.



African Sisters On the Move

Targeting African women, the aim has been to empower them, assist them to break their isolation, advocacy and to cultivate a sense of belonging in the wider Australian community. The group celebrated its inauguration in December 2009 and continues to meet monthly.

Strength to Strength project

Funded by the Community Relations Commission General Grants Program, this project aims to strengthen culturally appropriate community structures to deal with family violence within Tamil communities living in Blacktown and Auburn. Through workshops, community members were educated on the definition of violent behavior, identification of the cycle of abuse and taught conflict management skills. Information was also provided on services available for abuse victims. As a result of the workshops, a group of active Tamil women met every week from December 2009 to June 2010 to obtain training in family safety, information they plan to take back into their community. The project also provided casework support for victims/survivors of family violence. Further issues addressed were psychological and physical health, accommodation, immigration, legal, income support, employment, children's health and education. Appropriate referrals were made for clients to receive further assistance and specialist help.

Youth Projects

In 2009-2010 SydWest MSI continued to provide quality programs and support to newly arrived refugee and migrant young people aged 12-24 years in Blacktown and Penrith through its Humanitarian Youth Project; Youth Empowerment through Sport (YES) Project; Refugee Youth in Transition: Education and Employment Project and African Youth Project (delivered in a new partnership with Father Chris Riley's Youth Off the Streets - YOTS). Strong outcomes were achieved for young people through the delivery of education, sport and recreation, health, school-based programs and other innovative programs that saw an average of 200-250 young people participating in activities each week.

This was only made possible thanks to the dedication of the youth workers at the centre and the support we receive from the Settlement Team, as well as the strong partnerships with local services and support from funding bodies such as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) through its Settlement Grants Programs (SGPs) and Diverse Australia Programs, Community Services through its Community Builders Programs and Blacktown RSL through the CDSE program.

Humanitarian Youth Project (DIAC SGP)

The Humanitarian Youth Project assists refugee and humanitarian young people with their settlement needs in the Blacktown and Penrith Local Government Areas through the provision of case work and referral services to clients, information sessions, training activities and the development of ongoing activities and programming. It is funded by DIAC through its Settlement Grants Program.

The project continues to provide relevant settlement information activities newly arrived refugee, humanitarian and family

entrant young people by linking guest speakers and other partner organisations to its school holiday programs. This year activities included a Young Mens' Health and Safety Day at Narrabeen Sport and Recreation Centre and Girls' Swimming and Health and Safety Sessions (in partnership with the YES Project) in July. A girls' soccer camp and a boys' soccer camp were conducted in partnership with Football United in October, and activities included health and conflict resolution activities. A beach excursion in January also introduced young refugee people to local health services in the Penrith LGA and a basketball tournament in April was combined with healthy relationship workshops. Over 250 young people received information through these programs on topics which included sexual and reproductive health, nutrition, the police (including material about drug and alcohol use, personal safety and the role of police), conflict resolution skills, healthy relationships and types of domestic violence, beach safety, sports safety and injury prevention, mental health and peer pressure.

Youth Leadership and community consultation activities were delivered throughout the year and included a Cross-Cultural Youth Leaders workshop with the Rugby Youth Foundation, Football United, STAR Basketball and SPARK futsal representatives and the Blacktown Police in July 2009, where young people developed strategies and discussed key youth issues in Blacktown. A Life Matters Leadership workshop held in partnership with the Initiative of Change, Blacktown Police, Blacktown City Council and Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency (MECA) in August 2009 had young people participating in a two day training course learning about leadership skills and how to be effective agents of change in our community. A Youth Leaders' Camp in January 2010 held

in partnership with Football United and the Rugby Youth Foundation allowed key youth leaders to receive skills in leadership, communication and community development, and concluded with the highlight of participants delivering group presentations to J.P. Morgan staff about youth issues and what they learned during the program.

Many of the programs run by the SydWest MSI Youth Team are only possible through the dedication of youth leaders who have gone on to act as coaches, mentors and volunteers in the various programs in Blacktown. The organisers of the Youth Project were also pleased to engage young people and their families from new and emerging communities in Blacktown such as the Bhutanese, Burmese, Iraqi and Congolese communities through consultations, community meetings and a youth and families excursion to the Blue Mountains which had over 60 participants.

This year was also an exciting year for the soccer programs that the project runs in Blacktown in partnership with Football United. Through this partnership the project was able to continue to deliver three weekly after-school soccer programs, with over 100 participants in the Saturday Football in the Park program, Evans High School, the and Intensive English Centre (IEC) after school soccer program and the drop-in futsal program facilitated by youth leaders and delivered in partnership with YOTS. Other exciting activities this year involved participating in the Football United Festival (with the Football in the Park Girls' Team and the Evans High School Boys' team taking out the tournament and SydWest MSI receiving the first annual Hirschman Trophy), participating in the Sydney Football Club Season Launch where the young people involved in the soccer programs presented jerseys to the players, visits to the programs



by player Alex Brosque and representatives from the FIFA 1Goal initiative, and the youth leaders organisation of football clinics at the Blacktown Burbs Festival celebrating Youth Week. The most exciting program of all saw three players from Blacktown soccer programs selected to play in the Football United 'Hope Team' training every Sunday in the beginning of 2010 to compete against 31 other teams in South Africa during the World Cup in FIFA's 'Football for Hope' Festival.

The Youth Project also continued to provide programs and activities to young people in the Penrith LGA through partnerships with local services. This was the fourth year of the Homework Support Program in partnership with Nepean Migrant Access, every Tuesday during school term. The project organised an excursion to Coogee beach in partnership with Sydney West Area Health Services (SWAHS); Family-Planning; The Warehouse and MECA. In partnership with SWAHS and The Warehouse, the project also delivered a Basketball Gala to Celebrate Youth Week in Penrith.

Youth Projects

Youth Empowerment Through Sport (DIAC Harmony)

The Youth Empowerment through Sport (YES) project targets young women – primarily from Muslim communities – and engages them in sporting activities delivered in a culturally appropriate environment and includes both community and families' engagement strategies. Funded for one year through the DIAC Diverse Australia Funding stream, the project formally finished in January 2010 with program activities absorbed into the Humanitarian Youth Project. During the program over 200 young women participated in sports and other activities.

This year the project continued to provide weekly opportunities for young women to participate in ongoing soccer activities by developing the female component of the Evans High School soccer program and the Saturday Football in the Park projects delivered with Football United.

The project incorporated new programs and activities identified through consultations with young women including a female swimming program and a girls' futsal (indoor soccer) tournament into its general programming. In partnership with the centre's Women's Project, two women's swimming programs were held at an indoor pool in Seven Hills. In this project more than 60 young women and 15 mothers completed a beginner's swimming program that also combined information sessions on health and safety that included a beach and pool safety lesson organised by one of the first Muslim female lifeguards in Australia, Mecca Laalaa. A girls' futsal tournament was held over six weeks during the Christmas school holiday period. Forty eight young women from Afghani, Bhutanese, Pakistani, Sudanese and Togolese



backgrounds made up the eight teams which participated in the tournament.

The project also worked with other community organisations and associations to link girls to other galas and events. This included submitting teams to the November 2009 and February 2010 girls' soccer tournaments organised by the Afghan Australian Cultural and Sporting Association, submitting two girls' teams to the Football United December Festival, working with the Pakistani communities young women's program in December to deliver its swimming program and participating in the girls' soccer gala in Lidcombe.

Youth in Transition: Education and Employment Project

The Youth in Transition is a new project funded by DIAC late round SGP Funding in 2009. The project provides orientation and support to newly-arrived refugee, humanitarian and family entrant young people in Blacktown LGA making the transition from English Language Centres to mainstream education facilities and employment opportunities through providing targeted casework support and programs both at SydWest MSI and local schools in Blacktown and through partnering with local training providers.

This year the project worked with four local schools in Blacktown in partnership with the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) and other services to provide support to both individual students and programs. At Evans High School and IEC introduction to local services tours and information sessions were organised in partnership with the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) with visits to TAFE, SydWest MSI, Blacktown Youth Services Association, the Max Webber Library and Blacktown PCYC. At Mitchell High School a comprehensive program was developed in partnership with DET and the school which covered local services tours, conflict resolution classes, study skills, cooking and nutrition classes and other kinds of skills-based learning. At Doonside Technology High School, in partnership with the school and DET, a community school celebration saw selected students focusing on community harmony and youth leadership with youth guest speakers from Sierra Leone, Pakistani, Pacific Island and Indigenous backgrounds. A Ghanaian drumming presentation, international student music and dance presentations and a youth workshop focusing on community harmony and support were also held. At Blacktown Girls' High School, conflict resolution workshops were held, as well as an introduction and consultation day to the Social Inclusion Pathways for Refugee Youths (SIPRY) program delivered at the school in partnership with Centrelink, DET, TAFE, STARTTS, SydWest MSI and other services. Over 130 students participated in these programs.

This year after school educational support programs were delivered to provide extra assistance to students. This included the Homework Support Program held in partnership with the African Communities Project who manage the primary school

component of the program, where students receive support from volunteer tutors. An average of 15-25 high school students attended the program every week, with over 80 students accessing the program in 2010. Writing workshops were held at the Max Webber library in the April school holidays, providing three sessions on essay writing skills, poetry writing, stress management, study skills and assignment planning with Student For Student (S4S) coaching. HSC English exam preparation courses were also held for Year 12 students in the holidays, as well as tours of TAFE, the library and University of Western Sydney to help students decide about future pathways.

The project also worked in partnership with the Blacktown TAFE Outreach program to provide education and employment training to young people. These included skills workshops where young people learned job seeking techniques, interview skills, resume writing and application skills. TAFE also provided basic computer skills training at SydWest MSI for students in the school holidays.

African Youth Project

The African Youth Project is a new partnership project between SydWest MSI and Father Chris Riley's Youth Off the Streets (YOTS) and funded by DIAC. Commencing in late 2009, the project focuses on providing safe and accessible after hours youth programs and activities including youth outreach, sports programs and youth leadership initiatives.

The project supports local youth initiatives from the African community in Blacktown including the STAR Basketball Recreation and the SPARK Futsal Drop-in Program. The basketball program provides free drop-

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Events

Refugee Week

Short films, a fashion parade, performances and a DJ – all with a multicultural theme. These were the highlights of this year's Refugee Week celebration held on Sunday, June 20 at the Max Webber Library, Blacktown.

With 'Freedom from Fear' as its theme, the event featured as a highlight the film of the play *My Name Is Sud (My Name is Black)*, performed and created by local African youth. The play was first staged in November last year to sell-out success at the Blacktown Arts Centre.

The organiser of the Refugee Week Freedom From Fear celebration, SydWest MSI, joined sponsors Blacktown Arts Centre, Blacktown City Council and Centrelink to create this many-pronged event which invited the general public to attend for free from midday onwards.

It was an opportunity for anyone who missed *My Name Is Sud* to have a chance to see it, as well as taking part in other activities designed to celebrate refugees who play so great a role in the rich social fabric of multicultural Blacktown in particular, and Australia in general.

The event was funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).



Settlement Services

Mount DrUITT Outreach Office

SydWest MSI this year opened a new Outreach Office in Mount DrUITT. Office staff offer services and help with casework; information and networks; referrals and more.

At this Outreach office facilities and courses are available in the following areas:

- Free access to computers
- Health
- Housing
- Families
- Women's issues
- Crisis management
- Employment
- Migrant advice
- Education

The following languages are spoken at the centre: Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Pashto, Urdu, Swahili, French, Kirundi, Bembe, Kiha and many more with the help of Translating Interpreting Service (TIS).

SydWest MSI Outreach Office is at Shop 8, 6 Ralph Place, Mt DrUITT.



The Big Family Forum

The Big Family Forum was held at SydWest MSI for parents and teenagers living in Blacktown from African and Afghan communities. Over 60 people attended the first of its kind event half-day on April 14.

The aim was to deal, in a forum-style context, with some of the issues between parents and guardians of refugee teenagers in Blacktown. The need to do so was established from the ongoing casework conducted in the Settlement Services section of SydWest MSI. Guest speaker and facilitator Lyndal Power from Relationships Australia was joined by SydWest staff members Bernadette, Bintu, Yatta, Akuol, Abulla, Joseph and Mustapha to assist proceedings. Sudanese Youth Worker Emmanuel John Acuoth was a fitting MC for the upbeat event.

Some of the issues discussed were the cultural clash that can result from settlement in Australia, and the breakdown in communication between teenagers and the older generation that can arise. Questions asked included: "How is it different here in Australia to back home?" "What are the challenges you face, and how do you cope with them?" Young people were divided into five groups in total, and in the resulting presentations they proposed strategies to address the issues they face.

Speakers for the day included SydWest MSI lawyer Chandrika who discussed legal access issues. A delicious Egyptian meal was had by all. The project was funded by Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

Harmony Day

African drumming, a rap performance, Sudanese singing, Indian dancing, Indigenous music and a Halal barbecue were some of the highlights of the Harmony Day event held on March 18 outside SydWest MSI, Blacktown.

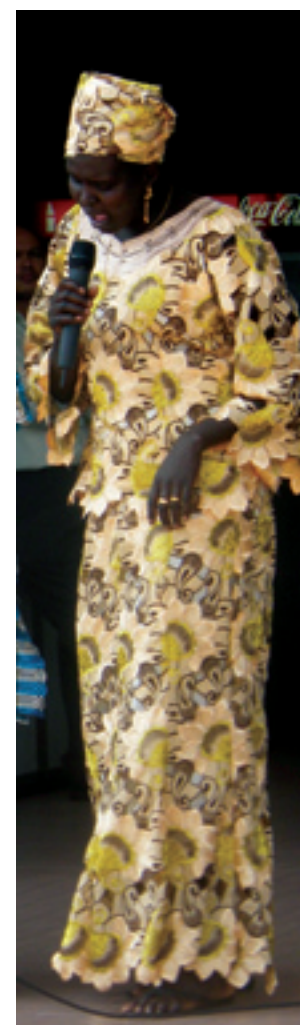
Over 150 people from a broad selection of refugee communities in Sydney's Western suburbs attended the festivities at 125 Main Street.

In convening the event, SydWest MSI's George Kpakima aimed to fit with the tradition of bringing together all the community service providers that share the building in which SydWest MSI is housed.

"Together we aimed to project the beauty of multiculturalism," he said.

Service providers from the building that took part included Macquarie Community College, Break Thru, Family Relationship Centre and Hillsong City Care. They were also joined by Blacktown City Council, Blacktown Police, Centrelink, the Blacktown Fire Brigade and Blacktown Girls' Centre.

Among the speakers was Justin Koholo, a Liberian from the Gavel Club that operates at SydWest MSI. Other speakers included manager of SydWest MSI Susan Vogels, George Kpakima and Gabriela Interiano from Macquarie Community College. Hillsong City Care provided a rap performer and other entertainment. Funding for Harmony Day came from Blacktown City Council with donations from participating services.





Youth Projects (cont.)

Continued from page 17

in training at Blacktown PCYC three days per week and submits three teams into the local league in Mount Druitt at Kevin Betts Stadium. The team was also pleased to host the 2009 Annual Sudanese-Australian Interstate Basketball Tournament at Penrith Basketball Stadium, where 24 teams from around Australia competed for two days. The SPARK futsal program continues to provide free drop-in futsal competitions for young people in Blacktown and is organised by a group of youth volunteers and supported by project workers at YOTS, Football United and SydWest MSI. SydWest MSI is also one of several participants in the COM4Unity Project. This project is a partnership between Blacktown Police, the Westpoint Shopping Centre, Blacktown City Council, Blacktown Rotary Club and local youth services such as the Marist Youth Centre (MYC) and Hillsong City Care (HCC) and YOTS. This partnership program focuses in providing safe and youth friendly spaces and after hours programs in Blacktown with a focus on the Westpoint Shopping Centre. In 2010 SydWest provided two youth workers on Thursday evening at Westpoint along with other workers and volunteers from partnership youth services to talk to young people, let them know about youth programs and support services and help create a safe and friendly atmosphere at the centre. The project has also participated in COM4Unity music and dance events held at Westpoint Shopping Centre. The African Youth project also coordinated and was involved in other programs such as workshops at the Max Webber Library, a family harmony forum and legal rights and responsibilities information sessions, youth leadership camps and consultations.

Mount Druitt and Blacktown Migrant Interagency,

Community Services Expo

The Mount Druitt and Blacktown Migrant Interagency is a dynamic and effective network composed of over 170 government and non-government organisations and community groups in the Blacktown and Mount Druitt LGAs. On the last Friday of each month, the group of up to 45 people meets at SydWest MSI.

The aim of the Migrant Interagency is to enhance service delivery for the CALD communities, newly arrived and longer term refugees and humanitarian entrants by effectively disseminating information, identifying gaps in delivery, advocacy and avoiding duplication of services.

The Migrant Interagency has traditionally offered a format of guest speakers to deliver information about relevant community services addressing the needs of CALD clients in the target areas. In 2010 the group introduced a program in which representatives from different communities living and working in Mount Druitt and Blacktown LGAs provided a presentation about their country of origin, the refugee community in Sydney of which they are a part and their related work. This took place every second month, with the traditional 'Hot Topic' speakers scheduled on alternate months. The Migrant Interagency was the driving force behind the annual Community Services Expo which this year showcased the services of over 80 organisations. Funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

Events (cont.)

Nowroz Celebration

Those visiting SydWest MSI on April 9 might have been surprised to hear an Afghan band playing from one of the meeting rooms. With 185 people attending, it was the first large Nowroz celebration to be held at SydWest MSI, a celebration held specifically for the Afghan and Iranian communities, who herald in their new year with music and other traditional festivities. Singer Javid Nasiri and band performed, and others also came up on stage to read poetry, say a word or tell jokes in the Nowroz spirit. Afghan traditional food was served thanks to Afghani caterer Sima Halim. Multicultural worker for Families NSW at SydWest MSI Ebad Amid was the event MC and community representative Rana Topal gave an inspiring speech. SydWest MSI's Families NSW male worker Mohammad spoke about the Nowroz festival and read poetry.

SydWest MSI Family NSW worker Mushtari Wakili said the older people particularly loved the traditional program.

SydWest MSI's Khatol Ahmadzay was instrumental in the success of event.



International Women's Day

International Women's Day was this year celebrated by SydWest MSI in the Afghan Community Hall, Blacktown. Over 170 women, and a few men, attended on the day. Women from the Afghan, Indian, Pakistani, Liberian, Sierra Leone and Philippine communities all took part. Event convener SydWest MSI's Mushtari Wakili says the aim of the event was to promote women's solidarity and celebrate multiculturalism.

Speakers included SydWest MSI Manager Susan Vogels, Seema Syed, Mayada Darfur a volunteer at SydWest MSI and Mary Rose Leona, the Families NSW Perinatal project play group worker. Entertainers provided examples of Bollywood and traditional Indian dance, as well as African belly dancing. An interactive workshop also took place. Catering was provided by Sima Halim from the Afghan community, with a vegetarian Indian alternative offered by the Curry Hotel, Blacktown. Roving Child Care provided support on the day with face painting for the 15 or more children present.

Celebrating 25 Years

The organisation has grown from strength to strength.

- Lalli Sethuram



There is the ability to see the needs of refugees, humanitarian entrants and frail aged migrants and the drive to work towards addressing their needs.

- Marilena Rubbo



To see the growth of SydWest MSI and our support services in the last nine years fulfills my imaginings.

- Nikolayka Bentcheva

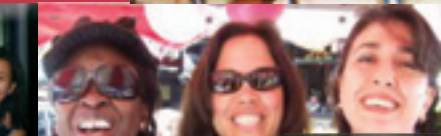


What I really like here is the interaction between the projects... people are working increasingly better together, and more work is being done in a shorter time.

- Susan Vogels



SydWest MSI would like to thank all those who have helped us through the years to support the disadvantaged people of western Sydney, be they young, old, newly arrived to our country or longer term residents. Together we continue to strive for a harmonious multicultural Australia and to learn from, and enjoy, our differences.



For 25 years SydWest MSI and its predecessors have devoted their energies and commitment to ensuring our newest citizens are able to dedicate their full range of skills and talents for the benefit of their new home, our community. I salute all those volunteers, management and staff for the efforts.

- Ed Husic

One Sudanese woman came to our camp and said she didn't know anyone. She recently told me thanks to the camp, "I have made friends. I have family."

- Bernadette Agyepong



Celebrating 25 Years



The day I started at Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre my whole outlook changed and I felt a sense of belonging.

- Tania Schembri



I am proud to be an organisation able to serve people from all walks of life.

- C...



The projects and services offered to the community by SydWest MSI forces me to think: what would the community do without this organisation to answer its needs?

- Ejaz Khan



I love all the people from different cultures at SydWest MSI, the mix is inspiring.

- Ania Uszynski





...e part of an or-
to service clients
f life.
Geodhini Sivaraj



I am impressed with the dedication
of the staff who strive to assist
new arrivals integrate into the
broader community.
- Mark Wright

When I started working here the organisation
was small but the commitment to worker's
rights was extremely strong. This spirit has
been an underlying
tone of the
organisation.
- Marilena Rubbo



All Care Services

HACC CALD Social Support

The CALD Social Support program has proven to be very successful amongst CALD groups in the Blacktown area. CALD All Care Services commenced the service at the end of last year after SydWest MSI received funding from the NSW Department of Human Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

The success was obvious from the beginning as within weeks 61 community members had expressed an interest in participating in the program. By December 2010, 232 seniors from a range of CALD communities living in the Blacktown LGA had applied. Currently the service operates in language specific group settings. Following a number of consultations with each group, the HACC team has tailored a separate program for each group according to the needs identified.

Some of the major highlights for the CALD Social Support Program include gentle exercises for seniors of Croatian, Spanish, Turkish and Egyptian background, meditation sessions for the Indian Subcontinent groups, laughter therapy sessions (which staff also enjoy!) and numerous day trips for all.

The feedback provided by members of the groups can only make us proud of the effort the team is putting into the program. Very positive feedback comes from women that due to cultural restrictions and language difficulties have been socially isolated for a number of years, while a very successful men's group allows men to enjoy their time together.

Following a number of consultations with all social support groups it seems that the major challenge facing care recipients is transport, as well as language specific volunteers to assist with that little extra touch.

Currently CALDACS HACC team runs the following groups:

- Bhutanese on Thursdays
- Chinese on the first and third Friday of the month
- Chinese women's group on the second and fourth Friday of the month
- Egyptian Coptic group on Thursdays
- Croatian on Wednesdays
- Indian Subcontinent group on Wednesdays
- Indian Subcontinent group every third Thursday of the month
- Italian on the fourth Monday
- Maltese every Tuesday
- Serbian on Fridays
- Spanish on Tuesdays;
- Turkish women's group on Mondays; and
- Turkish men's group every Monday.

Counselling, Support, Information and Advocacy

Counselling, Support, Information and Advocacy (SIAC) is a growing, flexible and much needed service for CALD communities in the region. It has assisted a great number of callers from a range of non-English speaking backgrounds with information and



referrals to HACC and HACC-like services throughout 2010.

The service has provided information on HACC services in the Parramatta, Blacktown, Auburn and Holroyd LGAs in the Bhutanese, Tamil, Egyptian, Turkish, Chinese, Maltese, Croatian, Spanish and other communities.

Through the SIAC service, seniors from different communities had the opportunity to learn more about their benefits from Centrelink, had a hearing test from Australian Hearing and learnt more on how to recognise diabetes symptoms and have a healthy lifestyle, thanks to Diabetes Australia.

A very successful event for the HACC team in 2010 was the celebration for Seniors' Week. It was an event with a number of cultural displays from Africa, Egypt, Greece, Malta and Turkey that gave bright colors and good vibes to a roomful of seniors. It was a very interactive day where seniors and staff sang and danced to numerous cultural tunes and a day where talents – particularly amongst our Turkish social support group and the Tamil seniors – were discovered!

The end of 2010 also saw the establishment of CALDAC's first Multicultural Carer's Support Group. This has been one of the greatest achievements for the hard working HACC team this year.

Included in the major highlights of SIAC this year has also been the Community Development programs the project officers have initiated within their communities.

A big part of the Project Officers' role today is to also engage with their communities, as well as to provide all the necessary information to seniors on HACC and how to access HACC services in the region, as a great number of CALD seniors are not aware of existing services and their rights.



Personal Care/Respite

These two service types keep assisting our care recipients with direct service delivery from a professional team of bilingual field staff. Our ongoing strong relationship with ADHC Case Managers saw an increase in the numbers of younger people with disabilities from CALD background and their carers requiring services.

During 2010 an average of 130 hours of personal care was provided to each of our care recipients and 150 hours of in house respite was offered to each of our CALD carers.

It is imperative to note that the assistance of the Department of Human Services, Home and Community Care, its project officers and staff at all levels has been very important in providing all of the above services to CALD communities in the region. Without their support and understanding of cultural needs and the different approaches needed to address them, it would be very difficult to continue.

In such a changing environment for HACC today, we can only wish for much more culturally appropriate service delivery for all CALD seniors in Western Sydney.

All Care Services

Seniors Internet Kiosk

This also saw the commencement of operation of the Seniors' Internet Kiosk in our CALDACS premises. It is an initiative funded by the Federal Government which allows our care recipients to enter the new world of technology. Our CALDACS team has been available to provide ongoing face-to-face training. This has been an opportunity all interested seniors are extremely happy to have had.

Community Partners Program (CPP Arabic – Tamil)

During the last year the Arabic and Tamil Community Partners Program (CPP) was yet another successful program for both relevant communities and Aged Care Service providers in the region.

The primary outcome of the Program, funded by the Department of Health and Ageing, includes:

- More aged care support services delivering culturally appropriate care to older persons from culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
- Older people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities having increased access to culturally appropriate age care support services; and
- Older people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities having greater capacity to make informed decisions about aged care support services.

The success of the CPP Program in 2010 was that the Tamil CPP expanded to cover not only western Sydney but also the area of the inner west where a large number of Tamil speakers reside.

Tamil CPP has successfully delivered



information to more than 1000 Tamil speaking seniors on a range of topics such as Community Aged Care Packages, EACH and EACHD packages and information on residential care facilities, such as access and fees involved. The same focus was applied to the Arabic speaking community with information sessions provided to more than 150 people and resources in Arabic disseminated to community members and the Arabic media.

The Tamil Program organised and facilitated numerous Cultural Briefings, Temple tours and a show of everyday Tamil customs and practices for aged care providers that proved a great success. The general feedback received was always very positive while handy and user-friendly Cultural Kits have been produced for aged care service providers.

Additionally a very helpful resource for Residential Care Facilities has been developed: a cook book in CD form with favorite Tamil recipes for residents, in collaboration with the Sydney Tamil Women's Welfare Group.

The Program has also established a strong networking relationship with service providers in the western Sydney area. Its aim is to assist in understanding the cultural differences of the Tamil speaking community in order to provide more culturally appropriate services. Strong partners in this effort have been the Tamil media, and the

numerous expos that allowed us to promote the program.

In 2010 a number of translated fact sheets in Aged Care Options in both Tamil and Arabic were finalised. These translations will assist the communities to understand the options they have for both community and residential services and also allow them and their carers to make more informed decisions when it comes to aged care.

At the end of this year, and following a restructure within the Department of Health and Ageing, the Executive Officer Kathyne Bradley who liaised with all community partners programs in NSW was moved into a different position. She has been an inspiration and has provided great guidance to both programs. Being sensitive to cultural differences and understanding the needs required to address them is always important in holding such an important position. The CPP Program is now looking forward to a fruitful relationship with the newly appointed Executive Officer Kathyne Bradley in the Community and Carer Support Section.

Community Aged Care Packages (CACP)

CALDACS CACP multicultural packages have been operating smoothly for a number of years providing direct service delivery to a number of CALD care recipients in the Blacktown, Baulkham Hills, Holroyd, Parramatta and Auburn LGAs. The very experienced and committed bilingual pool of field staff embraces a variety of languages spoken in the area including Arabic, Spanish, Estonian, Russian, Italian, Persian, Slovenian, French, Indian, Danish, Croatian, Serbian, Turkish, Tagalog, Hindi, Maltese and more.

The CACP team also speaks a variety of languages internally including Arabic,



Turkish, Maltese and languages from the former Yugoslavia, which assists greatly in their case management work.

The team works very closely with the Community Partners program coordinator by assisting in presentations regarding the packages to the Arabic and Tamil speaking communities in the area.

Bright and happy moments are always those when care recipients, field staff and Project Officers get together for lunch and entertainment. This year's April outing at Blacktown Workers Club was a great success as seniors had the opportunity to be entertained by performers from staff as well as professional belly dancers and Indian dancers. A lucky door prize was drawn on the day with lots of practical presents for all care recipients. Everyone is now waiting for the Christmas outing with lots more prizes and tasty food!



All Care Services

CALDACS team

This year CALDACS hard working team (office and field staff) had the opportunity to undergo a number of team building exercises such a cruise to the beautiful Sydney Harbour and a very alive and unforgettable session of Drum Beats. The team was unlucky in their effort to book tickets for Oprah... but maybe we'll be quicker next time. A very successful wellness working party organised a number of yoga and meditation classes for office staff in order to overcome the hectic work environment and bring everyone together, while a couple of laughter therapy sessions and exercise classes let some steam out to the right place!

A number of professional development training sessions took place, in-house and out, for all CALDACS staff. Training sessions on communication skills, project management, elderly abuse, Microsoft Outlook, and many more were found to be very useful. In the meantime, 25 members of our field staff obtained their Cert IV in Aged Care and Cert III in Home and Community Care.

Well done to all for a wonderful year with a great number of achievements!

Senior's Get Together Event



If you thought a Seniors' Week Get Together would be a quiet affair think again! Some 60 seniors with CALD backgrounds attended the Seniors' Week Get Together at SydWest MSI on March 18 for a very lively event. It aimed to showcase the cultures of communities living in the Blacktown LGA including Maltese, Chinese, Greek, Turkish, Indian and Egyptian.

Clients of the All Care Services team who are 65 and over were invited to engage with the program of performances and cultural displays. The booked entertainment included an Indian classical singer, Bollywood dancers, Chinese Yoga group and a Turkish Seniors Saz Group. There was so much audience participation the event coordinators suggested they need not have booked a full entertainment program!



Families NSW

Perinatal Project

This year Families NSW has introduced innovations in the delivery of its projects which aim to assist refugee and humanitarian entrant families in the Blacktown and Baulkham Hills Local Government Areas (LGAs).

The Families NSW Projects are funded by the Community Services (DoCS). The core work conducted by Families NSW is conducted through the Early Intervention and Perinatal Projects, which provide support for expectant women and for parents with children from 0-8 years. Its aim is to support the women to raise healthy and well adjusted children.

The Families NSW Perinatal Project partners with other service providers and offers a range of information sessions, courses, workshops and activities tailor-made to suit their Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) clients' needs.

Working with partners, Families NSW locates suitable client groups for which it offers free childcare facilities provided by Blacktown Roving Childcare and via the hiring of venues. Through an annual consultation process the team obtains feedback from a range of families to tailor the delivery of their services.

Over the years the project has seen a growing focus on providing information about education and training to its groups, with a view to obtaining employment for parents. This year the provision of English classes was also greater than in

previous years, while retaining a traditional emphasis on information sessions on the topics of health, education, parenting and safety issues along with visits to a range of community service organisations.

In response to increasing need from within the communities involved, the team has this year concentrated on addressing the sensitive issues of child protection, domestic violence and trauma issues occurring within the family context of its client base, as well as transport and isolation.

Some of the main challenges faced by the Perinatal Project team are finding ways to avoid isolation, the need to build up clients' self-esteem and finding ways to support the up-skilling of family members. The projects deliver their core message through non-intrusive education for CALD families about raising their children in the Australian cultural context through sessions like PPP and 123 Magic. As there are now more organisations providing support for refugee and humanitarian entrant families settling in western Sydney, the team is experiencing a faster turn-over of clientele compared with six years ago when Families NSW projects were instigated in the Blacktown and Baulkham Hills LGAs.

Other changes to the Perinatal Project have involved a 25% increase in clients from the Indian subcontinent becoming involved in programs, with more of this target group settling in the region and its surrounds. The team would like to thank the students and volunteers who assisted this year to help the projects operate successfully.



Families NSW

Groups

The following community groups are currently being facilitated by Families NSW:

- Baulkham Hills Multicultural Women's Support Group on Tuesdays;
- Sudanese Mother's Support Group in Blacktown on Thursdays;
- Punjabi Women's Support Group in Glenwood on Tuesdays;
- Multicultural Supported Play Group in Blacktown Fridays; and
- Blacktown Indian Women's Support Group on Fridays.

Some of the courses provided during the course of the year are parenting, basic First Aid skills, rhymes, craft activities, story times and information sessions, basic skills in computers, Kid Safe, Fair Trading and Community Services. The number of groups have grown over the years and now service more than 1000 women over the 2009-2010 financial year. A few groups have been dissolved, relocated and have changed names like the Baulkham Hills Indian subcontinent mothers group is now known as the Hills Multicultural Women's support group in order to reflect the diversity in the client's we were servicing.

Networks and Partners

Without network and service providers with whom Families NSW forms partnerships, the team could not do its work. The team would like to acknowledge partner organisations in 2009-10 including:

Roving Childcare; Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health; Blacktown Library; Family Relationships Centre, Blacktown City Council; Nirimba TAFE; City Care Blacktown; SydWest MSI Settlement

Grant Project; Blacktown and Mt Druitt Hospital Imaging Department; Mt Druitt and Blacktown Community Health; NSW Rural Fire Services; Transcultural Health; Anglicare; Swinson Cottage; Wesley Mission; Wash House; Hills Community Aid; NSW Department of Health; THHP MRC; NSW Department of Fair Trading and NSW Department of Education.

Expo in Glenwood

The Community Information Day 2010, or Glenwood Expo, was the first of its kind to take place on March 20, 2010, at the Sikh Temple, Glenwood. An estimated 150 people from the Indian subcontinent communities living in Sydney's west attended this event staged by SydWest MSI, and convened by the Families NSW Perinatal Project team.

The venue was chosen to entice Indian community members living in Blacktown, Doonside, Parramatta, Strathfield, Wentworthville and Westmead, who attend the Temple regularly, to come. Information stalls were on display from community service providers who cater for CALD communities



Families NSW

Early Intervention Project

The SydWest MSI Early Intervention project, funded by NSW Community Services under the Families NSW program, provides support to families with children aged 0-8 aiming to assist parents raise healthy children by helping them to solve problems early. This year the project targeted families from the Afghan, Iraqi, Sudanese, Pakistani and Indian communities. These families were migrants, newly arrived refugees and temporary protection visa holders, often within small and emerging communities.

The project provides culturally appropriate support and assistance for families, helping clients ease into the often overwhelming task of bringing up children in a new country. Much of the work is done through women's and men's support groups and via home visits. The staff work hard to bring about positive change to the participating families. Project activities are carried out at individual, family, and/or community levels and are tailored to meet the needs of different cultural groups. Early intervention services include home visiting services, support for families with new babies, parenting skills training, family relationship education, family counseling and access to support services for families with young children such as playgroups.

The parenting programs running this year were aimed at preventing and addressing a range of issues families face including managing children's behavioural and emotional problems. Additionally, the home visiting service continued to provide information, practical support and skills to parents in their homes.

This financial year the project's activities focused on primary schools in the area. The School Breakfast program at Mt Druitt Public School brought together CALD mothers, school teachers, school principals



and service providers to learn about each other's needs. Activities held for children during school holidays included visits to iconic places like the Harbour Bridge, and a fun run. An Education and Children Forum provided information on issues affecting parents and school children, giving parents a chance to discuss issues with a Department of Education representative.

A research project provided an opportunity for primary school children to describe their first school experiences and participate in discussions about creating a better understanding of CALD children's educational issues.

Skills training for women was held throughout the year to enhance women's employment prospects. The project addressed unemployment amongst newly arrived young fathers by providing 'green card' training for 25 Afghani, Indian, Pakistani and Iranian men.

A Health Forum was held in Mt Druitt, and the project secured extra funding for the ongoing Homework Support Project for CALD children run from SydWest MSI. Project activities commenced at the end of June at two primary schools in the Blacktown LGA.

The Early Intervention Project also brought many families and communities together by celebrating events such as International Women's Day, Harmony Day, Refugee Week, the Muslim Eid and the (Nowroz) New Year celebration for Afghan and Iranian communities. (Please see the events pages).

Management Committee and Staff

Management Committee	
Lalli Sethuram	Chairperson
Kathy Meyer	Vice Chairperson
Ejaz Khan	Treasurer
Sajana Nand	Secretary
Clarissa Mulas	M/C Member
Balraj Sangha	M/C Member
Mark Wright	M/C Member
James Ater	M/C Member
Russel Dickens	M/C Member

SydWest MSI	
Susan Vogels	Centre Manager

Administration and Finance	
Nikolayka Bentcheva	Access and Administration Manager
Maria Popal	Administration Officer
Saffna Noor Mohamed	Administration Officer (Website)
Marilena Rubbo	Accountant
Marian Wilcox	Financial Assistant
Anne Howell	Promotions/Newsletter Coordinator

Settlement Services Team	
Bernadette Agyepong	Team Leader
Bintu Kamara	Coordinator African Project/Coord. Family Harmony Project
Catherine Johnson	Coordinator Youth Project/Coordinator Family Safety Project
George Kpakima	Coordinator Family Harmony Project
Isaac Zungua	Coordinator Homework Support Program
Sanathani Mahesan	Family Safety Project Officer
Abulla Agwa	Generalist /African Project Worker
Khatol Ahmadzay	Generalist
Seema Dar	Generalist
Malathy Uthayachandran	Generalist
Hikmat Odesb	Generalist
Elizabeth Philipasz	Generalist
Jane Aboka	Generalist Outer West
Edward Massimino	African Project Worker
Yatta Quetee	African Project Worker
Joseph Makuei	Sudanese Project Worker
Ahmed Shmela	African Project Worker
Ferdinand Nkurunziza	African Project Worker
Mayor Cagai	African Youth Worker



Settlement Services Team	
Mustapha Bangura	Education and Employment Youth Worker
Andy Kenyi	African Youth Worker
Stephen Lang	Generalist Youth Worker
Akuol Diing	SGP Youth Worker/Generalist Women
Accouth John	African Youth Worker
Saffna Noor Mohamed	SGP Administration Assistant
Vijayata Sharma	SGP Administration Assistant

Families NSW Team	
Mushtari Wakili	Early Intervention Coordinator Families NSW
Geodhini Sivaraj	Perinatal Project Coordinator Families NSW
Mary Rose Leona	Multicultural Family Worker
Ebadullah Amid	Multicultural Family Worker
Mohammed Paikar	Afghani Worker
Sonal Chatrath	Indian Family Worker
Nada Hanna	Sudanese Family Worker
Jokbabbot Mugo	Sudanese Family Worker
Nazima Parker	Multicultural Playgroup Worker

CALDACS TEAM Services Team	
Elfa Moraitakis	CALDACS Manager
Ania Uszynski	Quality Control Manager
Margeret Ibrahim	CACP Coordinator
Mereline Rarami	HACC Coordinator
Vida Zamani	CACP Project Officer
Rahile Cakir	CACP Project Officer
Marija Derikuca	CACP Project Officer
Sree Vithya Harilingam	CPP Coordinator
Sharmila Yoganand	HACC Bilingual Support and Access Officer
Souzan Amin	HACC Bilingual Support and Access Officer
Irma Berbis	Administration Officer
Marilou Adams	HACC Bilingual Support and Access Officer
Mariam Metry	CACP Receptionist/ Administration Assistant

Sessional Workers	
Name	Language
Behrooz Gouniai	Persian
Pina Vittoria Di Rita	Italian
Tadija Popovic	Croatian

Management Committee and Staff

Casual Staff	English Teacher
Halima Alkozai	Jihan Boulos

CALD All Care Services	
Ahmad Yahya Khwaja	Rosalinda Ojeda
Angela Pena	Rozalija Zivkovic
Aurora Leano	Sahar Chaboksavar Larami
Azar Ranjbar	Salwa Abiatara
Hamidan Bibis Ali	Sharmila Yoganand
Cecile Nicola	Stephanie Tesoriero
Desy Abad	Souzan Morris Diiku
Elhan Naderi-Tehrani	Tania Clease
Elisabeth Gayst	Vanja Sarajlic
Gullu Onay	Virginia Castro Malong
Grazyna Slowik	Hoda Morgan
Halina Malikowski	Jane Refalo
Hamide Youssef Saleh	Lilian Ruben Amuron
Iwona Minda	Maline Balasingham
Krystyna Kochanski	Mari Moraes
Lorna Camilleri	Marilou Adams
Margaret Raphae	Mary Anne Aquilina
Maria Arrastia	Mimma Mazzullo
Marjan Fakhar	Nabila Hashimi
Maria-Violeta Gonzales	Ranita Kumar
Mary Rizigi	Ramsis Zariel Tadros
Mohini Sharma	Nahed Milad
Nada Panddza	Nazli Onay

Staff who have left SydWest MSI in 2010	
Amy Murphy	Margarita Videla
Tenneh Kpaka	Ali Ali
Peter Polities	Assmaah Helal

English Conversation Classes	
Monica Rose	David Rose
Don Jacobs	

Childcare Workers	
Anja Jawn	Seema Syed
Fawzia Fegeri	Abida Moshrif



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