

2017/18

# ANNUAL REPORT



POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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## Content guide

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## Eithandee Aung

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I have really enjoyed getting to know the settlement sector more and, as a first-time board member, challenging myself to learn new skills and building relationships with colleagues from a wide range of professional backgrounds.

## Myee Gregory

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I have loved getting to see first-hand the work done by the organisation to help newly arrived refugees and migrants.

## Nathan Hagarty

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The amazing and passionate people, that includes clients, staff and my fellow board members.

## Craig Saphin

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Meeting other members of the community and assisting in the support of a diverse range of people. Supporting the dedicated and talented staff of Western Sydney MRC.

## Judy MacGraw

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...getting to know my fellow Board members, the CEO and the executive team as a wonderfully diverse collection of people passionate about the organisation and how they can contribute to better outcomes for others has been the most enjoyable element for me.

## Dr Amad Mtashar

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I have enjoyed being on the board to assist our clients in being part of a great diverse community.



## The Board Address

With any new structure and governance comes an integration of old and new, a mix of visions and a diversity of thinking. This year's appointment of a new board allows us to share with our community, staff and clients, the driving forces and key decision makers behind our refreshed vision and how it will continue to influence our overall strategic goals. It is worth noting that our board members give up their time as volunteers and we are extremely thankful for their vital role and to have them as part of the team.

As with any group, each of our directors have a vision for the organisation that comes with a wealth of individual experience, whether it be in the community, the organisation and/or the sector. However, when asked about this vision, there was a great alignment...

"...Western Sydney MRC will be adaptable, dynamic, and relentless in its commitment to the communities that we serve. The vision is combined in creating a secure, professional and respected organisation while maintaining its strong links with the community." The board have a strong strategic collective mind, and their combined thinking allows us to have a strategy "... that empowers the team at Western Sydney MRC."

With 'Powered by Community' being our underlying driver, the board highlight what this means to them... "The MRC is of and driven by our strong and diverse local community. [This] means that we work in partnership with our communities and other service providers. While we seek to serve our communities, they are in no way beholden to us - [it's about] listening... really listening to the people we serve to make their lives better and involving the community in decisions and delivery."

With each year that passes our strengths and challenges change. We asked the board to highlight Western Sydney

MRC's strengths and of course a theme that presented was the people... "The passion of the wonderful staff, the respect of the organisation within the community, atop the invaluable knowledge and experience of staff in understanding the needs of the communities." Together the staff and its collective experience and passion provide "... a sense of 'home' and as the 'go to' place for the community." This is underpinned by "deep community history and respect in the community for the services already rendered."

Looking forward there are many plans... "...to seek to diversify our funding streams, deliver new services, and build on existing and future partnerships, enabling Western Sydney MRC to control its own destiny." The board are clear that the new and unexplored often presents the unknown, however "the board has the organisation's back." Western Sydney MRC will continue to... "build on its role as a trusted and essential community resource in Liverpool and the wider Western Sydney region."

On a more personal note we asked the board to provide feedback on their own highlights so far... their responses are adjacent.



## Chair of the Board

It has been a year of change, reforms and achievement at the Western Sydney MRC as Board reforms led to skill base Board Directors.

The Board has since moved to support organisational change and restructure of the management team to support new directions. With the changes and continuing commitment to quality and needed services by the Board, management and staff, our partners and funding agencies, can look forward to capable, accountable, performance oriented and purpose driven organisation.

The organisation continues to strive for improved and diverse services amid increasingly challenging environments, adapting to the changes in government and funding directions.

During the year, the implementation of the Western Sydney MRC reforms demonstrated the belief of the Board on the pathway and opportunities for the organisation to meet the challenges and opportunities of a changing sector. As part of the focus on growth and new service stream, the Western Sydney MRC has successfully completed the process of the National Disability Insurance Services (NDIS) accreditation.

I am delighted with the achievements that the organisation has made over the past year in collaboration with several communities, partners, funding agencies and support of many groups and individuals. In the 2017/18 financial year, the organisation having had 8,278 client interactions this year.

It is with great pleasure that the new Board and the Western Sydney MRC look forward to a future of strength, a future of more growth and more responsive to the needs and services

to our clients and community in a changing sector. We are finalising a five-year Strategic Plan that will detail the directions and priorities in the medium term.

I would like to close this address with a vote of thanks to the Western Sydney MRC Board Directors, staff, associate members of the Western Sydney MRC, volunteers and students for contributing to the success of the Western Sydney MRC in the past year.

We look to the coming year confident that the organisation is best placed to provide responsive and high quality service to our clients and to welcome new opportunities.

**Vincent Ogu, PhD, GACID**



## CEO

In my 15 years as CEO of the organisation I am delighted to be able to introduce and commend this year's annual report.

There are many things to commend over the last year, against the backdrop of sectorial changes that has impacted the ability of the organisation to provide its services, the team, from board to casual volunteers, have all provided an outstanding effort – this report is a testimony to the achievements and outcomes of the organisation and I commend this report to all, as a real demonstration of how the organisation is imbedded as part of the community. This report focuses and articulates the reflection of the experiences of our clients, communities and stakeholders.

And it is this theme that drives us forward into the future - Part of the community reaching out to Government and Business. We continue to act within the aspiration and needs of the community, providing space for genuine voices to be heard, and working with appropriate initiatives that address transformational change for our communities.

We have been responding to sector changes and challenges in front of us as we have reformed our Governance process with a new board following our change from association to company, bringing in new skills and experience; we have restructured the management team to ensure a proactive approach to realising our mission; we are NDIS accredited and we are in the final stages of developing our new strategic plan. We aim to build on the confidence placed in the organisation that is well run and can deliver on its objectives and its best place to partner in programs. We have nurtured and built new partnerships, such as with CORE, Illawarra Multicultural Services, Wagga Wagga Multicultural Communities; Think + Do Tank Foundation; The

Social Outfit initiative; Football Federation Australia; Western Sydney University; and University of Wollongong; Settlement Services International and Liverpool City Council.

Our most important relationship is the community we are a part of and an represent the voices of Western Sydney.

As we move forward, we also need to remain true to our mission to ensure that place-based responses implemented and resourcing for community development promoting social justice remain in our objectives – to partner with stakeholders to address deep disadvantage in our local communities.

The path in front of the organisation is challenging, but we structured ourselves to address the challenges and provide valuable community-based outcomes.

None of this cannot be achieved without the dedication and passion of the staff whom provide tireless and ongoing support for all our programs, well and above what is normally expected of any employee – you will see them in our report and they all need to be congratulated and thanked. I would also acknowledge our board that has been providing its support to the organisation in the best possible way as directors. We are fortunate to have such a talented pool of board, staff and volunteers.

**Kamalle Dabboussy**

## **Vision**

Our vision is a socially inclusive Australia where diversity is celebrated.

## **Mission**

Western Sydney MRC champions our diverse community to be empowered, informed and connected

**Acceptance of and respect  
for all people is central to  
our organisation.**





## Our Values

key  
to our  
success

### Diversity

We celebrate our diversity and respect the diversity of others

### Integrity

We act ethically in all situations and decision making.

### Collaboration

We work as one team to support our communities.

### Innovation

We strive to develop innovative solutions to challenging social issues.

### Excellence

We strive for quality outcomes in all that we do.



## The Rebrand

Over a year has passed since the rebrand and we feel as though it was and continues to be a success. To many of our community and referring organisations, it was business as usual... and as promised we will always remain the MRC.

There have been a number of opportunities that have 'made sense' since our rebrand and name change - one being the Western Sydney Wanderers Football Club Partnership. Our strengths across Western Sydney allowed us to have a 'like for like' offering, and certainly our name alliance is extremely beneficial for events and supports offered to the community.

Alongside influencing external impacts have come a wealth of internal rebrand highlights. We have had a plenitude of positive feedback about the overall aesthetic at our front of house - reception, with clean bright fresh walls and bold imagery adding to the sense of welcome and home for our community. Volunteers have commented on the use of frames to house posters and program's marketing materials, almost

like those frames at home... adding to a clean easy to navigate area. One of the highlights for staff have been our business cards. As you can see the concept allowed for each staff member to choose their own image and colour, feeding into the family of cards - yet all customised to the individual.

We believe this reflects our client service approach... whilst structured in planning, our clients benefit from personalised, needs based assessment and support.

With fresh looking branded t-shirts we simply can't be missed at events. We look forward to bringing our rebrand ideas and vision to life in the year ahead. STAYTUNED.



Our cards are designed to reflect the entity that is Western Sydney MRC, whilst a representation of the individual, their contribution, the way they see their place at work or the professional support they provide.







## Meet Bashar Hanna

Manager, Arts and Community Development Centre Fairfield  
& Community Liaison Team Leader, Prairiewood High School.



Bashar has been working with disadvantaged communities from a refugee-background since 2008. His relationship with Western Sydney MRC began around that time, when he would refer his clients to us. He remembers that his clients would utilise our services, receiving many benefits that helped them during their settlement journeys.

He now works with the Department of Education and runs the Arts and Community Development Office in Fairfield. He continues to refer his clients to the office, receiving positive feedback about feeling welcomed and supported. Western Sydney MRC and the Arts and Community Development Office have joined forces to work on a project that will provide people from a refugee-background with the opportunity to learn English through music. This is an opportunity for those who are at a disadvantage and due to their circumstances are unable to access formal English class settings.

He is a regular attendee at our consultation meetings and values the manner in which Western Sydney MRC utilises the knowledge of community leaders in making decisions and service provision. He believes that this is the only way in which real issues, that sometimes might be hidden within sub-communities, will be addressed.

"Our country is welcoming more people, so the need for resettlement services is always there. MRC is doing great, not [just] from today, even in the past. They have a proven record in helping people and directing them to the right way to live and resettle in the most wonderful manner in Australia."



Our country is welcoming more people, so the need for resettlement services is always there. MRC is doing great, not [just] from today, even in the past. They have a proven record in helping people and directing them to the right way to live and resettle in the most wonderful manner in Australia.



## Meet Kelvin Ozurumba

Igbo Association of Australia



The Igbo Association of Australia has been working with Western Sydney MRC for the past nine years. It is a close relationship that is based on transparency and social cohesion. Kelvin explains that Western Sydney MRC has provided immense support for the Igbo Association as an emerging community in Australia who, when they were first established, didn't have any networks or support. Western Sydney MRC has assisted in providing a platform for the Igbo Community to be able to integrate with other African communities in Australia.

Kelvin says that during times of need and when wanting to project their concerns to the government, Western Sydney MRC has been of support.

"Dealing with State Members of Parliament or Ministers or Departments of immigration or multicultural affairs as the case might be. But above all, [Western Sydney MRC] have also represented some of our migrant concerns on the top levels with the government. Some of our issues and some of the issues that are impacting us as migrants can be heard in the Federal Government areas through their networks of agencies.

I would just like to say that we will encourage the Western Sydney MRC community to continue to support us, to continue to interface with us, because we value their partnership. We also value their sponsorship in various ways.



But above all, [Western Sydney MRC] have also represented some of our migrant concerns on the top levels with the government.

We also admire their courage in supporting us for all of these years and we would like them to continue in this effort because we're still growing, we haven't got there yet, but we are still looking forward to better opportunities that we can integrate with them and project our community forward.

One thing that is outstanding is the integrity of Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre, both their management and their employees.

They work very well as a good team and they've been willing to support us in every event that we've done. They've attended our events in various times on mass.

They've also supported us in any way and any shape, even in securing sponsorship, in linking us with other communities over the Migrant Resource [Centre's] network, for us to be able to extend our partnership with other African Communities.



## Meet Daud Mohammed

26 years, President of Youth for Global Peace Inc



Youth for Global Peace Inc. (Y4GP) is an independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to providing support and peace education to respond to the human suffering throughout Eastern Africa and Worldwide. Y4GP was founded in 2015, on the grounds of long activity of a team of Australian, Swiss, Kenyan and Somali intellectuals and professionals whose aim is to respond effectively to the violence with education, mentoring and teaching.

Daud's background is in youth work and disability services and he always dreamt of starting a youth association to serve the general youth population and more specifically the Eastern African community. Daud had no idea about how to start to make his dream come true.

As a youth leader he built a strong connection with Western Sydney MRC and with other communities through the events, activities and information sessions that were organised by Western Sydney MRC.

"Setting up a youth association and serving the youth was one of my dreams that I've always had, until 5 years ago, when I met the Community Development Officer of Western Sydney MRC, who helped me to achieve my goal.

I wouldn't be able to make my dream to come true, without Western Sydney MRC's support, mentoring, coaching, and networking."



Western Sydney MRC taught me the right tools to set up our youth association and linked me to other communities, for that reason our Youth association was built and it's running so smoothly at the moment.



## Meet Khaldoon Al Nassah

Tarmitha; Mandaean Community



I'm Tarmitha (religious man), Khaldoon Al Nassah, from the Mandaean community. I came to Australia 10 years ago and I work as a Tarmitha for my Mandaean community here in Australia. I have been a Tarmitha for 25 years in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and other countries. I live with my family here in Australia, with my lovely wife that I'm so proud of, we have four daughters and three sons.

I'm so proud of my kids because they are educated and are ambitious. Some are graduated from University, some still studying there except the little one, he is still in primary school.

When I first arrived to Australia I've was introduced to Western Sydney MRC in Liverpool and I used their services a lot for myself and family to help us settle in in Australia. Through their networks, I have met a lot of people including MPs and have taken much advice from the MRC. Alongside my brothers / colleagues (religious leaders).

We have built a religious association for our Mandaean community. I've been involved with Western Sydney MRC in volunteering for months to serve my community and I've been invited to many events, the last event was the visit of the US Acting Ambassador giving me the opportunity to talk on behalf of my group and to raise our voice.

“ Western Sydney MRC provides a lot of support that help migrants and refugees from different backgrounds in their daily life to settle in Australia.

Our plans and goals are to collaborate with the Migrant Resource Centre and the government to help our community to connect and integrate with the Australian community and understand their rights and their obligations toward their new home Australia and we would like the new migrants / Refugees to break the barriers such as language and understand the Australian culture.



“...groups that work in the heart of the community are the ones that keep the community on track.





## Meet Wendy Waller

### Mayor of the City of Liverpool

Hi, I'm Wendy Waller. I'm the Mayor of the City of Liverpool and I've been Mayor for the past two years but I have been Mayor previously, so it'll be six years. I'm actually the first woman Mayor, ever [in Liverpool]!

I'd like to say that the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre is a very precious resource. Because not only does the organisation face challenges, it also provides an incredible service to people moving into South-West and Western Sydney. We are a very rich community, with a lot of people coming from overseas who bring not only their talents, commitments and their futures, [but] they also bring other things with them that need sometimes a bit of support and assistance. That's where I think the [Western Sydney] Migrant Resource Centre comes into its being.

#### On the future

We want to make sure that what we have is shared throughout the community. I'd personally like to see poverty eradicated totally. I feel that we have the opportunity to increase the social equity in our community and we should be striving most certainly for that.

#### On Western Sydney MRC as an organisation

I've been involved with the [Western Sydney] Migrant Resource Centre for a number of years, in fact over twenty years. So, I've seen it actually born in a sense (I know it's older than that) and I've seen it rebranded. I think that's a sensible thing today because of the

growth, of Western Sydney particularly. We are growing because we have more migrants coming to the area. Liverpool is a refugee safe zone and we are proud of that.



I'd like to say that the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre is a very precious resource. Because not only does the organisation face challenges, it also provides an incredible service to people moving into South-West and Western Sydney.

We continually have a lot of citizenship ceremonies. They're on a regular basis where we have over one hundred people at a time coming in and becoming citizens of Australia, which is a very big step, a very important step, but a very good step. People are very proud to be here in Australia. It's not a nation of people who don't want to be here, we're a nation of people who want to be here. Everybody has come from somewhere at some time. Except our Indigenous brothers and sisters, who have, I think, the rights to claim Australia as their own, we are all migrants at some point in our journey.

#### On our partnership with Liverpool City Council

I feel we have a very good partnership and we are able to talk about our strengths and weaknesses. We are able to look at the greater good for the community in general and I think that's where we come together very well. We are able to promote different cultures but also, I think, we are able to contribute the harmony that we actually enjoy, in Liverpool particularly. We are able to do that because we work together in that partnership and I think it has worked very well.

I always enjoy the cultural events, to be frank! There's always a number of them and they're always happening in some way, shape, or form and so I think it's just that continual awareness but also celebration. Sometimes there are some issues that we have to address but overall, I think it's a positive and I think it's really important, especially for newly arrived migrants to have somewhere where they can go and be assisted, that's so important. If they don't get support and assistance, they become very isolated and that can be a fairly negative and terrible situation for anybody to be involved in and I don't think that's reasonable in this day and age.

#### On 'Powered by Community'

Having services that are run by the community, for the community, I think are extremely important. It creates social economy but also social equity, and that is really important today because we need to continue to show our children that it is important to be part of a community. The community is up to all of us – it's not up to a select group, it's up to everybody.

#### Final comments

I'd just like to congratulate everybody at the MRC (you'll always be 'the MRC' to me, regardless of your name change) because groups that work in the heart of the community are the ones that keep the community on track. I think that's really important and I think some government departments have forgotten that, it's becoming a little bit bureaucratic and I think the time to go back to ask the community for involvement is definitely here and that should be supported.



## Settlement Support Program

### POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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The past year saw Western Sydney MRC assist more than 1200 clients under the Settlement Support Programme and contributing to the community of practice established under the NSW Settlement Partnership. With a view to empowering, informing and connecting our communities, we are pleased to report that of the 473 clients in receipt of casework who had a goal measured in the DSS' Outcomes measurement framework SCORE, 96.2% reported positive change as a result of the casework support received.

Over the past year, we extended value add supports to clients seeking support under the SSP, through means such as access to the hub of co-located services hosted by Western Sydney MRC; assistance under the Work and Development Order Program, of which Western Sydney MRC became a sponsor; and through integrated delivery of a pilot lay counselling mental wellbeing program – ADAPT - in partnership with the University of NSW.

Partnerships extended the scope of supports and opportunities offered to new arrivals under the SSP. Highlights included Oceans Without Borders beach safety sessions in Tamarama together with Surf Lifesaving NSW, and poetry workshops promoting mental wellbeing under the Refugee Men's Poetry Group, delivered in partnership with the Liverpool Refugee and Migrant Interagency. The poignant poems of participants were translated and transformed into calendars designed by UTS Shopfront.

Supporting English, education and employment goals of new arrivals has and continues to be an increasing focus of the Western Sydney MRC. In addition to ongoing weekly English classes and homework support sessions, in this period Western Sydney MRC started delivering regular employment support workshops to new arrivals seeking employment and orientation to the local job search landscape in Australia. In this period, 35 employment preparation workshops were conducted, in addition to 224 casework sessions delivered to address education and employment goals.

## About Mrs.W

### Case Study

Mrs W, an Iraqi refugee who arrived with her husband and children, has been accessing SSP casework support at Western Sydney MRC since 2016. She is a full-time carer for her husband who has a vision impairment. Mrs W requested SSP support as she was struggling to deal with the changing demands on her as the main carer for her family and was having difficulty accessing mainstream services due to language barriers. Mrs W reported that due to family stressors, she felt sad, depressed and overwhelmed.

Initially the focus of support was to increase Mrs W's capacity and confidence to access mainstream services. This included in-depth one-on-one information and referral to a range of services. Mrs W was also provided clear training on using TIS services which she was not previously confident in, and orientation to transport services.

Services Mrs W was referred to through SSP included:

- Ability Links
- NDIS
- Legal Aid, for issues she was facing with her mobile and internet provider
- Public and private health services
- Driving lessons

Another focus of support for Mrs W was to increase her social networks, build her confidence and self-esteem. Mrs W was linked with Strive Women's group where she partook in conversational English classes, yoga, gardening, and embroidery. Mrs W has reported making new friends through Strive.

Mrs W did not feel ready to engage with counselling services however was open to engaging in a trial mental health program facilitated by Western Sydney MRC, called ADAPT. Through ADAPT, Mrs W has focused on building resilience amidst the challenges she faces in settlement.

A key to success in this case has been the long-term, holistic approach taken to supporting Mrs W. The duration of supports has allowed her to build rapport with Western Sydney MRC so that issues such as mental wellbeing can be addressed. Through casework, Mrs W has been encouraged to set goals for herself.

In addition, having multiple services which Mrs W could access through the Western Sydney MRC hub including case work, ADAPT, social support groups, Ability Links and Legal Aid has allowed ease of access at times when she has felt too overwhelmed to access external services.

## Employment Support

POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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Western Sydney MRC's Employment Supports addresses the challenges that are experienced by refugees and people seeking asylum in finding sustainable and skilled employment opportunities. We focus on four key aspects to support people into employment:



### Language Training

- Developing English language through courses to become work ready
- Providing encouragement to pursue social interactions in English through sessions and one-on-one mentoring



### Planning

- Working one on one with a mentor who has knowledge of local industry and workplace conditions.
- Monitoring what additional skills may be needed to be work ready
- Developing suitable career pathways throughout the year



### Education and training

- Understanding and exploring appropriate choices or links to training and volunteering
- Assessing current skills and experience for suitable jobs
- Recognition of prior learning and qualifications acquisition
- Links to resources, programs, organisations and tools to gain sustainable and skilled employment (including links to potential employers)



### Employment Goals & Progress

- Assessing existing skills and qualifications and providing support to further develop these
- Understanding challenges (language, skills needed, transport, cultural differences)
- Practical skill development through work experience and other workshops
- Links to employment opportunities



## Meet Abeer

### Program Attendee



I am Abeer from Syria, I am 42 years old and I arrived in Australia in February 2018, I have a bachelor in Economics and I worked as accountant in Syria.

I joined one of Western Sydney MRC's employment programs after 3 months of my arrival in Australia, and I still get the benefits until now.

Three months after arriving in Australia, I started to think about the available opportunities, and the skills that I need for the right job, in order to settle in Australia and integrate into the Australian society, therefore I joined the employment program because it provides the right information that help the job seeker to understand the labor market environment in Australia.

The program is very useful, there is so many statistical information about the labor market, and the most important economic sectors, that provide more job opportunities to be focused on, I learned how to do a professional resume as well, and all the tools needed to find a job which to enable the newly arrived to Australia to find work, then I had discovered the best websites that offers jobs, all these information had provided through different workshops with Mrs. Barbara from Western Sydney MRC which was very important and helped me to identify the best choices and obtain one of them.

Due to this effort, I am working now to have a local experience, which is very important for my future profession in Australia. Other important sides of this program: I had some driving lessons, which is very important for the job seekers.

Mrs. Barbara still follows my profession steps to be sure that I am [going in] the right direction.

In addition, there is other amazing social activities that I participated in it, like Harmony Day Bake Off which gave me a great opportunity to meet with new people and discover other cultures,

and I was invited by the Western Sydney MRC to attend football game which is my favourite game.

I highly recommend Western Sydney MRC programs to all new arrivals to Australia.

“ Mrs. Barbara still follows my profession steps to be sure that I am [going in] the right direction.

“ I highly recommend Western Sydney MRC programs to all new arrivals to Australia especially refugees to be enrolled in the employment programs because it provides the job seekers the help that they need to find jobs, so it helps them to settle in Australia and integrate in the Australian society.

## Aged Care Support

### POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) forms part of the Australian Government's support for frail, older people and their carers living in the community. The CHSP is underpinned by the wellness approach which builds on older people's strengths, capacity and goals to retain independence to live in the home. Western Sydney MRC offer various programs to address the needs of older people within our community.

Our Centre-Based and Flexible Respite programs offer an opportunity for senior participants to connect socially and provide carers with an opportunity for respite. Sessions are designed to cater to participant interests and needs and include outings as well as leisure activities within the centre. Flexible respite offers participants support and an opportunity for carers to receive respite.

Supports are delivered in the home or out in the community. Through Flexible Respite, our support workers can assist seniors to access their community. For example, support may be requested to attend medical appointments, gain assistance completing shopping tasks or attend cultural or religious activities.



### Meet Thomas and Nina

#### Program Attendee

Thomas is seventy-seven years old and has lived an extensive life on the sporting field. He is married with two children and ran two very successful businesses. Thomas' wife suggested he join our program after he was confined to a nursing home for ten weeks, as a result of an injury to his spine that left him unable to walk.

Thomas is part of both our Flexible Respite program as well as our Centre-Based Respite program.

Thomas sees his Respite Worker, Nina, once a week for three hours. They decide on the day what they are going to do, based on what Thomas feels up to and what his health permits. This can include playing cards and board games, going for a walk or drive and even feeding ducks at the local park.

He has found freedom in the Flexible Respite program because he is able to do simple things that he used to enjoy once more.

"I think a hell of a lot of her, I really do." (On Nina, Thomas' Respite Worker). "I look forward to my Tuesday visits. I used to walk around a lot now but I wouldn't go to a shopping centre for months... I like to get around there and see what's in the shopping centre!" says Thomas.

"To us we take advantage of it, but to him it's an ordeal to get there. To me it's like, okay, we'll do it next Tuesday!" Nina .





“

I look forward to my Tuesday visits. I used to walk around a lot now but I wouldn't go to a shopping centre for months... I like to get around there and see what's in the shopping centre!



## Strive

### POWERED BY COMMUNITY

Strive is a social group and conversational English class for newly arrived women from a refugee background within the Liverpool LGA. Strive purposes to support women in building social connections, improving their English, strengthening skill sets and capacity building whilst reducing risks of isolation. The group helps women in their general integration into society through activities that work to develop a sense of belonging by creating an inclusive and welcoming space.



### Meet Mari

#### Program Attendee

Mari, from Syria (Aleppo), has been in Australia for 3 years and 3 months, and she's been attending Western Sydney MRC for 3 years. Mari said that the women's group, Strive helped her a lot to learn new skills and they always responsive to the women's questions and requests.

Mari attends Strive every Monday, she learnt English through Strive and through the Strive workshops she learnt new skills like Floristry, craft, art and enjoying yoga in this term and enjoyed the Aqua gym in the previous terms.

"Through the women's group Strive in Western Sydney MRC, we discovered a lot of new things about Australia, and we visited a lot of places in our excursions also I'm happy that gained a lot of friends that we visit each other like a family even the staff is friendly, sociable and welcoming.

"The Australian government and Western Sydney MRC helped me and my husband a lot to support our daughter that's living with disability, through their support, my daughter is very happy now and she feels normal like others, as a mum that's the happiest thing ever.

“ I do recommend this women's group to the newly arrived women to learn many things about Australia and to gain new skills. Sometimes when I have a conversation with people from my community, my daughter get surprised that I know more information than her, even though she's been married in Australia for 20 years. She didn't have a chance to attend such a similar programs like Strive, it's great.





“ ...we discovered a lot of new things about Australia, and we visited a lot of places in our excursions...”

# Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Program

## POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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Young people from refugee backgrounds have so much potential. Western Sydney MRC is working with Core Community Services, the Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga and Illawarra Multicultural Services to deliver a flexible youth mentoring program that aims to support the capacity of young people to achieve their goals and shape their own futures.

The Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Program (RYPMP) matches young people aged 17-25 with a mentor aged 21-35. The program is also open to young people aged 15-16 if they are at risk of disengaging from education. Mentees are from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds and mentors are from a range of backgrounds and experiences.

In the past six months, we've seen young people and their mentors connect in unique and inspiring ways, bonding over common interests and working together to make dream futures reality. We have run creative workshops in arts and music and worked with organisations like Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre to think outside the box and unlock the potential of talented young people in our community.

Working with Schools, universities, TAFE and community groups, we are promoting the program far and wide to ensure that the possibilities for young people in South West Sydney remain just as they should be: endless.

## Meet Aneshka

### Program Volunteer

Hello, my name is Aneshka. It is a Czech name and it's original spelling is Anežka but my parents thought that might confuse English speaking people! I was born in Australia but my mother's side is Czech and my Dad is from South India. I have just started studying again, doing a PhD in Art Theory at UNSW Art and Design.

When I'm not at Uni, I work at the bookshop at AGNSW. The program I am volunteering for is the Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Program (RYPMP) and I have been in it for about 2 months. Both my parents were first generation migrants. When they came to Australia in 1991 they had limited English and no community or friends.

This was one of the things that my Mum most spoke about – how isolating and difficult it was to be accepted by the country when you didn't have the means to connect with anyone. Through this program I hope I can be those means for my mentee – just some sort of connection! My mentee is such a great gal! She is very fun and is always laughing and cracking jokes.

“ Honestly, I have such admiration for her. I feel so humbled at her resilience to the hardships of life and her drive to excel in the circumstances she has been given. I have gained a lot of perspective from her and two Arabic words (only because I am a terrible at learning languages!).



“ This was one of the things that my Mum most spoke about – how isolating and difficult it was ...

*In partnership with Core Community Services, the Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga and Illawarra Multicultural Services.*



# Multicultural Playgroups

## POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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Western Sydney MRC has been running Multicultural Playgroups on a weekly basis since 2001. The Multicultural Playgroups support migrant and refugee families with children aged 0-5 years. We have three mainstream playgroups that specifically accommodate parents who are socially, culturally and linguistically isolated and focuses on building a strong relationship between the child and parent.

The grass roots level support offered by the Cultural Connect Project aims to increase the engagement of vulnerable families into a coordinated service network, transition families through a playgroup continuum and ensure early intervention by specialist services where developmental concerns have been identified. It also supports the improvement of parenting practices through culturally competent practice and service provision, families from small emerging communities, young parents, fathers, grandfathers and extended family members.

### At the Multicultural Playgroups our community are given the opportunity to;

- Speak your own language and practice learning English
- Develop new friendships
- Enjoy an environment that reflects your own culture
- Obtain support from the Coordinator on early childhood issues, advice and referral to other services
- Participate in information sessions and discussions with regard to early childhood topics and settlement issues

### At the Multicultural Playgroups children can:

- Learn through play
- Mix with other children
- Maintain their home language

*Funded by Families NSW in partnership with Liverpool City Council, Fairfield City Council and Liverpool Public School.*

## Meet Nada, Dania and Ashvini

### Program Attendees



My name is Nada and my daughter's name is Rania. My daughter has benefited a lot from this program. She has learnt how to hold scissors, how to write and how to sing. She has gained a lot of confidence and I have seen an improvement in her emotional wellbeing. I want to say thank you so much for this program.

When I first came here my son was almost six months old. He has improved a lot since then. He has learnt to feel and touch things and hold things properly. He is now about a year and a half. He has improved a lot and is engaging with the other children. He has even started to form words. I like the activities because through these activities and songs he is building a new vocabulary. He is my only child so he is so excited when he comes because he can spend time with other children. He has started to love reading and has fallen in love with books. Having teachers to sit with him has meant that he has learnt a lot from that interaction. It has also helped me to improve my interaction with my son.



Hello, my name is Ashvini. Maybe one year ago I came with my baby here. It's really, really good. [There are] lots of activities, excursions and teachers to speak with my kid. He's really happy here. Really, it's a wonderful experience.

## Youth Programs

### POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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It has been an exciting year in our youth space, with innovative and responsive programs delivered with consistently strong attendance and participation. Throughout the year we have worked with incredible partners and reached hundreds of young people across a multitude of programs, supported and driven by our incredible youth workers, Darren and Sarah.

Our flagship programs, Dropzone and Homework Support continued to thrive and develop. Dropzone, delivered in partnership with PCYC Liverpool, maintained high attendance throughout the year, with focus on building social skills and intercultural & inter-school friendships.

We launched some exciting new programs this year, including a photography program, Viewpoint, led by photographer Saskia Wilson with support from Contact Sheet, culminating in the launch of our Curious Dreams magazine at Redfern Town Hall.

Our girls' group, Beyond, kicked off with an incredible line-up of inspiring women coming to run creative workshops with the enthusiastic group. We collaborated with The Social Outfit, an ethical fashion brand, to deliver a series of creative workshops for a group of young women, the artworks from which were used as prints for the new season line at The Social Outfit's flagship store in Newtown.

Our long-standing partnership with the Liverpool City Council continued, with our young people being connected with Council arts program, Urban Screens, multiple sessions of swimming lessons at the Whitlam Centre in school holidays and support of our Multicultural Arts night at PCYC, which saw over 100 young people from diverse backgrounds enjoying a night of live performances, dancing and fun.

We participated in the New Arrived Refugee Youth project (NARY) in partnership with SSI, linking HSP young people to SSP activities, ran a youth consultation with over 25 young people, delivered a multitude of school holiday activities including ice skating, Oceans without Borders (in partnership with Tamarama Surf Lifesaving Club) and a beautiful celebration of mother and daughter relationships.

“ In the coming year we will continue to expand our youth offering, strengthen our partnerships and expand our innovative programs, working to ensure that our young people have access to programs, information and support to reach their full potential.

This year also saw the launch of the Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Program, delivered in consortium with CORE, Illawarra Multicultural Services and Wagga Wagga Multicultural Council and funded by FACS. The program continues to go from strength to strength as we recruit and match mentors and mentees and witness their genuine connections and growth.

In the coming year we will continue to expand our youth offering, strengthen our partnerships and expand our innovative programs, working to ensure that our young people have access to programs, information and support to reach their full potential.





# Homework Support

## POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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The Western Sydney MRC Homework Support program continues to provide support to a core group of students every week – the majority of these students have been attending the program regularly for the past few years. We see a number of younger siblings begin to access the program as well.

The homework program continues to support students from all schools within the Liverpool LGA. Young people with a refugee or migrant background often experience a disrupted education due to instability and conflict. This, whilst coupled with the challenges of developing academic and functional English, can often lead to difficulties in participating in the classroom and engaging in school work.

Homework Support offers students who are struggling free tutoring and resources in a wide range of subjects, including:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Economics
- PDHPE
- Legal Studies
- Business Studies
- History
- Geography
- IT
- Computing



### Meet Abeer

#### Program Attendee

Abeer is seventeen years old and originally comes from Iraq. She has been attending the Homework Support program since 2015. She decided to join the program because it provided her support to improve her studies and she receives assistance with school and homework support. She enjoys coming to Homework Support because of the open space that is inclusive and welcoming and allows for both intense individual work as well as group conversations.

“

I've gained a lot of confidence and also a lot of friendships, which I really enjoy.

*An initiative of Western Sydney MRC funded by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services under the Settlement Grants Program. Resources funded by Liverpool City Council under the Community Grants Program.*





She enjoys coming to Homework Support because of the open space that is inclusive and welcoming...



## Dropzone

POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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Dropzone is a free after-school program for young people to have fun and socialise through physical activity and free play. Participants can play soccer, basketball, boxing, dance, and more. Young people are at a stage in life where both strong male and female mentors are beneficial. The program to date has been a success with all and incorporates working with adults that respect and give young people the opportunities to grow and excel.

We have been able to teach and support a number of skills from following instructions and empowerment to leadership, mentoring and building confidence. An inclusion of Trivia Q&A sessions adds another educational component to the activities, ensuring that we are working all the important muscles of the body including the brain. The program facilitates new friendships and a sense of belonging amongst the group, who are increasingly able to self-regulate and encourage one another to aspire for greatness, engage and stay switched on throughout the sessions.



### Meet Antonie

Antonie is originally from Syria and is thirteen years old. He has come to Dropzone weekly since arriving in Australia two years ago and says he has lots of fun playing games, boxing, playing soccer, sharing food with his friends and meeting new people.



### Meet Joelle & Hind

Joelle and Hind are fifteen years old and came to Australia from Syria two years ago. They met each other at Dropzone and enjoy playing basketball, playing cards, singing and dancing with their friends. They have learnt to work together and communicate through issues they may have, building stronger friendships and a new community of young people.



### Meet Anhar & Ehab

Anhar and Ehab come from Iraq and are sixteen and fifteen years old. They enjoy coming to Dropzone because they learn new techniques for soccer, boxing and play lots of games. They encourage all of their friends to come to Dropzone because of how much they enjoy the program and the opportunity to make new friends from different countries.



# Beyond

## POWERED BY COMMUNITY



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Beyond is a program that aims to create a positive environment for local young women, from refugee backgrounds aged between 14-19 to network with female role models. The program provides a platform for lifelong inspiration, skill sharing and having fun. Beyond facilitates the building of positive relationships within youth peer cohorts and works to develop the confidence of young women in decision making and accessing the larger community sphere. Beyond is specifically designed for young women who are from newly arrived refugee backgrounds, having arrived in Australia less than 5 years ago.

Beyond has been particularly important for this year's group of young women who have learnt the importance of independence and have developed their confidence tremendously. It has been wonderful to see the young women recognise that one of their peers were facing social isolation, take her under their wing and ensure that she was never left out and always felt supported.



### Joelle

“Making a magazine was my favourite thing. It's interesting to me because I like to make new things and I like to do interesting things like that. Everything in the program was interesting and nice but the most joyful thing was that we met a perfect chef that taught us how to cook.”

### Hind

“My favourite thing was when we went to Luna Park because from that day we stuck to each other and we are still friends until now.”





## Men's Group

### POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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Western Sydney MRC, through the Liverpool Refugee and Migrant Interagency Health and Wellbeing Subcommittee, launched a weekly men's group, during which men who speak Arabic were invited to come together to learn more about mental wellbeing.

The men attended a seven-part series of poetry workshops, exploring concepts of mental wellbeing, through the Five Ways to Wellbeing approach. Mental health issues amongst men can often be overlooked, particularly within refugee and migrant communities.

The Five Ways to Wellbeing approach is a methodology that was developed in the United Kingdom, using evidence-based research relating to mental health. The approach has been taken on board by communities and organisations all over the world, helping individuals tackle difficult circumstances through strategies that can be incorporated into everyday life.

The group of men met each week to write poetry and play music, as a means of connecting, and expressing thoughts that otherwise tended to remain unaddressed. This avenue to self-expression allowed them to navigate through their own emotions and express what wellbeing meant to them. The poems written by the participants were collated and, through the help of the UTS Shopfront program, turned into a calendar for 2018. The money raised from the calendars will be used to fund such initiatives, including further funding for the program itself.



### Meet Samih

#### Program Attendee

Samih is 54 years old and came from Syria two years ago. He is an engineer surveyor and was a teacher in the Engineering Institute and University. Here in Australia he decided to change his career. He wanted to be close to people in need, people who were vulnerable. Samih is also interested in poetry and all kinds of literature and theatre. He wrote and translated many stories and plays from Russian into Arabic, and at the same time, is an activist in policy and human rights.

Samih attended our Men's Group weekly at first because he was intrigued by the title. He wondered how they would merge literature and poetry with psychology, a healthy life and wellbeing. He decided to attend the program because of his love for poetry and psychology and was excited to learn healthier habits of wellbeing.

“

I really enjoyed this course because I gained new information and knowledge about how you can feel, act and conduct yourself better in this life throughout sport, meditation, healthy food and other good habits and through the word and the poetry. Secondly, I made new friends who have the same interests and we are still meeting until now.

*This program was run in partnership with Liverpool City Council, SWS Local Health District Mental Wellbeing Health Promotion Team and DAMEC and SSP.*





“ I recommend to all my friends to join this program or any other programs that fit their concerns, there are a lot of options and programs that you will enjoy so you will never feel bored or lonely.

# Complex Case Support

## POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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From its creation and implementation in 2012, until its cessation in 2017, Western Sydney MRC provided support to clients through the Complex Case Support (CCS) program (funded through DSS), growing to be the largest provider of this service nationally. The program provided services to individuals and families who required a more specialised and intensive case management beyond the support available through Settlement Support Programs.

Our clients came to our service experiencing complex barriers in their settlement journey, and through the program were able to access a service that was flexible and tailored to their needs. We worked collaboratively with them to identify areas where they sought to grow their skills and knowledge. Clients were supported to develop their own capacity to navigate the complex systems that would unlock access to services necessary for their wellbeing and settlement, for example NDIS, My Aged Care and social housing.

## About Balsam

### Program Attendee

Balsam is an eighteen-year-old young woman who is currently enrolled at Miller Technology High School. Balsam is an incredibly resilient young woman who arrived to Australia with her family in 2016 with no previous schooling or English.

Internal programs have supported Balsam in growing independence, improving English skills and tailoring holistic support to Balsam's needs. Within the past financial year Balsam has received support in a variety of ways, helping her gain confidence and independence.

Initially Balsam had never accessed public transport and was unable to identify the difference between various bus routes. With the support of youth workers, Balsam learnt to identify bus stops and which bus routes to use. Balsam is now able to successfully access public transport to attend various community spaces including the Western Sydney MRC office, the local Library and most importantly her local shopping centre.

Balsam was referred internally to be a part of the Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Program. She was connected with a mature mentor and through this, continues to develop her skills in accessing the public space. Balsam was also supported in to engaging with and accessing NDIS services. She was approved for NDIS services has now undertaken an assessment that will ensure she is able to receive appropriate support coordination.

Initially Balsam shied away from group settings, often being confined to digital devices. She is now an active member of our youth program, Dropzone and takes part in cooking, sports and other activities. She attends all School Holiday activities and is learning to swim and has accessed Beyond, our young women's group. Balsam has become part of a sisterhood, in which her peers have taken her under their wing.

Discussions have taken place with Balsam regarding her future, particularly surrounding employment. She previously reported not having considered working as she was unaware that she was able to. Information has been provided to Balsam in relation to her Australian context and the rights she has. She is now looking forward to seeking employment in the future.

Balsam continues to be a part of the Western Sydney MRC youth program and will grow to become one of our youth leaders.

“

Balsam has become part of a sisterhood, in which her peers have taken her under their wing.



# Community Visitors Scheme

## POWERED BY COMMUNITY

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Western Sydney MRC has been running the Community Visitors Scheme (CVS) program for over 20 years. CVS aims to enrich the quality of life of aged-care residents who have been identified as being lonely or isolated and would benefit from having a regular friendly visitor. We use our connection to the CALD Community to link volunteers with CALD individuals living in Aged Care facilities.

We currently have seventeen Volunteers that visit over forty aged care residents. Some volunteers visit groups of residents, whilst others visit clients individually at home. The volunteers interact through various activities, including reading, walking through the garden, playing games, chatting, reminiscing or even watching a television program together. Western Sydney MRC currently visit more than nine nursing homes across the Western Sydney region. We host a monthly support meeting during which the volunteers can express any issues and gain training and expertise in a range of issues, including understanding Dementia and Alzheimer's disease. The connection between one's language and culture plays a large part in reducing isolation in the resident's life. As memories begin to fade, some people can revert to speaking in their birth language, which is why linking them with a CALD Volunteer who speaks the same language is an important part of the unique approach of Western Sydney MRC.



### Meet Rahim and Amal

Amal and her husband Rahim, arrived in Australia from Iraq in 2011. A year of their arrival they start looking for jobs. Rahim couldn't work because of a health issues and Amal struggled to find a job because her English needed improving. They decided to look for volunteering opportunities, both wanting to 'give back' to Australia and to the Migrant Resource Centre - their second home and family that looked after them, making them feel welcomed and safe.

Through their settlement program with Western Sydney MRC they found out how useful their Arabic language is, and both are extremely valued as part of the Community Visitors Scheme program (CVS). They decided to join and started regularly visiting Arabic speaking patients at the nursing home.

Since 2012 Amal and Rahim enjoy their experience as CVS volunteers, especially when they see the happiness in the patients' eyes and when they accompany patients for walks or when they participate with them during activities, sometimes they help them with eating.

"Sometimes if our friends at the nursing home are sleeping or busy, we start talking to other patients specially the English speakers to improve our English " Rahim said.

"Volunteering for Western Sydney MRC is just a simple gesture to thank them for their welcoming, activities, and all the support they provide for all migrants and refugees." Amal & Rahim said. "I feel so happy when our friends at the nursing home see us, and it feels like they want to jump and hug us of happiness." Amal said. "In Iraq, women can barely go out because it's unsafe, I used to feel afraid every time I go out but since I arrived in Australia, I feel free, safe and relaxed. When I walk in the street I feel like I own everything around me." Amal said. "Through this experience I learnt a lot of things about Australia and I made a lot of friends." Amal said.





### Meet Maria

Maria speaks Spanish and originally comes from Chile. She has been volunteering with the CVS for three years. She originally joined the program based on the recommendation by her friend Zunilda, who asked her if she was interested in helping other people who spoke her language.

"The most rewarding thing is to be able to communicate with people. They need someone to listen to them. It is so rewarding when you see a smile, when you see eyes opened wide and they say 'Oh! You are coming to see me! It's so nice to see you again!' That is very rewarding."



### Meet Zunilda

Zunilda has been volunteering for over twenty years. She is very happy to work with senior citizens because she loves helping people. She says that she has learnt a lot through the CVS program run by Western Sydney MRC as she has been trained in dealing with different experiences and has learnt CPR. She recommends that all of her friends join the program as she fears that mature aged citizens face isolation.

"They need communication with somebody else. People are alone there and nobody visits them. They don't have a family to visit them. I am so happy to do that. I recommend it to continue this program, because its very good for everybody. For the person going there, and for the patient."



### Meet Clara

Clara loves volunteering because of her passion for helping people. She believes that elderly need care and enjoys her time with them. She has worked in the CVS for nearly 18 years and worked in disability care for 25 years. Since then, she has devoted her time to working with senior citizens who come from a migrant or refugee background. She likes to learn about different cultures and finds that through her volunteer work she is able to do just that.

"I have learnt different cultures and different nationalities. All the people are too friendly, and the people are happy in there. I recommend that program. All the people need help, there's not too much stuff [available to them]."



“

I would like to thank everyone in Western Sydney MRC it's been a great year full of great events and activities and I hope that next year will be more successful.

## Darren Chan & Khadija Sifat

Youth Worker & Information & Referral Officer

**When did you join Western Sydney MRC?** 2015

**Education / work background:** Bachelor of Social Work

**What's your passion?** Drawing, art and motorcycles



**When did you join Western Sydney MRC?** 2014

**Education:** Studying Bachelor of Social Work at WSU

**What's your passion?** Photography

### What was your favourite activity / event you were involved in at Western Sydney MRC this year?

The Multicultural Arts Night—a NSW Youth Week night of dance and music celebrating the different youth cultures in Liverpool including Iraqi, Syrian, and Pacific Islands. It's my highlight of all the youth events in this year.

There are many events that I liked, and I was only involved with one event which was the information session for Legal Aid which give the attendees the opportunity to ask the lawyers about their issues.

### Tell us about something that surprised you?

I'm surprised with the big number of the young people we connect with through the Youth Program – regular groups such as Dropzone, Sarah's group Beyond, and through school holidays activities. The other thing that surprised me is how much joyful energy and appetite for life they have and that I'm still able to somehow keep up with them!

I'm surprised that programs can be so full, that the need is great and that even though programs are busy we can still deliver a high level of service to clients and make them happy.

### Is there one thing that stands out for you when coming to the MRC?

In my whole work history, I've never worked at the place where everyone is ready and willing to support each other in their work, doesn't matter if it's something out of their comfort zone or not part of their role, anytime that the worker needs help the rest of the team will be there and make sure that this person receives the support needed. That's almost like the family feel of our organisation which makes it unique.

Working at Western Sydney MRC gives me the opportunity to work with migrants and refugees, I'm studying social work and I need to gain experience, confidence and improve my skills to work with different people from different backgrounds.

### Tell us about what your planning for next year, what would you like to achieve?

Working more closely with my colleague Sarah, Youth Worker, Jen, who runs the Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Program, and the rest of the team to better support the youth and focus on more projects and initiatives that will benefit them.

I would like to thank everyone at Western Sydney MRC it's been a great year full of great events and activities and I hope that next year will be more successful.





“

The culture at Western Sydney MRC is so friendly and warm, it's totally different to anywhere else I have ever worked.



## Olivia Brancato

*Specialised & Intensive Services  
Case Manager*

**When did you join Western Sydney MRC?** 2018

**Education / work background:** Bachelor's degrees in Social Work and Arts (Major in Psychology and Gender Studies)

**What's your passion?** Social Justice

## & Noni Papalia

*Children's Programs  
Coordinator*



**When did you join Western Sydney MRC?** 2017

**Education:** Master of Teaching, Bachelor of Arts (Education/ Psychology), before joining the MRC I managed 25 OSHC services and 12 vacation care services as the Programs Manager for NSW region. Some of our services had over 100 children in the afternoons!

**What's your passion?** Children's Rights, Sustainability and Bush Regeneration/Restoration

### What was your favourite activity / event you were involved in at Western Sydney MRC this year?

My favourite event was a carers' workshop that we held here at Western Sydney MRC. We brought together different people from different organisations to deliver information sessions for the carers in the community. I was lucky enough to facilitate that event. I also enjoyed the Multicultural Youth dance at PCYC.

I volunteered on that night, it was amazing to see the young people coming together and having a strong connection with their community.

Playgroup Excursions are my favourite part of my job. This term we took the playgroups to the Woolworths Discovery Tour where the children learnt about fresh fruit and veg, followed by lunch at Bigge Park and a play in the fountains at Bigge Park Water Play.

### Tell us about something that surprised you?

I've been surprised with how many different programs and services there are in the centre for whole variety and intersection of people in the community.

The Wandering Books program has completely taken off this year! We started out with a tiny program and now we are having to set limits on how many children we can physically fit inside a room. Also the parents are more engaged with the activities this year and are promoting the program to others.

### Is there one thing that stands out for you when coming to the MRC?

I would say the connection and the strong relationship we have with the community here in Western Sydney MRC and how resilient and empowered the communities are here. It's amazing to see that kind of exchange going on between the centre and the community.

The culture at Western Sydney MRC is so friendly and warm, it's totally different to anywhere else I have ever worked.

### Tell us about what your planning for next year, what would you like to achieve?

I think it would be to continue to work on my skills as a Case Manager and to continue to build my relationship with the community here in Western Sydney and to be more involved with the up coming programs and events.

For my programs to continue and grow and hopefully gain small playgroup space to continue to deliver more children's and families support and playgroups.



3

Up  
Close

## Up Close - Harmony Day Bake Off 2018

This year, Western Sydney MRC celebrated Harmony Day in a big way. We organised an event that enabled our communities to unite and share their culture, through food.

Through a common love for food, more than fifteen communities participated in our first ever Harmony Day Bake Off. We saw Samoan, Iraqi, East Timorese Polish, Indigenous Australian, Sudanese, Syrian, Italian, Maltese, Vietnamese, Moroccan, Egyptian, Chilean and Fijian just to name a few! Participants came together to participate.

Liverpool Coles sponsored the event, providing contestants with vouchers to purchase the ingredients for their home cooked cultural dish.

“Through a common love for food, more than fifteen communities participated in our first ever Harmony Day Bake Off. We saw Samoan, Iraqi, East Timorese Polish, Indigenous Australian, Sudanese, Syrian, Italian, Maltese, Vietnamese, Moroccan, Egyptian, Chilean and Fijian just to name a few!

The event was incredibly successful, and the participants were so happy to see the guests and judges getting to know their cultures through food. The participants reported that they had gained a lot of confidence, after hearing so much positive feedback and being able to share their experiences and journeys with one another.

A massive thank you to SBS Radio who covered the event live, making the event accessible to those that could not attend.

WESTERN SYDNEY MRC

Proudly supported by **coles** LIVERPOOL

# Harmony Day

## BAKE OFF 2018

Join us in celebrating the flavours of Western Sydney.

Prepare and bring in your favourite family sweet or savoury dish for the chance to win one of three exciting prizes. All contestants will receive a certificate of participation and will go in the draw to win one of two lucky door prizes. If you would like to participate, contact us for a Coles gift voucher to cover your expenses for the ingredients.

**The panel of judges includes**

**Dien Furgessburger** - Optus Businesswoman of the Year 2017 & Creator of the Coco and Lucas' Kitchen Brand

**Arwa Abousamra** - Humanitarian, Arabic Interpreter, Motivational Speaker and Author of Tea with Arwa

**Hassan M'Souli** - Executive Chef and owner of Out of Africa restaurant, Sydney and Author of Make It Moroccan

Wednesday 21st March 2018, from 9:30am till 12:30pm  
at Western Sydney MRC, 108 Moore St, Liverpool

Come in your cultural dress, or simply wear something orange!

For more information please contact Nadia or Saliha on 02 8778 1200 or email [nadia@wsnrc.org.au](mailto:nadia@wsnrc.org.au)

## Celebrating the flavours of Western Sydney

### Diem Fuggersberger

**Founder of Berger  
Ingredients and  
Coco & Lucas' Kitchen**

Diem escaped from war-torn Vietnam in 1980 on a wooden fishing boat with little more than the clothes on her back. Throughout her journey she and her family were tormented by pirates and battled severe weather conditions that caused the boat to almost capsize. Today, Diem is married with two children and is the founder of Berger Ingredients and Coco & Lucas' Kitchen, creating healthy, pre-packaged food for children. She epitomises resilience and strength and in recognition of this, was awarded the Optus Businesswoman of the Year in 2017.

“

Harmony Day means a day to bring people together... it is my duty to be useful to the community...

### Arwa Abousamra

**Author of  
'Tea with Arwa  
– a memoir'**

Arwa is from a Palestinian family that migrated to Australia in 1985. She is a mother of three, Arabic translator in the medical and legal sectors, volunteer, humanitarian, motivational speaker, passionate cook and author of 'Tea with Arwa – a memoir'. Her book shares the story of her life, through food. Arwa's history is particularly special to Western Sydney MRC, as her mother was once a client who found her calling as a floristry student, and then teacher through our services. Arwa's mother went on to teach other migrant women through TAFE for 20 years, giving back to the community.

“

Finding a place to belong to in a new country is very hard, whether you speak the language or not... that journey, we all share. But there is an end, there is a light at the end, it just takes time...

### Hassan M'Souli

**Executive Chef  
& Author of  
'Make it Moroccan'**

Hassan is a Moroccan Chef who grew up in Casablanca and has owned and operated three restaurants specialising in Moroccan cuisine. His family settled in Australia in 1985. Since then, he has gone on to have two children, open restaurants in Sydney and publish his recipes in cookbooks. Hassan's approach to food reflects a fusion between traditional Moroccan flavours with a contemporary Australian twist, bridging the gap between the two cultures through food. He has appeared on numerous television shows and had many articles written about his influence on the Australian food scene. His restaurant, Out of Africa, has been nominated by the Catering Association as a finalist in Sydney's Best Restaurant Awards for the past six years.

“

I'm glad to be one of the judges... it is important to be confident and to be proud of your background and to give your specialty to this country...











## Up Close Youth Week - Multicultural Youth Party

To celebrate Youth Week this year, we consulted participants from Dropzone, one of our youth programs. What became clear from this was that most people wanted to celebrate with a party at the PCYC, with a night of music and dancing. Many of the young people also expressed a want to have a party where they could play songs from their cultural background and have the opportunity for fun and socialisation outside of school.

The event was exactly what the young people requested – a night of dancing, music, food, and celebration of young people and their diversity in and around the Liverpool area. This event was open to all young people of all cultural, religious, and gender identities. The Multicultural Arts night was a safe and fun outlet for young people to express themselves through dance, music, and creative performance, whilst also providing the platform for the development of new friendships.

“The Multicultural Arts night was a safe and fun outlet for young people to express themselves through dance, music, and creative performance, whilst also providing the platform for the development of new friendships.

We had dance and music performances by young people from different cultural groups, presenting Assyrian, Samoan and Iraqi dances to name a few. Local singer, Lara Dabbagh, also performed and engaged with the young people present, providing them with another successful young person that they could interact with. This was a wonderful opportunity for each individual to share their cultural and religious identities through a common interest.

Young people from diverse backgrounds had a chance to develop new peer bonds and to strengthen existing ones in a carefully supervised environment. They were also able to link with other communities, developing inter-cultural relationships based on a common link – their migration to Australia.







## Up Close - Curious Dreams Magazine Launch

### Youth Photography Project

Redfern Town Hall was transformed into an art gallery for the night with guests travelling from all over Sydney to attend the Curious Dreams magazine launch. The magazine launch and exhibition were the concluding events from a project run in partnership with Sydney-based photographer and educator, Saskia Wilson.

The project involved a series of ten participatory photography workshops, providing young people with the space to express themselves and to take ownership of their story, telling it the way they wanted it to be known. It was interesting to note that the conveying of such experiences through a creative outlet encouraged the revelation of tales that may otherwise have remained unheard.

“ For both Simon and Wasam, the ability to share their stories through art has had tremendous impacts, allowing them to remedy aspects of their past whilst sharing their journeys in a positive manner.

The launch was a great success, with over eighty attendees and incredible numbers in magazine sales. The profit made from the magazines will directly benefit our youth program, allowing for more opportunities and experiences to be made available to our young people. Member of the audience were mesmerised by the exhibition and were thrilled to be able to hear from one of the exhibiting photographers, Basma, who gave an enlightening account of her journey of healing through art.

The launch attracted the attention of SBS, who took a closer look into the stories of two of the exhibiting photographers, Wasan and Simon. Wasam's family were forced to flee from Iraq, joining approximately 60, 000 other Mandaean people who are now settled all over the world. Simon was also forced to flee from his home country of Syria, seeking refuge in Australia. For both Simon and Wasan, the ability to share their stories through art has had tremendous impacts, allowing them to remedy aspects of their past whilst sharing their journeys in a positive manner.





Photograph by Wasan

## Up Close - Mother's Day

Within our SSP space mothers had been asking to attend youth events. Behind this was many mothers reaching out and wanting to spend time with their teenagers.

Western Sydney MRC collaborated with three volunteers, giving young women and their mothers a safe and welcoming environment to connect.

“ The Mothers' Day event aimed to further provide an opportunity for mothers to feel acknowledged and valued. Often, young people who migrate to Australia are trapped between their home culture and wanting to adopt their new Australian culture – this event acted as a bridge between the two. This event acted as a pilot program to encourage positive relationships and 'spoil' mothers in anticipation of Mothers' Day.

The young women were asked to invite their mothers to attend an event to celebrate Mothers' Day at Western Sydney MRC. They attended with their mothers/mother-like figures independently and each mother-daughter pair were taught basic skin-care and make-up artistry skills that they then applied on one another. Upon arrival the young women took ownership of the space, giving their mothers tours of the Western Sydney MRC office.

The women had been attending various programs in the office on a weekly basis and anecdotally explained that they were glad that their mothers were able to see what they are a part of.

Each mother-daughter pair then posed for a portrait photoshoot with each photograph being framed and hand-delivered to the families. The mothers' reactions upon receiving the photos was priceless. Many of the mothers were overwhelmed with positive emotions, crying tears of joy and expressing how much they enjoyed the event and the opportunity to connect with their daughters.

*With thanks to DB makeup for donating make up, Thu Nails for providing our women with free manicures and pedicures and Banafsha and Parvin who facilitated the master class.*







## Up Close - Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

Western Sydney MRC's biggest morning tea was held on 24th May, and organised to educate our community and staff about breast cancer and other cancers with a focus on women's health.

The not for profit sector is rich with support materials for many types of health awareness, and we understand the importance of reaching our community and assisting in the education of CALD communities surrounding topics such as cancer.

The morning tea allowed us to raise funds for the Cancer Council. With over 40 attendees and a speaker from Refugee Health - we were able to deliver a one hour information session in Arabic which was greatly appreciated by those in attendance.







## Up Close - Welcome2Sydney Multicultural Futsal Tournament Community

Western Sydney MRC was privileged to have partnered with the City of Sydney to organise a Multicultural Futsal Tournament in celebration of Refugee Week 2018

The City of Sydney holds a men's futsal tournament every year however chose to organise an event specifically for communities with an asylum seeker and refugee background. Because of this, Western Sydney MRC made a large contribution to the event which saw more than eighty participants take part. This included two teams of players, club officials, volunteers and many families engaging with the program from a vast range of communities.

Western Sydney MRC sponsored two teams in participating in the tournament. And were very excited to see our teams place first and second in their respective divisions!

To celebrate this, we organised a celebration at our Liverpool office on 2nd July, during which our community team players and their coach, Mr Aouse Amoor from the Mandaean FC club executive, presented the trophy they won to Western Sydney MRC, in recognition and appreciation of the support that they received.







## The Power of Partnerships

The extent of support, opportunities and service provision offered at Western Sydney MRC would not have been made possible without the involvement of our many dedicated partners.

As part of the NSW Settlement Partnership together with 22 agencies across NSW and led by SSI, we continued to deliver support to newly arrived refugees and migrants as a community of practice under the Department of Social Services funded Settlement Support Programme. We also worked closely with Illawarra Multicultural Services and Macarthur Diversity Services Initiative to assist clients with intensive case management support under the Complex Case Support Programme, and to provide emergency relief support. Multicultural playgroups were delivered together with Liverpool City Council and Fairfield City Council under FACS funding. We also recently rolled out the Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Program in consortium led by CORE, together with Wagga Wagga Multicultural Council and Illawarra Multicultural Services, also as funded by FACS.

We worked together with an even wider range of partners, to enhance social impact and supports. Key partners included the services who form the hub of co-located services operating from our Centre, through to project partners such as PCYC in the co-delivery of 'Drop Zone' youth box fit sessions each week; The Social Outfit who have provided creative design exposure and opportunities for young women engaged with our service (have a look at the fabulous designs: <https://thesocialoutfit.org/collections/liverpool>); and The Think and Do Tank Foundation, who have piloted with us the Wandering Books program over the past year, which outreaches into primary schools to build relationships, literacy and wellbeing through creative means (for a glimpse into the joys of the program, look up "Our Journey Into Space" on YouTube!).

### With thanks to our HUB Partners



#### Melkite Catholic Welfare Association

Extending casework and form assistance support to our community



#### One Door Mental Health

Improving the mental wellbeing of group session participants



#### St Vincent de Paul

Delivering citizenship sessions



#### Anglicare

Sporting our clients with financial capability assistance



#### Legal Aid

Providing legal support in the areas of migration, social security, family and civil law via the refugee team



#### The Salvation Army

Delivering financial counselling advice and financial capability supports



#### Settlement Services International

Delivering the Humanitarian Settlement Programme and Ability Links

# **We worked together with an even wider range of partners, to enhance social impact and supports.**

We extend a heartfelt thanks to these partners, and to Football Federation Australia, Football NSW and the Western Sydney Wanderers who have welcomed and created connections and friendships between new arrivals and the broader Australian community through joint initiatives such as the ALDI MiniRoos program, in partnership with community leaders and groups, and the provision of Western Sydney Wanderers membership to newcomer, which has provided opportunity to experience the A League in action. We were thrilled to have the Wanderers join our youth BBQ in December, and to launch their membership packages initiative from our Centre in April 2018.

Last but by far from the very least, we have worked together with a broad range of community leaders and community members to connect with and support community. These community leaders and members are invaluable, imparting connection and such rich insight into the issues impacting their communities. These community leaders and members are at the heart of the MRC and enable us to well and truly be powered by community.

We thank them for their dedication to communities, and to the time offered in working together to create change in communities together with the Western Sydney MRC.

## Partnership Spotlight - The Social Outfit

### Youth

The Social Outfit provide employment and training opportunities in the fashion industry to people from refugee and new migrant communities. The organisation has created a social business model in which people build skills in a supportive environment, whilst interacting with broader Sydney Communities.

During an eight-week period, participants worked with Jessica Lee Parker from The Social Outfit to embark on a creative journey and produce various forms of art and design.

The participants had the opportunity to experiment with different mediums including painting, printing, drawing and stamping. By the end of the eight weeks, each participant had a folio of artworks that were then pieced together to form the collaborative Liverpool print, highlighted in The Social Outfit's King Botanic collection.

The participants were invited to participate in site visits to The Social

Outfit's Newtown store and workshop, to learn more about the design and manufacturing process. This was a great opportunity to explore new parts of Sydney as well.

The Liverpool print was printed onto fabric that was then stitched into an incredible range of garments and accessories. Each participant had the opportunity to attend a photoshoot and model a piece featuring their collaborative design.

A big thank you to Jessica Lee Parker (for The Social Outfit) for her facilitation and support. Credit to Levon Baird, Lester Jones and Peter Simon Phillips for Company1 for photography and styling.



“ These young women brought so much enthusiasm and creativity to our project, which really shines through in the resulting print design! It has been a pleasure spending time with them each week, creating and learning together.

*Jessica Lee Parker,  
The Social Outfit*



“ This Project has provided a world of new experiences and inspiration to these young women. They feel incredibly privileged to have been given this once in a lifetime opportunity.

*Sarah Elfoul, Youth Worker*

“ We consider our Digital Print Project with Western Sydney MRC a great success! Our supporters are loving the 'Liverpool' design. Customers wearing our distinctive clothes featuring this work report how vibrant and hopeful the work is - and this is what we want to showcase - the talent of Sydney's refugee and multicultural communities. Collaborating with organisations who truly understand the needs of new migrant young women, and can partner with us for mutual benefit, is vital in our creative work. The Western Sydney MRC team were amazing to work with, and we're actively looking for future projects together already. Now that's community power!

*Jackie Ruddock, CEO - The Social Outfit*





## Partnership Spotlight - Western Sydney Wanderers Football Club Community



### ALDI MiniRoos Football Launch

The six-week program was free and filled with combination of fun and serious training, with the opportunity for participants to go on to play club football if they choose.

The launch was a great success, with an overwhelming response from local families of all backgrounds and a large turnout in both locations.

The program reflects Western Sydney MRC's commitment to community engagement and the ways in which sport can be used as a unifying factor bringing communities together, to foster social inclusion and harmony.

This project is result of the coming together of Western Sydney MRC, Football Federation Australia, the Western Sydney Wanderers and other local groups, particularly, the Mandaean Association.

### Wanderers distribute Memberships to new migrants

In an effort to continue to promote inclusivity and unity for new arrivals and migrants in Western Sydney, the club distributed the first of 1,000 Memberships yesterday evening at the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre (MRC).

Wanderers CEO John Tsatsimas and Hyundai A-League players Brendan Hamill and Abraham Majok attended the launch of the initiative, which is part of a pilot program supported by Blacktown City Council.

The initiative will see the club work with a number of Western Sydney resettlement and migrant advocacy groups to distribute 1,000 Memberships to the community.

The Membership on offer gives access to the Wanderers' final two matches of the season at ANZ Stadium and also includes a membership hat, scarf and free train travel to and from the matches.

Wanderers CEO John Tsatsimas said that the club was delighted to be able to play a part in helping new migrants find their feet.

"It's a very proud moment for us to be involved in projects such as this. We're a club that was founded on the basis of you being part of us and we are being a part of you. We're all about helping people integrate into our community and if we can do anything in terms of allowing this to happen, all the better."

CEO Kamalle Dabboussy said it was an important day for the migrant community.

“Today's moments are very important for the groups we work with, it gives them a sense of belonging, it gives them a sense of inclusion and it gives them a sense of being a part of the mainstream community as well.

"I really hope it gives them the confidence to get out and see games; I think it gives them a sense of inclusion, it brings them a sense of camaraderie with other people and they can see the passions are the same – there's much more things that make us similar and unite us than things that make us different."

“ It’s a very proud moment for us to be involved in projects such as this. We’re a club that was founded on the basis of you being part of us and we are being a part of you. We’re all about helping people integrate into our community and if we can do anything in terms of allowing this to happen, all the better.



## Partnership Spotlight - Western Sydney University Research



Iman Partoredjo and Arkan Yousef

Liverpool is home to one of the highest concentrations of Australia's recent arrivals – many of whom are from refugee backgrounds. It is also home to many CALD communities in differing stages and experiences of settlement, including experiences of settling with a disability. Over 2017, Western Sydney MRC partnered with Western Sydney University's Institute for Culture and Society to explore the intersection of refugee resettlement and disability in Liverpool, in the Circles of Social Life project.

Commissioned by Western Sydney MRC, made possible by seed-funding from SSI's Settlement Innovation Fund, and conducted in partnership with SSI Ability Links, the research project developed an understanding of sustainability in Liverpool, especially for new arrivals with a disability and their carers.

The Circles of Social Life project identified opportunities for service improvement in the local area across four domains – economy, ecology, politics and culture - with key themes and issues centred on transport, technology, stigma, psychological wellbeing, service systems for disability resettlement, and employment.

The research was formed upon the insights of members of the Liverpool community, who participated in interviews, critical reference groups and workshops. We are extremely grateful to the 32 agencies and residents of Liverpool who informed the research, and wish to acknowledge the dedication and contribution of authors Paul James, Liam Magee, Jakki Mann, Shuman Partoredjo and Karen Soldatic to the project.



To access a copy of the Liverpool Circles of Social Life report and its recommendations, visit <http://www.circlesofsustainability.org/projects/settlement-and-disability/>

# Partnerships at a Glance



## NSW Department Health

NSW Government agency responsible for public hospitals and healthcare facilities in South Western Sydney.



## Anglicare

Not-for-profit organisation providing a range of community services in aged care and family support, and for migrants and refugees.



## Navitas

One of the largest providers of English language training in Australia, delivering services and courses to strengthen language skills and employability of students.



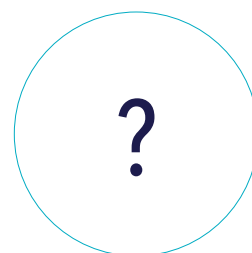
## Families NSW

NSW Government initiative providing services and various projects aimed at the enhancement of health and wellbeing within families.



## PCYC Liverpool

Liverpool branch of one of Australia's leading youth organisations offering a range of programs in sport, music, art & culture.



## Is this you?

If you would like to find out more about partnering with Western Sydney MRC then give us a call on 8778 1200.



## Dept of Education and Training

Government department responsible for national policies and programs that help Australians access quality and affordable early child care and childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training, international education and research.



## SSI

Leading community-based not-for-profit organisation providing a range of services in relating to refugee settlement.



## MYAN

State-wide specialist youth organisation engaging, connecting and building the capacity for the youth, settlement, and multicultural sectors to address the needs of young people, particularly those from refugee and migrant backgrounds.





### Department of Social Services

Government department responsible for social policy aiming to improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia.



### NSW Legal Aid

NSW State-wide organisation providing legal services to socially and economically disadvantaged people.



### Liverpool City Council

Local Council providing services, facilities, and resources to support the community.



### Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre

Cultural facility of the Liverpool City Council working to expand and diversify arts in the local area and become a multi-disciplinary arts centre.



### Mission Australia

An integration of nationwide services helping people find safe and affordable housing, support disadvantaged children and families, empower troubled young people, assist people with mental illness and disabilities, and more.



### Refugee Council of Australia

National body for refugees and organisations and individuals that support them working to address policy, support for refugees, support for members, community education, and administration.



### Football Federation Australia

Football Federation Australia (FFA) is the governing body of football in Australia and is a member of Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the international governing body for football.



### Football NSW

Football NSW is the governing body for association football (soccer) and futsal in the Australian state of New South Wales, with the exception of the northern regions of NSW (the governing body for which is Northern New South Wales Football).



### Ward 6

Ward6 is a creative leader in health, consistently recognised internationally at the Globals, Clío Healthcare and Creative Floor.

# Partnerships at a Glance



## White Ribbon Australia

National violence prevention campaign aiming to raise awareness among Australian men and boys about the roles they can play to prevent violence against women.



## ATO

Australian Government's agency for revenue collection, managing and shaping the tax, excise and superannuation systems.



## Ashcroft Primary School

Local primary school actively working to cater for students of diverse backgrounds.



## NSW Department of Fair Trading

NSW Government agency responsible for the protection of the rights of consumers and businesses, providing advice on fair and ethical practice.



## Department of FACS

NSW Government agency responsible for the protection of children & young people, working with vulnerable people and promoting participation in social and economic life and the building of stronger communities.



## Dept Office of Environment & Heritage

NSW Government agency responsible for the protection of the environment and Aboriginal country, as well as cultural and built heritage.



## Community 2168 Project

Liverpool City Council initiative working to address issues relating to the community, urban renewal, employment and skill development, education and training, community safety and health and wellbeing.



## The Think and Do Tank Foundation

Local children's multilingual bookshop-café providing a creative learning centre, language exchange hub and a safe space for women.



## Circles of Social Life

Research association collaborating with various universities and international organizations to determine and apply methods that contribute to the development of a more sustainable planet.



### Department of Human Services

The Department of Human Services is a department of the Government of Australia charged with responsibility for delivering a range of welfare, public aid, health and other services to the people of Australia.



### Muslim Women Association

Australian not-for-profit organisation providing support for women who suffer from domestic violence and other forms of abuse at home.



### NO WRONG DOOR

Government funded program working with service providers to improve the provision of services to people with severe and persistent mental illness.



### Fairfield City Council

Local council providing services, facilities and resources to support the community.



### NSW Police

A variety of Police officers and offices spanning the Western Sydney region including Liverpool and Fairfield.



### Dept of Immigration & Border Protection

Government department responsible for immigration and customs border policy.



### PHN

Government initiative dedicated to supporting general practitioners, practice nurses, and other primary health providers to deliver quality care for patients and improve access to local health care for the whole community.



### LMA

Organisation that works to provide social, religious, educational and recreational services for the Muslim community through initiatives that advocate for social harmony.



### Western Sydney University

Sydney based university focusing on community engagement to ensure they are responsive to local issues and a focal point for the community.



## Partnerships at a Glance



### The Social Outfit

An independently-accredited, ethical trading social enterprise that provides employment and training in the fashion industry to people from refugee and new migrant communities.



### Liverpool Boys High School

Local boys high school that caters for a multi-cultural community and is working to provide opportunities for students from a background of socio-economic disadvantage.



### The Salvation Army

Charitable organisation providing services to vulnerable people in society, helping with addiction recovery, aged care, emergency and disaster recovery services and more.



### One Door Mental Health

Through One Door, people living with mental illness and their families can find an inclusive community, innovative services and advocacy support.



### STARTTS

NSW service specialising in the rehabilitation of torture and trauma survivors, through culturally appropriate psychological treatment and other methods of rehabilitation.



### St. Vincent de Paul Society

Organisation assisting people living in poverty, working to promote compassion and address issues of social justice.



### Melkite Catholic Welfare Association

Extending casework and form assistance support to our community



### Western Sydney Wanderers FC

The Western Sydney Wanderers FC is a football club which has been established to represent Western Sydney in the Hyundai A-League since April 2012.



### Multicultural Council Wagga Wagga

The Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga (MCWW) was established in Wagga Wagga in 1988.



### Settlement Council of Australia

National peak body for settlement agencies providing settlement solutions for migrants and refugees settling in Australia.



### University of NSW

Sydney-based university leading in research and teaching throughout the country.



### Uniting

Out-of-home care program providing long-term foster care, planning placements, and short-term care for children and young people aged 0-18 years and aftercare services for young people who have left foster care aged 18-25 years.



### Illawarra Multicultural Services

IMS provides information and help to migrants, refugees, humanitarian entrants and those who are of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.



### CORE Community Services

CORE Community Services provides local communities with a wide range of services, activities and programs.



### IGBO Community

Community association for the promotion of African-Australian socio-economic achievements.

Without these partnerships, connections and advocates our reach, services and impact would not be possible. Thank you to you all for your commitment to the Western Sydney MRC, and more importantly to the commitment to our clients and our community.

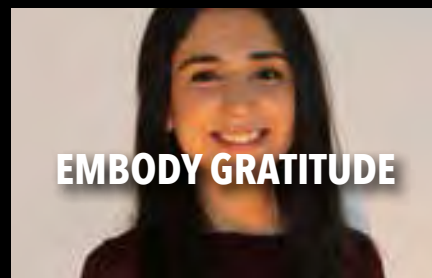


2 Worlds 2 Words has come such a long way since its launch in July 2017. We have engaged with many communities and VIPs, attended events and heard from staff and partners on their 2 words. We want to thank everyone that has given their 2 words and we look forward to sharing more in the year ahead.

Our 2 Worlds 2 Words campaign highlights the story of our refugee and migrant community leaving behind their world to come to a new world, Australia. In some ways they are still living in two worlds.

2 Worlds 2 Words is a project that asks us to share two words of hope, strength, confidence or advice for both newly arrived and established individuals.

Listen to all the 2 words of advice and know that anything is possible when you begin to explore your new surroundings.





## Watch and subscribe to our 2 Worlds 2 Words YouTube Channel

We are honoured to have had many visitors this year and thankful that our 2 Worlds 2 Words campaign has been well received.

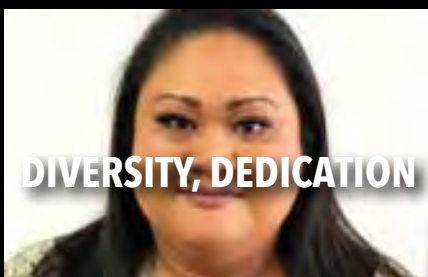
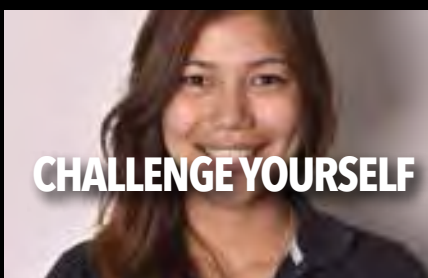


### VIPs

Many words of inspiration and advice have been shared. We have selected a few favourites from our VIP visitors.

### Community

We have also selected our favourite messages of welcome, hope and inspiration from our community.



If you would like to request a 2 Worlds 2 Words pop up at your next event, get in contact with our Marketing Team - [marketing@wsnrc.org.au](mailto:marketing@wsnrc.org.au) or give us a call on 8778 1200.



We have been asked many times - 'Why does an MRC need a Marketing Department?'

As a team of dedicated communicators, we are here to bring you information, to inspire you to get involved, connected and engaged - to transform language and imagery that allows you to make a connection. We would love to hear from you about what Powered by Community means to you, what images or words does it make you think of... what is your narrative? We would love to bring your thoughts to life and share those with our community.

**Tell us below what 'POWERED BY COMMUNITY' means to you?**

Take a picture of your Powered by Community message and email us at [marketing@wsnrc.org.au](mailto:marketing@wsnrc.org.au) or visit us at 108 Moore Street, Liverpool NSW 2170.

## Our 2017 - 2018 team

Our team are the core of who we are as an organisation. We pay respect and gratitude to their efforts in achieving our many goals. Without you this year would not have been possible.

### STAFF

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Akua Mensah-Boateng  
 Alcina Desouza  
 Anna-Marie Kanaan  
 Aseel Khalaf  
 Ayman Alhaboub  
 Ballina Gee  
 Barbara Sargeant  
 Cassandra Cannon  
 Charles Mahagodage  
 Darren Chan  
 Doria Chafic  
 Duyen Nguyen  
 Eithandee Aung  
 Elham Mandwee

Eman Elfoul  
 Eptesam Al Bankani  
 Farhad Arian  
 Fayhaa Alzuhairi  
 Hoda Kassab  
 Jafrana Bi  
 Janet Maene Aslam  
 Jennifer Hanson  
 Jennifer McLean  
 John Buraho  
 Kamalle Dabboussy  
 Karameli Manousso  
 Karren Beaumont  
 Khadija Sifat  
 Kimberly Oligo  
 Lina Merdawi

Lydia Anwia  
 Mandy Wong  
 Margaret Barnett  
 Maria Montecino  
 Marie Nyiraguhirwa  
 Meredith Stuebe  
 Meyer Nashed  
 Nada Miski  
 Nadia Bouchti  
 Natalie Pauls  
 Nina Sakr  
 Noni Papalia  
 Olivia Brancato  
 Olivia Nguy  
 Rachel Haywood  
 Rassem (Sam) Asmar

Rebecca Polito  
 Rhiannon Heinz-  
 Partington  
 Rosaria Raco  
 Saliha Rafiqi  
 Salome Joseph  
 Sandra Romanelli  
 Sarah Elfoul  
 Shuman (Iman) Partoredjo  
 Sophia Strickland  
 Suhad Khalaf  
 Tahereh Kargar  
 Xuan Thi Bui  
 Yuhana Nashmi

### FUNDING BODY LISTING

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Department of Health (DOH)  
 Department of Social Services (DSS)  
 Department Immigration & Border Protection (DIBP)  
 Department of Family & Community Services (FACS)  
 Core Community Services (CCS)  
 Lebanese Muslim Association  
 Liverpool City Council  
 Macarthur Diversity Services Initiative (MDSI)  
 Multicultural NSW  
 Settlement Services International (SSI)  
 South Western Sydney Local Health District  
 Western Sydney University

## VOLUNTEERS

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Abeer Khayat  
Abhijot Singh  
Adam Zhang  
Akran Yousef  
Amal bdul Razak Shijar  
Amanda Orellana  
Anjali Kannan  
Ann Lopez  
Anne Toirkens  
Antriksh Dhand  
Aseel Khalaf  
Ayeda Alsaberi  
Bethany Tracey  
Cassandra Cannon  
Christine Nichols (Chung)  
Clara Bucarey  
Dalya Al-Haidari  
Dane Chan  
Danielle Katrib  
Elana Saeed  
Eyad Shadid  
Fouzi Jamhour

Francis Thomas  
Guadalupe Consepacion  
Alvarez  
Hiyam Al-Azazi  
Jamal Al Mindwy  
James Shehadie  
Jana Dabboussy  
Jaskiran Kaur  
Jessica Parker  
Juliana Dawood  
Juliet Warda  
Kalid Shawi Fenjan  
Kuwthar Aumarah  
Lisa Tran Le  
Lydia Sahi  
Maria Eugenia Valdes  
Maria Panagiotidis  
Marwa Elnahas  
Maysaa Zainal Ezzat  
Meyer Nashed  
Mona Dawoud  
Nerida Ross  
Nibras Jasim  
Nisrin Assi

Noor Al-Haidar  
Noora Jasim  
Quac Minh La (Minh)  
Raed Al-Khadadi  
Rahim Hussain Sahan  
Rana Yoakub  
Rasha Rahma  
Riham Sabri  
Rosalia Moreno  
Safija Salihovic  
Sandra Carina Virga  
Sara Rahem  
Saskia Wilson  
Suha Abood  
Sumaia Ismail  
Sura Al Zuhairi  
Susan Al Zuhairi  
Suzan Banna  
Thekra Binoka  
Thi Thanh Tuyen DAO (Ivy)  
Thurawah (Sue)  
Alameddine  
Veronica Zapata  
Victor Chin

Violetta Mucerino  
Wesnaa Karim  
Yamamah Abbood  
Yasmin Sahi  
Zaid Shadid  
Zainab Allhaby  
Zinah Al-Haidari  
Zunilda Navarro

## 2018 BOARD MEMBERS

+

Dr. Vincent Ogu	Chair
Myee Gregory	Director
Eithandee Aung	Director
Dr Amad Mtashar	Director
Craig Saphin	Director
Judy MacGraw	Director
Councillor Nathan Hagarty	Director

## 2017 BOARD MEMBERS

+

Dr Vincent Ogu	Chair
Dr Amad Mtashar	Director
Joe Satar	Director
Iryna Druzenko	Director
Joseph Meka	Director
Iman Safsouf	Director
Rashid Benzerouk	Director

Liverpool City Council Ex-Officio's:  
Deputy Mayor Ali Karnib  
Councillor Nathan Hagarty



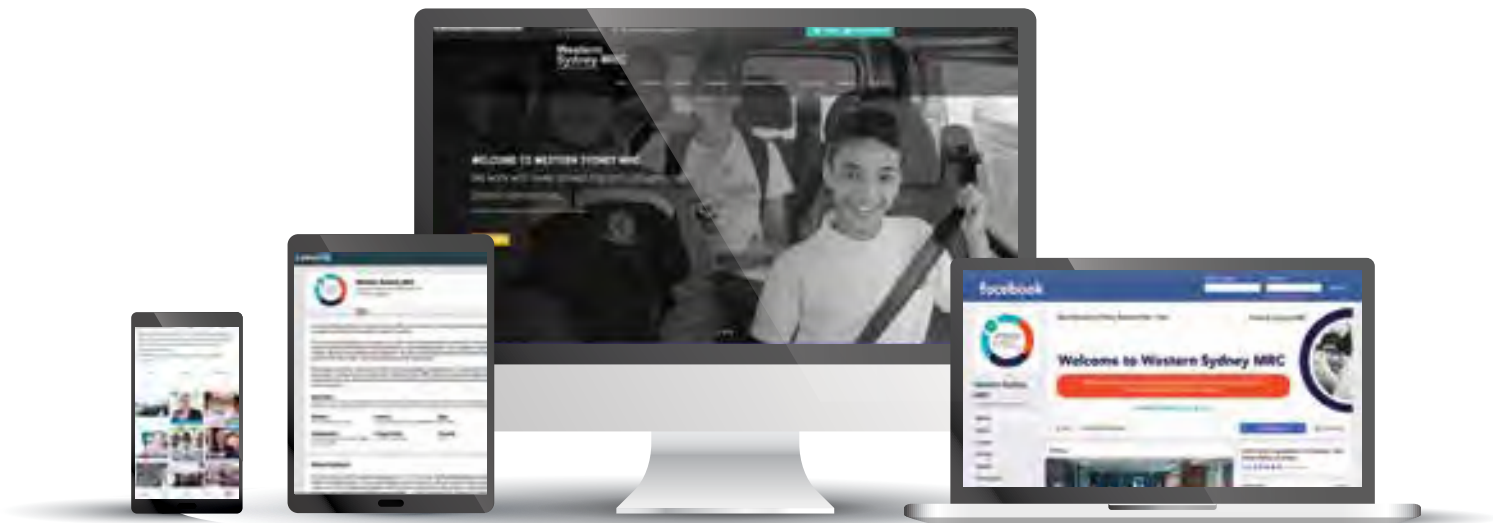
# Get Involved

## Find our more about Western Sydney MRC

If you would like to get involved with Western Sydney MRC, be it employment, partnerships, volunteering, internship or sponsorship then please contact us.

We are always looking for new opportunities to expand our reach and our current services to meet the needs of the community and our clients.

Visit our website, drop us an email, contact us via social media or visit our Liverpool head office. We are open from Monday - Friday 9am -5pm, or just give us a call.



Facebook	@westernsydneymrc	YouTube	@westernsydneymrc
Instagram	@westernsydneymrc	Website	wsmrc.org.au
LinkedIn	@westernsydneymrc		

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Address	108 Moore Street, Liverpool NSW 2170
Phone	02 8778 1200
Email	info@wsmrc.org.au

## Conclusion



Due to the ever-changing nature of our sector, evolution is key to meeting the demands of the world in which we live. In recognising this, we look forward to our future and all the changes that are to come.

We again hope to expand our existing services and partnerships, enhancing them with new innovations to promote growth as an organisation, in order to better serve and meet the needs of refugee and migrant communities.

We want to engage with established communities and bring insight and learning to those that are newly arrived - make cross community connections - and establish a hub where everyone feels welcome.

**A future of strength, more growth and a heightened responsiveness to the needs of our clients and community continues to be at the heart of our organisation.**

As the circumstances in which we operate changes and make our own changes to meet this, we invite you to share your ideas, thoughts and time to join us - be part of the conversation and vision to part of peoples journey and be part of their local vibrant community.

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