



# Annual Report

## 2015-2016

*Working toward an equitable, just,  
culturally diverse and inclusive society*

[mrchobart.org.au](http://mrchobart.org.au)



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## WHO WE ARE

The Migrant Resource Centre is a not-for-profit organisation, which has been assisting migrants and refugees to settle in Tasmania since 1979. Together we strive to create a more supportive and inclusive Tasmanian community.

## Vision

An equitable, just, culturally diverse and inclusive society.

## Mission

To inspire and support culturally diverse communities to reach their full potential.

## What We Do

**Individual help** for new migrants settling in Tasmania

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Help and support for **older migrants**

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**Support and counselling** for migrants who have experienced torture and trauma

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**Community development** and building cultural awareness of migrant issues

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**Support and advice** to government, business and the community about migrant needs and issues

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## ABOUT US



### A WARM WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

***Reflecting over the year that was for the Migrant Resource Centre, it can only be described as BIG! There has been significant change – we have finally moved to our new home at the KGV complex in Glenorchy.***

This has taken many years of planning and implementation but it is very good to be located at the heart of both the older and emerging migrant communities. It has also provided us with many opportunities to engage with some new partners and to consider less traditional ways of doing business. There will still be a presence in Hobart, and at time of writing, what form this will take is being considered.

During the year the Board has developed a new strategic plan which will allow us to align the MRC to better reflect and meet our communities' and clients' needs.

The Board's subcommittees have realigned partly as a result of a greater operational capacity for such areas as human resources. As a result, the Governance and the Finance Audit and Risk sub-committees, as well as the fledgling Business Development Working Group are finding those opportunities for the MRC to be successful.

I and members of the Board have had the opportunity to represent the MRC at various events, and we welcome these opportunities to develop, collaborate and strengthen relationships with the MRC. I was also delighted to attend another successful afternoon gathering at Town Hall with migrant women graciously hosted by my colleague, the Lord Mayor of Hobart, Alderman Sue Hickey.

Our organisation has had a significant change in staff and Alison has worked with the new structure with the Boards' endorsement. The Board knows how dedicated all staff and volunteers are to their clients and tasks. I would like to thank the staff and their grace and patience in the move to KGV. Every day you do great things – thank you for the commitment you have to making a difference.

My thanks also to the Board members for your support over this exciting time for the MRC.

**Helen Burnet**  
Chair



## A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

*The 2015-2016 Financial Year was one of tremendous progress for the MRC.*

Reflecting on my first year as Chief Executive Officer I feel extremely fortunate to be leading an organisation that has for over 35 years provided such valuable service to multicultural communities. I have cherished meeting so many people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and have benefited from meeting our passionate organisation stakeholders and broader networks. It has been gratifying to receive such a warm and generous welcome.

The 2015-2016 Financial Year was one of tremendous progress for the MRC. With an optimisation of service delivery, acquisition of new programming and introduction of efficiencies we have realised an improved financial position against budget this year despite many challenges. In a year when we have farewelled some valued members of staff we have also welcomed new staff who naturally bring fresh creativity and perspective. Successfully navigating through an unpredictable environment of change, both internal and external, the MRC has remained focussed on strengthening foundations. Collectively, staff and other stakeholders have worked together to future-proof the organisation, making it more resilient and working to ensure service sustainability. A review of the landscape in which we were operating and examination of the organisation structure made it apparent that a new strategic direction would greatly benefit the organisation. With this direction now clearly defined, the MRC is now well placed to drive forward to achieve newly defined goals.

As a leader in identifying and communicating the needs of multicultural communities in Tasmania, we were delighted early in 2016 to be recognised as a partner to Skills Tasmania to inform workforce development policy and strategy within the state. We openly seek any type of collaborative partnership which strengthens our connections and provides benefits to our clients and we look forward in eager anticipation to delivering on our commitment. The introduction of the Tasmanian Government Population Strategy was also an exciting development and the exploration of initiatives such as Social Enterprise, migration support and business workshops will see us broaden our horizons and embrace these new opportunities in the upcoming year.

Our work with all levels of Government continues, and we remain responsive and agile to policy shifts with significant Federal reform processes in aged care

services motivating a combination of our previously siloed programs under a newly defined Aged Care Services portfolio during the year. Enhanced stakeholder engagement has seen opportunities to raise critical service delivery with members of both State and Federal Parliament, senior representatives from our major funding partners as well as input into policy development.

Finally, the challenging task of leading the organisation during a major relocation was made much easier by the professionalism and optimism that staff had for the project. Staff approached the move with a genuine desire to facilitate improved outcomes for clients, the MRC and more broadly the community.

I would like to warmly acknowledge the work of the Chairperson, Helen Burnet and members of the Board of Management. The critical guidance of the Board and support of experienced, enthusiastic hard working staff is central to successful outcomes for our clients. In addition the contribution of our volunteers, funders, supporters and community stakeholders is gratefully appreciated.

**Alison O'Neill**  
Chief Executive Officer





### RELOCATION TO GLENORCHY INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

Plans for MRC's relocation to Glenorchy have been in the pipeline for many years and it was through the Glenorchy City Council receiving funding for the development that a collaborative project could be facilitated between the Migrant Resource Centre, Glenorchy District Football Club and a health services provider (Revive Health and Fitness) to co-locate to the Glenorchy Sport and Community Centre. While there were some delays with the development over the following years, by mid-2015, activity had commenced on the site and preparation for the relocation began in earnest.

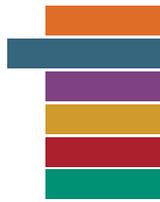
Investigation into MRC's client demographics revealed that a proportion of MRC clients reside on the Northern side of Hobart. This fact coupled with the ample parking facilities at the new location confirming that relocating would on the whole increase the physical accessibility to support services for many Tasmanian migrants. These investigations, as well as a cost-analysis led to the decision that all MRC staff at both the Molle Street and Bathurst Street offices would move into the new office once construction was complete.

Relocation planning was a key focus for MRC in the 2015-2016 financial year and an initial project scope review revealed a set of unique resource intensive challenges. An external Project Manager was engaged to assist with coordinating the planning process and an experienced interior designer was also bought

on board to help bring the new office space to life. Project objectives were developed and the relocation team worked together to plan a space that fostered a positive workplace environment and encouraged team collaboration, cohesiveness and creativity. They remained focused on creating an office that would be flexible and allow for future growth as well as create favourable conditions for leveraging new opportunities and building new community partnerships to better support Tasmanian migrants.

At the time of printing the MRC staff are now all under one roof in the new office, now named the KGV Sports & Community Facility. An updated report on the new office will be provided in next year's annual report.

**“The relocation team worked together to plan a space that fostered a positive workplace environment and encouraged team collaboration, cohesiveness and creativity.”**



**1**  **BIG OFFICE RELOCATION**

**23** **HOURS** OF DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING DELIVERED

VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTED **3171** HOURS OF THEIR TIME TO HELP



RADIO PRESENTING TRAINING DELIVERED TO **10** YOUTH CLIENTS

**7** WENT ON TO PRESENT A RADIO PROGRAM FOR **6** MONTHS

STAFF PARTICIPATED IN **55** PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

**3780** HOURS OF ROAD RULES TRAINING DELIVERED

**20**  NEW STAFF STARTED

 **141** CULTURAL DAY CENTRE GATHERINGS HELD

**260** PHOENIX CENTRE COUNSELLING CLIENTS



**58** CLIENTS MANAGED UNDER CONSUMER DIRECTED CARE

**54** WORKED ALONGSIDE COMMUNITY LEADERS

**\$1,013,631** **FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT**

**INVESTMENT IN SERVICE:**  
 DIRECT CLIENT SERVICES \$1,013,631  
 STAFF AND ASSOCIATED COSTS \$2,368,100  
**END OF YEAR RESULT: SURPLUS \$3,384**

FOR FULL FINANCIAL REPORT FROM THE 2015-2016 FINANCIAL YEAR PLEASE VISIT [WWW.MRCHOBART.ORG.AU/15-16-FINANCIALS](http://WWW.MRCHOBART.ORG.AU/15-16-FINANCIALS)

### NEW PROGRAM – NEUROFEEDBACK

The Phoenix Centre received funding in 2015/2016 to establish a neurofeedback program. STARTTS (a NSW service similar to the Phoenix Centre) pioneered a neurofeedback program that is breaking new ground in the treatment of survivors of torture and trauma, particularly with children. Based on a strong evidence base for this form of treatment, Phoenix Centre staff were keen to add neurofeedback to the range of therapeutic options available to clients.

Neurofeedback is a type of biofeedback that uses a computer to give clients information about electrical activity in their brains, or their brainwave patterns. By using the specific technology clients can learn to change their brainwaves with a view to improving their mental state. While this may seem an intrusive method, the process relies on a principle with which most people are familiar: behaviour which is rewarded is likely to continue.

In neurofeedback, sensors are attached to the client's scalp and these record brainwaves while the client interacts with a computer game. Auditory and visual cues on the computer screen allow the client to receive moment-to-moment information about the rhythmic electrical activity in their brain. The information is not processed consciously, but the client becomes aware of the impact of particular electrical firings, with the visible results in the game. With this feedback and learning, clients are soon able to induce positive changes in their brain wave patterns.

The practical implications for the Phoenix Centre's work are considerable, as neurofeedback allows people to overcome negative brain wave patterns which can manifest in states such as anxiety and aggressions. Clients gradually come to understand the relationship between sensations, thoughts and behaviours, enabling them to feel more in control of their responses and giving them a sense of grounding and confidence.



### YOUTH INITIATIVE – RADIO PRESENTER TRAINING

Every Saturday afternoon in September of 2015 "The Kings and Queens of the World" radio show was hosted on Edge Radio. The program was the result of a collaboration between the MRC Youth Settlements team and Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN TAS). With the generous support of Edge Radio (Hobart's Independent Youth Radio Station), MYAN TAS youth worked hard in the studio developing content and the technical skills and expertise needed to produce a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) youth radio program with a settlements focus.

The group of ten presenters shared the responsibility of hosting a weekly radio program on Edge Radio 99.3FM that shared settlement experiences, stories and advice with other new arrivals while sharing stories, music and culture with the broader Hobart community. The group focussed on creating positive representations of their culture and religion in the media using music, promoting cultural festivals and events and sharing stories from the different cultures that make up the diverse Hobart community.

## NEW SERVICE – TRAUMA-FOCUSED YOGA

*The Phoenix Centre, in its role as a trauma treatment agency, tries to keep in touch with the latest evidence based approaches that are gaining recognition in the field.*

More and more the international focus for trauma treatment is on brain plasticity and the ability to reduce trauma symptoms by “changing” or retraining the brain (as is evidenced by the work of many trauma specialists such as Dan Siegal and Bessel van der Kolk). Using techniques involving repeated practice such as Mindfulness meditation, Neurofeedback and Trauma-focused Yoga – debilitating symptoms left by the imprint of trauma exposure can be significantly reduced by down regulating the nervous system and changing the actual structure of neural pathways in the brain.

In March and April 2016 the Phoenix Centre Natural Therapies Program ran a course of trauma-focused yoga for clients with complex trauma symptoms. Men’s and women’s groups were run concurrently including clients from Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. The groups were necessarily small (6-8 participants each) so that the teacher could monitor and manage any trauma related discomfort during the sessions.

The classes consisted of yoga postures (Asana), breathing exercises (Pranayam) and a lengthy guided relaxation (Yoga Nidra). Within the framework of one class the participants learned techniques for increasing physical flexibility, breathing deeply and correctly, and relaxing the nervous system. All of these practices are invaluable for treating the debilitating effects of complex trauma that can cause symptoms such as enduring somatic pain, breathing difficulties and panic attacks and stressed, hypervigilant nervous systems.

The classes were popular and the results overwhelmingly positive. As one young male participant from Afghanistan observed after a session “outside the world is stressful – in this room it is peaceful and calm”.



## YOUTH ACTIVITIES – WINDEWARD BOUND

*For the fifth consecutive year, the Windeward Bound and MRC collaborated to enable 10 young Tasmanian’s from refugee and humanitarian backgrounds to participate in a Youth Leadership Challenge.*

The Challenge provides an opportunity for our clients, along with 10 youth mentors, to experience 10 days of adventure, fun, team work, and a host of challenges (including no mobile phones). Whilst sailing on a tall ship is very foreign concept for most young people from refugee backgrounds, it’s an opportunity eagerly embraced by those who participate. The opportunity provides young people with a challenging adventure where they have to live, work and play with people they haven’t met before. They become members of a team, take responsibility, give and take orders and push themselves physically and mentally. Participants reported an increase in understanding of other cultures, teamwork, leadership responsibility, self-confidence and empathy.

Feedback from participants, staff and other stakeholders confirms the value to this unique opportunity.

*“We could see that they were more positive about their future.”*

– Service Provider

*“So on the last day along with feeling sorrowful as we were getting ready to leave, I felt a sense of accomplishment. A lot of mixed feelings to take in all at once. All of us felt like going on and on with the voyage to the end of the earth.”*

– Youth participant



**Contract Administration**

**Client and Stakeholder Services**

**Work, Health and Safety**

**Compliance, Policies and Standards**

**Administration**

**Information Technology Coordination**

**Housing Management**

**Finance Management**

**Facilities Management**

**Human Resources**

**Corporate Project Officers**

**Volunteers**

**Students**

**Librarian**

**CORPORATE SERVICES**

*The Corporate Services team provide central support services to all MRC staff and manage the facilities, assets, IT, HR and finance functions.*

Delivering our client services would not be possible without the Corporate Services team. The past year we have been heavily focused on reviewing and enhancing internal procedures, updating technology and planning and coordinating for our office relocation to Glenorchy.

We have significantly progressed our IT strategy and invested in new technology including implementing a new cloud based phone system, installing a new Wi-Fi connection, procuring a number of handheld devices for staff, and a new Smart TV for our client meeting room. We also launched a new base website with a clean, clear design which we plan to fill with relevant, engaging information and content over time.

We have also replaced our entire fleet of corporate vehicles and have started the enormous task of a project plan to replace our client database while also improving our systems around our Volunteer Program.

At the time of writing the Corporate Services team are looking forward and are planning to implement a data acquisition strategy and to produce a Marketing and Communications Strategy. A new Social Media Strategy is also on the horizon as is a brand review.

It has been an enormous year for us, however our focus remains on creating innovative, efficient and effective solutions that provide our clients and our colleagues with an optimum operating environment.



*“Working in administration I get to meet and talk to such a diverse range of people, from clients and stakeholders, to the general public and volunteers. Volunteers are what make this organisation tick, and without them, much of what we do would not happen, and I am reminded of this everyday at work.”*

**Kate Dostalek**  
*Corporate Projects Officer*

**Counsellors**

**Counselling Coordinator**

**Natural Therapies  
Coordinator**

**Client Support Worker**

**Bi-Cultural Workers**

**Project Officers**

**Volunteers**

**Students on Placement**



“ I love working at MRC because every day is different. We get to meet and work with the most amazing, resilient people, and I’m constantly in awe of, and inspired by them.”

**Beth Lord**

*Suicide Prevention Project  
Senior Project Officer*

**PHOENIX CENTRE**

*The Phoenix Centre provides services across Tasmania to people of refugee backgrounds who have experienced torture or other traumatic events in their country of origin or while fleeing those countries.*

Despite enormous resilience and capacity to overcome these experiences, our client’s experiences prior to arriving in Australia often have a profound impact on their health and wellbeing. Through the provision of appropriate and timely support and recovery focussed services, the Phoenix Centre enhances the capacity of survivors to rebuild their lives and become positive contributors to Australian society.

During 2015-2016 the Phoenix Centre provided individual services to over 200 clients ranging in age from 5 years to 75 years, from over 28 cultural backgrounds. Services provided include natural therapies, counselling, mentoring, referral, case management and advocacy. In 2016 an additional evidence based service for the treatment of trauma – neurofeedback – was added to the Phoenix suite of services. In addition to our on-site services in both Hobart and Launceston, we optimise access to services though outreach in schools, clients’ homes and other locations convenient for clients. Group activities compliment services to individuals and over the last year staff have conducted a broad range of activities including therapeutic yoga and dance groups, nutrition, men’s groups and group activities for parents of young children, and group activities for young people. Other group activities focussed on topics such as suicide prevention, family violence, transcultural mental health and mental health and wellbeing.

Phoenix staff provided a broad range of training throughout the year, including mental health training for interpreters, training for teachers, suicide prevention training including ASIST and safeTALK, training for university students, the community sector and the mental health workforce.

Although the context in which Phoenix Centre staff work is challenging, the resilience and stories of many of our clients continue to inspire and motivate us. The commitment and dedication of staff is greatly appreciated, as is the valuable contribution of volunteers who work with Phoenix staff and clients.





“Young people have been enjoying a range of regular health and wellbeing activities including karate, hockey, swimming, personal training and Tasmanian’s first all women Afghani futsal team.”

**Case Managers**

**Youth Workers**

**Community Development Coordinator**

**Migration Advice**

**Employment Support Services**

**Student on Placement**

## SETTLEMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES

*We strive to build the confidence and capacity of our clients to independently access mainstream services and participate socially and economically in Tasmanian life. Supporting community leadership and active citizenship are an important element of MRC’s work.*

Volunteers, partner organisations, local businesses, community service providers and local government all play a crucial role in the delivery of our services and programs. The support of our volunteers is particularly vital and greatly valued. Volunteers assist with so much, including filling out forms and writing résumés, providing feedback on tricky homework assignments, and helping to guide new drivers around our roads safely. Our Volunteers are always there, providing a helping hand, and friendly support and advice.

Drop in and outreach form the backbone of the program, with regular sessions hosted at the MRC, local high schools and colleges, and TasTAFE. Group outings continue to be a popular opportunity to build relationships to people and place. Support has been provided to groups who wish to establish community associations. This includes training sessions, mentoring and individual support. Communities have also been supported to participate in mainstream events as well as a range of community education and information sessions. Group workshops and talks are also held throughout the year.

Our driving mentor program continues to offer a safe, legal and a well-supported pathway for refugee and humanitarian entrants to learn to drive. Connect, our employment program, continues to provide clients with an individual approach to career planning, job search assistance, employment preparation and post placement support. Our Migration Support Program offers professional migration advice and assistance to individuals.



“Enabling skills and creating opportunities for former refugees to “do” ordinary life on par with any other Tasmanian is so satisfying. Aside from seeing individuals thrive, I can see how it makes diversity “work” for the broader community too. Re-building a life is a big job, the generosity of our volunteers and tenacity of our clients keeps us going!”

**Clarissa Adriel**  
Case Manager

## SETTLEMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

### Community events

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- Community members held a food stall at the 'Moonah Taste of the World' festival
- The Karen choir – performed at several local high profile events

### Collaborations and Partnerships

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- Legal training and individual support – sessions facilitated by Hobart Legal Centre
- 3rd Annual 'Hear Our Voices' women's gathering – collaboration with the Glenorchy City Council

### Youth Initiatives and Activities

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- Tasmanian's first all women Afghani futsal team was created
- Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network consultation – over 60 young people participated
- Youth health and wellbeing activities including karate, hockey, swimming and personal training

### Training and education

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- English lessons – tailored opportunities to practice English and take part in activities for young families and vulnerable women
- Skill based training – including regular digital literacy classes, a University preparation program, Career Q & A's

### Skill-building and employment for job seekers

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- Introduction to Woodworking – skill-building course which inspired one participant to go on to study Certificate II in Construction
- Falls Festival clean team – a partnership between the Falls Festival Team, Youth Futures and MRC provided 10 clients job opportunities at the annual Falls Festival event, Marion Bay
- Certificate II Asset Maintenance – entry level cleaning industry training which resulted in 80% of participants gaining employment

### Employer training

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- Connect Employment Forum – raising awareness of how to best support employees who are new migrants or from a refugee background in the workplace, with three MRC clients sharing their first experiences of working in Australia





## AGED CARE SERVICES

***The Migrant Resource Centre's Aged Care Team provides support and services for our older more frail Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) migrant communities.***

Our Programs are provided in three main service areas; the combined Commonwealth Home Support Program and Tasmanian Home and Community Care, the Commonwealth Home Care Packages Program and the Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care Program.

Our Aged Care team is dedicated to delivering services for migrant older persons and those with a disability and their carers with culturally appropriate and responsive services. We assist clients with continuing independency providing mobility assistance, advocacy support, assistance with community service access and counselling services. We also work to create opportunities for our clients to connect socially with others, encouraging social cohesiveness and alleviating the potential for social isolation.

While individual client work is critical, there are a range of group activities the MRC conducts and we are particularly pleased to be continuing the Bhutanese Elders Group with the Commonwealth Home Support Program and Tasmanian Home and Community Care Program program after the success of the pilot program last year. In addition the popularity of the MRC Day Centre's continues to climb with exciting and unique opportunities and activities offered to clients throughout the year. Our clients particularly enjoyed activities that were designed to promote health and wellbeing. Excursions remain popular with a visit to Government House at the invitation of Her Excellency the Hon Kate Warner AM a highlight during the year.

We also hold regular meetings with CALD communities including established communities such as German, Chinese, Polish, Italian, Greek and emerging communities such as Bhutanese, Afghan and Karen to ensure our services remain highly relevant to each group. In addition to direct service provision, we work in collaboration with government and relevant organisations, to improve access and equity for aged care and other support services for people from diverse backgrounds.

The usual active work flow of the team this year was heightened due to the changing face of the Australian Aged Care sector, specifically the introduction of the digitalised service My Aged Care and the roll out of the Consumer Directed Care (CDC) program. Our team worked hard to embrace and adapt to the changes and repositioned themselves in order to capitalise on potential new opportunities. The MRC focussed on supporting clients through this shifting environment and while some of the changes proved challenging, staff rose to this and went to remarkable lengths to support clients through these transitions.

### **What is the Commonwealth Home Support Program Program (CHSP)?**

The CHSP is a range of programs to assist with ensuring frail, older clients participate in community life and feel socially included. The program achieves this through a variety of activities including individual support, Day Centre activities, as well as the provision of specialised support services. In addition staff undertake information, Cross Cultural Awareness Training (CCAT) in the area of culturally sensitive service provision with organisations funded under the CHSP to build the capacity and competency of the sector.

### **Case Managers**

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### **Client Coordination**

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### **Counsellor**

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### **PICAC Project Officer**

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### **Day Centre Coordinator**

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### **Day Centre Staff**

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### **Bicultural Workers**

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### **Students on Placement**

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**“I love my job because of the people. Our clients, because they are amazing and inspiring, our volunteers because they are dedicated and wonderful and our staff because they are unique and very special!”**

### **Monika Dutkiewicz**

*Client Services  
Co-ordinator*

## OUR CLIENTS

### AN ADVOCATE FOR YOUNG WOMEN

***Somayeh Kouhestani (pictured) arrived in Tasmania one year ago with her family. Originally from Afghanistan, Somayeh lived in Iran as a refugee for 17 years. In the short time since her arrival in Tasmania Somayeh has become a leader and advocate for young people, particularly young women, in her community.***

Somayeh has become a keen swimmer and regular in our Women's Wellbeing Program. Since her engagement with the youth program, she has quickly progressed from participant to youth leader and is now a role model for other young women from humanitarian backgrounds in Tasmania. Somayeh was employed as one of MRC's first bicultural youth workers, employed on the Multicultural Youth Leading Program. Working with MRC's Settlement Youth Team and volunteers she was integral to developing a young women's summer camp. Held on the east coast of Tasmania, 23 young women (18-25 years) from four emerging communities participated in outdoor activities, leadership activities and discussion around women's issues. The camp provided participants with opportunities to explore their new home, a safe space and forum to openly discuss issues and barriers they face during settlement, as well as the chance to provide feedback on future directions for the youth program.

Somayeh, supported by the youth team, became a presenter on the Edge Radio show 'Kings and Queens of the World' where she talked about her culture and settlement experience with other young people. Somayeh is also an active member of Students Against Racism, where she shares her personal story with others in order to create understanding about why asylum seekers, refugees and migrants settle in Tasmania. Somayeh hopes to attend University next year and is currently studying fulltime at TasTAFE in the 'Return To Studies Course' in preparation.



### AYANA'S STORY

***Ayana (not her real name) is a 42-year-old Eritrean woman. She has four children aged from 3 to 17 years. She hasn't had any contact with her first husband who went missing 12 years ago and she presumes he is dead. She now has a new partner who is also Eritrean and he is the father of her two younger children.***

Ayana's partner experienced imprisonment and torture prior to arriving in Australia and often joins in the MRC Men's Group activities where he enjoys the company of other men, relaxing, exploring the environment and learning about opportunities in Tasmania.

Ayana was referred to the Phoenix Centre by her GP. At the time of referral Ayana was experiencing regular nightmares, disturbed sleep, back pain, constant worries, headaches and poor concentration. She found it difficult to manage her children and would quickly become angry. Ayana was hesitant at first about how the Phoenix Centre could help her, but she likes her counsellor and they quickly developed a trusting relationship. Ayana is gradually feeling comfortable to share some of her experiences prior to coming to Tasmania and now realises her symptoms are not uncommon for people who have had experiences similar to hers.

Ayana's counsellor told Ayana about the Phoenix Centre's Natural Therapies program and referred Ayana for massage. Ayana finds her massage sessions help with her pack pain and headaches. Through massage and the therapeutic interventions Ayana's counsellor uses, Ayana symptoms are gradually reducing. Ayana is finding she is sleeping better and is now better able to concentrate during English classes. Ayana hopes to enrol in a nursing course and pursue her childhood ambition of becoming a nurse.

## NEVER HUNGRY AND DRESSES LIKE A QUEEN

***"I grew up in a small village in Croatia, with a population of 3500 people called Kotoriba. It is near the Mura river and close to the Hungarian border. I had three sisters and one brother and we lived with my grandparents on a farm which my father was in charge of. My father was Croatian and my mother was a Slovenian. My dear husband passed away 21 years ago. I have three children 2 daughters Arlene and Lily and a son, Michael.***

When I was young we grew many vegetables such as corn and peas as well as coffee and sugar cane. The smell of coffee brings back many childhood memories for me. During the war many people from both sides visited us because we had food. We were the centre of activity in the village. Everybody knew us.

When I was 17, I left my village and headed to Genoa in Italy where I caught a boat, which was 149m long and had more than 850 people on board, and was bound for Australia. The sea was rough when we left. We stopped at Naples and Messina picking up more "migrants" on the way. We then headed through the Suez canal and made our way to Colombo in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) where we took on supplies, it was very hot. I enjoyed the trip and the weeks went by quickly.

I was waiting for a visa for 3 months. I arrived in Melbourne where I was met by my uncle Andrea and lived in East Melbourne until I got married in Richmond (Vic) to Stan who played soccer for Footscray. He worked in Burwood making furniture. If I didn't get married I was going to be fined by the Department of Immigration. I got to learn English which was hard because it had a different alphabet, but I learned bit by bit.

I have been involved with the Migrant Resource Centre for some 22 years in one way or another. I have been attending the Friday daycentre for more than 10 years and I enjoy it very much. We have a wonderful lunch with many different dishes from all over Europe as well as some soup and of course dessert.

I get to talk with my friends and do some activities like Tai Chi or a talk about better health, I like doing all the things they have. Today we are going to the Moonah arts centre to see their latest exhibit, its very exciting. The staff are wonderful and I look forward to it every week. I hope you enjoyed my story, when I was young they used to say that Mary is "never hungry and dresses like a queen" and it became my motto."

*Mary Volar*



## OUR TEAM



THIR THAPA (SECOND FROM RIGHT) ONE OF OUR BICULTURAL WORKERS WITH HIS FAMILY.

### STAFF ROLE IN FOCUS: BICULTURAL WORKERS

*The MRC's Bicultural Workers provide enormous benefits and bring valuable insight and a depth of cultural knowledge and experience to the MRC. In doing this, Bicultural Workers provide a bridge between our services and our culturally diverse client communities.*

During 2015-2016 the MRC employed Bicultural Workers from 9 communities, strengthening our links with a broad range of clients. Our increase in support from Bicultural Workers over the last 12 months has resulted in innovative service delivery and better outcomes for clients.

Whilst bicultural work may include some interpreting, it is also much, much more. The work is sometimes complex and at times involves managing conflicting expectations of the workplace, the families and communities they are working with and their own expectations. The addition of specialist Youth Bicultural Workers in 2015 ensured our youth activities were engaging, fun and targeted to the needs of young people, resulting in participation rates soaring.

In recognition of the value of bicultural workers we have provided some exciting professional development opportunities. In early 2016 Thir Thapa was supported to attend a Suicide Prevention Conference in Canberra. This provided an environment in which Thir and his Phoenix Centre colleagues could learn more about suicide prevention activities, network, reflect and share perspectives on strategies to support suicide prevention in his community. We hope to continue to be able to offer opportunities such as this and thank all our Bicultural Workers for their contributions over the year.

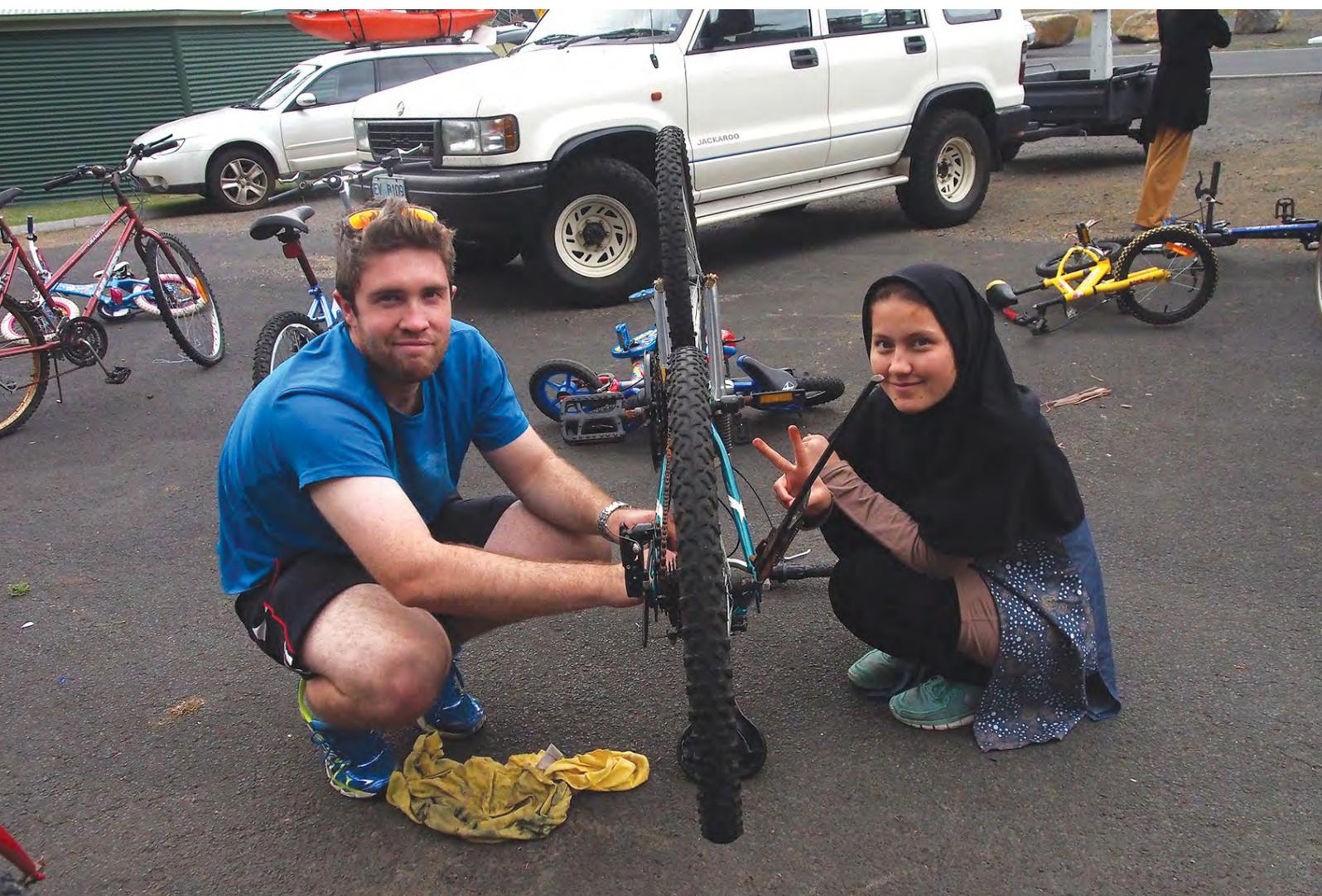
## OUR VOLUNTEERS

***It has been another exciting year for the volunteer program. Our volunteers engage in a variety of activities, contributing and collaborating with staff, clients and other volunteers, ensuring MRC delivers quality services and connections with the wider community.***

Volunteers work in many activities, including individual work and group activities. Settlement and Community Services offers drop-in centres that would otherwise not operate to current capacity without the assistance of the volunteers. Our volunteers are also instrumental in getting individuals and groups to any number of activities across the organisation, from youth swimming and fitness, and the social activity groups in the Aged Care program, including Healthy Living Group, the Day Centres and shopping trips.

We thank all volunteers – new and old – who have contributed their time to the organisation this year – a total of 3171 hours. Your time, commitment and dedication is greatly appreciated, and we look forward to working with the volunteers in 2016-2017.

MRC would also like to acknowledge the generous contribution of the German Choir, the Italian Choir and the Indian Dance Group for the volunteering services in the Aged Care Services program.



We would like to acknowledge all volunteers who have been with us throughout the past year:

Purna Adhikari	Allison Burrows-Cheng	Joy Di Tommaso	Jawad Haidari
Hafiz Ahmed	Lili Calitz	Jo Dimond	Barry Hall
Asif Ali	Alessandra Cancio	John Dodd	Kathy Hall
Claudia Ali	Xuuyan Chen	Bernadette Donehue	Yolande Hall
David Allison	Elaine Chevalier-Carter	Bob Donovan	Gabrielle Harb
Faisal Atzahrani	Jesslyn Chong	Jaqueline Donovan	Una Harbinson
Iain Anderson	Rajat Chopra	Liz Dougan	Cate Harding
Stephen Anderson	Angela Chung	Reshma Dutta	Elizabeth Hartridge
Brad Arnold	Harry Chung	Elaine Dye	Trudy Harvey
Mike Ashmore	Molly Coburn	Majella Eales	Christopher Harwood
Neylan Aykut	Robin Coffey	Emerson Easley	Rod Hayes
Jeanette Banks	Jenny Cole	Kate Edwards	Raija Heffernan
Vai Barons	Lindy Connor	Dylan Eynon	Lily Hellicar
Nick Bedding	Jordan Conway	Brent Feike	Lara Hembrow
Sue Bell	Kelly Conway	Fritz Feike	Francine Henderson
Silas Benjamin	Justin Cook	Lucy Flanagan	Russell Hill
Barbara Benson	Eliza Cropp	Jamila Fontana	Luka Hlaing
Peter Berechree	Michael Cullen	Steven Ford	Kerry Ho
Jewel Beresford	Ali Cummins	Simon Fountain	Sara Ho
Paul Beresford	Tiki Curnow	Biddy Gatenby	Bronwyn Hollett
Jessica Bigby	Jeff Day	Catherine Gayton	Duncan How
Sarah Blundy	Henry De Cesare	Chandra Ghimiray	Monica Hudson
Martin Boyer	Betty De Vries	Ros Goodsell	Navdeep Hundal
Jacinta Bradshaw	Otto De Vries	Hannah Goss	Callum Hutchinson
Carol Bristow	Jenny Dean	Ian Graham	Maite Ingall
Emily Burles	Tristan Derham	Stella Gray	Madeline Iseii
Helen Burnet	Sheree Dervish	Alexandra Haddad	Kate Jenkins

Carla Johnson	Doris Melara	Michele Reed	Daim Stephens
Rowan Johnston	David Morgan	Lauren Reid	Anastasia Stossich
Kalee Johnstone	Karen Morgan	Barbara Ridgway	Veronique Tabor
Katherine Jones	Mahoubeh Mostean	Louise Romanin	Anna Tayler
Peter Jones	Yorke Mountford	Paula Rooney	Kim Taylor
Brydie Jordan	Rhys Mountney	Caroline Ross	Bom Thapa
Stephanie Katz	Phoebe Nash	Melanie Ross	Indra Thapa
Jennifer Kemp-Smith	Frank Neasey	Meryl Rowlands	Claire Titt
Bronwyn Kimber	Graeme Nibbs	Maureen Rudge	Dhan Bahadur Tiwari
Aik Sing King	Simon Nola	Emily Rudling	Pamela Turton-Turner
Rani Klubai	Elise Norton	Denis Saltmarsh	Alice Waight
Melissa Kruger	Ronald Dak	Maria Saracino	Jennifer Wakefield
Sera Lalagaves	Bridget Osier	Ash Schuurman	Lindi Wall
Shelley Lawes	Meg Parry	Kerry Scutthorpe	Miriam Webb
Sarah Lyden	Paul Patel	Ghasem Shaaf	Grace Wells
Craig Malkie	Meegan Pearce	Regie Sherlock	John Wickel
Peter Maloney	Cam Philp	Robert Sherrington	Sue Wilcox
Annie March	Tiana Pirte	Gia Ka Shor	Bernard Williams
Matthew Massey	Monika Po	Thomas Shurvell	Pippa Williams
Talbot Matthews	Marianne Potma	Judith Simpson	Alison Willson
Barbara Mawson	Fern Prammananun	Evelyn Slater	Jaen Wilson
Michael McCausland	Tim Price	Cheryl Smith	Lyell Wilson
Prue McCausland	Graham Prichard	Grazina Smith	Scott Winter
Erin McCrickard	Sarah Purton	Tracy Spence	Teruyo Wolfe
Leah McDougall	Peter Qu	Margaret Amy Steadman	Cassie Wood
Robert McManus	Tiiu Rääbus	Chris Stennard	Michael Woolford
Margaret McMillan	Michaela Raonizanany	Anne Stephens	Andrew Young

## OUR BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



**Helen Burnet**  
*Chairperson*

Helen is an Alderman with the Hobart City Council, and has been a member of the MRC Board since 2009, currently holding the position of Chairperson. Helen has a broad interest in the health and wellbeing of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities and is a passionate advocate for social inclusion.



**Allison Burrows-Cheng**  
*Vice Chairperson*

Allison has been a member of the MRC Board since 2006. She is currently the Vice Chair. She is a solicitor and has been in private practice for 25 years.



**Jeanette Banks**  
*Secretary*

Jeanette joined the Board in December 2012. Jeanette is employed as the Public Health Evaluation Officer with the Public Health Services in the Department of Health and Human Services. Previously Jeanette worked with the Commissioner for Children and in the area of Community Sector Development with the Human Services Branch of the Department of Health and Human Services.



**Maureen Rudge**  
*Second Secretary*

Maureen has been a member of the Board since 2006. She is a retired Occupational Therapy Consultant and a Justice of the Peace. In 2008 Maureen was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in recognition of her contribution to the Occupational Therapy profession and service to the community over many years.



**Nick Bedding**  
*Board Member*

Nick Bedding joined the Board in 2014. Nick is the Managing Director of Symic Pty Ltd, a private investment company specialising in venture capital, property development and equity investment. Nick has extensive experience in the financial planning and stock broking industries and in merger and acquisitions in the financial services sector.



**Frank Neasey**  
*Board Member*

Frank Neasey has been a member of the Board since 2014. He has practiced law since 1982 and is currently the Assistant Solicitor-General of Tasmania. He has also been a volunteer driving instructor with MRC's Top Gear Program since 2011. Frank is also a member of the Inland Fisheries Advisory Council.



**Kacee Johnstone**  
*Board Member*

Kacee Johnstone joined the Migrant Resource Centre Board in July 2015. Recently returned from a stint of volunteering overseas for an Australian-based Charity, Kacee is a 2016 Participant in the Tasmanian Leaders program and is a director to the board of Gymnastics Tasmania and Flourish Tasmania. She has also previously worked as a Senior Advisor to a number of Tasmanian-based Federal Members of Parliament. Kacee hopes to share her knowledge of fundraising, marketing, government funding processes and policy development with the Organisation.



**Jamila Fontana**  
*Board Member*

Jamila Fontana joined the Board in 2016. She currently works in marketing and communications and brings with her significant events management experience. Jamila is passionate about Tasmania and its rich multicultural history and her enthusiasm and understanding of current communications techniques and trends make her a valuable addition to the Board.



**Chris Stennard**  
**Treasurer**

Chris is employed as CFO and Company Secretary of the Incat Group of Companies. Chris is a Fellow of CPA Australia. He has had experience in the manufacturing, service, IT, insurance and banking sectors. He is interested in social and community issues.



**Alison O'Neill**  
**Board Member**

Alison commenced as the Chief Executive Officer of MRC in May 2015 after previously holding the position of Corporate Services Manager. Alison's extensive and varied background includes leadership positions within the NFP sector at both a state and federated level, predominantly in the health and disability areas. Alison sits on a number of advisory groups and committees that inform, guide and influence outcomes for the multicultural communities in Tasmania at a local, state and federal level.

*In accordance with the Constitution, from time to time the Board appoints subcommittees with specific terms of reference to support the activities of the MRC. Board subcommittees meet regularly and make recommendations to the Board.*

*During the year a number of Board members participated on Board Subcommittees, including the Finance, Audit and Risk and Governance and Human Resources Subcommittee.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**The MRC would like to thank the many organisations, businesses and individuals who supported and donated time, expertise and financial resources to us during the 2015-2016 financial year.**

2a4 Grants

Anglicare Tasmania

Aspire Learning Resources

Asset Training

Australian Red Cross

Centre for Multicultural Youth

Department of Health

Department of Health and Human Services

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Department of Social Services

Department of State Growth

FASSTT (Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma)

LINC Tasmania

Mantana Foundation

Migrant Resource Centre (Northern Tasmania)

Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network

Skills Tasmania

TasTAFE

Zonta Foundation



[mrchobart.org.au](http://mrchobart.org.au)