

# Multicultural Western Australia



Office of Multicultural Interests  
Government of Western Australia

Newsletter of the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI)

July 2008

## Innovative service centres lead the nation

On Thursday 3 July, Multicultural Interests and Citizenship Minister Ljiljana Ravlich, Federal Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans and the Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, Laurie Ferguson, visited the Integrated Services Centre (ISC) at Koondoola Primary School.

The Koondoola project site is one of two ISCs - the other is at Parkwood Primary School - established in March 2007, as pilots with the aim of addressing issues relating to service delivery in the area of health, education, training and employment, family and community development. They were an outcome of the State Government's across-government working party on settlement issues for African humanitarian entrants.

Ms Ravlich said the ISC model provided a co-ordinated approach to delivery of settlement services between key State Government agencies through better use of existing infrastructure and utilising the skills of specialist non-Government agencies.

"The ISCs have helped these vulnerable new arrivals to our community to adjust more quickly to life in Australia, by ensuring



they receive the services and support they need to allow them to start their new lives." she said.

Minister Ravlich was pleased to announce that an additional 12 months of State Government funding to support the continued operation of the ISCs had been secured.

The ISC project is a partnership between the Office of Multicultural Interests, the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Health.



Mr Davies Chibale with Mr Paul Rafferty, Manger Communications and Community Education, OMI.

## Davies Chibale and the Zambian Community of WA

Mr Davies Chibale is the current Chairperson of the Organisation of Zambian Community Living in Western Australia (OZALIWA). The organisation was formed in 2005 to support people of Zambian backgrounds across WA.

He joined OZALIWA shortly after its incorporation, and prior to becoming its Chairperson, served as the elected Vice Secretary of OZALIWA. During that period he became involved with the African Community in Western Australia Inc. (ACWA), and was later elected as ACWA's Vice President.

From 2005 to 2007 when Davies served as Vice Secretary of OZALIWA, he was instrumental in writing the project proposal that won the contract for participating in the Edith Cowan University (ECU) Orientation Program. He also played a key role in bringing Zambian Gospel Musicians Ephraim Mutalanga, Rachael Nanyangwe and Harold Caala to Australia in early 2007.

Davies has never wavered in his commitment to the organisation and with the help of the Executive Committee he is determined to build OZALIWA as a strong, effective and coordinated African Community organisation.

Davies believes in providing greater recognition of the contribution of Zambians in Australia. He hopes to see Zambians being recognised as partners in building an inclusive multicultural society. He is convinced that people who left Zambia as mature

adults have not forgotten their roots. Davies explains this belief in an analogy: "Those of us living overseas are like people who have gone into the forest to look for firewood and food to bring back to our families (here in Australia) and extended families (back home). When we collect & return with firewood & food (financial or material resources), then we win! It's a win-win situation. Australia benefits because we are working hard as a way of saying thank you to a country that has been generous enough to accommodate us and given us room to live and raise our children, but Zambia and Africa also benefit because the resources we acquire and the investors and partnerships we build are channelled to no other place but AFRICA!!! Africa is our history and African is our identity, we shall forever cherish!" says Davies Chibale.

## AUSLAN INTERPRETER AWARDS



Ms Patricia Levitzke-Gray

The Auslan Interpreter Awards were hosted jointly by the Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association Western Australia [ASLIA (WA)] and Notre Dame University on Saturday 3rd May 2008. The awards were a great success and enjoyed by all those who attended.

Sponsorship and support by organisations, including the Office of Multicultural Interests, provided the opportunity to publicly recognise and celebrate the outstanding

talent, commitment and dedication of Auslan (Australian Sign Language) interpreters, who provide high quality language services to both the Deaf and hearing communities in Western Australia. The winners of these state awards will now qualify for the national awards to be held later this year.

This year, OMI sponsored the Deaf Relay Interpreter Award. This award is dedicated to the Deaf Relay Interpreter who has made a significant contribution to the profession of interpreting. The worthy recipient of this award for 2007 was Ms Patricia Levitzke-Gray.

Patricia is greatly respected and admired by all for her tenacity, passion and commitment to her language, the Deaf Community and her interpreting colleagues.

## MULTICULTURAL ARTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Researchers from Deakin University are starting consultations to investigate issues facing artists from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds in Western Australia. The researchers are interested in speaking to artists from CaLD backgrounds who engage in activities such as dance, visual arts, multimedia arts, singing, playing music, theatre, performance art, writing and film-making.

The research has been commissioned by OMI and is overseen by a Reference Group comprising representatives from the Department for Culture and the Arts, Kulcha and the Community Arts Network (WA).

Consultations are being held in a number of local venues around the Perth metropolitan area and selected regional areas. If you are an artist from a CaLD background, are aged over 18 and would like to participate in the consultations, Ruth Rentschler or Natalie Jenkins would love to hear from you.

The consultations will form an important part of a report by Deakin University, which will be presented to OMI to form a basis for the development of policies and programs to assist artists from CaLD backgrounds.

For more information about the project, please contact either Natalie Jenkins [natalie.jenkins@optusnet.com.au](mailto:natalie.jenkins@optusnet.com.au) or Professor Ruth Rentschler [rr@deakin.edu.au](mailto:rr@deakin.edu.au).

## Milligan Harmony Projects wins Cultural Exploration Award

Learning Centre Link, the peak body for Learning and Neighbourhood centres in WA, has awarded Milligan Community Learning and Resource Centre's **Harmony Projects** with a "Cultural Exploration Award", in recognition of its contributions to nurturing cross-cultural learning, and cultural exchanges.

The **Harmony: Let it Be and Many Voices, One Community** projects, which form the Milligan's Harmony projects were recognised by this award.

Milligan Harmony Projects work towards breaking down cultural barriers that are based on misunderstandings. It is through promoting opportunities for individuals and community groups to come together to share and learn about one another, that Milligan demonstrates its commitment to valuing cultural diversity. Discussion Circles, forums and special events such as Buddhist New Year Celebrations and Multicultural Festival are used as tools to engage community members in learning about one another in a positive and appreciative manner. Milligan Harmony Projects utilises cultural and religious leaders as guest speakers and forum presenters to provide insight into their cultural beliefs and practices.

Milligan's "Harmony: Let it Be" project, funded by OMI's Inclusion and Integration Grants Program (IIGP), involves Discussion Circles which bring people from different religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds together to discuss aspects of their beliefs to raise awareness, dispel ignorance and to discover the commonalities in different belief systems. Topics covered include beliefs, rituals, love, marriage and divorce, cooking and social welfare, reconciliation, politics and the media, wealth and society, nurturing body and soul. This project also encompasses a 'Unity in Action' component, which supports multicultural community events in Bunbury.

Milligan's other Harmony Project, entitled "Many Voices, One Community", also funded by OMI's Community Grants Program, hosts community forums which are aimed at bringing diverse groups together to discuss key cross cultural issues.

Through working with the community to promote harmony and dispelling myths and misconceptions about people from different religious and cultural backgrounds, Milligan Harmony Projects develop understanding and mutual respect. This in turn helps individuals build a sense of belonging within the community. OMI congratulates the 'Milligan Harmony Projects' for its innovative program and its recognition through Learning Centre Link's 'Cultural Exploration Award'.



L to R: Carrina Bradbury, Manager of Milligan House, with Merial Clark, Executive Officer, Association of Neighbourhood Houses Victoria at the Awards presentation.

## Revised Language Services Policy sets the standard

The Office of Multicultural Interests is pleased to advise that the State Government's revised Language Services Policy (LSP) was approved by Cabinet on 30 June 2008.

The LSP 2008 is intended to ensure that State Government Agencies are responsive to the needs of clients, who have limited English language skills, and that their rights to access Government services are not compromised.

The policy will assist in achieving substantive equality for all Western Australians by reducing language barriers, thereby better protecting their rights, health and safety, and facilitating social inclusion.

The LSP 2008 includes underlying principles, minimum standards, a broader definition of "interpreters and translators" to increase the number of people who can provide these services, and implementation guidelines as to how to assess the need for an interpreter or translator and use their services.

The Language Services Policy 2008 will soon be available on the OMI website at [www.multicultural.wa.gov.au](http://www.multicultural.wa.gov.au)



## Harmony Weekend Camp

The first of two 'Harmony Week-end' camps organised by the Edmund Rice Centre, Mirrabooka, took place from 16 – 18 May 2008 and was enthusiastically received by a number of people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD), Anglo-Australian and Indigenous backgrounds.

The countries of origin of the participants of the first camp included, Bosnia, Burma, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Somalia, Sudan, Turkey, Uganda, and Vietnam.

The family oriented camp gave 39 adults and 33 children, from a variety of cultures and faiths, the opportunity to interact, share experiences, beliefs and values, and learn from each other in a relaxed and peaceful rural setting in Dwellingup. Highlights of the camp included Local Indigenous Elder, George Whalley, sharing his wisdom and insight on local Indigenous history and culture.

This project is funded through OMI's Inclusion and Integration Grants Program. The second camp will be held in October. Please contact the Edmund Rice Centre on telephone 9440 0625 for further information.



Staff from the Department for Communities at the launch of the Refugee Week Art exhibition coordinated by the Office for Youth and Children.

## 'A Place to Call Home' Refugee week art exhibition

Young refugees from across Perth have shared their inspiring stories in an exhibition organised by the Department for Communities.

The exhibition was launched by Communities Minister, Sue Ellery MLC, on Friday 13 June 2008. The vibrant exhibition was on display at the Perth Concert Hall through to Saturday 21st June 2008.

The Office of Multicultural Interests provided support to the Office of Youth who organised the exhibition as part of Refugee Week 2008.

The artwork was undertaken by refugees aged between 10 and 18 years who attend the Edmund Rice Centre in Mirrabooka and the Intensive English Centres at Balga Senior High School and North Lake Senior Campus.

"Students from Balga and North Lake chose to tell their stories through canvas, while students from the Edmund Rice Centre were given disposable cameras to capture day-to-day scenes of their new home in Perth," Ms Ellery said.

"The artworks are poignant and sometimes funny and a wonderful insight into the lives of these young people, their families and friends."

Miss Hsar Eh Khu, a Balga SHS student whose work is featured in the exhibit, is a Karen-speaking Burmese girl who came to Perth with her family last year. Her memories of a refugee camp in Thailand where she lived for 10 years after escaping Burma are portrayed in a triptych.

Miss Hsar Eh said one of her earliest childhood memories of Burma was of being frightened as she fled from soldiers carrying guns. Although she sometimes still dreams of the fighting, Miss Hsar Eh is enjoying her new life in Australia and the freedom that it had given her family.

The Refugee Council of Australia works with agencies around Australia to coordinate Refugee Week, a national celebration held each year since 1986. Refugee Week 2008 was held from Sunday 15 June to Sunday 21 June, coinciding with World Refugee Day – Friday 20 June. The national theme for Refugee Week 2008 was "A Place to Call Home".



A group of students participating in the project.

## Gowrie Community Services

### Community Relations Integration Officer (CRIO) Program.

If you are a new arrival to WA, even a short journey can often be quite a difficult and confusing task, especially if you are not used to Perth's public transport system.

CRIO worker, Belinda Holmes, is employed by Gowrie Community Services through a grant from the Office of Multicultural Interests' Community Relations Integration Officer (CRIO) program. Her role is to identify and address barriers which may prevent young people from new and emerging communities from accessing services in the City of Gosnells and the City of Canning Local Government areas.

As transport continues to be a significant barrier, The Gowrie has ran several transport workshops with Transperth within schools with high numbers of students from diverse backgrounds. The purpose is to help young people develop their skills to locate a destination and plan a journey safely using Transperth services. Following the workshops, the students have the opportunity to participate in an excursion to put the skills they learn into practice by using the bus, train and ferry to reach a destination, for example, the Perth Zoo. Currently three workshops and outings have been held with the English Second Language (ESL) Enrichment Class at Cannington Community College, and the Intensive English Centre (IEC) at Northlake Campus. In the next few weeks the workshops and outings are being organised for the Langford Islamic College and the Australian Islamic College in Thornlie.

An information package has been developed to help teachers and service providers who may wish to run the workshops in the future.

In other CRIO project activities, The Gowrie in partnership with the City of Gosnells is providing Cultural Competency and Awareness training to assist service providers to more effectively engage CaLD young people in their services. Two workshops are being held in July, with facilitators including Muslim Women's Support Centre, Centrecare Migrant Centre and the Equal Opportunity Commission. For more information please contact Belinda Holmes, Gowrie Community Services on telephone 9478 7500.

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## NEW GUIDE GIVES TIPS ON AUSSIE WORKPLACE CULTURE

World Refugee Day on Friday 20 June was marked by a launch of a new publication for migrants entering the Western Australian workforce. The 'Employability Skills and Workplace Culture in Australia' guide was launched by the Hon Ljiljana Ravlich MLC at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WA).

This Guide is the first of its kind in Australia and was produced by the WA Department of Education and Training with funding from the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations with significant input from members of the community, training providers, migrant resource workers and employers.

"A recent report from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia (CCI) found that migrants may face barriers in the workplace because of a perceived lack of 'cultural or organisational fit' that can impact on their employment prospects", the Minister said.

"The Guide helps by identifying the things we take for granted, and unconsciously do and say, that make the difference between feeling accepted by, or alienated from, our employers and fellow workers."

It is structured around the eight employability skills endorsed by government and industry as essential to performing well in Australian workplaces, such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, initiative and enterprise.

For copies of the Guide, please contact Ms Katherine Horne on (08) 9264 5036 or email: [katherine.horne@det.wa.edu.au](mailto:katherine.horne@det.wa.edu.au) .

The Guide can be downloaded from the Department of Education and Training website at [www.vetinfonet.det.wa.edu.au/accessequity/docs/workplace\\_culture\\_guide.pdf](http://www.vetinfonet.det.wa.edu.au/accessequity/docs/workplace_culture_guide.pdf)

## Western Australian Cultural Diversity Profile

OMI has recently produced the Western Australian Diversity Statistics, a demographic profile, which provides an informative snapshot of our State's population diversity.

The profile of cultural and linguistic diversity provides 2006 Census data on a range of ethnicity related demographics including country of birth, ancestry, language spoken at home, proficiency in spoken English and religious affiliation for Western Australia.

The snapshot reveals that of all States and Territories, WA continues to be the most culturally diverse State with more than a quarter of the population (531,747 persons or 27.1% ) who were born overseas.

This profile has been produced for researchers, multicultural communities, government agencies, students and those in the broader community concerned with designing and delivering services that are accessible and equitable.

Copies of this publication can be obtained by telephoning OMI on 9222 8800 or email [harmony@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:harmony@communities.wa.gov.au).

The document is also available for download from the OMI website at [www.multicultural.wa.gov.au](http://www.multicultural.wa.gov.au) .