

# MCCSA Community Voices

► AUTUMN 2022



## MCCSA Celebrates International Women's Day

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Multicultural Awards

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### MCCSA Board

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# Ready for Election Day?



## Saturday 21 May

Your vote will help shape Australia.  
Make it count.

Find your nearest polling place at [aec.gov.au](https://aec.gov.au)



## FROM THE CEO

HELENA KYRIAZOPOULOS



There is no denying that the past couple of years have been extraordinary in every way; we have learnt so much from our experiences particularly how resilient and giving our communities have been in responding to the Pandemic.

I know that over the past few years I have expressed my gratitude to our communities for the way they responded to Government requests. Our community leaders have been exceptional in the way they have supported their respective groups during this time and continue to do so. Thank you!

In this edition of Community Voices, we focus on the women who this year were recipients of MCCSA Quiet Achievers Awards as part of International Women's Day celebrations. Congratulations to all the women, all who are very deserving of the recognition. Please take some time to read their stories.

Our Programs have continued to grow from strength to strength and we are very pleased to be supporting the South Australian Government as the Multicultural Coordinating Partner for the Community Connections Program, which provides coordination, support, and funding to our new and emerging multicultural community (NEC) organisations, or to

established multicultural community organisations supporting NECs. I encourage communities to consider applying for grant funding of up to \$10,000 through this Program. Information on this grant is available on our website.

I welcome our new Manager of Programs, Ms Julie Hoare to the MCCSA team; she comes to us with a wealth of experience both locally and internationally. Please feel free to drop in at the MCCSA or the John McVeity Centre in the north and meet with her, she is still learning the ropes and looking forward to catching up with our members and communities.

The MCCSA offers its support to the local Ukrainian Community and wishes them well in the task ahead of relocating displaced families seeking refuge in South Australia. I know that South Australians will band together and ensure families arriving feel safe and welcomed. South Australia offers them a safe haven, but in return, they will have much to offer their new homeland. Diversity is an asset one, which brings a richness to the South Australian community.

As the crisis of the pandemic eases many are travelling to reconnect with family and friends overseas and interstate, safe travels to all. Stay well.

*Helena*



# MCCSA Celebrates International Women's Day

Each year the Multicultural Communities Council of SA acknowledges International Women's and bi-annually we host the Women's Community Leadership Award which recognises women who have selflessly shown leadership, passion and commitment to the betterment of the entire multicultural sector.

This year, the MCCSA Women's Community Leadership Award was hosted by The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Sandy Verschoor on Wednesday, 9 March 2022, 4-5pm at the Queen Adelaide room, the Adelaide Town Hall where the photographs and life stories of the award recipients were shared with the guests.

This edition of community voices has been dedicated to showcase our exemplary 2022 award recipients who hailed from diverse cultural background and now call South Australia home.



# International Women's Day 2022

## ALIONA KING

Since migrating to Australia in 1999 as a skilled migrant from the city of Kharkiv in Ukraine, Aliona has realised many personal achievements and contributed much to enhancing South Australian's understanding of Ukrainian culture. Whilst caring for young children, she completed postgraduate education at the University of Adelaide, and has used this learning to work with the Department for Education in Inclusive Education for over 19 years. She is currently an Inclusive Education and Mathematics teacher at Glenunga International High School.

In all her endeavours Aliona remains committed to maintaining and promoting her Ukrainian culture. Her broad vision is to connect migrants of various cultural backgrounds through art projects so as to give them a sense of belonging and engage them in the Australian way of life. She has worked tirelessly to achieve this goal for over 20 years.

Aliona initially commenced her volunteer work at the St Michael Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 2002-2003 where she taught Ukrainian dance to the children of new migrant families. She also taught Ukrainian Language and Dance at the Ukrainian Community School of Adelaide. The following year, she became the Artistic Director, Choreographer and Chairperson of the Hopak Ukrainian Community Dance Ensemble.

In 2006, Aliona helped to found the Yevshan Ukrainian Arts Inc. As the Artistic Director and Choreographer for 12 years, Yevshan Ukrainian Arts grew to an ensemble of around 85 students. They performed at many multicultural events, Adelaide Fringe shows, received international dance awards, and won two trips to New York.

In 2007, Aliona established the Association of Ukrainians Community School where she was the Principal for 2 years. She was active for many years, including on the Management Board as the Cultural Officer, organising various community concerts and events. Creatively, by establishing Ukrainian language classes on Friday nights through the Association of Ukrainians Community School, Aliona initiated community dinners at the Ukrainian Hall on those same Friday evenings, attracting visitors and members to the community hall for the past 15 years.

In 2018, Aliona founded SLAVA Ukrainian Cultural Centre and has held significant roles over that time, including President, Artistic Director, and Principal of SLAVA Ukrainian Language School. The Centre's goals are to promote and develop Ukrainian culture and language, support new migrants and collaborate with multicultural communities in SA on various projects and events.



One of SLAVA's most significant projects, amongst many festivals and events, is the Pysanky - Giant Easter Eggs. This popular project has been displayed in the Adelaide City and Mitcham Libraries and Burnside Civic Centre and was displayed during March this year at the Unley Library.

SLAVA accepts members from all cultural backgrounds and currently has members from 12 different cultures. It has grown to more than 200 members in just a few years and has become well known in South Australia as a high-performing intercultural community. Aliona is very proud of this, and all her achievements, in meeting her vision for the Ukrainian community in South Australia.

# International Women's Day 2022

## DRAGICA ŠARUNIĆ

Dragica Sarunic was born in 1957 in her beautiful hometown of Zadar in Croatia. As a child and adolescent girl, Dragica developed a strong passion for education, which has lasted to this day. Although she took pride in all of her studies, Dragica fell in love with history and the Croatian language. Her passion for the Arts was significantly driven by the injustices she experienced, and experiences by those who fell victim to the Yugoslav communist party. Ethnic Croats in high positions were denied employment, the right to practise their religion and call themselves Croatian. Dragica's childhood significantly fuelled her passion and dedication to the Adelaide Croatian community.

Moreover, Dragica found herself significantly involved at her local Catholic church where she read and directed children's plays every Sunday.

In her late teens, Dragica married and moved to Adelaide with her husband, where she took on the role of a full-time wife and mother to her two sons. In addition to the traditional roles of cooking and cleaning, she worked hard on the family farm and completed weekend concreting jobs with her husband. This background developed Dragica's considerable trades skills, unusual for many women of her generation.

When Dragica's grandchildren were born, she cared for them, nurtured them and loved them with all her



heart. Importantly, there is one thing that Dragica has helped her grandchildren to find particularly special – her passion for Croatia. She taught her grandchildren about the origins of the Croatian people, the language, culture and most recently, the multitude of battles that Croats fought to obtain independence and international recognition.

It was an inevitable development that Dragica became an ethnic

School Teacher and Principal. In the Croatian Ethnic School, she is prominent in teaching her students about the Croatian language, culture and history. Dragica also is the Treasurer of the women's organisation, Katarina Zrinski, committee member of the Croatian Club Adelaide, and a committee member of the Croatian Seniors.

Dragica knows that all appreciate her work and dedication to the Adelaide Croatian Community.

# International Women's Day 2022

## GEO THEEPA

Theepha migrated to Port Lincoln, South Australia from India in 2009 when her husband got a job with Flinders Ports. She volunteered and worked in kindergartens and primary schools in Port Lincoln and quickly became involved with the local community, including indigenous communities.

She moved to Adelaide in 2011 and continued her service to the community as a Tamil language bilingual school support officer in primary schools, helping new migrant Tamil Children to more easily associate with the local community.

In 2017 after her daughter moved interstate to pursue dentistry, Theepha joined the South Australia Tamil School as a volunteer Tamil language Teacher. This enabled her to further her association with the Tamil community and use her language skills to help migrant Tamil Children and those born in Australia.

Theepha became the School Principal in 2018 and continued her service to the Tamil community. She worked hard with other teachers to adapt the arts, music and drama teaching curriculum to enable children to learn Tamil in a relaxed manner apart from normal reading and writing. Under her creative leadership, Sports Day was incorporated in the students' broader learning. Every annual day was planned meticulously and celebrated extravagantly, providing a platform



for individual children to showcase their talents and promote Tamil language.

Theepha's leadership and hard work helped the Tamil School accomplish another major milestone. South Australian Certificate of Education stage 1 and 2 in Tamil language was introduced and students were able to learn the Tamil language as one of their subjects in year 11 and 12.

As well as working hard within the school, Theepha volunteered with

the Adelaide Tamil Association (ATA) in their activities for the Tamil community and played a vital role in forming the ATA Women's wing. She has also volunteered as program presenter in the Vaagai broadcasting service since their launch, promoting Tamil language and helping and supporting their activities.

Theepha is committed in both her professional and volunteer work to assisting the Tamil community to live positively in Australia.

# International Women's Day 2022

## JACQUELINE RIVIERE

Jacqueline Riviere was born and raised as a child in Santiago, Chile. She arrived in Melbourne in 1974 with her family after fleeing the dictatorship of the Pinochet regime. As an adolescent immigrant in Australia, she faced many language and cultural barriers, but steadily overcame these barriers through her own efforts and the support of her parents.

Her parents always encouraged Jacqueline and her siblings to study and to have a career so that much can be achieved in life to assist their families economically and to be a role model for their own children. Importantly, her parents encouraged independence and self-reliance; this was particularly relevant for Jacqueline because, as a woman, she was taught that one never knows what life can throw at you!

The values gained from her parents and encouragement from her husband have helped, Jacqueline in her various careers over the past 30 years and in combining her work with study. She studied Social Work on a part-time basis at Uni SA over 6 years, completed a Diploma in Childcare Studies at Tea Tree Gully TAFE, and undertook a Spanish interpreter course at Adelaide TAFE. She later studied for a Diploma in Counselling and Training and Assessment at Relationship Australia.

Jacqueline is currently working as a Multicultural Screening Project Officer at Wellbeing SA, and



is also involved as a committee member with the Hispanic Women's Association in SA (HWASA).

All of this work and study was achieved while Jacqueline raised two wonderful children and now has three beautiful granddaughters, whom she cherishes as a gift from her children. She embraces the opportunities of being a wife, parent, grandmother, carer for her mother, sister, volunteer and employee.

Jacqueline's goals have always been to create a positive impact in her life, in others and in the community in which she lives. She is grateful for the opportunities given to her in Australia that have enabled her to achieve

and work towards these goals. She strongly believes that this has been possible through her current and previous work where she has met and interacted with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Working towards achieving goals in life requires hard work and commitment. Jacqueline relishes the challenges and her biggest driver is to make the most of every opportunity that life presents and use every challenge as a gateway for learning. She continues to develop as person from all experiences and will continue to advocate for change when systemic barriers exist to stop people from achieving their own goals and ambitions.

# International Women's Day 2022

## PRIYA PREMKUMAR



Born in Mumbai in India, Priya migrated to Adelaide with her family in 2007. Since 2008 she has been an enthusiastic, dedicated and committed volunteer, predominately with not-for-profit community organisations such as the Indian Australian Association of South Australia (IAASA), the Federation of Indian Communities of South Australia (FICSA), and the Adelaide Metropolitan Malayalee Association (AMMA).

While working as a full-time senior teacher, Priya's engagement with multicultural communities in South Australia commenced when she organised various cultural events and programs for AMMA.

In 2010 she played a key role in planning and developing a cultural float built on a co-created theme 'India - Unity in Diversity' at the

Australia Day Parade in Adelaide, which won the 'Best Creative Award' from the Australia Day Council presented by the Premier. In this role, Priya demonstrated her significant communication and leadership skills in the wider community, and showed that she had a strong capacity to continue to learn.

These leadership skills, combined with an artistic approach, enabled her to be a successful Program Coordinator from 2011-15 in planning and executing Adelaide Kalamela, a multicultural festival of performing arts in collaboration with the Adelaide Festival Centre. This event provided a strong, inclusive environment that encouraged artists from multiple ethnicities to demonstrate their culture and talents to a wider audience.

During 2014-15, as the Secretary of the Indian diaspora's peak organisation IAASA, Priya again used her well-developed leadership skills in engaging with multicultural communities and liaising with local and state government bodies.

As the Secretary of FICSA from 2016-18, she organised several events specifically focussing on helping new migrants to adapt to their new environment, as well as organising other forums for the wellbeing of women and children.

Since 2019, Priya has volunteered her time for IAASA, first as Women's

Wellbeing Coordinator and then taking up the Secretary's role again in 2020. Working together with community members, she has played an important role in formulating and delivering various community projects and programs to promote the welfare and wellbeing of the wider community members. Some of her major contributions include: -

- » Mental health and social support workshops for senior citizens
- » Counselling forums and workshops for international students and women suffering from domestic abuse and sexual harassment
- » 'IAASA Cares' a program formulated during the COVID-19 pandemic
- » 'Indian Mela', an annual mega cultural and food festival.

Priya strongly believes that a team is more than just a group of people working together toward a common goal. It's a group that functions as a single unit, working toward a powerful and shared vision of accomplishment. She believes that her demonstrated collaborative skills, together with the desire to build teams committed to achieving common goals, has enabled her to earn the respect and admiration of all.

# International Women's Day 2022

## YULTUZ TEYIPJAN

Yultuz was born in Urumqi, East Türkistan. She came to Australia in 1999 to reunite with her family and embark on a new life in this country.

In Urumqi, Yultuz studied Uyghur language and Literature at the University of East Türkistan and then began work at Tarim Magazine as an editor. When she came to Adelaide, she studied English language and undertook various short courses to continue her education and learning. Initially she worked in retail, but unfortunately, her daughter's disability became very serious, so she decided to care for her full-time. As well as caring for her daughter, Yultuz has been committed to and active in the Adelaide Uyghur community since her arrival.

Yultuz's greatest inspiration in life is her father, the late Teyipjan Eliyef. He was a renowned poet in East Türkistan, who inspired his people and gave them hope. Following his footsteps, she deeply admires Uyghur literature and uses her knowledge in the Uyghur Language School.

Yultuz is the Principal as well as a teacher at the Uyghur Language School of South Australia.

She has been teaching at the Language School for ten years, where Uyghur students learn their mother tongue, culture and history. This adds so much meaning to her life, as she is helping to preserve the Uyghur culture and teaching the next



generation of Uyghurs their Uyghur identity. In this way, she continues to honour her father whose principles and philosophy she is following.

She is also one of the founding board members of "Australian Uyghur Tangritagh Women's Association" (AUTWA).

As a board member of AUTWA, she strives to empower and inspire Uyghur women. As well as through AUTWA, Yultuz has been actively volunteering in the Uyghur

community and has been promoting Uyghur culture at various events in South Australia.

As the Uyghur community grows in Adelaide, Yultuz is grateful for the democracy and peace of our beautiful country, and she strives for the Uyghur community to become more connected to Australia's colourful society.

# International Women's Day 2022

## TJI SRIKANDI-GOODHART

Born in Indonesia, Tji Srikandi-Goodhart came to Adelaide in 1963 on a Colombo Plan Scholarship and graduated in dentistry (BDS1968), later specializing in Periodontics (MDS1982). Tji practised dentistry for almost 40 years and was active in various dental organisations including the Australian Society of Periodontology-SA (President 1988-91), Australia & New Zealand Academy of Periodontists and the SA Women Dentists Association (President 1998). She has also been involved in many community organisations.

In 1994 Tji, together with other businesswomen, formed the Asia Pacific Business Council for Women Inc. and was elected as their inaugural President (1994-1996). The business mentoring, networking, mutual support, acknowledgement of achievements and empowerment had a significant impact on many members. The Council is now in its 28th year and still going strong.

As Vice-President (1995-1997) of the International Federation of Women Entrepreneurs (IFWE), Tji helped convene the 5th IFWE International Conference in Adelaide, showcasing the diverse businesses run by talented South Australian women, and promoting multinational trade.

Throughout her student and early working life, Tji shared her love, skills, and knowledge of the land of her birth with fellow Australians through Indonesian performing arts as a traditional dancer, choreographer,



gamelan player and presenter at many events. She also taught Indonesian dancing over the years, including to schoolteachers of Indonesian language and culture, who in turn could teach their students.

Tji has been an active member of the Australian-Indonesian Association of SA Inc. (AIASA) since its inception in 1968, the aim of which is to promote better understanding and goodwill between the Indonesian and Australian people, based on friendship, respect and trust. The AIASA also provides a platform to nurture cohesion among the ethnically, culturally, and religiously diverse Indonesian communities in South Australia, and aspires to represent them at an inter-governmental soft-diplomacy level. As President of the AIASA in 2014-2016, Tji coordinated the annual Indofest-Adelaide, a major festival involving 20+ Indonesian community groups, in collaboration with many

schools teaching Indonesian, Flinders University, the Art Gallery of SA, the Migration Museum, Nexus Art Gallery and Oz-Asia. The festival attracted crowds from all parts of Adelaide's community.

In 2017, the Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia presented Tji with a "Lifetime Achievement" Award for "the promotion of unity and harmony among Indonesian communities in South Australia".

After retirement, 'Ibu (mother) Tji', as she is known, continues to be involved in many events with various Indonesian community organisations, including educational, cultural, religious, and fundraising events for different causes locally and in Indonesia.

Tji gratefully acknowledges the generous support she has received in all her endeavours from her team members, colleagues, friends, and family.

# International Women's Day 2022

## SISTER SLAVICA TURCIC

In 1968 aged 16, Sister Slavica and her family migrated to Australia and joined thousands of other migrants at the camp near Wollongong. A year later, the family was transferred to a camp in Melbourne.

As a teenage migrant, Sister Slavica understood what it meant to leave your homeland, to migrate to another country and to start from scratch. She learnt from experience how much assistance is needed to help people feel at home in a foreign land and to provide the means through which people can build their own homes so as to create the best environment for a family to nurture their cultural and religious practices.

From that experience, Sister Slavica developed a great passion for social and pastoral work and has continued this work, particularly for the Croatian community, since that time.

The Sisters Adorers of the Blood of Christ came to Australia in 1963 to assist Croatian migrants and others in their faith journey through various ministries. They also assisted Croatian and other migrants to settle successfully in Australia.

In early 1969 Sister Slavica's family met the Sisters Adorers in Melbourne. This was the beginning of her plan to join the Congregation as she was already contemplating committing herself to religious life.

In November 1969 Sister Slavica joined the Sisters Adorers in Melbourne, and after her formation

in 1977 was transferred to Canberra where she became fully engaged in social and pastoral work within the Croatian community. She was involved in children's, youth and family groups for many years. At the same time, she worked in a childcare centre for migrant children.

As the broader social welfare needs grew in the community Sister Slavica directed her work and efforts to establishing a Croatian Welfare Centre assisting people to meet their needs. After lobbying politicians for support and establishing a committee comprising Croatian and Mid-European community members who also were driven by the same objectives, the Croatian Welfare Centre (CWC) was established in 1980. In 1981 the CWC was successful in obtaining government funding that helped enormously in further developing the services for Croatian and Mid-European communities. While managing the services for those communities, Sister Slavica continued with her studies and obtained the Associate Diploma of Social Science in Welfare at the Canberra Institute of Technology.

Sister Slavica transferred to Adelaide in 1998 and became a Community Settlement Service worker for the Croatian community. In 2005, recognising that the Croatian community was slowly ageing over time, she began focusing on services for the aged, first as President of



the Croatian Care for the Aged Association and then as Manager of the Home and Community Care Program. Since 2015, she has managed the Commonwealth Home Support Program for the Association.

Sr. Slavica continues to work tirelessly to ensure that services for elderly people, regardless of their nationality, are in place and that these services are accessible to all those in need.

# International Women's Day 2022

## STEPHANIE KOMAR

Stephanie was born in Renmark, a multicultural town in rural South Australia. Her country roots have taught her the value of connected communities and her migrant lineage challenged what it meant to be a typical Australian.

Stephanie joined The Latin American Society of South Australia (LASSA) in 2021 after travelling to Latin America six years prior. Having never left the country before, her travels left an impression so deep she returned to Australia committed to giving back to the countries that radically shaped her impression of the world.

She learned Spanish at The University of Adelaide, the process of which informed her involvement with LASSA. Stephanie now facilitates English and Spanish conversation classes. What began as a two-person project has grown to include six more volunteers over the course of a year, demonstrating how fast the program has grown.

English conversation classes were designed to build the confidence of Spanish-speaking individuals who needed it, while teaching Australian slang and Adelaide culture in a friendly environment.

The Spanish conversation classes began six months later. These sessions were designed to connect Adeladians with the richness of Latin culture through the conduit of the Spanish language.



The classes cater to both beginners and advanced levels, as well as one-on-one online sessions.

In addition to regular sessions for both language groups, Stephanie has facilitated numerous community events to bring together the English-speaking world and the Spanish speaking world. At the heart of these events is a belief in the power connected communities can provide.

Since travelling to Latin America, she has returned to her father's home

country of Slovenia to connect with her own culture. In 2015 she gained official Slovenian citizenship and shares language and tradition with her grandmother who emigrated here at the age of 20 with her infant child - Stephanie's father.

As well as volunteering for LASSA, Stephanie studies International Relations full time at university, works part time in retail, and has completed numerous internships with Indigenous Australian organisations.

# What's been happening in the Disability Space?

## MCCSA's Disability Inclusion Videos

Over the past month our Project Officer Sisaleo Philavong, has been out and about in the Community Producing a series of Disability Inclusion videos as part of the Cultural Connections in Disability Project.

The purpose of the videos is to articulate to communities how to develop greater inclusion of people with disability, what Inclusion looks like in our community, and provide some practical insight and ideas to the community. Sisaleo has been working with people with lived experience of disability discussing what inclusion means to them, and with organisations such as the SA Museum to highlight what they have done to create inclusive spaces for people with disabilities and the community.

Over the next few months, videos will be filmed with Playford Council, Autism SA, Guide Dogs SA, Two Way Street and the South Australian Council of Intellectual Disability. If a person with a disability or your community would like to be a part of the video project please contact Sisaleo at [sisaleo.philavong@mccsa.org.au](mailto:sisaleo.philavong@mccsa.org.au)

## Developments in South Australia

Coming soon to South Australia is a new app called "Pavely."

Developed by panel members - people with lived experience of disability, the Department of Human Services, in collaboration with the Department for Innovation and Skills, Department of Treasury and Finance and Go2Gov program start-up 'The Moonshine Lab'.

The App will be an online directory of venues and facilities across the state and allows users to find, rate and review their experiences based on accessibility and overall inclusiveness. The app is an initiative of the State's Disability and Inclusion Plan, Inclusive SA and aims to drive greater community inclusion for the approximately 300,000 people living with disability in South Australia.



( INCLUSIVE SA )



Government of South Australia  
Department for Innovation and Skills

# Caring for our carers

MCCSA, in collaboration with Carers SA, is continuing to provide services for multicultural carers. MCCSA's main focus are Russian and Indian communities, however carers from other communities can still receive support, provided that they speak English.

Unpaid carers who are caring for a relative or a friend who is frail aged, has a disability, a drug or alcohol related problem, dementia, is experiencing mental illness, has a chronic health condition or a terminal illness can access a number

of services via the Carer Gateway program which supports carers in a critical situation.

Information and advice on the caring role, free counselling services, and peer support groups are available to help carers in their caring life. Transport or meal vouchers can be provided if a carer struggles financially. Cleaning and gardening services or a one-off electrical appliances purchase, such as a washing machine or a dishwasher, may help carers who have issues managing the home chores. Planned or emergency respite is also available if a carer can't continue to care for the loved one.

Our trained coaches help guide carers on setting up and reaching their goals, reflecting on how things are going for them, and determining whether there are areas in their life they want to change.

After the initial discussion, together with the carer, we form a plan for which services are most needed, and send this information to Carers SA who review and then arrange for the support.

To access the Carer Gateway services and support, please contact MCCSA to speak to Florine or Victoria on 08 8213 4607. Alternatively, you can email [florine.fernandes@mccsa.org.au](mailto:florine.fernandes@mccsa.org.au) or [victoria.tairli@mccsa.org.au](mailto:victoria.tairli@mccsa.org.au)

## Where carers can find support

 Carer Gateway  
An Australian Government Initiative



Sargoon, carer to his daughter.



## Julie Hoare

*Manager, Programs*

Julie Hoare joined MCCSA during January this year, replacing Megan Hill as Manager, Programs. Julie has spent most of the past 3 decades working overseas in humanitarian and development assistance. This included four years in El Salvador working with civil society organisations after the civil war, 6 years in Cambodia with Australian Red Cross, 13 years with the International Red Cross based in the Geneva headquarters and the regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama, and most recently three years with Save the Children's regional office in Panama.

Originally from Adelaide, Julie previously worked in refugee settlement, migrant health, sexual and reproductive health, youth housing, employment related and youth and indigenous further education programs.

# 'Experiencing swallowing and eating difficulties' – A research project by the University of Adelaide

*Dr. Stacie Attrill*

Food, and sharing meals together is important for people, their families and communities, and mealtimes are a place to develop relationships and celebrate culture and connections.

Some people with disability experience difficulties with eating and swallowing that can make eating and drinking challenging, and make it hard to participate in meals with others.

For example, some children are born with conditions that affect swallowing, such as cerebral palsy, and for adults living with neurological conditions, such as stroke, Parkinson's Disease or dementia, swallowing can be affected and may worsen over time.

People with swallowing difficulties (also called 'dysphagia') may also experience health risks when they are eating or drinking, especially if food or liquid enters their airways or lungs. Speech pathologists can assist people who may be experiencing swallowing difficulties to manage their swallowing and make preparing and eating food easier.

Unfortunately, we don't yet understand how swallowing difficulties impact people and their families from different cultural backgrounds, and how people can access help and information to support eating at home and in their communities.

A research team at University of Adelaide is working together with MCCSA to develop a project to learn more about the understanding and experiences of people from different cultural backgrounds, and how they adapt food and mealtimes with eating and drinking.

This project is led by speech pathologists Dr. Stacie Attrill and Dr. Abi Thirumanickam, who share an interest in ensuring that health services in Australia are accessible and equitable for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

We are in the early stages of planning, but we hope to provide more information by mid-year.

**If you would like to know more, you can email Stacie on [Stacie.Attrill@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:Stacie.Attrill@adelaide.edu.au)**

STRENGTH FOR LIFE IS FOR EVERYONE!

# Strategies to encourage participation in culturally and linguistically diverse communities

COTA SA's Strength for Life is a progressive resistance training program for people aged 50+, (40+ for Aboriginal community members and people from a refugee background). It is currently held in approximately 100 centres across South Australia. This program concentrates on strength and balance exercises, with a strong emphasis on social connection.

Thousands of people in South Australia benefit every year from the Strength for Life Program both physically and psychosocially, however data shows that older people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds have not enjoyed the same benefits, since their participation in Strength for Life has so far been low.

COTA SA's commitment to the cultural diversity program has resulted in the implementation of several strategies to encourage engagement and participation in Strength for Life for our diverse community. They include:

Adoption of a **multifaceted approach to raise awareness** about Strength for Life through CALD community presentations, CALD radio interviews, social media,

ethno-specific newsletter articles, working closely with CALD leaders and bicultural workers, and translated resources.

**Addressing cultural attitudes to physical activity** by ensuring that the community feels a sense of connection and relevance to the program, highlighting the fact that it relates to enhancing activities of daily living, thus promoting ongoing health and independence at home.

**Engaging in co-design methodology, respectful enquiry and exploring barriers and enablers** such as cost, transport and modesty, unique to different cultural groups.

Connecting with the community members and running sessions in **culturally appropriate settings**, where people congregate and feel 'at home'. These include ethno-specific seniors' groups, CALD Community Home Support Program groups, and places of worship. A mosque is one of our most recent Strength for Life facilities where Strength for Life sessions have commenced.

**Addressing literacy and health literacy** through a range of strategies involving the simplification and translation of enrolment forms and posters, web based translated

information highlighting a step-by-step approach to getting involved with Strength for Life, radio broadcasts, the use of pictorial representations and filming of various exercises to assist new participants with remembering the exercises.

**Working with bicultural workers/ volunteers** at the initial stages of the program, as they assist community members with enrolment and screening processes and preparation for exercise sessions.

**Matching fitness instructors with the community members;** gathering the **gender, ethnicity and languages spoken** of Strength for Life fitness professions to match them to the best of our ability with our community groups. One example of this matching is the choice of female instructors for women only groups.

If you would like to discuss how Strength for Life could be more accessible and appropriate to culturally and linguistically diverse community members, please feel free contact:

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**Clara Tait**

Cultural Diversity Officer,  
Strength for Life T: 08 8232 0422  
E: [ctait@cotasa.org.au](mailto:ctait@cotasa.org.au)



# Cancer Screening and Prevention among CALD Communities in SA

Cancer affects everyone. One in five South Australians affected by cancer are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, and 1.5% of Australians born overseas are currently living with cancer. People from CALD backgrounds are less likely to participate in the nationally offered breast, bowel, and cervical cancer screening programs. Many people encounter practical, structural, and cultural barriers to accessing cancer control and support programs.

People from the CALD population are not a homogenous or uniform group. There is diversity within diversity, where the health-related needs of different CALD communities and individuals within these communities vary considerably. Understanding these differences can help Cancer Council SA to improve the design and delivery of equitable programs and services for CALD communities. To do this, we are conducting research regarding cancer control program needs and barriers among emerging and established migrant communities in South Australia.

So far, we have conducted group interviews with people born in Afghanistan, Nepal, China and Hong

Kong, and north-western Africa (including Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone). These interviews were open-ended discussions about health care behaviours, beliefs and knowledge, as well as views and experiences with cancer. We have identified some common barriers to participating in cancer control and screening programs, as well as some common enablers, outlined below.

## Barriers to screening

- » Australian health system literacy
- » Past bad experiences with health professionals
- » English language literacy
- » Fatalistic views of cancer
- » Gender-specific concerns, e.g. modesty
- » Practical issues, e.g. childcare, transport

## Enablers for screening

- » Trusting relationship with GP
- » Health professional cultural awareness training
- » Quality resources in language
- » Knowledge about cancer and screening
- » Self-collection (for bowel and cervical screening); same-gender GP
- » Use of community networks

Despite these commonalities, we have found that the most significant barriers and enablers vary from one CALD group to the next. To identify these key issues and strengths in each community, we are now interviewing community leaders who can help enhance our understanding and work alongside Cancer Council SA to develop successful initiatives.

If you would like to participate in an interview or learn more about the research, please register your interest at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p834tj8> or contact the lead researcher Dr Jessica Loyer on email: [jloyer@cancersa.org.au](mailto:jloyer@cancersa.org.au), Tel: 08 8291 4294.





## Community Connections Program - Multicultural Coordinating Partner Grants

South Australian new and emerging multicultural community (NEC) organisations, or established organisations supporting NECs are invited to apply for grant funding of up to \$10,000 through the Community Connections Program, Multicultural Coordinating Partner Grants.

The purpose of this program is to empower people to make connections with communities, social networks and services. Funding will be allocated to projects that respond to emerging issues and unmet needs, and for projects that build the capacity of NECs. Applications close Friday 6 May 2022.

If you have any questions regarding the program, eligibility of your project or how to apply, please contact the Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia (MCCSA) on (08) 8345 5266 or Somi Lindsay at [somi.lindsay@mccsa.org.au](mailto:somi.lindsay@mccsa.org.au)

[MCP Funding Guidelines](#)

[MCP Grants - Application Form](#)



### Uniting Communities Survey

Uniting Communities is looking to gain some insights into what communities in the Eastern regions would be interested in doing to increase social connections. If this applies to you please spare a few minutes to fill out this survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCP-community-feedback-survey>



# Governor's Multicultural Awards

Winners of the 2021 Governor's Multicultural Awards were announced at a small ceremony held at Government House on Thursday 10th March, 2022.

Her Excellency, the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia announced the winners, recognising the individuals, teams and organisations for their outstanding contribution to multiculturalism and intercultural understanding, and for promoting our culturally diverse state.

**Ten award recipients were chosen from 23 finalists across nine award categories:**

OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**Mr George Chin**

ARTS AND CULTURE AWARD

**Mr Farhan Shah**

COMMUNITY SECTOR AWARD:

**Workskil Australia**

MEDIA AWARD

**Mrs Theodora Maios**

PRIVATE SECTOR AWARD

**Aussie Discount Chemist Group and TWCM Cumberland Park Pharmacy**

PUBLIC SECTOR AWARD

**Multicultural Services, Department for Child Protection**

VOLUNTEER AWARD

**Mr Esmatullah Ahmad Zadah and Ms Ayesha Fariha Safdar**  
(joint winners)

SENIOR VOLUNTEER AWARD

**Mrs Vjera Žuvela**

YOUTH AWARD

**Miss Neela Siva**

## MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER - **Eduardo Donoso**

Born and raised in Chile in South America, Eduardo Donoso migrated to Australia in the 80's under the Australian - UN Humanitarian Program as a Political Refugee and spent his early years in Whyalla in the Upper Spencer Gulf.

Prior to his arrival in Australia, Eduardo completed high school in Minnesota, USA and studied Oceanography at the Catholic University of Valparaiso, Chile. Upon his arrival in Australia over thirty years ago, Eduardo made use of the opportunities that Australia had to offer. He obtained a Bachelor of Industrial Engineering and an Associate Diploma of Mechanical Engineering with Associate Studies in Welding and Joining Engineering. Since completing his studies, he has worked as an Engineer in Mining, Defence, and the Maintenance Service Industries.

“My extensive career has allowed me to develop and refine my skillset to communicate and build relationships at all levels from small to large companies and organisations, through to Governments and its related entities. I develop strategies for meeting their needs and work with industry participants to provide safe, quality, and cost-effective services”.

Serving as board member of MCCSA is just one of the many roles Eduardo performs in South Australia. Eduardo has been a member of the Regional Development Board



– Whyalla & Eyre Peninsula Inc. (Federal Government – Individual Appointment), the Australian Institute of Company Directors, the Aboriginal Employment Cluster the Advisory Committee to the Industry Capability Network of SA, as well as Fellow/Member/Council Member of Ai Group Business Council for SA, and Past-President of the Australia Chile Chamber of Commerce.

Eduardo will use his experience to build relationships, contributing to the growth of South Australia's multicultural community organisations. His numerous engagements both nationally and internationally within the corporate sector have given Eduardo a broader insight into the norms and cultures of people from different parts of the globe. This ranges from the Americas and Europe through to the whole of Asia Pacific and the Middle East.

“Cultural acceptance and modesty have been the most important tools contributing to my success in business and other engagements. I believe now is the time to use my knowledge and experience to support our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities in SA.

I consider myself a citizen of earth more than of a particular nation. I believe that as human beings we hold the power to create change for the better. People and Communities are the centre of this so-called universe. If we all do the right things for each other, without clouding our activities by focusing on personal gain, then I am sure that as a community we can do great things with sustainable outcomes.

I believe in empowering the youth and supporting the elderly. Creating a powerful environment for socializing and networking is the beginning of good ideas and great outcomes”.

# MCCSA Successful Communities Program

MCCSA's Successful Communities Program has had a busy few months.

We kickstarted our first Leadership and Networking series of the year on the 24th of February. Though scaled down due to COVID restrictions the event was well received.

We had guest speakers from the Public Transport Inclusion Team (SA Public Transport Authority, Department of Infrastructure and Transport) seeking feedback from CALD communities on the various aspects of the SA public transport services to ensure better inclusivity.

In March we had our first Grant Writing workshop of the year held at

our city offices. Feedback from the wide variety of attendees was highly positive.

The Successful Communities Program runs workshops on Grant Writing and Organisational Governance throughout the year at our city and northern offices. For 2022 we also have 5 Leadership and Networking Nights lined up, in April, June, September and November. Similarly, the educational Grant Writing and Governance workshops are scheduled for May, July and August. Drop me an email on [somi.lindsay@mccsa.org.au](mailto:somi.lindsay@mccsa.org.au) if you are keen to find out a bit more about dates and times and to ensure that you are on the Successful Communities mailing list.

In other news, we have been working closely with our colleagues at the City of Playford's Community Wellbeing Hub, at the John McVeity Centre. MCCSA has secured office and meeting space at the John McVeity Centre and these facilities are available for the use of our members. You are most welcome to visit us if you are in the area. MCCSA staff will generally be available on site from Tuesday to Thursday.

Room bookings can be made by contacting Julie Hoare, Manager Programs at [julie.hoare@mccsa.org.au](mailto:julie.hoare@mccsa.org.au)

**Somi Lindsay, Coordinator - Successful Communities**



To book MCCSA facilities at JMC please contact [julie.hoare@mccsa.org.au](mailto:julie.hoare@mccsa.org.au)

# MCCSA TEAM AT JMC



## **JULIE HOARE**

**Job Title: Manager - Programs**

Area of Focus:

- » Program development
- » Partnership
- » Community engagement

Working days at JMC: Alternate Thursdays

Email: [julie.hoare@mccsa.gov.au](mailto:julie.hoare@mccsa.gov.au)

Mobile: 0424 799 322



## **UKASH ALI AHMED**

**Job title: Youth Programs Coordinator**

Area of Focus:

- » Assist New and Emerging communities with establishing youth programs at community level
- » Advocacy and support for CALD youth, including referrals
- » Connection to peer support networks
- » Group sessions

Working days at JMC: Wednesdays 9am to 3pm

Email: [ukash.ahmed@mccsa.org.au](mailto:ukash.ahmed@mccsa.org.au)



## **SAVRY OUK**

**Job Title: Reconnect Youth Officer**

Area of Focus:

- » Supporting CALD youth with issues of homelessness, drug & alcohol use, social connections
- » Advocacy, court support, networking with other agencies, referrals etc.
- » Counselling, family mediation, case management
- » School and community based out-reach services

Working days: Tuesday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Email: [savry.ouk@mccsa.org.au](mailto:savry.ouk@mccsa.org.au) Phone: 0423 002 064



## **SOMI LINDSAY**

**Job Title: Coordinator - Successful Communities**

Area of Focus:

- » Grant writing support
- » Organisational governance + soft skills
- » Leadership and Networking Opportunities for CALD communities

Working days at JMC: Alternate Thursdays

Email: [somi.lindsay@mccsa.org.au](mailto:somi.lindsay@mccsa.org.au)

# MCCSA SERVICES



## MCCSA CHSP Transport Service

Our transport service is well used and helps many of our frail and older members of the CALD community go on excursions and attend Day Centre programs. Community groups use our service for trips to places of cultural or tourist interest. This provides their members with an opportunity to socialise in comfort and tranquility.

To hire our buses at very reasonable rates, call us on 8213 4608 or email [sidique.bah@mccsa.org.au](mailto:sidique.bah@mccsa.org.au)

The languages currently spoken by our volunteers are: Bosnian, Cantonese, Croatian, Filipino, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Latvian, Mandarin, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Serbian, Swedish, Danish, Arabic, Farsi (Persian), Dari and Vietnamese.

If you would like to make use of our service or join our team of volunteers call Florine Fernandes at MCCSA on 8213 4604



## Carer Support Group

MCCSA in Collaboration with Carers SA are supporting carers in their caring role with a new program. The Carers Support Group provides information about wellness and self-care and opportunities to connect and support one another.

For more information, please contact: [Florine.fernandes@mccsa.org.au](mailto:Florine.fernandes@mccsa.org.au) or call 83455266.



## MCCSA Community Hall

A diverse range of community groups use our 50 seating capacity hall for meetings, forums, workshops and functions **Free of charge** if they are a registered MCCSA community group. A donation is appreciated for rubbish removal and electricity.

The Hall is also available for commercial hire.

For more information in accessing the MCCSA hall call June on 8345 5266 or email [mccsa@mccsa.org.au](mailto:mccsa@mccsa.org.au) for terms and conditions of use.



## Healthy Ageing

MCCSA supports community members to stay connected and receive the support and information they need as they age. In addition to advocacy and forums we also participate in research such as the CALD age friendly SA report and our current collaboration with Flinders university on social support. MCCSA supports four art groups for members of the Armenian, Korean, Spanish speaking and Russian speaking communities.

In 2022 we are facilitating Ageing Well in CALD Communities in collaboration with Office for Ageing Well (OFAW), this year focusing on Spanish speaking, Korean, Indonesian and Coptic Egyptian.

For any enquiries on this program please call Kristin or Lena on 8213 4603 or email [kristin.johansson@mccsa.org.au](mailto:kristin.johansson@mccsa.org.au).



## Community Visitor Scheme

Our Community Visitor Scheme facilitates one-on-one friendship between older people in residential care and community visitors speaking their language. They visit at least twice a month to build relationships. They add some warmth to the life of our senior citizens by reducing their loneliness and isolation.



## Successful Communities

Successful Communities is focused on providing individual support to vulnerable and emerging culturally diverse communities and their members.

For further information please call Somi Lindsay on 8345 5266 or email [somi.lindsay@mccsa.org.au](mailto:somi.lindsay@mccsa.org.au)



## Reconnect Services

MCCSA provides individual support to young people that are having trouble at home. This is an early intervention program to prevent youth homelessness and can provide information, support, counseling, mediation, practical support, and group activities.

For further information or referral please contact Julie [julie.hoare@mccsa.org.au](mailto:julie.hoare@mccsa.org.au) or Savvy [savvy.ouk@mccsa.org.au](mailto:savvy.ouk@mccsa.org.au) on 8213 4605.



## Kickstart your child's success program

Kick-start Your Child's Success program is nearing completion with the last remaining groups being Tamil and Ukrainian. The program covers effective parenting skills, understanding the challenges of childhood, safeguards, services and supports available in South Australia.

Over the life of the project, we have targeted the following communities: Spanish speaking, Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Arabic, Farsi, Hazaraghi, Mandarin, Nepali, Portuguese and Japanese. We thank the communities for their support and participation.

For more information contact Lena Gasparyan on 8213 4606 or Lena. Gasparyan@mccsa.org.au



## Disability and the NDIS

Navigating the disability and NDIS space can be very complex.

MCCSA provides disability and NDIS community capacity building and awareness raising activities around disability, how to live well with disability and the NDIS through the NDIS Community Connector Program, Cultural Connections in Disability as well as the Speak My Language program.

For further information contact Julie julie.hoare@mccsa.org.au, Sisaleo sisaleo.philavong@mccsa.org.au or Hanaa hanaa.grave@mccsa.org.au

## Youth Engagement



MCCSA runs a range of youth engagement activities in multiple locations across the northern and western suburbs that incorporate

soccer, hip hop, employment support, intercultural connections, leadership development and event planning

For more information please contact Ukash or send an email to ukash.ahmed@mccsa.org.au

## Justice of the Peace

MCCSA also offers the services of a JP, to book an appointment, call the office on 8345 5266.

## Going Places with MCCSA

If you are a registered community organization or a service provider join the MCCSA to organize outings, picnics, sightseeing tours and other social activities for our CALD seniors and people from our new and emerging communities.

Four Toyota Hiace buses are available on Mondays and Tuesdays including the weekend.

For more information email Sidique.bah@mccsa.org.au

**COVID-19 VACCINATION**

**TRANSLATED COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION**

Hold! Namaste! வணக்கம் Hi! Olá こんにちは salam! Nīn hǎo Ciao! Hallo! Bonjour!

COVIDVACCINE.SA.GOV.AU

Government of South Australia SA Health

# Interested in volunteering for MCCSA?

Visit [www.mccsa.org.au](http://www.mccsa.org.au) for more info or contact us on 8345 5266.

# [www.mccsa.org.au](http://www.mccsa.org.au)



**Multicultural Communities Council of SA Inc.**

113 Gilbert Street, Adelaide Phone 8345 5266 [www.mccsa.org.au](http://www.mccsa.org.au)

*Compiled and edited by Sidique Bah, MCCSA Communications Officer*