Acknowledgment

TO COUNTRY

Diversitat acknowledges and pays respect to the Wathaurong People and all the traditional custodians of the lands and waterways on which we work and meet today.

We pay our respect to Elders, past and present, and stand together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders leaders of today and tomorrow.

We value your histories, your culture and your knowledge.

Supporting

OUR LGBTI+ COMMUNITY

Diversitat warmly welcomes lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse and intersex people at all of our locations and to access all of our services.

We believe that our values of dignity, respect and acceptance are basic values defining our humanity and must be afforded to every individual in our society.

Cover image: Carmen Miranda welcomes the community to the 2020 Diversitat Pako Festa!
Photo credit: Matt Houston Photography

Mission

VISION & VALUES

Diversitat or the Geelong Ethnic Communities Council (GECC) is the peak body for ethnic and multicultural communities in the Geelong Region and the voice of Multicultural Geelong.

For over 40 years we have been the link between multicultural communities, government, and the wider community.

The GECC acknowledges the Wathaurong people as the traditional custodians of this land and we recognise the cultural, linguistic, social, and spiritual diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples and their rights as the First Peoples of Australia.

Our Mission
Building on our proud history of migrant services, Diversitat aspires to provide an innovative and high quality response to the changing needs of a culturally diverse community.

Our Vision
To empower individuals and communities to reach their full potential.

Our Values
Dignity, respect and acceptance are basic values defining our humanity and must be afforded to every individual in our society. We value an ecologically sustainable environment and promote and celebrate harmony, cultural diversity, peace and social justice in our society.

Photo credit: Matt Houston Photography

Annual Report & Audited Financial Report - Download online at diversitat.org.au

Empowering individuals and communities to reach their full potential
Empowering individuals and communities to reach their full potential

What We Do

EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS & COMMUNITIES TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

Diversitat, also known as the Geelong Ethnic Communities Council, commenced operations in Geelong in 1976. With a proud history in providing migrant services, our mission is to provide an innovative and high quality response to the changing needs of a culturally diverse community.

From humble beginnings as one office, Diversitat now operates from five locations in Geelong as well as one office in Colac. We offer a range of settlement services for new migrants, community programs, aged support services for older people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, services for younger people, training and education, cultural events including Pako Festa and My Maintenance Crew Social Enterprise which you can support.

Diversitat is governed by the Geelong Ethnic Communities Council Inc who elect the Executive Committee.

Diversitat has 48 affiliated cultural communities in the Geelong Region, who contribute to, and direct the vision, values and general policies of the organisation.

Through offering our services, we strive to realise our vision: to empower individuals and communities to reach their full potential.

Image: Jordan Edwards from Wathaurong at the 2020 Pako Festa.
Photo credit: Matt Houston Photography

Image: The Sikh community at the 2020 Pako Festa.
Photo credit: Matt Houston Photography
Empowering individuals and communities to reach their full potential

Year in Review

2019/20

231 New arrivals to Geelong welcomed by the Humanitarian Settlement Program

115 Asylum seeker drop-in clients

65 NDIS participants supported by Diversability

30 New staff members can be accommodated in the new Diversability building

712 Aged Support Clients

22,569 hours of social support group service delivered

1,706 delivered meals in two months with the new Meal Delivery Service during the COVID crisis

112 participants at The Base Hospitality since its opening

66 interns participated in the My Maintenance Crew internship program

1,158 Diversitat Training clients

361 qualifications completed

8,864 module enrolments at Diversitat Training

536,024 student contact hours (SCH) at Diversitat Training

100,000 People attended Pako Festa

76 Different radio broadcast in 16 different languages on 94.7 The Pulse

926 Financial counselling clients helped

6,000+ Views of our COVID-19 information videos in eight different languages

Image: The Fijian community at the 2020 Pako Festa.
Photo credit: Matt Houston Photography
Overview

Social Enterprises
Brad Keating - General Manager, Social Enterprises

“Through our repeat business opportunities, and high quality of work, we have been able to showcase our services; including property and facility services, land care, moving, cleaning both commercial and residential, Property maintenance, Fencing, Painting to name a few. This has resulted in the securing of numerous new contracts both locally and further afield.”

Education & Training
Carolyn Jones - Education Program Manager

“The COVID-19 pandemic has focused the importance of Human Services and their significance for the wellbeing of our community. This bodes very well for our organisation as we have several courses on our scope relating to the ‘care economy’. We hope to increase this area of specialisation in the future.”

Settlement Safe & Secure
Casey O’Brien - Unit Manager, Settlement Safe & Secure

“During the COVID-19 period the Community Development team sent out a range of key information videos for CALD communities translated into eight different languages. The videos have proven to be an essential part of keeping vulnerable communities informed about the pandemic. These videos have been watched over 6,000 times and counting.”

Aged Support
Robyn Martinez - General Manager, Aged Support

“We look back fondly on events like our 2019 Christmas Party, the March 2020 Tomato and Chilli Competition and our Friday Meals Program and dream about running events like these again. It makes our heart break to remember what we had and how we had to change everything. We really miss the regular face-to-face contact with our clients.”

Settlement Business Services & Development
Meril Perera - Manager, Settlement Business Services & Development

“Our support services continued during the pandemic and staff worked tirelessly to adapt to the ever changing restrictions and challenging work environment.”

Corporate
Lisa McCarty - General Manager People & Organisational Development

“2019/20 saw us recruit for over 65 positions, provide Prevention of Family Violence training to over 130 staff, coordinate the site consolidation project, and create and implement comprehensive COVID Safety Plans.”

94.7 The Pulse
Leo Renkin - Manager, 94.7 The Pulse

“The Pulse broadcasts in 16 different languages each week and was honoured to receive the National Ethnic Multicultural Broadcasters Council (NEMBC) Award for outstanding community engagement this year.”

Unfortunately due to COVID restrictions, Casey O’Brien - Unit Manager, Settlement Safe & Secure was unable to be in attendance on this day.
Dear Diversitat Friends and Supporters,

As I prepare this Annual Report, it is incomprehensible not only how quickly a year has passed since I presented my last one, but the kind of year with which we have been tasked.

The financial year began with a consolidation of sites and programmes, an opening of a Centre that will have a significant impact on those CALD community members living with a disability and the news that our CEO, Michael Martinez, was leaving our organisation after 25 years. Michael will always be remembered as being a strong advocate and voice for the most vulnerable members of our community and we thank him for his long-standing passion and dedication.

Diversitat’s mission of empowering individuals and communities to reach their full potential certainly took on a new meaning as the COVID-19 pandemic hit our shores and tested our resilience and spirit. Through two lock-downs, our staff worked tirelessly from home, clients were supported under limiting and testing conditions and meetings took place on Zoom. For all the anguish that the coronavirus has caused, I believe that there are positive lessons to be learned. We may never want to join a Zoom meeting again, but we may want to reassess how we work as an organisation.

One thing that we most certainly have learned is the fragility and importance of community and social connection. Social re-adjustment, the significance of community identity and the strength of the human spirit under adverse circumstances remind us that there is courage and good will amongst the wider Geelong community, and we will not be hindered by adversity. Together, we can achieve anything.

To take a quote and relate it to the pandemic - “this, too, shall pass”. These words are known in the Western world primarily due to a 19th-century retelling of a Persian fable by the English poet Edward FitzGerald. It was also notably employed in a speech by Abraham Lincoln before he became the sixteenth President of the United States and we can apply it to our current circumstances. We look forward to the day when we can all be back on site, laugh with our work colleagues and clients in person and greet each other in meetings, face to face.

Despite the challenges that have been thrown at us, not all the news brings despair. The announcement of a proposed merger of Diversitat and MACS in the middle of the year has brought a renewed sense of hope. An aspiration that the influence of these two respected organisations will create a multicultural powerhouse that will provide an even greater voice for the most vulnerable members of our Geelong community.

Re-evaluation and constant adjustment come only with the continual support and committed efforts of Diversitat managers and staff. Your day after day dedication and service to our clients does not go unnoticed nor unappreciated. Thank you does not seem to be an adequate word to our Acting CEO and Financial Controller, Brian McMahon, for his dedication and unwavering commitment to the daily operations of Diversitat since the beginning of this year. To my fellow Executive members, thank you for your friendship, wisdom and support in steering Diversitat over the last twelve months and into the future.

To the members of our affiliated groups, thank you to each of you for your friendship and support over the previous year, albeit under differing circumstances. May our journey continue to be rewarding for many more years to come.

Dr. Linda Sydor Petkovic
President
Geelong Ethnic Communities Council
The 2019/20 financial year was certainly one of incredible challenges & outstanding achievements. It concluded with the announcement of a fantastic opportunity for the organisation.

In November, consolidation of our sites took place. Our Training Division relocated from Vines Road to the building where 94.7 The Pulse is located in the Geelong CBD. Our Financial Counselling, Emergency Relief and Migration services relocated from the Geelong West Town Hall to the Northern Community Hub. This move resulted in all of our welfare programs being in one location. We have maintained a small presence in the Geelong West Town Hall.

In December 2019, our new $900,000 Diversitat Centre building was opened by Federal Senator Sarah Henderson alongside state MP for Lara, John Eren. This building is located at our Northern Community Hub and will bring improved health, education, and lifestyle options to people with a disability in CALD communities. The building was made possible with contributions from both Federal and State Governments, Perpetual Trustees, Give Where You Live and the Geelong Community Foundation.

January brought the news that our Chief Executive Officer, Michael Martínez, was leaving after 25 years with Diversitat. Michael held numerous positions throughout his time, including Migrant Employment Program Manager, Operations Manager and from 2005, Chief Executive Officer. Michael’s contribution to Diversitat has been considerable and I will not attempt to list all his achievements here. One achievement I will mention was that Michael secured $3,000,000 in funding that enabled our long-awaited Northern Community Hub building to be constructed in 2009 and open in 2010. The opening of this building was a huge accomplishment for Diversitat and laid foundations for future growth and development as well as the consolidation of our sites.

I wish Michael all the very best for his future. Everyone knows only too well what happened in March and the impact this has had on how we live. The approach of Diversitat throughout the COVID-19 crisis has been to follow the advice and directives of the state and federal health authorities.

The first stage of this was to transition the vast majority of our staff from office based work to working from home arrangements whilst maintaining as many client services as possible. I would especially like to thank Xtreme Technology for their help with this.

It was inevitable that some services would be affected, but we worked hard to either retain services or develop alternative and innovative services where we could. Given the high risk nature of our Aged Support clients, we made the difficult decision to close the Healthy Living Centre to clients in March 2020. As an alternative, we developed a program of delivering meals to clients’ homes as well as keeping in regular contact with them to check on their welfare.

Settlement commenced phone or Zoom appointments and Diversitat services maintained some client contact with PPE equipment and COVID safe procedures. Training Division transferred to courses being delivered online, the Pulse operated for 2 hours per day to do community services announcements and My Maintenance Crew continued to operate.

In June of this year the Boards of both Diversitat and Multicultural Aged Care Services Geelong (MACS) announced they had reached in-principle agreement to pursue a proposed merger of the two organisations. Diversitat and MACS have a long joint history. Geelong Ethnic Communities Council was responsible for creation of Geelong Multicultural Hostel in 1994 which was the forerunner of MACS. The only reason MACS separately incorporated was that, at the time, GECC did not have charitable PBI status. As Diversitat now has charitable status this is no longer an impediment of the organisations joining together.

I am personally very enthusiastic about the proposed merger as I believe it is a unique opportunity to create a stronger voice for the multicultural communities of Geelong. Combined, our annual turnover would be close to $35 million so we would be in a strong position to maintain and increase the high-quality services that we provide to our clients. Throughout merger process our clients and affiliated communities have been priority of both Boards. The merger will allow both Diversitat and MACS to grow in size, scale and impact as well as leading to greater local employment opportunities.

I am pleased to say that at time of writing this report, both boards have confirmed they want the merger to happen. A special resolution for merger and proposed constitution of merged entity is intended to be presented to our affiliated communities for a vote in November. 75% of communities attending the special general meeting need to vote in favour of the merger. I hope our communities will vote in favour of this.

I would like to thank our staff for their dedication and commitment throughout the year but especially through Coronavirus. It is a credit to everyone that we were able to continue our services at such a high level, in spite of unprecedented difficult circumstances.

I also thank our volunteers. Organisations like Diversitat would not be able to function as we do without commitment and dedication of volunteers.

To the management team of Casey, Meril, Carolyn, Robyn, Brad, Lisa and Leo I also say thank you for all your efforts throughout the year, not only in managing your division but also in assisting me in some CEO duties.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to the Diversitat Finance team of Alicia, Leri, Mariana, and Livia. As always, your commitment and support has been outstanding and has enabled me to undertake CEO duties since February as well as being Financial Controller.

I look forward to the year ahead with positivity as we create a strong united organisation that meets the needs of our clients both in terms of service delivery and advocacy.

Brian McMahon
Acting CEO
Financial Controller
Dr Linda Sydor Petkovic  
Executive since 1997  
President since 2002

Zoran Dimovski  
Executive since 1998  
Secretary since 2010

Eldo Jacob  
Executive since 2020  
Treasurer since 2020

Sophia Shen  
Executive since 2009

Dr. John Lamp  
Executive since 2012  
The Pulse Board of Management

GECC meeting in February 2020: Diversitat thanks Fely Spikers for her dedicated commitment to the organisation for over 23 years. Fely resigned from the Executive Committee in February 2020 after serving on the Board and holding a variety of positions.
Affiliated Communities

Afghan Community | 2012
Austrian Community | 1985
Abrisa Brazilian | 2015
Arabic-Iraqi Community | 2017
Geelong Bangladesh Society | 2019
Chinese Community | 1985
Congoese Community | 2012
Croatian Community | 1976
Dutch Community | 1986
Fijian Community | 1995
Filipino Australian Friendship Association | 1982
Filipino Social Club of Geelong | 1982
French Community | 2003
German Community | 1983
St Leonards & District Greek Senior Citizens Club | 2018
Greek Community- The Hellenic Orthodox Community of Geelong | 1976
Hazar Community | 2015
Indian Association of Geelong | 2019
Indonesian Community | 1996
Iranian Community | 2008
Irish Community | 1986
Italian Community | 1976
Japanese Community | 2018
Karen Community | 2008
Karenni Community | 2012
Kawish Incorporated | 2018
Lithuanian Community | 1978
Macedonian Community | 1976
Malayalee Community | 2019
Portarlington Maltese Pensioners Association | 2003
Maori Community | 2006
Nigeria Community | 2018
Nepalese Community | 2012
Polish Community | 1980
Russian Community | 1986
Barwon Sanatan Community | 2018
Scottish Community | 1986
Serbian Community | 1976
Sikh Community | 2010
Slovenian Community | 1987
Social-Cultural Syriac Incorporated | 2017
Spanish Community | 1978
South Sudanese Community | 2005
Lao-Thai Geelong Community | 2016
Thai Community | 2008
Ukrainian Community | 1986
Wat Lao(Geelong) Buddhist Vic Community | 2019
Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative | 2012
Extract from Diversitat Annual Financial Statement | Statement of Comprehensive Income
For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government grants</td>
<td>$11,955,669</td>
<td>$11,411,748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dividends</td>
<td>$2,314</td>
<td>$2,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other grants</td>
<td>$112,547</td>
<td>$236,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$174</td>
<td>$172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Services Income</td>
<td>$2,095,666</td>
<td>$1,991,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>$741,575</td>
<td>$1,281,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income from Operations</strong></td>
<td><strong>$14,907,945</strong></td>
<td><strong>$14,923,823</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee expenses</td>
<td>($10,436,430)</td>
<td>($10,421,950)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation expense</td>
<td>($708,212)</td>
<td>($502,994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating expenses</td>
<td>($3,605,353)</td>
<td>($3,878,417)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure from Operations</strong></td>
<td><strong>($14,749,995)</strong></td>
<td><strong>($14,803,381)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus/(Loss) for the year</td>
<td>$157,950</td>
<td>$120,462</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The complete financial statements including notes and auditors report are available from the Diversitat Finance department at Geelong West Town Hall, 153 Pakington Street, Geelong West or by phoning me directly on 5260 6000.

Brian McMahon; C.P.A  
Financial Controller

Image: Our Wathaurong friends join us in the Pako Festa parade.  
Photo credit: Matt Houston Photography
Diversability

Diversability was established in 2015. Our team provides support services to over 60 participants from our communities with an approved NDIS plan which may include:

- Support Coordination
- Accessing the community, sport and recreation
- Household support
- Skill development

These services are provided by our dedicated team of support coordinators and bilingual support workers.

The uniqueness of our program is the specialisation in supporting people from CALD backgrounds. For those that choose assistance, this is an invaluable resource for access to services and their wellbeing.

As an NDIS Service provider, Diversability must meet the very strict compliance and audit requirements periodically to maintain our registration. We take the care and support we offer our clients very seriously and are happy to undergo the necessary audits to maintain this status.

A real highlight of this year was the opening of the Diversability building which includes space for up to thirty staff, meeting rooms and a conference room. The building will support this service and cater for growth for a long time to come.

Diversability continued to provide support to our clients during the pandemic. Our team worked tirelessly to adapt to the ever changing restrictions and challenging environments. Staff undertook COVID-19 Infection Control and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) usage training. Support Coordination was delivered to participants remotely, while we worked from home. Our Bilingual Support Workers continued to deliver frontline support via face to face.

While maintaining strict COVID-19 protocols they operated effectively to support our participants with community access, skills development, and household support. A few participants chose to suspend or reduce support services, such as accessing the community during the pandemic.

Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP)

The Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) team provides a holistic service through coordinated case management in the following areas:

- Settlement/Housing
- Physical & Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Managing Money
- Community Participation and Networking
- Family Functioning and Social Support
- Justice/Australian Law
- Language Services

- Education, Training and Employment
- Transport
- Bi-lingual Support

Our HSP staff were thrilled to begin the financial year in the new Diversability building - a collaborative workspace that enables several programs to work together. This provides families with a greater support network.

We saw 231 new arrivals, predominantly from Iraq and Syria welcomed to Geelong until March when we saw the suspension of air travel due to COVID-19. New arrivals received a wide variety of assistance, with over 6,000 service delivery actions from our five Case Workers which was a tremendous team effort.

Newly arrived residents received intensive case management care to assist with their integration and wellbeing. All families have secured long term housing with assistance provided for those choosing to move to other parts of Victoria and interstate.

COVID-19 has restricted new clients from coming to Geelong, but there have also been impacts to existing families. Face-to-face meetings were suspended due to safety, resulting in online and mobile communication only. Staff have had to work remotely, creating challenges when working with CALD clients who have limited literacy and numeracy skills.
Our CALD community has struggled with ever-changing COVID-19 restrictions and updates. We conducted a client survey at the beginning of the pandemic to assess and address immediate needs. Our bi-lingual support team worked very hard with the HSP case workers and community development team to explain the COVID-19 restrictions and our suspended programs.

The driving school, homework club, citizenship applications and employment readiness workshops were all paused.

The introduction of the ‘Telegram’ app has been developed during this time which will be the main source of communication for all community information in the future. This has been produced in various languages and will be invaluable to all our programs moving forward.

Settlement Engagement and Transition (SETS)

Our Settlement Engagement Transition Support program allows clients who have been in Australia for up to five years support to access assistance with:

- Name change/name correction application
- Citizenship application
- Immigration/Family reunion/Red Cross Family Tracing
- Travel documents
- Translation of documents
- Recognition of qualifications
- Food and material aid
- Health
- Consumer services
- Access to documentation and Freedom of Information applications
- Legal issues - intervention orders, infringements
- Family violence
- Intergenerational issues
- Disability Support Pension application
- Rental advocacy/assistance
- Driving skills program
- Homework club for Primary and Secondary students
- Bi-lingual Support

This year, over 780 support actions were delivered which outweighed our contract obligations and we were very successful with several citizenship approvals.

Our volunteers are a very valuable asset to our department and assist in a variety of ways including:

- Attending medical/Centrelink appointments for our new arrivals
- Assisting Case Workers with day to day orientation to Geelong
- Driving program lessons
- Homework club for students

Settlement

BUSINESS SERVICES & DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)
Yousef was born in 1994 in Aleppo, Syria. He has fond memories of his childhood.

"As a Christian we had our churches, clubs and community. We had our freedom to do our social and religious activities. We used to celebrate the Christmas, New Year and Easter," he says.

In 2012, his life would be turned upside down.

"When I was preparing for Year 12 the demonstrations started in Aleppo."

A few months later while I was at school the whole classroom vibrated, the doors and the windows of the room opened and we heard a massive explosion.

Aleppo became a dangerous city, where Yousef lived under threat of kidnapping, missiles and bombs.

"I and many other students, fathers, mothers, elders and kids had no choice but to live life constantly on the move."

Yousef finished school and enrolled in university, studying biochemistry. One day he sustained injuries to his head, knees and neck when he was hit by a shrapnel from a shell that exploded nearby.

"I couldn’t finish my degree, and we decided to move as soon as I recovered. The closest option was Lebanon. The trip to Lebanon was challenging. There were soldiers, gunmen and mercenaries and you couldn’t trust anyone."

When Yousef finally arrived in Lebanon, he applied to migrate to Australia at the embassy in Lebanon.

"Luckily, we were able to obtain a visa. Life in Lebanon wasn’t easy for us - we had a lot of emotional and financial challenges."

Yousef arrived in Australia in April 2017, and his parents arrived just recently.

"The beginning was challenging because, it was a new country, new system and new language. The English was familiar to us but the Australian accent is completely different from what we have learnt. However, after three years I think we are doing well," he says.

"With the help of Diversitat staff members I could find two casual jobs. One of them was a bus driver for the refugee kids football team. I also did volunteer work at Diversitat."

Yousef finished a course in laboratory techniques, similar to his studies in Syria at the end of 2018 but found it difficult to find work in the field.

He eventually found that Diversitat was looking for new admin staff.

"I decided to apply, and luckily I got the job," he says.

Yousef lives with his wife Reem and two young children, Stephanie and Michael. He is grateful to have the support of his parents. He is now studying a Diploma of Community Services.

"I believe that Australia is a great country. I am so thankful to be in this country which gave me lot of opportunities and welcomed me and my family in a very beautiful way. It made me feel at home."

YOUSEF’S STORY

Our Settlement Safe and Secure department provides a number of services:

- Family Services
- Family Preservation and Reunification Program
- Financial Counselling (Specialist areas in relation to Family Violence, Prison Work, Problem Gambling and Energy Hardship)
- Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program
- Housing Program (New Arrivals)
- Asylum Seeker Services
- Status Resolution Support Services
- Immigration and Citizenship Services
- Family Violence Initiatives
- Employment Programs and Initiatives
- Mental Health and Carer Support initiatives
- Youth and Youth Justice Services
- Community Development and Capacity Building

We also provide immigration and citizenship services on a fee-for-service basis.

We saw a significant change to the structure of settlement services this year, resulting in a realignment of management responsibilities for settlement services and community program service delivery.

Funding

This year saw the cessation of funding for our emergency relief service in December 2019, which was a significant loss to the local community.

In other areas, we have seen new funding and the continuation of funding allowing for enhancement of service delivery and the creation of new program areas.

This year, we received state government funding for:

- Strategic Partnerships and Family Violence Initiatives
- Financial Counselling and Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Programs
- Youth Justice Service

We received federal government funding for:

- Financial Counselling (Problem Gambling)
- Status Resolution Support Services

We are also grateful to the following organisations for their support of our programs:

- The Geelong Community Foundation
- Give Where You Live
- ECSTRA Foundation
- Australia Post

When we receive funding we provided the required progress reports and acquittals, and work with funders through partnerships with them to market the usage of funds through a variety of channels.

COVID-19

COVID-19 has created a number of challenges whilst also creating some new opportunities for the department.

We have greatly missed the face to face contact with clients, community groups which ceased in March. We also saw some challenges in maintaining contact with the broader staff group, and some staff, particularly with young children faced with increased pressure on them as a result of the pandemic.

That said, we found that we embraced technology to a greater extent and we increased awareness of how working from home and flexible working arrangements might become part of life after COVID-19.

It has been very pleasing to see the way that staff have worked together despite adversity to achieve excellent service delivery for clients, often as a result of innovative practice. Development of social messaging strategies for communities in collaboration with the marketing team is a great example of this.

Despite all the challenges, our funded programs have continued to meet performance targets.
AGED SUPPORT

Aged Support provides the following services:

- Social support groups for older people, NDIS participants
- Delivered meals
- Diversity Theatre Project
- BSW Diversity Advisor
- Access and Support Workers
- Community Visitor Scheme (CVS) – ‘Hola Amigo’
- Catering and events
- A Café-style support program
- Catering to internal and external businesses

Image: Treated like the stars they are! Our friends at the Geelong Football Club came along to one of our fabulous Friday Meals to spend time with our clients and community - Mim Millandrinis especially!
Aged Support

712
Total number of clients.

34
Social support groups.

22,569
Hours of service delivered.

5,803
Subsidised meals.

2019/20
This year, Aged Support was successful in gaining Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) innovation funds for the Diversity Theatre Project.

We also setup a new service option, however we had to close all social support groups when struck by COVID-19.

This required us to quickly develop new models for delivering essential services, and included new meal delivery services, art projects, welfare checks and distributing activities to keep us connected to and supporting our clients.

This year saw retention and growth of staff during the pandemic, a testament to the resourcefulness, adaptability and creativity of our staff.

We also achieved increased funding in competitive national and state rounds, allowing growth in programs and more choices for our clients. We have successfully advocated to retain funded access and support worker positions in Victoria. We also captured all of our clients in a new IT platform.

We presented at multiple conferences and participated in speaking engagements related to our inclusive practices and programs. It has been wonderful to see our projects completed as best-practice models of service.

Events
We held a number of events this year prior to COVID-19.

Our Friday Meals Program is a wonderful day on our monthly calendar where we celebrate the taste of diversity, sharing a scrumptious meal with clients, the Geelong community and staff of Diversitat. We invite community members and groups to host a Friday meal and cook a traditional dish of their choice with our chef.

In 2019-20 the program celebrated Serbian, Croatian, Filipino, Greek and Indian cuisines.

We look back fondly on events like our 2019 Christmas Party and tomato competition in March 2020 and dream of doing events like these again. It makes our heart break to remember what we had and how we had to change everything. We really miss the regular face to face contact with our clients.

We would like to take this important opportunity to acknowledge the vital impact and contribution that volunteers make in Aged Support.

Service innovation as a result of COVID-19

- We commenced our delivered meals program in May, featuring weekly menus and non-contact delivery
- We engaged an independent consultant dietitian to review this program, and advertised the program on the Diversitat website
- We introduced PPE in March and a number of other COVID Safe practices were introduced. These included the completion of training modules by staff, the engagement of a consultant hygienist and temperature check procedures
- An unaccompanied shopping service was offered to clients from April
- We provided activity packs to SSG clients on a monthly basis or as requested. These were tailored to individual requirements and were available from May
- Care plan reviews are continuing by telephone
- Our Together Art Project with materials was distributed to clients from mid-June
- Our time capsule project began with establishment of a working group in July and clients were involved from August
- Staff were retained with JobKeeper support and continued to work on meaningful work due the work from home period

Image: Attendees inspecting the local produce at the Diversitat Aged Support 2020 Tomato & Chilli Competition.

Image: Having fun during the Geelong Seniors Festival.

Education & Training

The Training Department had a very busy year with four major activities including:

- Relocating the Vines Road campus to the Little Ryrie Street site (94.7 The Pulse), responding to two audits (SkillsFirst and ASQA), and pivoting to online learning and working in response to the extensive disruption resulting from COVID-19.
- The Reconnect Team relocated in November from The Pulse to The Healthy Living Centre as part of our site consolidation.
- The challenges presented to us from COVID also created opportunities including: major increase in staff capability with technology and online delivery and willingness to shift from face-to-face delivery to online learning for both our trainers and students.
- The main negative impacts were with drastic reduction in work-based placement opportunities for our students. This had a major impact across several courses with work places not in a position to accept work placement students due to the pandemic. We focus on supporting staff engagement and wellbeing whilst staff juggle working from home with home schooling and isolation from family and friends due to the lock down.
- Audits
  - This year saw us participate and respond to two audits within the Training Department. Though auditing is a regular occurrence and we welcome the opportunity to have our practices reviewed, the increase on workload to prepare for audits is increased significantly.
- SkillsFirst – This audit identified a small number of non-compliances in relation to processes undertaken by staff. While not major errors, they have been rectified via a Management Action Plan. New correct processes are in place and the implementation of this plan has been completed.
- Australian Skills and Quality Authority (ASQA) – This was a very detailed audit, focusing on four of our qualifications delivered in 2019. The outcome of the audit identified non-compliances in relation to some content in our marketing material, some trainer qualifications which as a result impacted assessments and the volume of learning delivered throughout the year. A thorough rectification plan is currently being implemented which includes remedial action for some students.
- Victorian Certificate Applied Learning – Youth Program (VCAL). In December 2019, we made the very difficult decision to withdraw from the reregistration process with Victorian Regulation Quality Authority (VRQA) for our VCAL Program.
- The VRQA has strengthened the requirements for all providers to ensure that organisations are in the best possible position to deliver quality programs to our disengaged Youth. The evidence that was required to meet the very strict standards of the VRQA has increased significantly.

After careful consideration, and despite our efforts, it was unlikely that we would be able to meet all of the standards required at this particular time.

We worked closely with students, their families and referring schools to ensure that each student was on the right path for their continued education.

We would like to acknowledge all the hard work that staff have put into the program over the years. These efforts have culminated in students reaching some great results in light of the tumultuous year.

Courses
Diversitat Training offers a range of courses from certificate to diploma level.
- Horticulture
- Early Childhood Education and Care
- Education Support
- Community Services
- Individual Support
- Education Support
- Community Services
- Disability
- Mental Health
- Counselling
- Screen and Media
- Hospitality
- English
- General Education for Adults
- Transition Education
- Work Education

Reconnect Program
Our Reconnect Program supported 107 participants in the 2019/2020 year in Geelong and Colac areas. Staff worked closely to identify pathways into education and training and provide holistic support for people with ages ranging from 16 -65. As a result, we saw many successful outcomes.

COVID-19
The main negative impacts were with drastic reduction in work-based placement opportunities for our students. This had a major impact across several courses with work places not in a position to accept work placement students due to the pandemic. We focus on supporting staff engagement and wellbeing whilst staff juggle working from home with home schooling and isolation from family and friends due to the lock down.

Improvements
We have increased the professional development opportunities for our staff with a subscription to VETevolve which offers a range of modules relating to best practice training methods and compliance requirements.

We have re-organised our classrooms to better reflect the focus of their specialisation, created a new reception to improve the workflows of our reception team and address access concerns re reception access for students attending our campus in wheelchairs.

Key Facts & Figures

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<td>Government Funded - Commonwealth &amp; State</td>
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<th>Qualifications Completed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications Completed</td>
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</table>
ISSARA SAEYIM

Recipient of the 2020 Diversitat Training Outstanding Achievement Student Award

‘Dealing with Adversity’ is the theme for the Diversitat Training Awards in 2020 with the awards going to students “that have gone above and beyond what we would normally deal with in Training” Education program manager, Carolyn Jones states.

“Issara has overcome great adversity to create some great outcomes as a result of her studies.”

Issara comes from Thailand and joined Diversitat with little English. Currently studying her Diploma of Community Services, Issara is a single parent of a young child and is also dealing with family law proceedings.

“When Issara couldn’t attend classes she made alternative arrangements so she could keep up with her studies and is a very diligent student,” Carolyn explains.

Issara also has a desire to create positive change.

“When Issara started her placement at Cloverdale she was instrumental in creating programs for Thai women who had not previously had access to these programs due to language barriers.”

One of these programs focused on helping young Asian women escape from slavery. The program was so successful that it received the attention of local MP’s and the Minister of Education.

“She is not only a dedicated student but she has translated what she’s learned into really fabulous outcomes for the community and that’s really what we’re aiming to do at Diversitat Training. Great job Issara!”

RECONNECT PARTICIPANT GAINS DREAM JOB

Even in the most challenging times of a world pandemic Diversitat Reconnect participant Kirrilly has gained her dream job as an apprentice hairdresser at Impressions Hair Salon.

In early June, Kirrilly was referred to the Diversitat Reconnect program from Gforce Transition to Work program for additional support and mentoring. Kirrilly stated that she was ready to move forward and improve her life and needed the additional support to help her reach her goals and aspirations.

Kirrilly was keen to complete further study or commence a hairdressing apprenticeship as this is something she had always wanted to do. With guidance, support and encouragement Kirrilly started a four week internship at Impressions Hair Salon. She worked hard and showed her passion for the industry and proved to be a loyal and dedicated team member. By the end of the internship Kirrilly was offered a full time hairdressing apprenticeship.

The Diversitat Reconnect team congratulates Kirrilly on her recent achievement and wish her all the best in starting her new career!
As part of Pako Festa 2020 a photographic project was launched that reflects the rich diversity we have right here on our doorstep.

This project pays tribute to the important contribution our local diverse communities have made to the success of Pako Festa over its 38 years.

The project will capture up to 40 cultures over the next two years as we move closer to Pako Festa’s 40th Birthday. (12 Portraits were created in 2020)

We thank the communities for sharing, preserving and teaching us more and more each year about cultural diversity. Pako Festa offers a unique experience via diverse food, music, dance and through this project we will all discover further the traditions and important elements of culture.

Photo Credits: Chrissie Francis
Makeup and Hair by ‘Sanne-Powell from Make & Do

Representing the Combined Dutch Clubs of Geelong

Empowering individuals and communities to reach their full potential.
Wow what a day!

Pako Festa 2020 saw well over 100,000 people getting together to embrace and celebrate our fantastic ethnic diversity on a perfect summers day!

From 9:00am when the first people arrived until 5:00pm when the last tired revellers headed home, the event provided a fabulous showcase of our cultural diversity. People danced, they sang, they participated and they enjoyed. They feasted on a smorgasbord of cultural food, folk dancing and entertainment on six music/performance stages. It was a day of peace, joy and “feel good” fun that appealed to participants of all ages and all backgrounds.

But the greatest thanks we save for the people of Geelong. It is the people who attended Pako Festa who made it such a magnificent day. So thanks for attending in such impressive numbers, thanks for celebrating in such peace and harmony and thanks for helping us to send a powerful message to the broader community - multiculturalism is alive and well and living in Geelong!

The Great Pako Festa Parade did not disappoint, full of colour and movement with nearly 70 entries parading along Pakington Street. Congratulations to all the parade winners, the huge amount of community support, commitment and long hours was evident in all entries!

Most Culturally Aware
Slovenian Community

Most Innovative Use of Theme “Elements of Culture”
Club Italia

Best Musical Entry
Geelong Sustainability Group

Best School Entry
St. Patrick’s Primary School

The 2020 Pako Festa is delivered by Diversitat and is supported by The Victorian State Government, Channel 7 and the City of Greater Geelong. In addition, it could not be delivered without the support of the local diverse communities, Pakington Street Traders and many other local and non-local organisations and businesses contributing to the event.

Thanks to all our Community Sponsors including The Bank of Melbourne, TRG, Xtreme Technology, The BCC Group, Adroit Insurance & Risk, Deakin University, Geelong Advertiser, St-E Technology Group, VicSuper, Furphy, The Pulse and National Australia Bank.

For the full list of sponsors please visit: www.pakofesta.com.au/sponsors

Event Director:
Luisa La Fornara

Risk Management:
Rachella Thomas, Event Kit

Trader Liaison:
Frank O’Neill

Marketing:
Sam Bond and Mitchell Dye

Administration:
Sharon Minner

95%
Agree that they enjoyed the atmosphere

90%
Agree that it gave them a greater respect for cultural diversity

87%
Agree that it made them feel welcome and included

87%
Rated their experience as good or excellent
My Maintenance Crew provides vulnerable people within our community the opportunity to complete a paid internship and gain on the job work experience. Since we commenced in 2018, our returned great results, with some participants gaining ongoing employment.

Through our repeat business opportunities, and high quality of work, we have been able to showcase our services; including property and facility services, land care, mowing, cleaning both commercial and residential, Property maintenance, Fencing, Painting to name a few.

This has resulted in the securing of numerous new contracts both locally and further afield.

MMC was fortunate to receive additional funding from Department of Social Security as a result of COVID19. Whilst business slowed down, it has also opened new doors for staff around cleaning in particular. We have continued to deliver on requests whilst also adhering to DHHS, Worksafe, Building and Construction Industry Victoria and Diversitat COVID safe plans.

Year In Review
This year My Maintenance Crew:
- Secured ongoing contracts with John Holland, Built and Hanlon
- Received outstanding reviews for the work completed at the Queenscliff Music Festival
- Employed fifteen young people
- Continued to diversify and expand our service delivery
- Increased the skill sets of all staff and employees
- Secured extended funding to permit ongoing internships to engage more of the target cohort

Continued Growth
We are continuing to grow the business to become profitable.

Our reputation for delivering high quality services is well known and we have a strong brand presence within the Greater Geelong, Queenscliffe, Surf Coast, Colac Otway and Golden Plains local government areas (LGAs).

Ongoing Employment
Through the achievements of the business and employing our target cohort, we have achieved ongoing employment with either MMC or transitioning across to other external opportunities whilst ensuring the young people remain in active employment.
Alex Goudge

FINDS HIS PASSION THROUGH MY MAINTENANCE CREW

My Maintenance Crew’s (MMC) reputation within the local community is growing fast.

Last year, we engaged with Alex, who, like we all do at some point, needed some additional support.

Alex heard about the internships programs available with MMC through another young person. He got in touch with us, and soon came in for an interview to discuss how we could help him find employment pathways. In the interview, we learnt that Alex had a passion and interest in car detailing.

Alex joined us as a trainee, attending TAFE each week and working towards a Certificate II in Construction Pathways. He was incredibly shy when he join the team. He also had challenges outside of work. Despite this, he showed commitment and motivation during the five week program and we him offered a job with MMC at the end.

MMC offered Alex an environment where he was supported and encouraged from both the team from his fellow trainees. This enabled him to complete his traineeship and to start to prepare for his next steps.

Alex left My Maintenance Crew when his traineeship ended and wasn’t really sure what was next. A car detailing position came up at Geelong Smash Repairs, which we knew would suit Alex to a tee. We helped him get his CV together, coached him for the interview and gave him nudge he needed to get there. Alex was offered the position and started immediately on a trial. Any new job is hard, but we worked closely with Alex and Geelong Smash Repairs to help them build a positive work relationship.

Alex has now been at Geelong Smash Repairs for a year and has become a valued member of their team. Alex has continued his passion for cars and learned from new skills from his supervisor. We are really pleased for Alex and all that he has achieved. MMC recognised the potential in Alex and were really happy to help him grow into the person he is today. He has come such a long way from the shy young person who turned up at MMC over 12 months ago. Alex has a full time job, loves what he does and has learned valuable skills which have set him up for life.

Congratulations Alex!
The BASE is a fully operational café, offering a diverse and healthy menu in a warm and welcoming environment.

In the first half of the financial year, The BASE provided great opportunities in a 10-week Cooking For Confidence program which included the accredited food handlers' certificate.

We had groups from Diversitat English classes and Department of Justice (DOJ) participants complete programs.

The BASE started operations in March 2019 as part of our Social Enterprise arm. During this time, they have made hundreds of coffees, served hundreds of meals, catered for local organisations and most importantly provided real life experience and training to members of our community.

We have made the difficult decision not to continue with business following the conclusion of our funding arrangement with RDV. The COVID-19 pandemic drastically reduced custom.

Both My Maintenance Crew and The Base are Accredited Social Enterprises. This accreditation comes through the highly credentialed and well-facilitated overseeing body, Social Traders. To continue our formal certification of social enterprises, as verified by Social Traders, requires that the enterprise meets the definition of a social enterprise in that it:

- has a defined primary social purpose, environmental or other public benefit
- derives a substantial portion of its income from trade
- reinvests 50% or more of annual profits towards achieving the social purpose

Being an accredited social enterprise gives us opportunities into the tendering processes for particularly, government tenders. The Victorian Government has a Social Procurement Framework, which stipulates a proportion of government tenders must have a social procurement component.

Thank you Geelong for your ongoing support.
94.7 The Pulse is a community radio station in Geelong which broadcasts 76 different programs each week in 16 different languages powered by 160 volunteers. The Pulse also provides training in radio broadcasting and audio and video production services.

This year, we were thrilled to win the National Ethnic Multicultural Broadcasters Council (NEMBC) award for outstanding community engagement.

Prior to COVID-19, 94.7 The Pulse was out in the community doing outside broadcasts. We showcased a variety of locations, including Pako Festa and numerous other community events.

COVID-19 has reduced the operations of the station due to restrictions, and also saw reduced revenue from sponsors. However, it has allowed us time to upgrade the studios due to the reduced broadcasting hours.

Our Mission Makeover Project began with funding allocated to renovate studios and upgrade equipment. We thank Tom Roe for his generous donation to this project and our many subscribers for their donations. We also continue to receive funding from the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF). We invite our community to get behind the station each year during our annual subscription.

94.7 The Pulse holds an Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) community radio licence, and this year this licence was renewed for another five years. A lot of behind the scenes works goes into renewing this licence. We need to ensure that we meet the high standards set out by ACMA so that we can continue to broadcast. Thank you to everybody involved in this process.

We also collaborated with other organisations throughout the year, renting studio space and equipment. One example of this was the City of Greater Geelong youth sound production project.

In 2020, The Pulse celebrated the sixth year of popular news, sport and information program, Mitchell’s Front Page.

- Over 1,200 hours of radio
- 3,737 interviews
- 18 candidates forums at election time covering 7 different elections for local, state and federal government
- Outside broadcasts from over 25 different locations including India!
The Oppe Shoppe in Belmont provides recycled goods for those in need and thrifty bargain hunters alike. This year, we saved over 100 tonnes of landfill and are proud of how we were able to help out numerous families and people struggling during a very difficult year.

We held a successful Oppe Shop After Dark fashion event this year which raised over $1,000. Our clients enjoyed free fashion advice from fashion designer Lizzy Mac. We also thank Geelong MP Christine Couzens for her support.

COVID-19 saw a loss of revenue for the shop as we were forced to close during restrictions, but it was wonderful to see volunteers and staff come together to help support those in need despite the shop being closed to the public.

Our Oppe Shoppe is powered by a team of over 20 volunteers. Our volunteers assist across the operation from emptying donation bins to testing and tagging electrical equipment, working in the shop and sorting donations for sale.
2019/2020 has been a very busy year for People and Organisational Development.

Throughout the year we recruited for over 65 positions across the organisation, have provided Prevention of Family Violence training to over 130 staff, coordinated the site consolidation project (as well as lifting some heavy boxes), updated emergency management plans, created and implemented COVID Safety Plans and have written over 1000 letters to staff, attended meetings with our Leadership teams, staff, volunteers, clients and students, and contributed significantly to the ongoing health and wellbeing of the organisation.

Upon conclusion of the financial year we had 50 full time staff, 102 part time staff, 69 casual staff and approximately 300 volunteers. During the year we had 100 separations of employment which included resignations, the end of contracts or traineeships, positions lost due to funding, and some redundancies. While we were sad to see these people go, we wished them the very best of luck and thanked them for their contributions to Diversitat. In 2019/20 staff accessed over 20,000 hours of annual leave and time off – all very well deserved!

Historically, Diversitat has not been an organisation that has operated remotely, however we were able to quickly adjust to working from home. We worked closely with our provider Xtreme Technology to set up remote access, refurbish laptops and much like the rest of the world, we became experts in Zoom, Teams and WebX! During this time, we have maintained our innovative approach to our work and employed a further 15 staff. This is a testament to the resilience, dedication and determination of our staff who continue to deliver services and programs to our clients and students.

From my perspective, the genuine desire to help, reach out and show kindness to peers and colleagues has been incredible. The ongoing commitment to the people within our community and intention to support, makes me so proud to be part of this team. Congratulations and thank you to all of our people.

Lisa McCarty
General Manager
People & Organisational Development

Diversitat was selected to be part of a pilot program which saw us lay the foundation for the Workplace Equality and Respect Standards. This project focuses on setting standards and goals for Diversitat that will help address gender inequality and violence against women. As a workplace, we play a vital role in creating a space where women are safe, respected, valued and treated as equals. This foundation has seen us deliver a variety of training to staff, celebrate the 16 Days of Activism with a successful social media campaign, and concluded with the launch of a powerful video and morning tea on International Women’s Day. The working group have also identified pathways to improve our policies and procedures, planned out a detailed communications plan and further explored ways in which all staff can be involved in this really important work. We are looking forward to rolling this out in 2021.

Towards the end of February and beginning of March, we became more aware of COVID-19 and the potential impacts this could have not only on our staff and work sites, but our communities in general. A very tough decision was made to close operations at most of our sites for what was expected to be a short period of time. Unfortunately, this has not been the case and we have all experienced the impact.

Historically, Diversitat has not been an organisation that has operated remotely, however we were able to quickly adjust to working from home. We worked closely with our provider Xtreme Technology to set up remote access, refurbish laptops and much like the rest of the world, we became experts in Zoom, Teams and WebX! During this time, we have maintained our innovative approach to our work and employed a further 15 staff. This is a testament to the resilience, dedication and determination of our staff who continue to deliver services and programs to our clients and students.

From my perspective, the genuine desire to help, reach out and show kindness to peers and colleagues has been incredible. The ongoing commitment to the people within our community and intention to support, makes me so proud to be part of this team. Congratulations and thank you to all of our people. Finally, a big thank you to Daniel Psimaris, our HR Advisor, who has worked closely with me and the rest of the organisation in 2019/2020, making our journey smooth, efficient and effective – thank you Daniel!

Lisa McCarty
General Manager
People & Organisational Development

Image: December 2019 - Morning Tea at Diversitat for International Women’s Day. A short video was screened featuring Diversitat staff, members of the Safer and Stronger community working group, City of Greater Geelong Parenting Service staff and Victoria Police speaking in 16 different languages about this year’s IWD theme “Let’s all be each for equal”.

Diversitat staff and clients strike the #EachforEqual pose to motivate others and to make International Women’s Day OUR day.
Thank You

Aberdeen Street Early Learning Centre
Access Your Supports
Adult and Community Education Victoria Inc. (ACEVic)
Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE)
Adroit Insurance
Aged Care and Quality Commission
AMES Australia
Australian Lamb Colac
Australian Muslim Women’s Centre for Human Rights

Bank of Melbourne
Barwon Child, Youth & Family Services
Barwon Community Legal Centre
Barwon Disability Resource Council
Barwon Health
Barwon Health – Mental Health Carers Respite
Barwon Health – Refugee Health Nurse
Barwon Prison
Barwon Water
Barwon Youth
BACForce
BCC Betta Home Living Geelong
Bean Squeeze – North Geelong
Beis Efraim College Limited
Bellarine for Refugees
Bellarine Secondary College
Belmont High School
Bethany Group
Bike Safe Geelong

BK Plumbing
Boral
Bright Minds Early Learning Centre Bannockburn
Bright Steps Early Learning and Care
Brophy
Bunnings – North Geelong
Bupa Aged Care Australia
Bupa Care Services

CDC Geelong
Centre for Culture Ethnicity and Health
Centrelink
CFA Geelong
Childcare Management Services
Child FIRST
Chris Drayton – Xtreme Technology
Chris Mackey & Associates
Christine Couzens MLA, Member for Geelong
City of Greater Geelong (CoGG)
City of Greater Geelong – Youth Development Unit
Clonard College
Cloverdale Community Centre
Codaecious
Colac Neighbourhood House
Colac Otway Shire
Coles Corio
Colliers International
Community for Geelong
Community Hub Australia
Community Hub Inc Colac
Community Visitors Scheme
Consumer Affairs Victoria
Coulter Roche Lawyers
Covenant College
CSB Electrical

Davidsens
Dawn Wade Foundation
Deakin University
Deakin University – OT Department
Department of Education
Department of Health and Human Services (HACC PYP)
Department of Human Services Youth Justice
Department of Immigration & Border Protection
Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
Department of Justice (Represented by Consumer Affairs Victoria)
Department of Premier and Cabinet
Department of Social Services (DSS)
Department of State Development, Business and Innovation
DOW Performance Materials (Australia) Pty Ltd
DVJS Employment Solutions

Eastside Cranes – Anthony Devlin
Eddy Kontelj
Emerald Tree Counselling and Consulting
Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV)
Event Kit

Fagg’s Mitre 10 – Barry and Keith Fagg
Federation Children Newtown
Thank You

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)
Finepoint Real Estate
First Steps Childcare
Food For Thought
Freshwater Creek Service Station
Fulton Hogan – South West Alliance
Fyansford Development Pty Ltd

G
Gateways Support Services
Gayle Humphries
Geelong Advertiser
Geelong Arts Centre
Geelong Baptist College
Geelong Community Foundation
Geelong Food Relief
Geelong Football Club
Geelong High School
Geelong Interfaith Network
Geelong Men’s Shed
Geelong Milk
Geelong Mums
Geelong One Developments
Geelong Rainbow Inc.
Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network
Geelong Smash Repairs
Geelong Settlement Planning Committee
Geelong Technical Education Centre – The Gordon
Geelong West Neighbourhood House
Generator Rentals Australia
GenU
Gforce Employment Solutions
Gforce Staffing Solutions
Give Where You Live

Glastonbury
GROW
Gunditjimara Aboriginal Cooperative – Warrnambool

H
Habitat Therapeutics Pty Ltd
Hanlon Industries
Happy Feet Early Learning Centre
 Headspace Barwon
Hepatitis Victoria
Hungarian Community

I
Ian Potter Foundation
Ian Weeks Fabrication
Ian Wheeler
iBuilt Group
Iona College

J
Jack Brockhoff Foundation
John Holland

K
Kardinia Childcare & Kindergarten
Kardinia Park Stadium Trust
Khan Curry Hut
Kids World Geelong
Kinetic Engineering Services
Kmart Corio
KYO
Kyrra’s Koffee

L
Lake Imaging
Lara Secondary College
Lavers Hill P-12 College
Laverton Community Centre
Leisure Networks
Leopold Community and Learning Centre
Lifeline
Life Saving Victoria
Linked Building
Lions Club Corio
Luisa La Fornara

M
MacKillop College Werribee
Marina View Café
Matchworks
Thank You

Matherson Construction Group
Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College (MFGSC)
Maurice Blackburn Lawyers
McHarry’s Buslines Pty Ltd
Melbourne Victory Football Club
Men’s Community Kitchen
Michael Martinez
Movers Galore
Mustang & Co
Multicultural Aged Care Services
Multicultural Centre for Women’s Health

Orange Door
Our Place
Our Watch

Paint It Black
Pakington Street Traders
P & G Bakery
Peter Doyle
Peter Murphy Automotive
Pettavel Winery and Restaurant
Phil Hines Photography
PK Creative
Platform Arts
PPG Taubmans

Queenscliff and District Neighbourhood House
Queenscliff Brewhouse
Queenscliff Men’s Shed
Queenscliff Music Festival – Chris Longmore
Queenscliff Uniting Church and Community

RACV – Rory Sackville
RapidClean Geelong

Reading Writing Hotline
Reclink
Refugee Council of Australia
Refugee Legal
Regional Development Victoria (RDV)
Richard Marles MLA
Rosewall Neighbourhood Centre
RTO Advice Group
Run M Ragged

Sacred Heart College
Saint Ignatius College
Salvation Army Community Services Programs
Salvos Connect
Sarah Henderson MP
SC Technologies
Scanlon Foundation
SCOPE
Second Bite
Settlement Council of Australia (SCoA)
Sexual Assault and Family Violence Centre (SAFV)
Shine On Foundation
Shilo Victoria
Sleepy Hollow Blues Club
South Valley Baptist Church
South West TAFE
Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre
St Joseph’s College
St Luke’s Uniting Church – Highton
St Paul’s Lutheran Church – Grovedale
State Emergency Services (SES) Geelong
Strategies 4 Excellence
Streamline Media
Supercats Basketball

National Australia Bank – Geelong West
National Ethnic Multicultural Broadcasters Council (NEMBC)
NDIS
Nelson Park School
Netball Victoria
Newcomb Secondary College
Nilsen Electrical
Nook Architects
Norlane Community Initiatives
Norlane Pharmacy
Norris Construction Group
Northern Bay College
Northern Futures
North Geelong Secondary College

Occasions Event Hire
Office of Multicultural Affairs & Citizenship

Empowering individuals and communities to reach their full potential
Thank You

T

Telstra Business Centre
The Fagg Foundation
The Knight
The Mulch Centre
The Potato Shed
The Shell Club
Time for Youth
TLC Aged Care The Belmont
Torquay Community Centre
Torquay Early Learning Centre
Total Events
Total Tools – North Geelong
Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS)
Transport Accident Commission (TAC)
Tuli Foods – Geelong Golden Farms

U

Uniting Aged Care Kalkee Day Respite
Uniting Care
Uniting Church – Queenscliff

V

VicRoads
VicSuper
Victorian Curriculum & Assessment Authority
Victorian Group Training Company Ltd

W

Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative
Wathaurong Glass
Western Heights Secondary College
Westpac Bank
West Vic Staffing Solutions
Wilsons Road Early Learning Centre
Woolworths Corio
Wombat Gully Plant Farm Geelong
Worksafe

X

Xtreme Technology

Y

Youth Approach to Pregnancy and Parenting Program
Youth Connect
Youth Justice
Youth Law
Youth Support & Advocacy Service (YSAS)

Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC)
Victorian Regional Channels Authority
Victoria Police (Corio and Geelong)
Volunteering Geelong
In the Media

Journey to Australia

An explosion that blew off Yussif Shubod unconscious was the catalyst for his journey to Australia, but he refused to leave the love of his life behind. He speaks to Luke Young about his journey from Syria for Refugee Week.

Yussif Shubod, an ordinary man with an extraordinary story, had his world turned upside down when an explosion of a car bomb in Syria left him unconscious. The blast, which occurred while he was on the way to work, resulted in a traumatic brain injury that would change his life forever. His family remained by his side, offering unwavering support as he navigated the challenging road to recovery.

A few months later, an offer from an Australian family to take him and his family to Australia was too good to turn down. The couple agreed to take him and his family in, offering them a chance to start anew and rebuild their lives in a country where opportunities seemed endless.

Yussif değer, a man with a heart of gold, found himself resonating with the stories of other refugees who had sought sanctuary in Australia. His experiences brought him a newfound appreciation for the richness and diversity of the Australian community.

Would you like to host 25 or more copies of the Geelong Independent at your business or organisation?

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In the Media

Program to create opportunities for job seekers

HARRISON TRIPPEL

The program is supported by the Department of Social Services and seeks to empower individuals to achieve their full potential. It is designed to help people gain skills and experience that will enable them to secure employment.

Merger to amplify Geelong’s multicultural voice

MACS CEO executive Brian Lefrancois said the merger would create a stronger voice. The proposed merger will enable the two organisations to continue to provide the very best care and support for the multicultural people in the Geelong region in all stages of their lives.

The proposed merger is the result of a series of meetings and discussions held between the two organisations in recent months. Mr Lefrancois said the merger would bring together the best of both organisations to create a stronger force for change.
In the Media

MY GEELONG

Jan Juc’s Jessica Freidley is in the running for a statewide award for her work in aged care at Nelson. She spoke to Luke Vogt about her passion for the job and working through COVID-19.

"I can’t even begin to tell you the changes that have come with the pandemic. Aged care is a demanding profession, but the stress and pressures have been particularly acute during COVID-19," Jessica said.

"We’ve had to adapt to new safety measures and ensure the health and safety of our residents. It’s been challenging, but the support from our team and the community has been incredible."

"What are your proudest moments during COVID-19?"

Jessica reflected on the resilience and kindness of her colleagues. "I’m proud of the way our team has come together to support our residents. We’ve worked tirelessly to ensure their safety and wellbeing during this difficult time."

"Other than health care, what other aspects of your job do you enjoy?"

Jessica said, "I love working with seniors and helping them maintain their independence. It’s rewarding to see the positive impact we can have on their lives."

"What’s next for you after this award?"

Jessica deferred to her employer, "I’m looking forward to continuing to grow and develop in my role. I’m excited to see what the future holds for me and the aged care sector."
In the Media

2019/2020 DIVERSITAT ANNUAL REPORT

Empowering individuals and communities to reach their full potential
In the Media

DIVERSITAT WORKS BACKSTAGE ON ITS THEATRE PROJECT

Diversitat is seeking volunteers and participants for its new theatre project aimed at senior members of the community. The project will include a series of workshops focusing on developing skills in acting, writing, and directing. Participants will have the opportunity to develop their creative skills and gain experience in the performing arts.

The project will be directed by Karen Miller, an experienced theatre practitioner. The workshops will be held at the Diversitat Centre, and participants will have the chance to work with professional actors and directors.

The project will run from mid-March to mid-May, and participants will be given the opportunity to perform in a final production. The production will be presented in a local theatre and will be open to the public.

This project is an opportunity for participants to learn new skills, socialise, and enjoy the creative process. Participants will be given the chance to develop their confidence and build new connections.

To express interest, please contact the Diversitat Centre on 1800 250 050 or email info@diversitat.org.au.
Image: Diversitat staff at the 2019 Geelong Rainbow Inc Pride March & Festival.