

CCOEI - in a strong position entering 2021

The following initiatives undertaken in 2020 support community connection, engagement and efficiencies that streamline operations and ensure sustainability.

1. Changes to Committee Roles.

- **Secretary**

Gina Etienne Secretary will be supported through portfolio positions filled by members of the committee¹. Example: the Finance Portfolio and the Meeting Convener Portfolio positions.

- **Website, marketing and social media**

Dan Martinez – Silver Dollar Media. Dan will continue with website and social media management. As a result of Dan's pro-bono work in 2020, Google contacts grew steadily to over 10,000 per month. CCOEI is fortunate to have Dan continue this work as a volunteer in 2021.

2. **Mentoring and support** of volunteers has contributed in a number of ways including the development of a new and expanded skills base for CCOEI. In addition, the new CoM is implementing a *buddy* system for new members

3. **CCOEI Vice President Bwe Thay was appointed Deputy VMC Chair** in 2020. Bwe's work with individual communities; his policy and advocacy work with service providers, business and all levels of government; will influence CCOEI direction in a positive way. Read more about Bwe Thay [here](#)

4. **Multicultural Community Connections Twilight Concert series.** This initiative included four concerts, funded by the Victorian State Government, during the Melbourne CoVid-19 lockdown. Ken Pang (Master of Ceremonies) worked with Bwe Thay and Dan Martinez running the concerts online, through Facebook, resulting in 30,000+ contacts recorded. See link to the final concert on Facebook [here](#)

5. Migrant Settlement Committee 2020

- Adapting to online meetings through Zoom allowed MSC meetings to resume in August 2020 after the first wave of CoVid-19 restrictions
- Participation in meetings increased from an average of 35 participants per meeting to over 45 per meeting. Service providers logging in from regions beyond the Eastern Region of Melbourne contributed in a minor way to the increase.

¹ 2020-2021 Committee members: Sui Ting Tse; Gina Etienne; Emma Chege; Bwe Thay; Sam Navarria; Krishani Dassanayake; Damien Finette; Wali Sultani; Con Pagonis; Ken Pang; Saarah Ozeer.

- The results of the annual MSC Survey were analysed and presented to members at the December 2020 meeting by Dr Lillian DeBortoli. Feedback obtained contributed to planning for 2021.

6. The New MSC Meetings Model for 2021

Organisations are encouraged to "host" an MSC meeting.

- The benefits to organisations hosting meetings include:
 - greater exposure of services and programs;
 - ability to share information knowledge and expertise;
 - being part of a valuable network and identifying gaps and barriers which may lead to workshops or forums.

In turn, CCOEI will disseminate meeting outcomes to all members on the mailing list, feature presentations by organisations on the CCOEI website and/or CCOEI eNews.

7. CCOEI Funding/Grants:

- Volunteer Grant received from Department of Social Security in June 2020. This funding is to assist CCOEI volunteers with items such as first aid/safety materials; police checks; training etc.
- Victorian State Government Multicultural grant to assist with initiatives to keep the multicultural community engaged and connected during the pandemic.

8. CCOEI eNews.

The newsletter, compiled and edited by Con Pagonis, provides a comprehensive source of up-to-date information on migrant, refugee and asylum seeker information, services and projects. Readership includes migrant and refugee policy-makers, service providers, advocates and researchers in Melbourne's eastern local government areas as well as a broader state-wide and national audience. Although usually a monthly publication during CoVid-19, 40 online editions were published weekly in 2020 to keep people connected. Link to CCOEI eNews newsletter [here](#)