



MULTICULTURALISM MATTERS

MCNT'S Newsletter

MCNT'S HIGH- LIGHTS

- Multicultural Policy, Building on the Territory
- Islamic Society on its 35th year

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Building on the Territory's Diversity

The Hon. Mr. Vatskalis has released the first Annual report under the Multicultural Policy. The Multicultural policy was launched in February '05. The policy sets in place a framework for government actions and activities to become more coordinated and coherent. It sets in place 4 clear principles which government agencies must demonstrate programs against. The 4 principles are: valuing diversity; fair access; encourage participation & mutual respect.

The annual report outlines initiatives that have been undertaken by various agencies under each of these 4 main principles, such as:

- The increased provision of housing to refugee families by the Dept of Local Government, Housing and Sport.
- The provision of multi-faith spaces in Darwin Prison by the Dept of Justice
- Anula Primary School children to preschool project where, in consultation with the African community, a bus service has been established to assist refugee children of appropriate age groups to attend preschool to help them with their transition into schooling; and
- The development of diversity policies by several agencies.

For more information and to obtain copy of the report, visit www.multiculturalaffairs.com

Islamic Society on its 35th year

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory congratulates Dr. Waqar Ahmed, President of the Islamic Society in Darwin and his Committee, on the success of the Open Day of the Islamic Society held on 22 April 2006. It was well attended both by the different religious leaders and Government officials in Darwin.

Message from the President

Leading change and implementation of continuous improvement in the strategic approaches to the Council's operations are what I am looking forward to 2006. The 'new look' first edition of the 2006 MCNT Newsletter is one of the key approaches to bring about change & improving the way MCNT communicates to its members and the community. The MCNT's website & brochure are in the process of being updated to reflect current and future projects of the Council and to continue improving the public face of the organisation.

Forging new links through effective partnership arrangements with other in the Territory are also underway. The signing of Memorandum of Understanding between MCNT and Australia Day Council has taken place on 7 April. Another Memorandum of Understanding between NT Chamber of Commerce is currently being negotiated. Partnership arrangements with Darwin City Council and Palmerston City Council are being developed and in the process of being formalised.



Jenny Medwell, President of MCNT

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I look forward to your feedback to our 'new look' newsletter.



International Women's Day

International Women's Day is celebrated every year worldwide on 8 March. This year's theme was: **2006: Women in decision-making.**

The Multicultural Council of the NT (MCNT) has been organising IWD's dinner for the past ten years. The MCNT Committee believes that we need to celebrate and acknowledge women's contributions to society. There were 100 people who turned up for the celebration dinner.



This year IWD Dinner was held at Kantillas Function Centre in Marrara Oval.



MCNT Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Australia Day Council



On Friday 7 April 2006, MCNT signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Australia Day Council NT at the Government House.

On the occasion Heather Sjoberg, Chairman of the Australia Day Council NT said "We were seeking strategic partners to further our mission to inspire national pride and identified the Multicultural Council as a significant organisation, particularly in their work with new and emerging communities".

Jenny Medwell, President of the Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory reiterated, 'through our work with the MCNT we hope to ensure these and other ethnic groups get the opportunity to learn about our celebrations and awards programs'.

'We are looking forward to working in partnership with the ADCNT to seek opportunities to enhance both our programs and theirs.' Jenny Medwell concluded.

**C o m m u n i t y S e t t l e m e n t S e r v i c e s S c h e m e
(C S S S 2)
B u i l d i n g S e l f R e l i a n c e P r o j e c t**

With the departure of Stuart Clark as Capacity Building Officer due to work commitment interstate, The Multicultural Council of the NT would like to welcome our new Capacity Building Officer, Ms Jenny Milne.

Of all the 100 countries I have visited, African culture seems to have had the greatest impact on my life. I have a deep interest and respect for African culture, having been involved in African settlement for the last 10 years including Africa Australia Friendship Association (AAFA) activities and organising World Refugee Day 2005 with Melaleuca Refugee Centre.

Multicultural Council objectives are similar to my own and especially through AusdanceNT community cultural development projects, I have worked tirelessly to achieve them in multicultural Darwin, rich in its diversity and a unique special place. I look forward to facilitate and inspire the African community to reach its potential as a dynamic force within Darwin Region and the NT. This Capacity Building initiative is an important step towards building up cultural diversity contribution in Australia, but the drive, initiative and will, must come from the African communities. The important challenge is for the six African community incorporated bodies to make their associations work in an accountable way to achieve their various goals. Grant projects can be a way of progressing on the journey and a mentorship program is being built up to assist groups to work , separately or together.

I believe that the capacity building project is an important catalyst and training for developing future talent and am happy to be on board. The potential is enormous!

**C o m m u n i t y S e t t l e m e n t S e r v i c e s S c h e m e
(C S S S 2)**

Assisting Dependants of Skilled Migrants

by: Jamie Harvey



The Assisting Dependants of Skilled Migrants project seeks to provide information and referral to the client group and develop strategies to counter deep seeded issues faced by this group.

Presently the project worker is now looking to organize an information session in mid May for skilled migrants and their families with a focus on visa application processes and the skilled migration program. In conjunction with Luchie Santer (Senior Vice President of the MCNT Management Committee) the project worker has recently applied for funding from the Office of Multicultural Affairs. The money will be used to run three dialogues with skilled migrants and employers of skilled migrants to identify challenges that both of these groups currently face and help the groups to develop strategies to meet these challenges.

P a l m e r s t o n I n t e r f a i t h N e t w o r k

b y : R o n M i t c h e l l

“Goodness and Kindness” Program visits Top End schools in Harmony Week

MCNT’s ‘Palmerston City Interfaith Network Project’ in early 2006 focused on the satellite city of Palmerston with the aim of promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding through innovative activities and events.

One of the most rewarding and highest profile activities of this project was the inaugural tour of the Sydney-based “Goodness and Kindness” Program in late March, made possible with sponsorship from the NT Community Benefit Fund.

This fast-paced and interactive program was presented to 1,500 students in six local schools in late March. Islamic community advocate Kuranda Seyit led the multi-faith team and inspired the children with his positive message of interfaith harmony.

Goodness and Kindness coordinator and Islamic representative Kuranda Seyit inspires the children at Driver Primary School”.



MCSL & Multimedia

by: Delphine Morris

Mural competition:

We are still taking entries into the Mural competition until the 30th of April. Theme: "multicultural children living in harmony in the NT".

Fusion textile workshops at Nungalinia:

The end of the last series of workshops came too soon for many of the participants. A satisfaction survey revealed an over-

whelming majority attendants believed the program helped them to better access education, training or employment opportunities, made them want to be more involved in community activities, enable them to learn skills/improve their skills, and make new friends, as well as the fact service providers were using the workshops to disseminate information.



Aurelia with Margaret, mentor and renowned artist at the Fusion Textile workshop.

Multimedia project: "Knowledge is Respect"

One to one training is still taking place with a few cultural groups who are yet to complete their Power Point presentations and we are expecting to start public speaking training in a month. The settlement video's filming stage is almost completed. The technical and acting team has so far involved 12 people from several African communities, with a strong youth focus and participation.



filming a sequence on Larrakia culture at Rapid Creek

Multicultural Parenting Project:

MCNT and the Department of Families and Community Services NT are currently negotiating a partnership to undertake research in the largely unexplored domain of multicultural parenting. *The program Objective is:* To explore and document the personal stories & family traditions of families who have resettled in Australia. To design & develop parenting resources by sharing positive stories from CLD families who have successfully managed the cultural transition as parents in a different country.

Indigenous Cultural Tour of Darwin

It is a project of utmost and timely importance to promote mutual understanding between the new communities and indigenous communities in the Territory, especially in the light of recent minor youth issues. The tour was held on the 29th of April (Saturday) from 10 am to 4 pm. Two Larrakia guides took us on a discovery of Darwin's features and sites of significance, including the art centre, and a lunch with indigenous food. MCNT, Melaleuca and PEAG have developed a partnership and will collaborate in providing transport to the families.

MCNT is the spearhead of the project and we hope this is a first of a long series of collaborative initiatives to spread understanding in our diverse Darwin community as well as to create platforms for new comers to the territory to develop a sense of place and respect for their host country, people and cultures.

Multicultural Community Quality Use of Medicines Program (MCQUM)



National Prescribing Service Limited

NPS is the peak organisation providing independent information about medicines. NPS has been refunded by the Australian Government for 2005-2009 to provide services to health professionals and consumers (*Community Quality Use Medi-*

cines Program). In 2004, NPS and FECCA formed a partnership to deliver the multicultural component of the community program using an evidence based health promotion framework.

What is Quality Use of Medicines (QUM)?

Medicines include prescription and non-prescription medicines, including vitamin and mineral supplements, herbal and complementary healthcare products. Simply put, QUM means when medicines are the right option

use them wisely and safely.

Aim

The program aims to increase awareness, knowledge and skills of CLDB consumers to manage their medicines more effectively.

Achievements to date:

Community specific programs (Italian, Greek, Chinese and Vietnamese):

National study to assess the medicines issues of four communities *Get to know your medicines*, a language-specific media campaign in partnership with SBS Radio;

tm TRANQUIL MOMENTS

Discover an oasis of calm and well-being for your body, mind and soul.

Tranquil Moments is held in a candlelit setting where guests can enjoy a few unhurried moments to reflect on some inspiring words set to music, specially chosen to uplift the heart and refresh the spirit.

12.30 - 1.00pm
Thursday 20 April, 2006
Thursday 27 April, 2006
Thursday 4 May, 2006
Thursday 11 May, 2006

SPILLET HOUSE
65 Smith Street, Darwin.
Telephone: 0413 770 212
After Hours: 8927 2617

This is a service offered by the Baha'i Community of Darwin *with funding*

assistance provided by Community Benefit Fund.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Free access!

All statistics on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) website at www.abs.gov.au can now be accessed free of charge.



The change means that all statistics, tables, spreadsheets and Census data are now available free to any member of the public with Internet.

Quarantine Regulations

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) *Quarantine Matters!* Campaign Manager, Jacquie Travia, has reminded travellers to acquaint themselves with Australia's quarantine regulations and declare risk items during the Christmas gift-giving season of Easter and throughout the year.

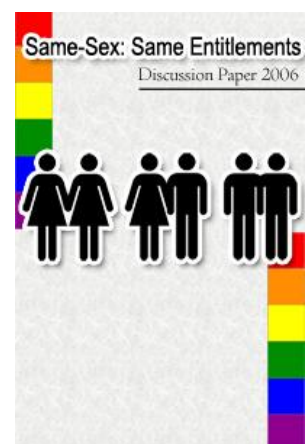
"I urge all people to declare on their incoming passenger card all food, plant and animal products. AQIS screens all luggage and the penalties for not declaring (up to A\$66,000) are simply not worth the risk," Ms Travia said.

To find more information about Australian quarantine regulations simply:

visit www.aqis.gov.au/ [language]

What is 'Same-Sex: Same Entitlements' about?

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission will conduct an Inquiry into discrimination against same-sex couples regarding access to financial and work-related entitlements. The Inquiry intends to conduct an audit of Commonwealth, State and Territory laws in order to develop a full list of circumstances in which same-sex couples may be denied financial and work-related benefits and entitlements that heterosexual couples enjoy.



A National Inquiry into Discrimination against People in Same-Sex Relationships Regarding Financial and Work-Related Benefits and Entitlements on Monday 3 April 2006.

National Inquiry—Review of Seditious Law

The Australian Law Reform Commission is inviting everyone to provide a submission or comment on this:

- The circumstances in which individuals or organisations intentionally urge others to use force or violence against any group within the community, against Australians overseas, against Australia's forces overseas or in support of an enemy at war with Australia; and
- The practical difficulties involved in proving a specific intention to urge violence or acts of terrorism;

For more information, please visit their website at www.alrc.gov.au

Migration—Economic Growth and Social Cohesion

The 12th International Metropolis Conference will be held on 8-12 October 2007 in Melbourne. The week long event conference will concentrate on Migration and settlement issues, Growth and Social Cohesion.

To get more information, please visit their website at www.amf.net.au

DIMA—Rural/Regional Training & Development Conference

The DIMA NSW Multicultural & Settlement Branch is pleased to announce that the CSSS/MRC Rural/Regional Training & Development Conference will be held in Sydney on Wednesday, 17-19 May 2006.

The conference provides an opportunity for rural/regional workers to share valuable information & to explore positive initiatives & strategies to deliver a high quality service to clients & communities.

Invitations to the conference are also extended to rural/regional workers funded through DIMA's NT.

SBS's Triennial Funding Submission

SBS is seeking support for their Triennial Funding Submission for 2006-2009. The upcoming Triennium is a critical one for SBS. While SBS is currently riding on a wave of success, with record audiences and widespread recognition of our innovative programs & services, we are also moving into a very challenging digital environment & additional resourcing is necessary, even just to maintain existing services.

SBS is a critical way to bring Australians from diverse cultural backgrounds together by reflecting on Australia's cultural diversity & promoting harmony.

The Triennial Funding submission is a key strategic document for SBS. It articulates our assessment of the major issues in broadcasting and our planned responses to those issues.

Current Settlement Research Conducted by DIMA

The DIMA has commissioned research into the settlement experiences of newly arrived humanitarian entrants. The successful tenderer was the Institute for Community Engagement & Policy Alternatives, Victoria University.

The broad objective of the research is to gain understanding of the positive/negative settlement experiences of recent humanitarian entrants & to determine how their settlement experiences differ from those of earlier cohorts of humanitarian entrants. The research will inform the design of DIMA policy & programs which assist clients to achieve full & active participation in Australian society. The final report summarising the outcomes of the research will be available by the end of 2006.

The research involves 500 interviews & 8 focus groups of ten participants each. The interviews will collect basic demographic details as well as information about employment, accommodation, knowledge of English, problems with discrimination and health issues.

For more information, please visit their website at www.immi.gov.au

Active Ageing Strategy—Building the Territory for all Generations



Active Ageing—Have your say on ageing well

We're all getting older and Government needs to plan for a future where there are many more older people. Ageing is a matter for everyone, so we are seeking the views of all members of society on the issues of concern to people as they age.

Active ageing focuses on how people can maintain their good health, continue to maintain mentally and physically active and retain their independence. Building the Territory for all generations, a discussion paper on active ageing in the NT, presents a range of information about ageing and seeks the views of all Territorians about what is important to people as they grow older.

You can comment on any issue relating to ageing. Your comments will be used to develop an Active Ageing Strategy to ensure that people of all ages can plan well for their futures.



UPCOMING EVENTS

YWCA Darwin are celebrating World YWCA Day 2006 with Morning Tea on the **2nd of May**. Priscilla Kare, the General Secretary of YWCA for PNG will discuss "The challenges to and importance of Women's Organisations in developing democracy, strong institutions and accountable governments." RSVP by the 26th of April to 89818323 or office@ywcaofdarwin.org.au Cost is \$12.50 with proceeds to the YWCA Global Campaign for Women.

Changeover Australia is holding a business breakfast with Elders WA Chairman Barry Court on **May 6** from 7.30 at Darwin Airport Resort. RSVP by April 28. To find out more email steverowe@faithcentre.org

Dragons Abreast are having their Inaugural "Simply the Breast" Weekend on Water **May 6/7**. There will be a dragon boat race on Saturday and a yacht race on Sunday and other fun activities.

Contact Penny LaSette on 8981 9625 or email: nationalcoordinator@dragonsabreast.com.au.
Website: www.dragonsabreast.com.au

Office of Women's Policy is seeking women to complete a Lifelong Economic Wellbeing Issues Survey. The survey can be found online at www.security4women.com

World Environment Expo/Day come along to the NT Museum and Art Gallery, Fannie Bay, on Sunday 4 June from 11-5.00pm. Learn about our unique NT environment; find out about all the different organisations working for the NT environment and how you can get involved



**DRUMBEAT
MULTICULTURAL PARADE AND
PERFORMANCE**
Saturday May 6th, 5.30pm

12 world drums & dance groups. More are welcome. Bring your drum along and join in!

A free, fun, family, community festival from April 28th to May 7th.

Hotline on 8985 5111

Drumbeat Enquiries on 8932 7476 (Jenny)



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PO Box 299 Karama, NT 0813

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Shop 15, Malak Shopping Centre-
Malak Place, Malak, NT 0812

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Website: www.mcnt.org.au

MCNT is sponsored by
The Northern Territory Government
through the Office of Multicultural
Affairs



Northern Territory Government
Department of the Chief Minister

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT) is the Peak body dedicated to advocacy and representing the interests, concerns and aspirations of people of Non English Speaking Immigrant and Refugee Background.

Our aims and objectives are:

- To ensure the right of ethnic communities to a fair go, a fair share of community resources and their full participation in decision making in issues which concern and/or affect them;
- To assist in the settlement of migrants and refugees and inform them on aspects of life in Australia;
- To lobby for best practice service delivery models which meet our stakeholders' needs for access to culturally and linguistically appropriate services;
- To manage the Council's activities in a responsible and transparent manner to the benefit of our constituency;
- To be a strong voice for the Northern Territory at the national level;
- To encourage and support multicultural and ethnic organizations to maintain and share the social and cultural life of their communities;
- To promote joint action and cooperation between multicultural and ethnic communities and partnerships with service providers on issues of common concern;
- To achieve a truly multicultural society where diversity is celebrated and where there is no discrimination and disadvantage based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, culture and language;
- To focus on outcomes and meet performance agreements.

MCNT's Exco and Staff Update

Major changes have occurred within the MCNT Executive committee membership and staff composition make up:

Executive Committee—Two members of the committee namely **Yogan Sathianathan OAM**, Vice President and **Indrani Doloswala**, Committee member have resigned from their positions. Indrani and her family are moving to Brisbane. I would like to extend our sincere thanks to both for their significant contribution to the community and to the Council and wish them both all the best in the future.

Lea Mussak—was successful in her nomination to be co-opted as the new **Vice President** and the Council would be seeking nominations from the members to co-opt two persons as a result of the vacancies in the committee.

Alice Chang—is the 2006 NT Young Australian of the Year. She was also the 2006 Commonwealth Games Flag bearer. She is a member of the Chief Minister's Youth RoundTable. Alice is organising a 'Multicultural Youth Group' that will happen sometime in June. She is also in the process of chalking out the 'International Youth Medical Program'.

Staff—changes have occurred due to the resignation of **Ms Kim Jackson**, the former Executive Officer in February & this position will be replaced by the Policy & Project Director to meet the public policy & advocacy challenges faced by the Council. **Stuart Clark**, the Self Reliance part time Project Officer moved

MCNT does not take responsibility for the accuracy of news items, nor are the opinions expressed herein the official position of the Council. Opinions and contributions from MCNT members and supporters are always welcome.