

# Nelson Multicultural Council Inc.



**2011 - 2012**



Community Response Fund



te ranga tahi, together we grow



# Nelson Multicultural Council Inc.

## Annual Report

### Period of Reporting

April 2011 – April 2012

The Nelson Multicultural Council (NMC) continues to facilitate social, cultural and economic well-being to the migrant ethnic communities in the Nelson Tasman Region with the strong support of its funders, members and supporters.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS:**

##### **1. Healthy Lifestyles:**

**Ignite Project** – Right at the beginning of April 2011, NMC started the Ignite Project funded by the Community Response Fund provided by the Ministry of Social Development. The aims of this project are to increase the participation of former refugees in social, educative and community programmes, and to look at new initiatives that address the gaps in settlement needs of the refugee communities in Nelson. We hired Jane Furkert as the Project Manager.

**Multicultural Fitness Sessions** – An average of 12 people from 7 different ethnicities attend these sessions which have been held twice a week. They consist of gym exercises and stretches aimed at general fitness, improving muscle tone and preventing injuries. The aim of these sessions is migrant participation for all ages in physical activity and decreasing social isolation.

##### **2. Vibrant and Optimistic Youth:**

Lun Tan joined the Management Committee as the Youth Representative, originally from Malaysia, he and his family have been strong supporters of the NMC for many years. He attended a Youth Forum in March 2012, where he NZFMC Youth Council meeting in Wellington.

##### **3. Appreciation of Diversity**

At the last AGM there was a representation of 12 elected people from 10 different cultures, they were: India, Salvadorian (Spanish/Mayan), Sri Lankan, NZ European, Indian, Filipino, Scottish, Maori, Iranian, British and Argentinean. The following week the first of a series of strategic planning meeting was held to ensure NMC is on track with its work.

**Rainbow Praise: many people many songs**, took place at Nelson Cathedral in mid-April, for the fourth year in a row! This multicultural Christian service involved choirs from NZ, Myanmar, Tonga, Samoa, Vanuatu and the Cook Islands. Our event has inspired other communities to copy us and now there are Rainbow Praise events in Palmerston North and Invercargill.

**Intercultural Awareness & Communication** training workshops, designed by the Office of Ethnic Affairs, were delivered by NMC in July and December to government and non-government personnel.

**Nelson Masked Parade:** NMC, in conjunction with *Alegria Beat* Samba band and *Las Calientes* dancers, were awarded the **Best Community Band** and the **“Merry Makers Mask Award”** in this popular annual community event.



**Week of Prayer for World Peace** was promoted to all faith groups. Unfortunately there was a poor response in terms of interfaith activities, except from the Baha’is Faith in Nelson and the Methodist Church; we informed all members the prayer sessions which were open to all.

The Chairperson attended a special session for migrants on 27<sup>th</sup> Oct at Nelson City Council: **“Framing Our Future”** it was designed to gather ideas for how Nelson might develop in the coming years.

NMC promoted the travelling **Anne Frank exhibition** which came to Nelson Museum. It was through NMC that the Museum was able to make contact with the local Jewish community. In fact, in a Nelson Mail feature article prior to the opening of the exhibition, NMC agreed to be the contact agency for anyone wishing to communicate with Nelson’s Jewish community as not one member of Nelson’s Jewish community wished to give their name. This illustrates the importance of this exhibition and of the work NMC does to educate and promote racial & religious tolerance.

**NZ Federation of Multicultural Council’s AGM** in Lower Hutt, June 2011 – It was attended by Chairwoman, Dayanira R. Bakhshi and Vice-Chair Priyani de Silva-Currie.

**NZ Federation of Multicultural Council’s Quarterly Meetings** – There was one held in October 2011, it was attended by Vice Chair Priyani de Silva-Currie and committee members Claire Keenan and Jyoti Sandhu.

**8-8-88 Burmese Uprising Commemoration** – Several committee members attended this event at Victory Community Centre.

**Celebration of Desi, Bhutanese celebration** – NMC Co-ordinator and Committee members attended this celebration in October 2011 at the Trafalgar Centre.

**Chin National Day Celebration** – NMC Coordinator and Committee members attended this celebration in February 2012 at Nelson Boy's College.

NMC Coordinator and Chairperson have attended the **Citizenship Ceremonies** at the NCC throughout the year; we have welcomed the new citizens and introduced to them the projects of the NMC.

**Race Unity Day 2012, "Aotearoa, A Fair Go for All"** – It was held on Sunday 11th March was



a colourful celebration of Nelson's cultural diversity. Despite of the rain, there was a continuous flow of people who had fun connecting with others, tasting the great variety of ethnic food and enjoying the many cultural performances. We are so appreciative of all the performers who shared their talents so generously: Te Whatakura Kapa Haka group, Alegria Beat Percussion Band, the Las Calientes dancers, Zenda Middle Eastern dance troupe, the Kildunne School of Irish Dance, the Bhutanese Nepali dancers, the solo dancers from Burma, the Seychelles, Easter Island/Tahiti, the Zomi Innkuan group, the Kayan musicians and

dancers, the Zo group, Latin American band "Embalada", the Mosaic World Choir, a Chinese Zheng (harp) player and dancer and of course the marvelous Qiao Yi lion Dance troupe from Christchurch! Katrina Smith from More FM did a splendid job as MC for the day. This year, we developed the interactive cultural activities and were very grateful to the Confucius Institute at University of Canterbury for their participation. Altogether we had over 20 ethnic food stalls and numerous information stalls.

Thanks to the **Nelson City Council** for additional funding this year, we were able to enlist the help of event organizers, Michaela Blackman & Adi Tait as well as Andy Williams of Nelson Foodies.

We are also grateful for support from Settling In, Family & Community Services, More FM, the Nelson Mail, HireQuip, Nelson Media Agency, St Joseph's School, Central School, Bowater Toyota, Westpac Bank, Woollaston Estate, Transport & Marine Covers Ltd and the NZ China Friendship Society (Nelson).

Art Competition – We had a terrific display of art work on the day and it was a difficult job to choose the winners.

A big **THANK YOU** to all the wonderful volunteer helpers!

#### **4. Safety in the Community**

**Speak Out Nelson Tasman Project** – An initiative of the NMC, with the support of numerous other organisations, government agencies and the Human Rights Commission. This reporting system is user-friendly, allowing racism to be reported confidentially on the website, through the free-call number or face to face at several community centres. Late in June 2011 we appointed Lillian Li for the position of Speak Out Nelson Tasman co-ordinator and she took her position in July. The project has been very well publicized in the local newspapers with the hope to raise awareness and motivate people to use it the system.

Because of the SONT project, NMC received the Health & Well-Being runner up award at the TrustPower Nelson/Tasman Community Award ceremony on 31<sup>st</sup> August.

Our region's initiative "**Safe at the Top**", to which NMC made a significant contribution in terms of our work with emerging communities, received WHO International Safe Community certification on 30<sup>th</sup> August.

#### **5. Families and Children**



This has been mostly covered by our Field Worker, Cristy Aydon. This year, the support for families and Children has increased due to the Ignite project. The Multicultural Mums and Toddlers group created a page in Facebook to publicize and share their activities.

NMC is proud to support the Japanz Kidz, a group that teaches children with Japanese heritage, about the language and culture of Japan. And the Raduga(Rainbow) Russian Language Playgroup for children from different backgrounds, all of whom are Russians or Russian speaking.

**NELSON NEWCOMERS NETWORK** – Its membership keeps growing due to the hard work of Chandra Dahal as its Coordinator and to the variety of fun activities it offers.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

To the Management Committee members who are all volunteers, for their efforts and selfless work:

### **The members and officers of the Management Committee were:**

Dayanira Rodriguez Bakhshi	Chairwoman
Priyani de Silva-Currie	Vice-chair, Privacy Officer
Baki Bakhshi	Treasurer
Denise Hutterd	Secretary
Denise Hartley-Wilkins	
Diane Homer	
Claire Keenan	
Marie Johnstone	
Silvia Rodriguez Atencio	Policy Officer
Francey Kara	
Jyoti Sandhu	Minute recorder
Natasha Kara	Youth rep
Lun Tan	Youth rep

### **Employment Sub-Committee members:**

Dayanira Rodriguez Bakhshi  
Denise Hutterd  
Denise Hartley-Wilkins  
Silvia Rodriguez Atencio  
Marie Johnstone

### **Financial Sub-Committee members:**

Priyani de Silva-Currie  
Baki Bakhshi  
Evey McAuliffe

The Management Committee met regularly once a month for the past year, with an average of 6 members present.

To the staff and contractors, we acknowledge their hard work and thank them for the extra unpaid time that they dedicate to the Council:

Evey McAuliffe	Coordinator
Cristy Aydon	Field Worker
Wenli Zhu	Administrative Support Worker
Lillian (Miaolin) Li-Kurtovic	<b>SONT</b> Coordinator
Chandra Dahal	<b>Nelson Newcomers</b> Coordinator
Jane Furkert	<b>Ignite</b> Project Manager
Angela Baker	<b>Multicultural</b> Fitness Instructor

**To our major funding contributors to our work this year and whom we are very grateful:**

Lottery Grants Board

COGS

Family and Community Services (MSD)

Nelson City Council

The Canterbury Community Trust

Creative Communities Arts Council

Tasman District Council

Network Tasman Trust

The Management Committee does not want to finish this report without giving a sincere thanks to the Committee members Denise Hartley-Wilkins and Silvia Rodriguez Atencio who due to work commitments or change of locality had to step down from the Management Committee. Their selfless service, support and contribution to the work of the Council are really appreciated.

On behalf of the Nelson Multicultural Council,

Dayanira Rodriguez Bakhshi  
Chairwoman