

# 2023 Annual Report



# Chair & CEO REPORT

**It's hard to comprehend that we've had a circuit around the sun yet again. While every day feels different and important at Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS), there are times when it's hard to believe that we're another year down.**

2023 has been a time for change at BGCS. We have said farewell to a number of staff and board members and have welcomed new faces to our Banksia family:

- Samantha Donaldson, who began at BGCS in 2001 as a 17 year old on the work-for-the-dole program. In her 22 years, Sam grew to be a brilliant HR and Business Manager and was the backbone of our operations as we grew from a small neighbourhood house to the multimillion-dollar community services organisation we are today. We are so proud of Sam and wish her well as she spreads her wings at Brite Industries.
- Natasha Downes who also began at BGCS in 2004 and was forever the friendly face at reception. We miss Tash's warmth as we walk through the front doors, but are delighted for her in her new adventures.
- Christie Sinclair who began with us at BGCS in 2016 and was our Mr Fix-It, always a sturdy pair of hands free to assist anyone and everyone who came into the centre.

- Jonathan Chee who has performed various roles at BGCS, most recently Chief Storyteller, where he upgraded and led our communications, IT and stakeholder engagement to new heights. Luckily for us, Jonathan is staying on to continue coordinating the WPI Program.

But with goodbyes also comes hellos! We have welcomed two new board members – Khaled Chakli and Asifa Qarar – who bring a wealth of local experience and expertise in governance and finance to our Board. We have also welcomed Georgina Wheeler and Kylie Aloï who are phenomenal assets to our Business Services team, along with:

- Andrew Tomlinson
- Anthony Marcus
- Corinne Rugolo
- Dana Ghawi
- Igor Pejic
- John Paterson
- John Rutter
- Lucy Dewhurst-Phillips
- Luyee Bai
- Najelt Akot
- Nateisha Russell-Armstrong
- Parwana Ahmadzai
- Paulina Sanchez Gaete
- Prinscilla Benson
- Ricky Ellul
- Sapna Khadka
- Simardeep Matharoo
- Simon Qaso
- Siyoda Jayawardene
- Terina Davies
- Tiffeny Yong



We would also like to acknowledge the work of Jaime de Loma-Osorio Ricon who acted as CEO for three months while Gina took her well-earned long service leave. Jaime continues to be an enormous support to the Leadership Team, the Board, the staff and the local community with his strong sense of social justice and his uncanny ability to support the people who need it most.

A big focus for the Board and Leadership Team this year has been place management of the Banksia Gardens Estate. Sadly, we've seen an increase in crime and property destruction and decrease in the quality of housing for our community members on the Estate. We have been focused on improving their lived experience through a coordinated action group, Banksia Now. This has been a multidisciplinary approach between BGCS, Victoria Police, Homes Victoria, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, DPV Health and local schools. The taskforce has been chaired by our new Member for Broadmeadows, Kathleen Matthews-Ward, and we can't thank her enough for her dedication to improving the safety and security of our community. There's more work to do, but we're grateful to have the ear of the government in our commitment to making BGCS a thriving community for everyone.

We also sadly farewellled our inaugural Patron, Father Bob McGuire, who passed away in April.

Father Bob was a dear friend of all at BGCS, who understood not only the challenges faced by our community, but the important contributions that our people make to our society. He saw value in people where others did not. He was dogged in his pursuit of social justice, particularly for those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity.

Father Bob's generosity towards BGCS was second to none, including donations made from the Fr Bob McGuire Foundation, his support of our food relief program and his RoboBus, which provided invaluable STEM education to children in our community during the school holidays.

BGCS has lost one of its greatest champions, but we will continue his legacy and passion for the people of Broadmeadows. We are delighted to honour his legacy by awarding him the Robert Kumar Community Award at this year's AGM.

Finally, we would like to thank our wonderful board members – Asifa Qarar, Carole Fabian, Ed David, Joanne Bliss, King Ng, Khaled Chakli and Marina Labib – for their excellent work and support in striving to help Banksia achieve its potential and ground us in our overarching purposes.

**Julijana Todorovic  
and Gina Dougall**

CHAIR AND CEO

# Deputy CEO REPORT



**After being paralysed by the threat of a blank page for half an hour or so, I thought it may be appropriate to take a few deep breaths and to start with an emotional check-in, like we do in our flexible learning school, Project REAL. What has this period felt like?**

On the 2nd of August 2022, I returned to work at Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS) following a sabbatical 6-month stint spent with my family in Europe, a fabulous opportunity to regroup after a strenuous period on the personal front. I'd like to publicly thank all my colleagues who had to pick up slack on top of their already impossibly busy roles. A special mention to Eric, Gina, Paul and Seral. I feel deeply grateful for all the support and flexibility I have received from BGCS over the last 17 years.

And while some personal dark clouds have continued to persist since my return, I think that to the best of my ability I have tried to give everything I have to offer to the task at hand, whilst refraining from making comparisons to my performance in years past. A certain peace has arrived with that which feels like progress.

Now that this is out of the way, let's shift to what we actually did in 2022–2023. It was another extremely positive period for BGCS, as can be illustrated by a few selected highlights:

- Accreditation to deliver Targeted Care Packages (TCPs): For several months Paul Atkinson and I worked on our registration to be able to deliver TCPs under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005. TCPs are funding packages from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to support particularly vulnerable children and young people. Following our successful registration in late November 2022, we started delivering TCPs in February 2023. This cements our status as an important part of the social support infrastructure in Hume and provides us with a sustainable opportunity to carry out highly intensive client and family support work.
- Banksia Gardens Local Site Executive Committee (LSEC): Since March 2023, we have been honoured to contribute to the Banksia Gardens LSEC, established as part of the State Government's efforts to work across government and with sector partners to improve the lives of people using multiple justice, health, social, employment and education services. This LSEC has a strong focus on disengaged youth in and around the Banksia Gardens public housing estate. It comprises senior representatives from the Department of Education, DFFH, the Department of Justice and Community Safety and Victoria Police. Our initial work has involved a comprehensive data collection and analysis exercise focused on service gap analysis and identification of opportunities for improved service coordination.

- Banksia Now meetings: Informed by the invaluable work of the Banksia Gardens Community Connections team (Melodie Radatti, Merinda Brown and Paulina Sanchez), several conversations between our CEO Gina Dougall and our local federal MP Kathleen Matthews-Ward, led to the establishment of the Banksia Now collective in February 2023. For several months, this group of senior officials from most local agencies in Broadmeadows have been problem solving in relation to some entrenched community issues facing residents of the Banksia Gardens housing estate. This effort has resulted in several positive outcomes, including improvements in community safety, physical amenity (rubbish, tagging, etc.) and local infrastructure (e.g. lighting, sporting infrastructure). I'd like to convey our deep appreciation of the advocacy work carried out by Kathleen, who has become an important local champion and a trusted friend.
- GPAN 10th year anniversary – On the 29th of March BGCS celebrated the 10th year anniversary of the Good People Act Now program, a youth-led community group working to promote gender equality and end violence against women in Hume. I was privileged to co-facilitate the training and the group meetings during its first few years and I know first-hand the deep impact that this program has had on literally hundreds of local residents. I can also see how sophisticated this program has become, putting the voice of participants at the epicentre of all its activities. I was incredibly proud of the work that all the program coordinators, program officers and participants have achieved. Well done to Georgia, Tash and all those who came before you!!
- Northern Centre for Excellence in School Engagement (NCESE) inaugural conference: Since the establishment of the NCESE in 2020, my colleague Dr Eric Dommers and I often daydreamed about organising an annual conference. As it is often the case, chance provided an opportunity for us to turn this dream into reality when we learnt that some distant and illustrious collaborators, Professor Mark Greenberg and Dr Christa Turksma were planning an Australian holiday earlier this year. Racing against the clock and with the invaluable support of Jonathan Chee and Gina Dougall,

we were able to put together a highly successful conference, which I saw as a major milestone sanctioning the status of the NCESE as a regionally significant initiative.

- Reopening of the Common Bean Café: Our social enterprise café was one of the first victims of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, we were thrilled to open a new Common Bean Café at Kangan Institute in October 2022. We also worked hard to secure funding to reopen our original café, in a new in a stand-alone building at DPV Health Broadmeadows (opening in July 2023).

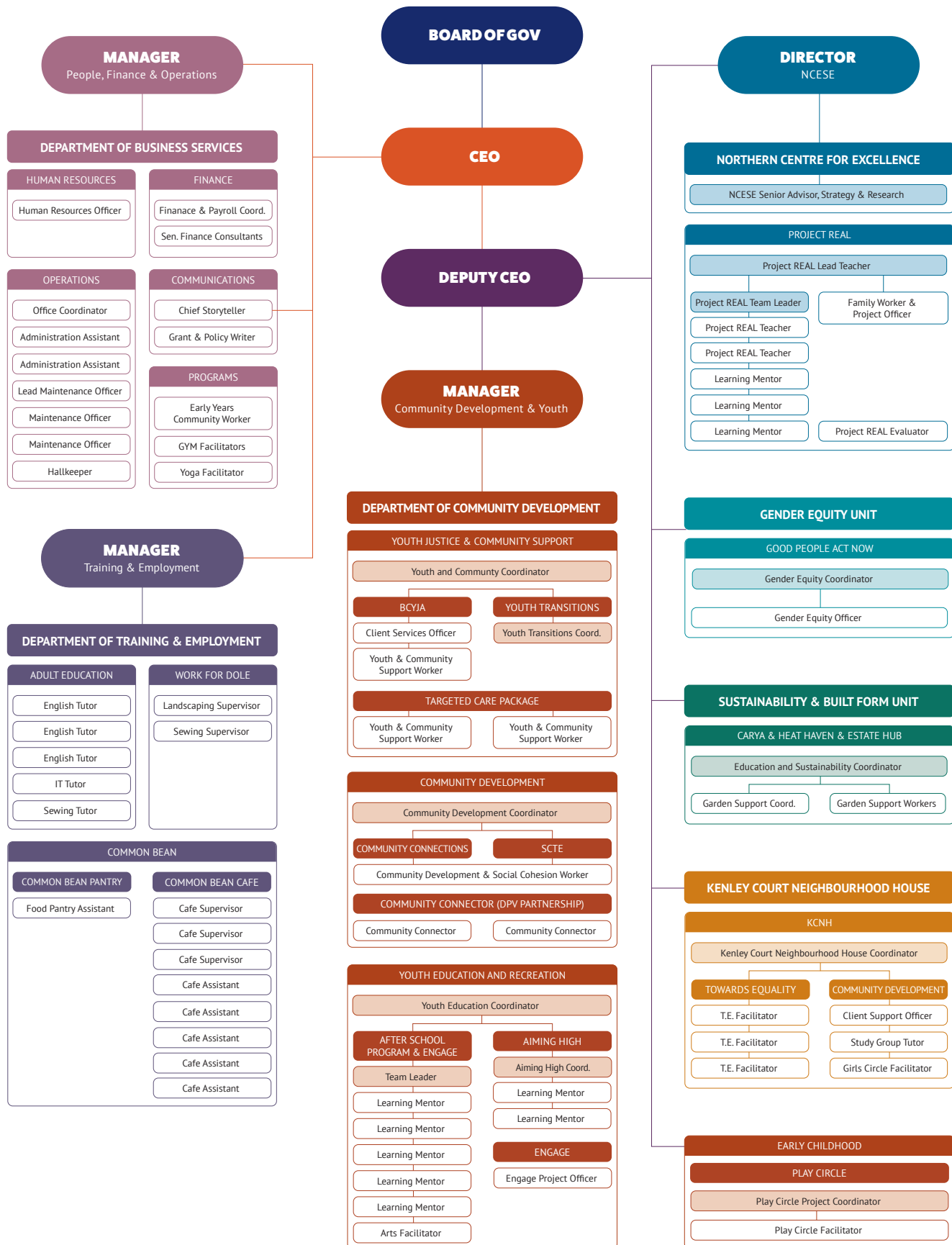
To conclude, I'd like to reflect on some lessons learnt during this period and on our future direction. BGCS has continued to experience significant growth. While this has allowed us to successfully embark on several new initiatives, it has also created a number of challenges as our processes and systems at times have struggled to keep up. During the second half of the financial year, Executive Management Team members have designed an organisational restructure to be implemented from the 1st of July 2023 with the following objectives:

- Placing more emphasis on distributed decision-making.
- Creating more balance between the workloads of all BGCS staff.
- Increasing our structure's coherence and capacity for coordination and communication.
- Liberating resources at a senior management level to dedicate to the following organisational priorities:
  - Consolidating our social enterprise activities and initiatives.
  - Improving our financial sustainability through stakeholder management and the preparation of highly strategic funding submissions.
  - Developing a comprehensive induction and professional development program describing in detail our organisational approach to community work, with a strong emphasis on Adult Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), trauma informed practice and Executive Functions.

**Jaime de Loma-Osorio Ricon**

DEPUTY CEO

# JUNE 2023 ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



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**Banksia Gardens Community Services acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we provide our services. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and express our hope for reconciliation, justice and the recognition of the ongoing living culture of all Aboriginal people.**

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# How you can help

## Volunteering

Banksia Gardens Community Services believes that the best way to create a stronger and better community is to help each other. This means volunteers are central to what we do. If you would like to support the community by offering your time, skills and knowledge, please get in touch. There are a number of ways that individuals, groups and companies can help.

## Individual, corporate and philanthropic support

### Workplace giving

Regular tax deductible donations have a powerful impact on the lives of our community. A donation of as little as \$50.00 can help us provide food for our After School Program or our Community Pantry. These two programs alone support 300 families a week.

## Corporate volunteering

We can provide a structured volunteer program for your staff that provides a range of activities so they can get either hands-on experience or provide skilled support.

## Pro bono work

Support through pro bono work is critical for both operational and efficient service provision. If you have skills or expertise that you would like to share, we would be happy to discuss opportunities.

## Financial sponsorship

You can choose to fund one or all of the programs at Banksia Gardens Community Services. For example, specific investment could fund a program such as Aiming High for a year – supporting 30 aspirational young people to pursue their academic and career goals.

## Financial investment

Broad financial investment allows the organisation to consider where best to use the funds. We are currently aiming to secure approximately \$750,000 in broad financial support.

## Board member position

We are always interested in speaking with people who have the skills, time and energy to join our Board of Governance. Good governance is essential to us excelling as an organisation.

Donations can be made through our online platform:  
[HTTPS://BANKSIAGARDENS.ORG.AU/DONATE/](https://banksiagardens.org.au/donate/)

## To discuss volunteering, donations, and other supports, please contact:

**GINA DOUGALL, CEO**  
0402 163 739  
[GINA.D@BANKSIAGARDENS.ORG.AU](mailto:GINA.D@BANKSIAGARDENS.ORG.AU)





# A message from DON TIDBURY

DON TIDBURY, CEO OF DPV HEALTH

**DPV Health's partnership with Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS) holds immense value and significance.**

**As a healthcare organisation committed to providing comprehensive and accessible services, DPV Health recognises the power of collaboration in achieving the best outcomes for the communities it serves.**

By joining forces with BGCS, DPV Health gains a valuable ally that shares its vision of enhancing the health and well-being of individuals, families, and the community. This partnership allows DPV Health to leverage BGCS's deep roots within the community, tapping into their networks and local expertise. Through working together, both organisations can bridge the gap in healthcare access, amplify their impact, and reach priority populations more effectively.

By combining resources, knowledge, and passion, DPV Health and BGCS have developed and executed innovative programs to address the unique needs of the Hume community, including:

- Integration of the Community Navigator program which employed local Banksia Gardens housing estate residents and DPV Health community connectors, to expand health literacy and service access to over 500 public housing residents.
- Planning for the reopening of the Common Bean Café in a new attractive and purpose built setting co-located within the DPV Health Medical and Dental Clinic. This social enterprise will employ and upskill local people in the provision of hospitality services and provide café and catering services to the community and staff from both organisations.
- Creation of a youth resource health promotion project - "Change starts with You", to be used in the community to empower young people to create change for a safer community for everyone and reduce family violence.
- Development of a central access point to the DPV Health service intake team for BGCS staff to help residents understand what services are offered and assist in priority access to services such as: dental, family violence, homelessness, refugee services and mental and physical health.

## OUR VALUES

### Respect

We genuinely acknowledge and respect each other's individual values, beliefs, efforts, ideas and cultural and religious backgrounds.

### Integrity

We maintain high standards of integrity, are ethical, honest and conscientious in our approach to work. We acknowledge and assume responsibility for our own actions and personal behaviours and we are entitled to expect the same of others.

### Inclusion

We collaborate with the aim of empowering each other to be the best we can, to create connections across communities, celebrate diversity and give voice to those suffering injustice.

### Responsiveness

We are proactive and act flexibly to empower our community when responding to community needs.

### Gender Equity

We believe gender equity is fundamental in creating an ethical society. We will cultivate an equal work environment and will be a leader in gender equity as a means of achieving a thriving and safe community that is free from violence.

### Environmental Sustainability

We actively support the principles of environmental sustainability, both locally and globally.

### Human Rights

We boldly support human rights both locally and globally, aiming to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found.

## OUR VISION

**Strengthening Communities**  
**Reducing Disadvantage**  
**Transforming Lives**

## OUR MISSION

Banksia Gardens Community Services will be a leader in education, training and community engagement programs in Hume city and the northern suburbs.

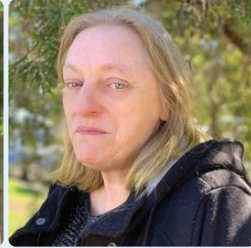
Our services will provide opportunities, particularly those who are experiencing disadvantage and poverty that lead to further education and employment pathways, enhance wellbeing and transform lives.

Banksia Gardens Community services will also focus on social justice advocacy and give voice to those in our community who suffer injustice.

## BOARD OF GOVERNANCE



**JULIJANA TODOROVIC**  
Chairperson



**JOANNE BLISS**  
Public Officer



**ASIFA QARAR**  
Treasurer



**CAROLE FABIAN**  
Secretary



**ED DAVID**



**MARINA LABIB**



**KHALID CHAKLI**



**KING NG**

## PATRONS & AMBASSADORS



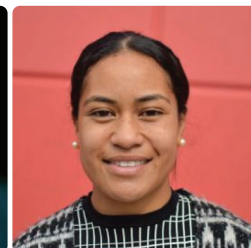
**ROBERT KUMAR**  
Patron



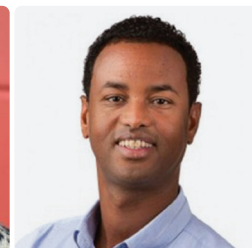
**HELEN PATSIKATHEODOROU**  
Patron



**FR BOB MAGUIRE**  
Patron  
*14TH SEPTEMBER 1934  
TO 19TH APRIL 2023*



**TA TUPOU**  
Ambassador



**ABDI ADEN**  
Ambassador

# Remembering **GABRIELLE WILLIAMS**



**In January 2023 we heard of the unexpected passing of the wonderful Gabrielle Williams, talented author of novels for young adults, great supporter and friend of Banksia Gardens. Jonathan Chee reflects on Gab's impact at Banksia Gardens.**

I first met Gab in early 2018 through her role as Readings Foundation Grants Officer. Our Aiming High VCE Support Program had been the recipient of a Readings Foundation grant. Gab came to do some official Foundation work, but had also generously offered to do a workshop with our aspirational VCE students on creative writing and generating ideas.

The workshop was such a hit! Gab was equal measures engaging and warm, hilarious and energetic. I don't think any of the young people had ever had the opportunity to chat with a practising author, let alone to get insights into their practice – with some handy hints from a master copywriter to boot.

Many students in that cohort would make reference to the ideas and strategies that Gab shared well beyond that day. One student in particular, a young woman from a refugee background living in public housing, entered the program with aspirations to do her best and also with a crippling anxiety that seriously hampered her academic performance.

There was something about Gab and the workshop that really resonated with this student and helped ease her anxiety. Gab talked about her writing process, and the fact that her first attempts were often rubbish, but it was all okay because that was all part of the process. It was so humanising, so accepting of limitations and so liberating for a lot of these students to hear that. I recall this young woman going to have a chat with Gab at the end of the workshop, and being inspired and energised.

The night before the English exam in October, I was strolling through the Broadmeadows library returning some books, and I bumped into the young woman who was busily preparing for exams.

I asked her how she was feeling about the exams, and she nodded a couple of times and she said 'going okay, just gotta keep going and do my best'. She then followed up with 'you know, it's like that woman said, you remember, from the workshop at the beginning of the year? Gab, I think her name was? "Say it straight, then say it great"; I've just got to give it a go and not judge myself. If I can do that I know I'll be alright'.

It was such a stark contrast to the fear and the paralysing anxiety that she first showed up with. In its place were movement, momentum and hope.

When I think about Gab, I think about the hope that she inspired in me and others. When I think about Gab, I think about how comforted I felt knowing that there were smart, funny, kind people in the world who wanted to make it a better place. When I think about Gab now, I think about all the ways that she did make the world a better place.

# Program HIGHLIGHTS

## The Aiming High VCE Support Program (Aiming High)

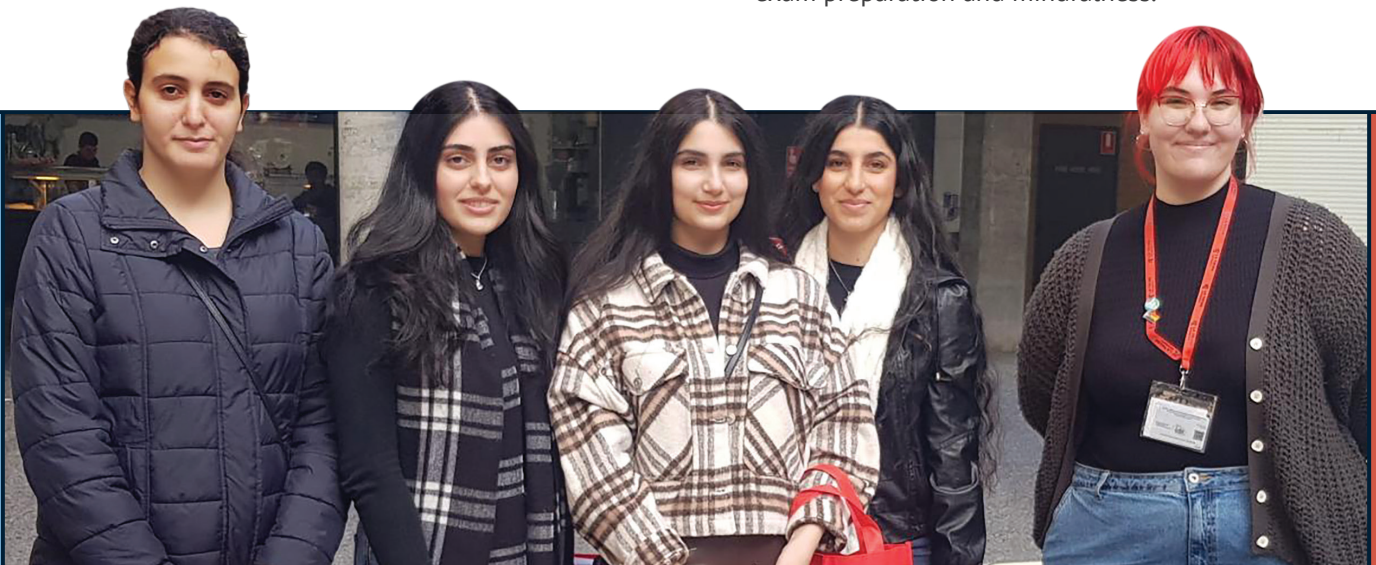
Aiming high is a VCE support, mentoring and development program catering for students in the wider Hume area. The program offers students wellbeing support and tutoring with specialised Learning Mentors in weekly sessions. Aiming High provides leadership and personal development skills for students and opportunities to gain volunteer experience in the community. There is a strong focus on supporting students to transition into further education.

**“To say Aiming High changed my life, is an understatement. I had decided I could not finish year 12 at the end of term 2 and was going to work full time. One of the Aiming High Learning Mentors came and had coffee with me, drove me to the Aiming High session. She checked in on me all the time and yesterday I found out I got into early admission to nursing which has always been my dream. I cried with joy. This changed my life and I am the first in my family who will go to uni”**

AIMING HIGH PARTICIPANT 2022

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- In 2023, 18 VCE students enrolled in Aiming High from the Broadmeadows area and 22 from Craigieburn.
- In 2022, five students received an ATAR score above 90 and four received a score above 80.
- All students from the 2022 cohort are engaged in further tertiary education in their chosen field.
- One Aiming High student was awarded the Centre for Multicultural Youth Student of the Year Award and another was awarded the Hume City Council Young Social Entrepreneur Award.
- Individualised Wellbeing Plans were developed and maintained with each student.
- Learning Mentors offered support in a wide variety of subject areas including English, Maths, Science, Health, Legal Studies and Business Studies.
- Opportunity for participants to gain volunteer experience through Banksia Gardens’ School Holiday Program.
- Students participated in career exploration sessions including a careers dinner. Three students completed work experience from contacts made at the careers dinner.
- Students visited La Trobe University and Melbourne University to learn about study options and pathways into further education.
- Regular specialised workshops were delivered on topics including: English language analysis, exam preparation and mindfulness.



## Engage! Youth Program

Engage! is a BGCS youth engagement program that integrates and expands our youth development, youth participation and youth activation. The program is built around the principle of collaborative design with youth, and gives platforms for young people aged 12–25 years to express themselves, showcase their talents and advocate for their interests.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- Over 300 student engagements across 20 programs, activities and events.
- The program increased engagement in existing BGCS youth programs, initiated new skill-building and recreational opportunities for young people, and attracted new young people and their families from Broadmeadows and the broader Hume community.

- The program fostered a continued collaboration with K1 Kingdom Boxing and initiated new partnerships with ReLink to deliver Muay Thai kickboxing and OzHarvest to deliver their NEST cooking program.
- Engage! established a new partnership with the BGCS Social Cohesion Through Education program to create a Student-Shorts film series exploring themes of identity, family and community with young people from the BGCS After-school Program and Meadows Primary School.
- The Iftar and Youth Showcase dinner had over 250 guests attend, all of whom were children and young people engaged with Banksia Gardens and their families.

## After-school Program

The After-school Program provides learning support and social-emotional development for children and young people through a range of activities including academic support, creative projects, sports, play-based learning and other enriching group activities. We cater for prep to year 12 students from the local community and extend our support to regional Victorian students in our online sessions.

At the beginning of 2023, the program underwent some key changes with an increased focus on social-emotional and play-based learning.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- Weekly offerings included primary and secondary study support delivered in person and online, play-based learning for primary students, arts and crafts, basketball, soccer, boxing, Muay Thai, and gardening and nature-based learning.
- A significant investment was made in literacy learning resources for our primary-school-aged students, with an emphasis on phonics and high-frequency word recognition.
- 195 students registered in the program including over 90 new registrations.
- 29 volunteers supported the programs.
- Up to 50 students attended each session.
- A new parents and carers group was established, creating a space for women to communicate and take part in creative activities
- The After-school Program continued its online study support, delivering 36 sessions for primary and secondary students, while providing more opportunities for students to attend throughout the week.





## Environment and Sustainability

BGCS made significant strides in the areas of environment and sustainability, with a primary focus on climate change adaptation and sustainability initiatives at the community level. This year, the youth-led action group, CARYA (Climate Adaptation Requires Youth Action), celebrated its third iteration, and played a pivotal role in driving climate change awareness and action within the local community. Other key transformative programs developed by BGCS include the maintenance of six community gardens, an advanced composting program and family gardening programs. These initiatives have not only contributed to environmental resilience but have also empowered the local community to actively participate in sustainable practices.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- In 2022, Tess Cheetham joined the sustainability team bringing fresh ideas and innovative approaches to all environment and sustainability programs. With her expertise and dedication, she invigorated the CARYA program and propelled it towards significant climate related actions.
- Delivered the 8-week CARYA training program in 2023 with 7 dedicated young participants and 5 guest attendees - the third time the training has been delivered.
- CARYA participants visited the Toolangi Forest with a local Australian Conservation Foundation group to learn about the impacts of logging and advocate for its cessation.
- CARYA hosted the annual environmental film night and panel discussion where they showcased 'Regenerate Australia' and the efforts of local environmental groups.

- Established a collaboration with Victoria University to partner on education, community programs, urban design and development and climate adaptation gardens.
- Collaborated with a team of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute to design an automated biodiversity heat audit. This audit produces reliable information on our efforts to reduce temperatures and increase biodiversity at BGCS.
- Continued to manage a BGCS waste management system that has expanded to include six local families from the After-school Program, resulting in a reduction in organics and emissions from landfill.
- Gardening activities are integrated into the After-school Program and have promoted environmental awareness amongst young participants and provided them with valuable hands-on experience.
- Continued to grow and maintain six garden spaces in and around the BGCS premises for climate adaptation, food resilience and to beautify the environment:
  - The Banksia Community Square
  - The Heat Haven, officially launched by Federal MP Maria Vamvakinou
  - The Food Forest
  - The Play Bush Tucker
  - The Real Bush Tucker
  - The BCGS Community Garden

These initiatives showcase the BGCS commitment to sustainable practices and engaging the community in environmental stewardship.

## Gender Equity

For many years, BGCS has been a local pioneer in the push for gender equality and ending violence against women through its Good People Act Now (GPAN) project. In 2019, BGCS made gender equity a key priority area, establishing a gender equity working group to help drive this change across all of the organisation's operations.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- GPAN trained over 600 young people in matters relating to respectful relationships, gender equality and gender-based violence.
- GPAN partnered with Thornbury High School, De La Salle College, Sacre Coeur College, the Centre for Multicultural Youth, Melbourne Airport, Hume City Council, Spectrum, DPV Health, Department of Education and Training and Fitzroy Football Club.

- BGCS welcomed MP Ros Spence, the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence.
- Obtained new funding to establish the Taking ACTION Project and the LGBTIQ+ Youth Advisory Group.
- Launched 'Change Starts With You', a resource for young people to become gender equity advocates and seek help regarding matters of gender-based violence.
- The GPAN Youth Advisory Group was awarded the Hume Young Gender Equity Leaders Award.
- 30 BGCS staff attended 'Gender on the Agenda' training.
- GPAN celebrated its ten year anniversary.
- BGCS staff completed the third Workplace Equality and Respect Survey.
- BGCS published its first LGBTIQ+ position statement.
- Toward Equality and Beyond hosted a successful multicultural International Women's Day Celebration.



## It's4U and Let's Get Cooking

It's4U and Let's Get Cooking are new additions to the work Banksia does with young people; both are activity-based learning programs to help young people develop their life skills and economic capacity. It's4U is funded by the Hume Empowering Communities initiative managed by the City of Hume, and Let's Get Cooking by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation.

It's4U offers participants the opportunity to develop skills in cooking, fashion and bike maintenance, and then showcase their produce at community markets (one scheduled for July 2023, and the second in November). Similarly, Let's Get Cooking is a horticulture and food preparation program, which includes information sessions on alcohol and drug issues as they present to young people.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- Formed a young leaders group of 7 young people from the Banksia Gardens Housing Estate to co-design and manage both programs.
- Conducted cooking classes in the School Holiday program
- Harvested 20 kilograms of olives from the Kenley Court Neighbourhood House community garden that will be used in the Common Bean social enterprise cafe.
- Prepared apparel, homewares and cosmetic program lines for the 'Naughty Broady' brand to be launched in a community market in July 2023.



## Kenley Court Neighbourhood House

In the heart of Meadow Heights, BGCS operates and manages Kenley Court Neighbourhood House (KCNH). With a diverse local population that includes many refugees and new migrants, KCNH brings people together and helps them thrive through various programs and services. It fosters social connections, empowerment, and community growth by offering opportunities for participation, building skills, and engaging with the community.

By adopting a holistic community development approach, KCNH maintained its commitment to running programs that catered to various needs within the community. These programs included providing homework and academic support to children, empowering girls and teenagers, distributing food parcels to individuals facing food insecurity, offering assistance to newly arrived migrants and refugee families, empowering women, preventing family violence, and fostering community cohesion.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- Successfully coordinated and delivered 6 programs supporting approximately 150 people on a weekly basis.
- KCNH Study Group Program assisted more than 15 primary students with their homework & academic studies and supported 5 parents.
- The Girls Circle program empowered 13 girls and partnered with It's4U to teach participants how to make natural cosmetics, soap, skin care products, and start their own business at home.
- Organised more than 8 excursions for around 100 young people.
- The Food Relief Service collaborated with Northpoint Centre to distribute approximately 3500 food parcels to those in need.
- KCNH Client Support Program supported 115 people.
- Two Community Market Events were held, providing food relief and essential supplies to a total of 120 individuals.
- Three Adult Education Courses were delivered that enhanced the skills of 32 individuals in Conversational English and Sewing.



- The Towards Equality 2020 and Beyond Project continued its work to empower women, prevent family violence, support children, and continuously foster community cohesion by leading and building the capacity of three ethnic women's groups: DBSV (Nepalese Women), El Amal (Arabic Speaking Women), and Oorja (Indian Women), resulting in remarkable achievements and positive outcomes, which included:
  - 55 new women participating in the programs.
  - The delivery of 130 sessions and workshops.
  - Improved connections and partnerships; the three women's groups engaged with 25 different organisations and local services.
  - Active participation in the Week Without Violence and 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaigns, contributing to raising awareness, promoting gender equality, and advocating for the rights of women and girls.
  - Hosting a successful multicultural International Women's Day Celebration in partnership with GPAN.
  - The DBSV Women's Group established their own children's group, which has achieved success with 28 children enrolled.
  - The El Amal Women's Group, in partnership with the Hume City Council, organised a Hume City Tour that involved visiting important local services such as libraries, Orange Door, and DPV Health.



## School Holiday Program

The School Holiday Program engages young people and families in the Broadmeadows and the local Hume area in dynamic and immersive experiences. The activities develop skills, increase engagement and help build self-confidence whilst creating lasting friendships among peers.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- Twenty-four different activities were carried out across the areas of STEAM (STEM & Arts), outdoor education, sports and exercise and community engagement. These holiday activities engaged over 150 students across multiple days.
- Some examples of activities include excursions to the Melbourne and Werribee Zoo, the Melbourne Museum, Gravity Worx rock climbing centre and Altona Beach with Life Saving Victoria where students learnt how to swim and be safe in the water.
- Incursions at Banksia Gardens included cooking with the Common Bean cafe, National Gallery of Victoria - Kids on Tour art days, RoboBus STEM robotics, a bicycle repair workshop and learning how to make natural skincare products.
- Community engagement events over the year included Family Fun Days, community dinners and Banksia Gardens Estate BBQs. These community engagement events reached over 250 children, young people and their families.

## Project REAL

Project REAL is a re-engagement program for 9–12 year-olds who are at a very high risk of disengaging from mainstream education. Typically, these students experience significant challenges with emotion regulation, socialisation skills, and executive function, which includes task focus and attention deficits. Project REAL aims to support children, their families and local schools to develop skills that foster positive school engagement.

While students are enrolled at Project REAL, the team provides intensive family or caregiver support. Including referrals and collaboration with community agencies and allied health professionals, coaching to referring schools, and professional development on key areas of our practice.

Project REAL is part of the Northern Centre for Excellence in School Engagement (NCESE). The ultimate goal of Project REAL and the NCESE is to re-engage students into mainstream schooling and build the capacity of our partner schools to appropriately respond to the needs of students impacted by adverse childhood experiences.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- Three students successfully transitioned into Year 7 at their preferred secondary school.
- Twelve students and ten families were intensively supported through Project REAL to improve their engagement at school and address challenges they were facing.
- Completed 157 one to one coaching sessions with seventeen teachers across eight schools.



- Completed 194 one to one coaching sessions with fifteen Education Support staff working with our most vulnerable children in six partner schools.
- Provided assistance to sixteen local schools that have approached the Project REAL and NCESE team for support.
- Celebrated the completion of an Art Mural that honours all past, current and future students and staff members who have contributed to the wonderful memories, lessons and learnings through their time at Project REAL.
- Attended 65 meetings with School Leaders who provided secondary consults, advocacy for families and students and assistance with complex cases.
- Delivered the Project REAL camp, the biggest highlight of the year! Students who had never been on camp or had previously struggled in a camp environment created new happy memories and overcame some of their challenges and fears associated with camp. This wouldn't have been possible without the supportive camp officials and the phenomenal Project Real team!
- Provided students with rich and engaging learning activities where they experienced success, built relationships and could be proud of their achievements at school and in the wider community.
- Hosted the Project REAL Cafe each Monday. Mondays were always fun and busy as students cooked and set up the cafe for their care teams and BGCS staff.

## Targeted Care Packages

The Targeted Care Packages (TCP) program provides tailored assistance to local young people with multiple and complex needs. TCP requires a workforce with specialist skills and experience and in recent years we've built this through our work with the local community and justice-involved young people. Recognising this skill set and our connections to families, children and young people in the local area, we were invited by the Department of Human Services to register as a provider under the Children, Youth and Families Act. With this registration we are contracted by Child Protection to support young people who are at high risk of placement breakdown.

We were provisionally approved in late 2022 and we commenced work in early 2023 delivering "Targeted Care Packages". This intensive program allows us to work closely with children and young people and their parents and carers.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- In June 2023 BGCS supported 6 young people from 3 families helping them build skills, connect to schools and community, foster passions and solve problems.
- BGCS have recruited and trained three intensive support workers and developed a bespoke database to support the work with clients.



## Social Cohesion Through Education Program

The Social Cohesion Through Education (SCTE) program fosters a sense of unity, belonging, and positive relationships within school settings among students, teachers, staff, and the broader community. It is characterised by a supportive and inclusive environment where individuals feel valued, respected, and connected to one another.

The SCTE program at BGCS enhances social cohesion and community resilience by creating spaces and activities in schools for students to develop tolerance, respect and an appreciation for diversity within the broader society.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- Successfully secured three more years of funding from the Victorian Department of Education and Training. The program is now publicly funded.
- Engaged on-site with six primary and secondary schools in Hume, including new partnerships with Broadmeadows Valley Primary School, the Collingwood English Language School, Craigieburn campus; and Hume Central Secondary College, Town Park and Blair St. campuses.
- Hosted an Acknowledgement of Country mural project on the Banksia Gardens Housing Estate in collaboration with First Nations artists, students and community members.
- Produced four 'What's your story' short storytelling films in partnership with Engage!
- Hosted large-scale Harmony Week events at Meadows Primary School (80 students) and Hume Central Secondary College (100 students).
- Hosted a Welcoming Refugees creative arts postcard project for all schools in Hume.
- Conducted a fortnightly 'Art & Wellbeing' group at the Hume Central Blair St. campus facilitated by Art Therapist, Tiffeny Yong.
- Conducted weekly 'Mindful Meadows' Mindfulness and Social and Emotional Learning program at Meadows Primary School.
- Hosted a large-scale cultural creative arts activities hub at the Hume City Council 2023 Refugee Week event.

## Training and Employment Department

The Training and Employment Department offers pre-accredited training programs that support people to learn valuable skills for employment, further education, social connection and daily life. The department consists of Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) Learn Local adult education classes, computer refurbishment, Work for the Dole, the Community Pantry and the Common Bean Café.

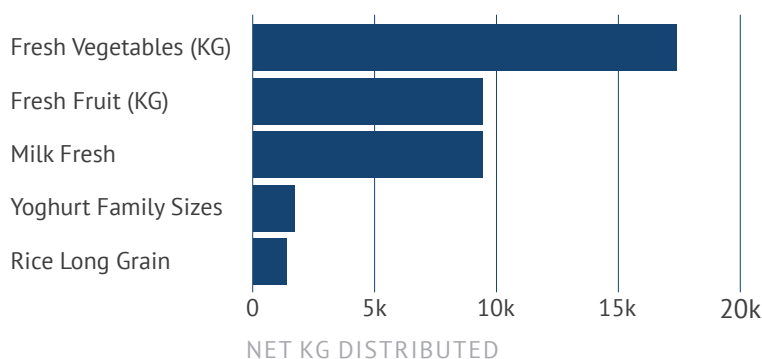
### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- Engaged with more than 900 participants to build their employability skills and support their transition into employment or further study.
- Delivered over 56,000 ACFE student contact hours.
- Offered 5 ACFE classes online, including English and citizenship.
- Provided nearly 600 refurbished computers to the community at no, or a very low cost.
- Partnered with more than 11 local school community hubs to deliver adult training courses for the schools' communities.
- Officially launched and operated the Common Bean Café at Kangan Institute with six trainees, two supervisors and a chef.
- Partnered with Spectrum to establish an Economic Inclusion Action Plan for refugees and new arrivals.
- Held eight community pop-up markets, funded by the Victorian State Government.
- Held two community farmers markets in partnership with Foodbank, providing fresh produce and groceries to 500 local families, and operated a pop-up op shop as part of the market.
- Delivered four Work for the Dole activities to twelve clients. Of these clients, four transitioned into employment, two enrolled in further education and two secured volunteer positions.
- Supported approximately 200 families from the Hume region on a weekly bases with 8000 material aid packages consisting of food, household items and clothing items.
- Distributed Christmas, Easter and Eid hampers to 420 families.

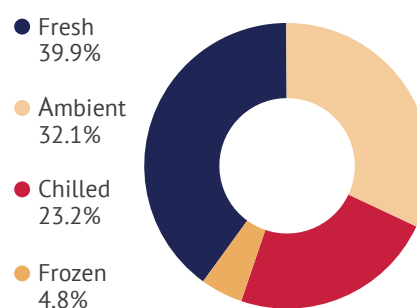
## Banksia Gardens Food Pantry Snapshot 2023–2024



### Top Ordered Item



### KGs Distributed by Produce Group



## Youth Transition Support Program

The Youth Transitions Support (YTS) program supports young people of refugee and migrant backgrounds aged 15–25 years to build their skills and participate in education, employment and sport. The program places a strong focus on workplace readiness, access to employment and vocational opportunities, and creating strong social connections.

BGCS ran programs for over 100 students within local schools – Collingwood English Language School, Kangan Institute, and Hume Central Secondary College.

### Highlights from 2022–2023:

- All 43 current participants are either enrolled in short or ongoing training and/or are linked in with employment.
- Supported one participant to apply for and participate in a Refugee Working Group organised by BGCS, the Brotherhood of St. Laurence and the Hume City Council.
- Helped facilitate fortnightly Refugee Working Group meetings to plan and implement a large-scale event for the Hume City Council Refugee Week event in 2023.
- The 'Creative Hub' at Refugee Week in partnership with the SCTE program: an activity space for children and their families to make cultural puppets, bead bracelets, participate in mindful colouring, and create diversity tree artwork.
- BGCS provided a paid opportunity for a YTS participant's mother from the local Banksia Gardens Housing Estate to facilitate a Henna station at the Refugee Week event.
- Co-facilitated weekly sessions in the boys class for 8–16 students at the Collingwood English Language School (CELS) Broadmeadows campus. These sessions consisted of informative learning, social and emotional learning, encouraging prosocial behaviours, sports and the promotion of local, extracurricular activities.
- Ran a fashion design elective program for 14 students at CELS in Craigieburn in partnership with the It's4U program. They screen printed tote bags and tie dyed t-shirts and socks and learnt how to turn their hobbies into business ideas.
- Supported one YTS participant to set up and run their own cultural coffee station at the BGCS Iftar dinner.
- Two YTS participants (one now a BGCS employee) presented at the Brotherhood of St. Laurence's 'From Surviving to Thriving' Webinar with over 100 viewers.
- Participated in a School Pathways information session at CELS in Broadmeadows where students and their parents learnt about pathways after school.
- Delivered a four week Muay Thai program in partnership with ReLink and the After-school program. 14–16 young people regularly attended the sessions.





# BCYJA

**Broadmeadows Community  
Youth Justice Alliance**

**Banksia Gardens Community Services has been funded since 2017 by the Department of Justice and Community Safety to deliver BCYJA as a place-based crime prevention program. We support young people, aged 10 to 24, who are in contact with the justice system, or at risk of it.**

The program originally had three streams, a 'primary' prevention element to provide young people with opportunities to participate in community activities, a 'guided' service that linked a young person to mainstream services, and an 'intensive' case management stream. However, as BCYJA evolved, the focus has been increasingly on case management of individual clients, a development that reflects the complex circumstances facing young people in contact with the legal system.

This complexity ranges across many areas of a young person's life but might include any combination of homelessness (or the threat of it), school disengagement, unemployment, lack of identity documentation, mental health and substance mis-use.

Our experienced case managers, Saida Nur and Emma Soloai, have found this complexity requires deep, and time-consuming, engagement with our clients, sometimes out of hours at critical moments like bail hearings. Supporting young people in custody has also required long commutes to detention centres, but these are necessary to emphasise to our clients that 'we are there for them'. Both Saida and Emma bring invaluable community connections to the program – on top of her BCYJA work, Saida convenes a support group for Somali mothers, and Emma is a much-respected figure in the Pasifika community.

The program is a partnership with Jesuit Social Services (JSS), a state-wide provider of youth justice services, something that provides a productive link to the wider service system. JSS case workers Pia Tobin and Jack Macreadie-Smith were valuable members of the team during the year.

In 2022–23, BCYJA supported 45 young people in the case management stream, and at the close of the year, 23 were active clients.



# Profile NATEISHA & SUNDAY

MELODIE RADATTI, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

**Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS) and DPV Health enjoy a strong partnership working collaboratively to support the needs of local Broadmeadows residents, particularly those living within the nearby Banksia Gardens Public Housing Estate.**

The DPV Health Community Connector program supports dedicated community members who are eager to contribute towards enhancing the overall health and well-being of their community. The primary goal is to share health-related information, including services and opportunities, and to promote healthy behaviours to public housing residents. Residents are offered a fast track referral service to DPV Health, streamlining access to much needed healthcare and support. DVP Health Community Connectors all live in social housing.

Their lived experience brings a wealth of knowledge and genuine connection with the community they support.

Nateisha is a 20 year old Kamilaroi woman, mother of two and an active Good People Act Now (GPAN) member. Teish has been living in the Banksia Gardens Housing Estate since February 2023. She describes her community as “a nice place to live and isn’t as bad as some people say it is”. Teish has formed strong friendships with her neighbours. Most recently with her senior neighbour Helen who likes to give her tours around her garden.

“I have been working as a Community Connector in the Hume area helping connect people and write referrals to DPV and occasionally Banksia Gardens Community Services. I’ve met a lot of new people within my community through my work and I’ve made some new friends along the way. It made me sure of what I wanted to do in the future as I realised my love for the job that I’m doing now and I want to help people for a living.



I have gotten a lot more confident in speaking to new people as I was really shy before starting this work. I have learnt how to write more professional emails and how to word things more appropriately. I've loved my experience in this project as it connected me more with my local community and showed me what my true passion is. In the next 3–4 months of working with DPV I'm excited to run some community events and I'm excited to help my community more. In the Banksia Gardens estate I would love to see more community events such as BBQs, a little carnival and other events."

**"Some of the challenges working in the community I live in are people asking me questions outside of hours and about issues I can't assist with. In these instances, I refer them to the appropriate staff/services."**

Teish recently secured a new part-time role as a Koori Education Support Officer at Roxburgh College and has been invited to be a panellist at the Courageous Conversations: Things Men Can Do To Challenge Sexism event hosted by Merri-bek Council in July.

In her spare time Teish likes connecting with family, attending cultural and community events. She also hopes to enrol in a diploma of community services in the near future.

Najelt 'Sunday' Akot is another DPV Health Community Connector at Banksia Gardens. The 27 year old mother of two was born in South Sudan, moved to Egypt at age 4 before settling in Australia at age 6. Sunday likes how the Community Connector program "supports vulnerable communities" and how it has allowed her to "reach out and support community members face-to-face".

Lived experience workers from diverse backgrounds can offer culturally sensitive support that recognises the unique experiences and needs of community members. As an Arabic speaker, Sunday has noticed how her "cultural identity has helped others feel comfortable to reach out and seek the help they need".

**Both Sunday and Teish have formed a firm friendship by participating in the program. Sunday states the program has increased her confidence and sense of belonging within BGCS, her "Banksia family".**

When asked about her experiences of living and working on the Banksia Gardens Housing Estate, Sunday says "I feel safe and happy living on the housing estate and have seen some improvements over the last few months."

Sunday is currently part of the Banksia Gardens Young Leaders program, Family Gardens program and is studying a Diploma in Community Services. In her spare time, she likes to take her children to local events and tend to her family veggie patch.

**BGCS thanks the amazing team at DPV Health including Adele Parris, Kate Butler and Ananshiya Joseph for their collaboration with the Community Connectors program which has been an outstanding example of organisations working together to support the immediate needs of the local community.**



# NCESE

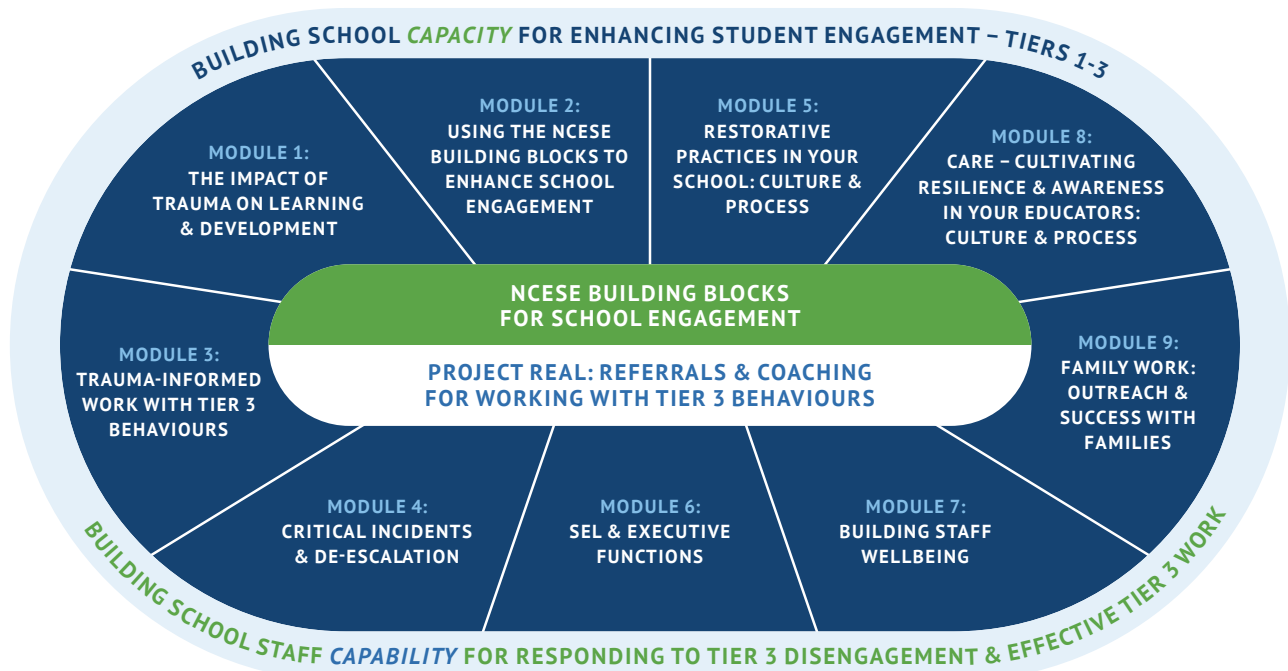
*Northern Centre for Excellence  
in School Engagement*

DR ERIC DOMMERS, CO-DIRECTOR, NCESE

## What does the NCESE do?

**The key reason for the existence of the NCESE is to work with local schools to support student engagement, and to minimise the incidence and impact of student disengagement.**

The NCESE is a collaborative enterprise that commenced in 2020. The NCESE was built on the success of Project REAL, a referral service run by BGCS for students who are experiencing significant behavioural and educational challenges. The learnings from Project REAL have informed a broader approach to student engagement and disengagement, that assists schools to build capacity to both focus on what works in creating engaging school cultures and programs, and also to respond to active disengagement, such as 'Tier 3 behaviours'. Today, the NCESE comprises a network of 15 local schools (14 primary; 1 secondary), and BGCS. Project REAL remains at the heart of the NCESE through its school outreach services, although we also provide school staff professional development and training through a suite of modules.



## What have been the NCESE's biggest successes in the past year?

Our staff in Project REAL have worked very hard over the last year to build a set of transferable skills that can assist NCESE school staff with building engaging school practices, and particularly, in developing skills about how to both prevent, and respond to students who display active disengagement ('Tier 3 behaviours').

The shift from Project REAL providing on-site services at BGCS, to a mix of services that can be delivered on school campuses and that aim to build school staff capacity and capability, has been very successful, and is becoming a key to our ability to meet school and community engagement needs.

## Some of this work was on very public and highly successful display in workshops run by Project REAL leadership at our Inaugural NCESE Conference.

The NCESE's first ever conference took advantage of our existing links with national and international scholars and expert practitioners in student engagement. Our links with CASEL, CREATE, Penn State University, Harvard University & Think Kinds at Massachusetts General Hospital, and Monash University helped us to create a set of Keynote lectures and workshops that could help to build school and community knowledge, skills and confidence in supporting student (and family) engagement.

The Conference also commenced a deeper conversation about the social determinants of health, wellbeing and engagement in school and community life. To this end, the Victorian Commissioner for Children and Young People (Liana Buchanan) gave a fascinating and in some respects frightening Keynote about the numbers of students who are actively disengaged from school life, and whose path can all too easily lead to involvement in the justice system, to homelessness, to ill health, and sometimes, to unimaginably worse outcomes.

As Liana pointed out, school engagement is a complex issue, with many causes and numerous agencies potentially involved – including welfare, health, justice, housing and other community services, and therefore we are all part of the solution.

## Was the Conference successful?

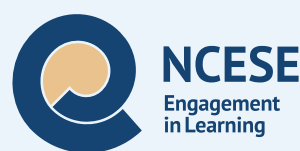
We managed to attract local and international experts of renown, including: Professor Mark Greenberg (Penn State University, CASEL), Dr Stuart J Ablon (Harvard University and Think:Kids), Dr Christa Turksma (CREATE) and Dr. Kristin Reimer (Monash University) – to name just a few.

This conference was strongly supported by our key partners including the Hume City Council (thank you Mayor Joseph Haweil), as well as by NCESE schools. Three schools on our Steering Committee (Meadows Primary School, Roxburgh Homestead Primary School & Roxburgh College) also offered direct support, both financially and in terms of practical support. Meadows PS School Principal Anthony Potesta offered to Moderate 2 Plenary sessions where Keynote speakers were engaged in deeper questions about policy and practice; and Pat Lynch, Assistant Principal at Roxburgh Homestead PS ran 3 workshops with our own Deputy CEO, Jaime de Loma Osorio-Ricon.

In all, we attracted over 150 registrations – which indicates a high level of need and interest in school engagement. Most of our speakers and workshop presenters received rapturous applause for their efforts and expertise. Our formal post conference evaluation confirmed that our presenters were extremely well received (scoring an average of 2.8/3), and really engaged their audiences.

## Would we do it again?

In the words of one evaluation respondent: "I wish I could do it all again tomorrow!"





# Robert Kumar Community AWARD WINNER

FRANK O'CONNOR, FATHER BOB FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBER

The Robert Kumar Community Award was established in honor of BGCS patron Robert Kumar, former Deputy Chief Magistrate of Victoria who served as head of the Broadmeadows Magistrates Court for 25 years, and introduced innovative initiatives at the court such as Koori Court and the Criminal Diversion Program.

**This year the award has been given posthumously to the honorable Father Bob Maguire.**



**"Some people have called me a maverick or a larrikin or a renegade, or they say I'm plain mad... People will have to decide for themselves. But just one thing: don't ever make me a saint. Because that is something I'm most definitely not." Father Bob Maguire — The Larrikin Priest by Sue Williams.**

Saint or sinner? We need to look back at the issues that created a person like Father Bob. In particular, what was it that resulted in such dedication and commitment to disadvantaged and marginalised people? It's clear that he was somebody special.

When we look back at Father Bob's upbringing it's not a surprise that such experiences would end up colouring the rest of his life. His own life, especially up until he entered the Seminary to become a Catholic Priest, had always been a battle and this helped form his attitude, opinions and direction forever.

He had a knack of getting people to believe in what he was trying to do. Some of his ideas were not realistic or achievable. Nevertheless, he made his supporters think about how issues might be solved, encouraging them to try and implement new programs in line with Father Bob's desire to help those less advantaged. He started the Open Family Foundation in 1981 and then Emerald Hill Mission a few years later, both of which continue to do important work.

He also attracted both financial and promotional support, from, as he would call them, the rich and famous. He was a self-described "media tart" and was always willing to make a comment on radio or do a TV appearance. Spruiking his thoughts on how the world or the Catholic Church should be thinking or operating, or more broadly how society should be helping the less advantaged. This was often a challenge to the Church hierarchy and what they perceived as their authority in matters of religious practices and how Church resources could be used.

But despite these outward characteristics, he always held deep concerns and compassion for the "unloved and unlovely". This was a deep part of his personality, undoubtedly stemming from his own upbringing. His public persona was simply his way of getting his message across. Many of his tens of thousands of followers on social media only ever saw the public performer, not the deeply compassionate person who never wanted anything for himself and invariably whenever money was raised he gave it to those in need.

There was one very public occasion (and many others) where wealthy donors publicly pledged him the necessary airfares and accommodation costs to visit Scotland, the land of his parents and forebears, as well as Rome, his ultimate spiritual home. He simply deferred the trip and then ignored other offers and got on with what he saw as his far more important work, looking after those who had nothing.

Over many years he developed a strong connection with and affection for Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS). He loved to visit and greet clients and staff. He clearly felt an affinity to the area, and people, not because of any personal connection, but rather because it was a community of people that he felt were doing all of the right things – looking after each other, providing services, and maintaining connections so that nobody would feel left out. It was in fact a great model of what Father Bob had commenced back in South Melbourne when he first arrived in the Parish of Sts. Peter & Paul, and his joy at finding it working so well in practice at BGCS was especially important to him.

Father Bob's forced departure from the South Melbourne Parish in early 2012 was a pivotal moment for him personally. His work, TV, radio and social media activity continued, but he felt wounded and let down by the Catholic Church, the organisation to which he had dedicated his life. He still raised the necessary funds to operate and significantly expand the Father Bob's Pantry in South Melbourne and he encouraged and supported other organisations to do similar work. He was very proud of his support for BGCS and their food and support programs, especially the personal connections that saw were developed with the community through the services.

Despite Father Bob's removal from his beloved Parish at South Melbourne, he continued to be an inspiration to so many people and organisations. His death in April has not seen the end of his work, he has inspired so many others to continue this work, to continue looking after the unloved and unlovely, so that nobody needs to be left behind.



# Gender Equity REPORT

GEORGIA RANSOME, GENDER EQUITY COORDINATOR

**Since 2019, Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS) has prioritised gender equality, both within our internal systems and structures, and within our community facing work, with the people of Hume and beyond.**

**The establishment of Banksia's first Gender Equity Working Group and the creation of the Gender Equity Coordinator and Gender Equity Officer positions in 2019, allow this work to be an ongoing focus.**

## **What is BGCS doing?**

Many of our projects are working directly with girls, women and community members to address gender inequality, gender-based violence and women and gender-diverse people's economic participation and social engagement.

The Gender Equity Department continues to work with staff and volunteers to ensure a gender lens is placed over all other BGCS-run projects and programs.

BGCS's flagship gender equity project, Good People Act Now (GPAN), celebrated ten years in March. GPAN is a youth-led action group, working to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence. Over the course of those ten years, GPAN has trained thousands of young people, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to stand up against inequality and disrespect, creating a more respectful and equal community for everyone.





## What is coming up?

The gender equity landscape at BGCS will continue to grow and change over the next few years, particularly with the addition of the Taking Action Project and LGBTQIA+ Youth Advisory Group (YAG).

Taking Action is a partnership project with Womens' Health in the North (WHIN). This project is based on the peer-led GPAN model, and will focus on sexual violence, sexual pleasure and affirmative consent.

The LGBTQIA+ YAG will be co-facilitated with Hume City Council. The aim of this project is to elevate the voices of those from the LGBTQIA+ community, empowering them to make changes and create a more equal and respectful environment for the wider LGBTQIA+ community.

Each of these projects will get under way in the latter half of 2023 and continue into 2024.

## Are we making a difference?

Last year I asked myself the question, are we doing enough? The answer is, with rates of gender-based violence continuing to increase right here in our backyard and nation-wide, no.

In the past financial year, 53 Australian women were murdered by a current or former partner, and yet a national emergency has not been declared. At every level; national, state and local; and in both the prevention and response sectors to gender-based violence, we are failing to do enough for the women of Australia.

These people are more than just a statistic. They had family, friends, passions and dreams. However, the statistic alone should be enough to elicit more action.

## No, we are not doing enough.

### However, are we making a difference here at BGCS? Yes!

Of course there is always more to do and improvements to make. However, since 2019, we continue to add to the list of achievements toward an equitable workplace and wider community.

We know we will not see a change in statistics for some time, so it's important to focus on the smaller moments and the personal growth we see in the people we work with.

See this year's Gender Equity highlights (page 15) and a participant profile on Catherine Palavras, a member of the GPAN Youth Action Group (page 31).

## Support Services

### THE ORANGE DOOR

1800 319 353

Support those who use or experience violence

### 1800 RESPECT

1800 737 732

24/7 online counselling

### SAFE STEPS

1800 015 188

Family violence support

### QLIFE

1800 184 527

LGBTQIA+ peer support

### DJIRRA 1800 105 303

Support for Aboriginal women

### MEN'S REFERRAL

SERVICE 1300 789 978

Support for men who use family violence



# Profile **CATHERINE**

GEORGIA RANSOME, GENDER EQUITY COORDINATOR

**The GPAN Project aims to create gender equality champions, to help reduce the rates of gender-based violence in Hume and beyond. We know if we continue to create positive cultural change around gender and respect on a national level, the rates of gender-based violence will begin to trend downwards. However, it will take generations to see this change.**

To demonstrate the positive short term effects at GPAN, we look for shifts in the attitudes, knowledge and confidence of the young people we work with.

Meet Catherine Palavras. Catherine joined the GPAN family at the beginning of 2023. She is 20 years old, the child of Greek immigrants and is a proud member of the LGBTQIA+ community. Catherine loves music, poetry and video games and she is a self-described adventurer, even if that means a late-night trip to Kmart.



Catherine is very strongly connected to Hume. She has always lived in Roxburgh Park, where she attended primary and high school. Catherine has worked in Broadmeadows and Mickleham, and is now studying her Diploma of Community Services at Kangan Institute in Broadmeadows. She recently completed her student placement at BGCS.

Like many of the wonderful people who find their way to BGCS, Catherine has “always felt passionately about helping people and supporting people” through any challenges they face in life. She is grateful to have found her passion so young in life and be able to pursue it through her studies and career goals.

I interviewed Catherine to get to know what GPAN has been like through the lens of a young person engaged in the project.

### **Georgia: How did you find out about GPAN?**

Catherine: I found out about GPAN through my Certificate IV in Community Services at Kangan Institute a couple years back. I’ve been interested in GPAN since then, but really wanted to join once I spoke to a classmate of mine who’s a part of it.

### **Georgia: Why do you want to be involved with the GPAN Project?**

Catherine: I want to be involved with the GPAN project because I feel so strongly about the prevention of violence against women, and supporting women that have been, or are in those circumstances. As a victim of violence myself, it still affects me deeply in my day to day life.

Even besides me feeling so strongly about the goals of the project, to be honest, being able to be a part of something like this is even helping me grow as a person, I’m so incredibly grateful for that.

### **Georgia: What do you want to achieve by being part of the GPAN team?**

Catherine: I want to spread the word of the prevention of violence against women, and educating people on it.

I want to be able to support people in opening their eyes to what’s happening all around us, and supporting them in being active bystanders.

### **Georgia: What effect do you think GPAN has on other young people and the community?**

Catherine: I think GPAN shows other young people that they can do this. They can spread awareness of things, they can be a part of something bigger, and that they aren’t just ‘kids who don’t know anything’. That their input is so important, and it means so much to their community, that being able to put effort into something so meaningful DOES and WILL make a difference. The effect I think GPAN has on the community is the ability to be able to see that their young people can make a difference as well. But with all this, especially since Hume has such high statistics of family violence, showing the community that no matter who they are, where they’re from or what language they speak, they have a voice and that we WILL make a difference.

It has been such a pleasure getting to know Catherine this year. She is the embodiment of what young people can achieve when they are given a community and resources.

Six years ago, I was just like Catherine. I had recently joined GPAN as a volunteer, completed my student placement here at BGCS and was looking for a way to channel my passion for change into action.

Catherine summed up my feelings exactly about GPAN when she said “it feels so safe and happy. GPAN is like a warm hug or a hot chocolate on a cold day”.

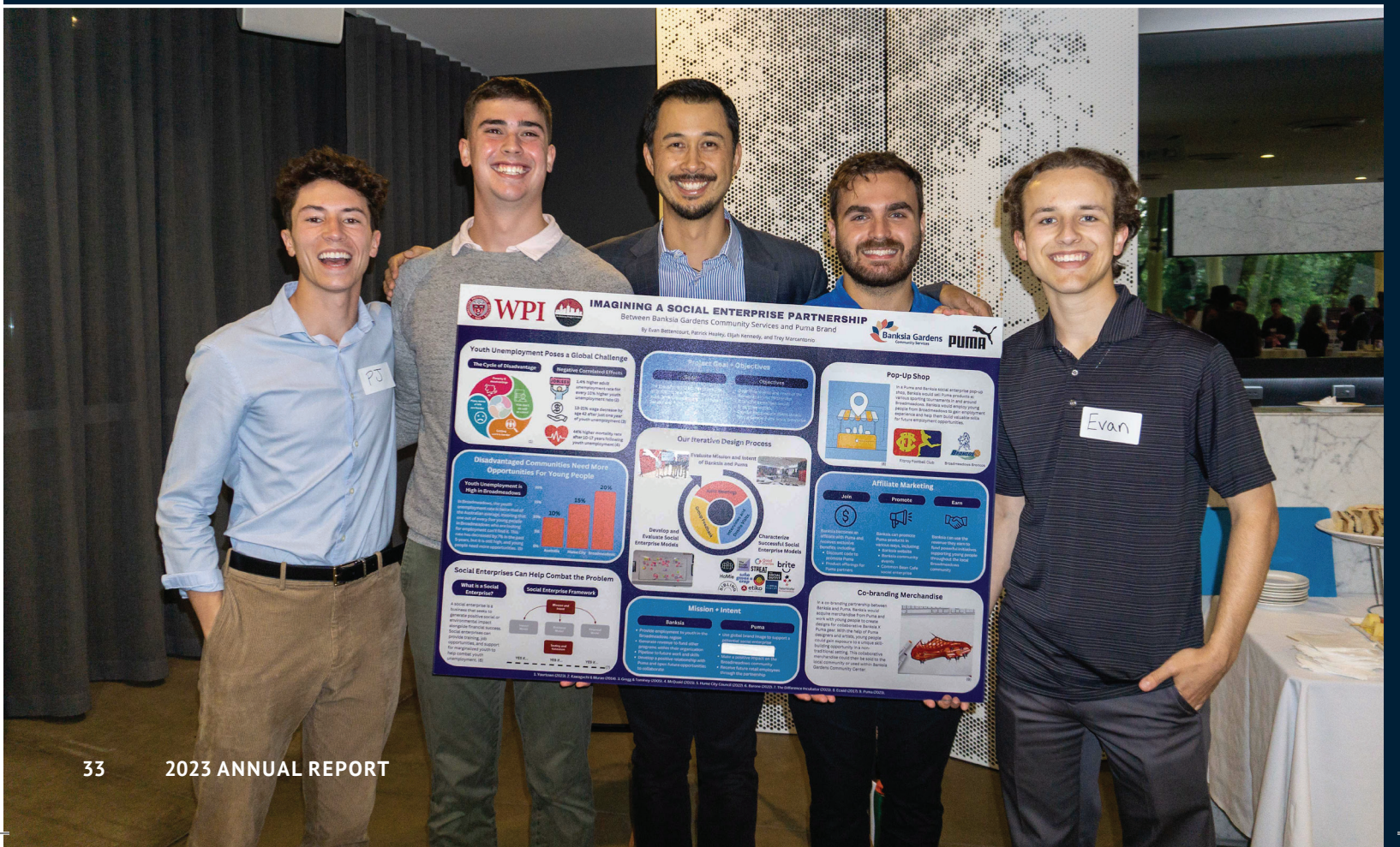
# WPI

JONATHAN CHEE, CHIEF STORYTELLER  
& WPI COORDINATOR

**Most years, regulars walking the hallways of BGCS will hear the twang of American accents, often in energetic discussion, and sometimes in conjunction with the bustle of building some sort of prototype. Commonly referred to around Banksia as 'our American students' or 'the WPI team', these visiting teams of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in Massachusetts, USA, have become a regular part of life at BGCS over the last decade or so.**

It's a special relationship between BGCS and WPI that has developed, having gone from collaborating on student projects, to BGCS taking on a local coordinating role for WPI's Melbourne Project Center in 2016. The relationship speaks to a shared value of education, community engagement and innovation.

Over the years, WPI teams at BGCS have helped explore and develop initiatives in some key strategic areas: environment and sustainability, gender equity, and education, with some stunning results along the way. The highly successful NCESE conference in 2023 was headlined by Professor Mark Greenberg and Dr Christa Turksma, who Banksia developed relationships with as a result of a Banksia-WPI project team exploring the state of trauma-informed education in the USA in 2020.



Several WPI teams have also been instrumental in supporting the award-winning Good People Act Now (GPAN) project, creating educational resources, web development and contributing to a swag of interactive videos in the GPAN library of tools. Of course, the collaboration and exchange of skills and experiences between WPI students with many of our local young people has been immensely valuable too.

BGCS is not the only organisation to benefit from the work with WPI teams each year. WPI sends 18 teams to Melbourne each year, and organisations across Melbourne in a range of industries to work with WPI teams on projects. Many organisations have done multiple projects with WPI, with 83% of partner organisations saying that the WPI projects have a high impact on their organisation.

WPI has project centres all over the world, with 50+ project centres spanning the Americas, Asia, Africa, Europe and the Pacific. The Melbourne Project Center is one of WPI's longest-standing centres, and since its establishment in 1998 has clocked over 270 projects with organisations across Melbourne. From fire and emergency service organisations, cultural institutions, government departments and not-for-profit organisations amongst its collaborators, more than a thousand WPI students have completed their projects here and contributed to the missions of more than 50 organisations.

So, it was extra special this year to be able to celebrate a significant milestone: 25 years of WPI's Melbourne Project Center. It was quite the silver jubilee, with a celebration in the beautiful Treetops Room at Melbourne Museum, a long-time WPI partner. Associate Dean Kent Miller visited Melbourne to mark the occasion, and the Melbourne Project Center Co-Directors Lorraine Higgins and Steve McCauley worked closely with Melbourne Project Center Local Coordinator Jonathan Chee (from BGCS) and a WPI student team (of course!) to showcase some highlights and themes from a quarter century of WPI projects.

BGCS is proud to be a close partner of such a wonderful program and institution. WPI's leadership in project-based learning over more than half a century is internationally well-regarded and continues to help equip young STEM graduates

to tackle the myriad of issues facing the world with broader perspectives and insights. The impact of WPI projects at BGCS cannot be underestimated, and we are thrilled to be able to help coordinate successful and impactful projects with organisations across Melbourne.

### **Fast facts about WPI's Melbourne Project Center:**

- The Center was established in 1998
- More than 1,000 WPI students have completed projects
- WPI students have completed more than 270 projects
- WPI have worked with more than 50 organisations
- 83% of partner organisations say that the projects have a high impact on their organisation.
- 170 research studies have been conducted
- 100 design projects have been completed



**WATCH THE WPI 25TH ANNIVERSARY VIDEO**





# COMMON BEAN *Cafe*

TERINA DAVIES, COMMON BEAN CAFE SUPERVISOR

**BGCS established the Common Bean social enterprise cafe in 2016 to provide a space for young people to gain work experience and develop their employability skills and confidence.**

Every six months the Common Bean Cafe provides a transitional employment opportunity and on the job training to a new group of young people from the local community. During their placement with the Common Bean, the young participants gain accredited hospitality training, general employability skills, six months of paid work experience and an increased sense of confidence which supports them to obtain employment independently in the future.

After a three year closure as a result of COVID-19, this year brought a wonderful opportunity to increase our scope with the opening of the Common Bean Cafe at Kangan Institute and the expansion of our team to include two Cafe Supervisors, a qualified Chef and four trainees. Our Common Bean Cafe at DPV Health will reopen in a newly designed facility in July 2023.

The current group of trainees have experienced a range of challenges in finding suitable employment due to low confidence in their skillset, a lack of flexibility in other workplaces - particularly for working parents and experiences of exclusion.

At the Common Bean cafe we take into account each unique circumstance and build the strengths and capabilities of each individual rather than focusing on their barriers to obtaining work or challenges. Through this positive strengths based approach we have been able to support each trainee to develop their personal and professional skills and thrive in the cafe.

One of our trainees, Maddie, has long been a familiar face around Banksia Gardens and when the opportunity arose to be part of the Common Bean Cafe team, she took it.



COMMON  
BEAN CAFE

Cafe Now  
Open →

@commonbeancafe

**“Since I started at the cafe, I’ve learnt how to work in a kitchen, how to make coffee and how to look after customers. But it’s not just those skills that I’ve gained. My confidence has improved and my interpersonal skills have grown. I’m saving up to travel and work in America next year and because I’ve been able to work outside of my comfort zone in a supported environment, I feel really confident and excited about the future!”**

Maddie has also stepped up into a team-leader role, helping oversee the development of some of the other employees, Ricky and Simon. Ricky has been blind since he was a child, he is excelling in his role and shows us how the hospitality industry as a whole can benefit from being more inclusive by embracing those with disabilities. Ricky’s naturally hospitable nature and keen work ethic has made him an important part of our team and we’re so excited to be part of his hospitality career!

Likewise Simon came to us determined to develop his self-taught cooking skills. Simon suspected his autism may have been the reason some employers were hesitant to take him on, however, undeterred he came to us for a chance to progress his kitchen skills and begin to build his work experience and we haven’t looked back! If you’ve ever enjoyed one of our famous spanakopitas or chicken and mushroom pithiviers, you can thank Simon’s flair for creative cooking.

After our long COVID-19 hiatus, we’re thrilled that the Common Bean Cafe has re-emerged with vigour and verve. This year we have hosted school holiday cooking programs with industry giants such as Audrey Allard from Holy Sugar - one of the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival’s ‘30 Under 30’. We’ve also built a catering package that showcases the talents of our team and allows us to host conferencing events and large-scale dinners.

**We are excited for our new Common Bean cafe to be launched at DPV Health in July and for the opportunity to train and upskill more young people as we look forward to 2024!**



# FINANCIALS

*For the year ended 30 June 2023*

## Board of Governance Report 2023

Your Board of Governance members submit the financial report of Banksia Gardens Community Services for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

### BOARD OF GOVERNANCE MEMBERS

Julijana Todorovic  
Carole Fabian

Joanne Bliss  
Marina Labib

Asifa Qarar  
Khalid Chakli

Ed David  
King Ng

### PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

To respond to the cultural, social, education and recreational needs of the community. Banksia Gardens' Board of Governance will work to encourage social diversity, access and inclusion, community participation, and consumer participation in the operations of the Association.

The Board will take into account not only the mission and maintenance of the Association but also:

- I. The rights and interests of the Association's users;
- II. The rights and interests of the Association's members;
- III. The rights, interests, health, safety and wellbeing of the Association's workforce;
- IV. The interests of the general public; and Human Rights locally and globally.

The Board should ensure that the Association works actively to preserve the environmental sustainability of the planet:

- I. In its own practice;
- II. As a participant in a community of practice;
- III. And as a participant in the Australian social discourse

### SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

### OPERATING RESULT

The surplus for the 2023 financial year, after all depreciation and amortisation, amounted to \$86,321 (the prior year we had a surplus of \$163,147).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the members of the Board.



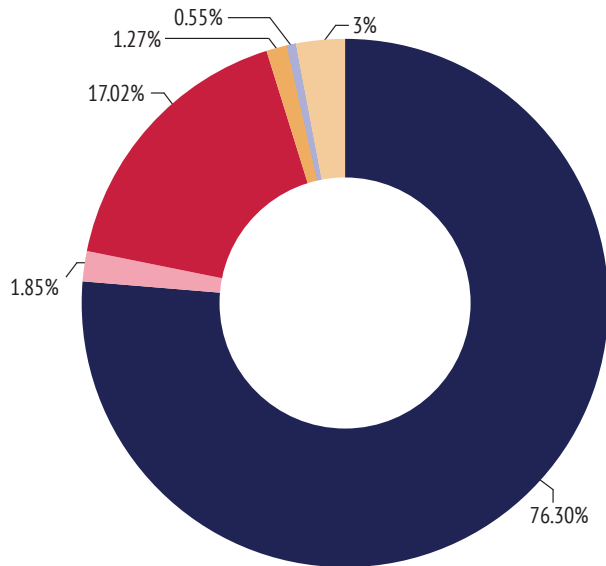
Julijana Todorovic, Chairperson  
3rd October 2023



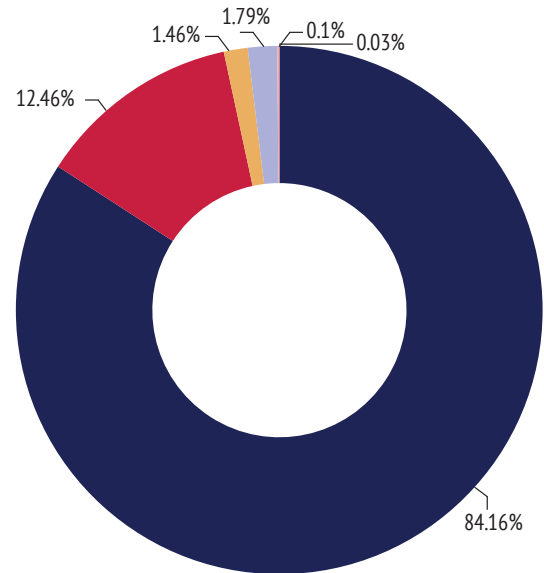
Gina Dougall, CEO



**WHERE OUR FUNDING CAME FROM 2022-2023**

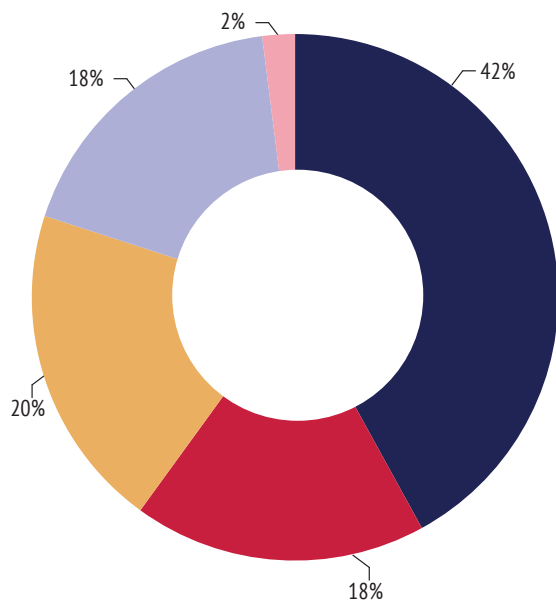


**WHERE OUR FUNDING CAME FROM 2021-2022**

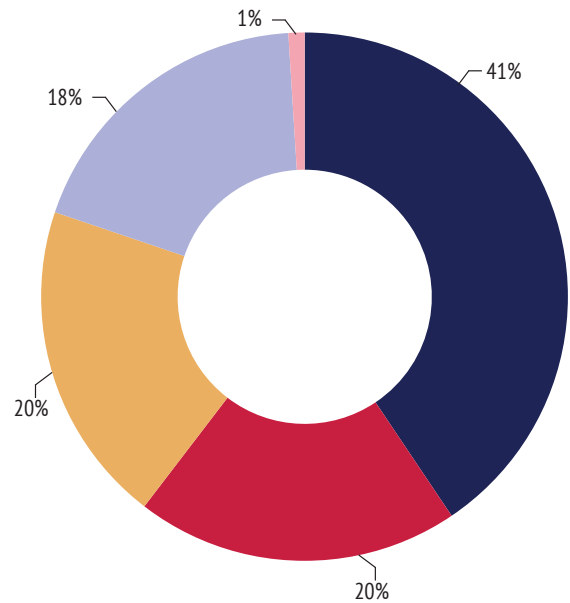


- Government
- Philanthropy
- Corporate
- Services & Fees
- Fundraising
- Other

**HOW OUR FUNDS WERE SPENT 2022-2023**



**HOW OUR FUNDS WERE SPENT 2021-2022**



- Community Development
- Training & Employment
- Education
- Administration
- Fundraising

# FINANCIALS

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

|  | NOTE | 2023<br>\$  | 2022<br>\$  |
|--|------|-------------|-------------|
| Revenue  | 4    | 4,521,975   | 3,891,765   |
| Finance income                                 |      | 115,630     | 4,154       |
| Other income                                   |      | 15,306      | 13,800      |
| Donations                                      |      | 84,673      | 69,305      |
| Employee benefits expense                      |      | (3,750,997) | (3,095,935) |
| Depreciation                                   |      | (21,026)    | (19,136)    |
| Change in fair value of financial assets       |      | (16,109)    | (2,561)     |
| Catering                                       |      | (101,066)   | (36,131)    |
| Contractors                                    |      | (214,145)   | (89,181)    |
| Grants paid                                    |      | (188,170)   | (302,168)   |
| Administrative expenses                        |      | (189,013)   | (147,856)   |
| Marketing expenses                             |      | (7,232)     | (1,648)     |
| Occupancy costs                                |      | (110,782)   | (89,202)    |
| Other expenses                                 |      | (50,957)    | (30,546)    |
| Finance expenses                               |      | (1,766)     | (1,513)     |
| <b>Profit for the year</b>                     |      | 86,321      | 163,147     |
| Other comprehensive income                     |      | -           | -           |
| <b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b> |      | 86,321      | 163,147     |



## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

|                                      | NOTE | 2023<br>\$       | 2022<br>\$       |
|--------------------------------------|------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                        |      |                  |                  |
| CURRENT ASSETS                       |      |                  |                  |
| Cash and cash equivalents            | 5    | 1,150,427        | 1,365,080        |
| Trade and other receivables          | 6    | 150,831          | 92,636           |
| Other financial assets               | 7    | 1,087,155        | 997,439          |
| Other assets                         |      | 3,472            | 1,214            |
| <b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>          |      | <b>2,391,885</b> | <b>2,456,369</b> |
| NON-CURRENT ASSETS                   |      |                  |                  |
| Trade and other receivables          | 6    | 24,861           | 52,049           |
| Property, plant and equipment        | 8    | 112,641          | 129,517          |
| Right-of-use assets                  | 9    | 2,156            | 312              |
| <b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>      |      | <b>139,658</b>   | <b>181,878</b>   |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>                  |      | <b>2,531,543</b> | <b>2,638,247</b> |
| <b>LIABILITIES</b>                   |      |                  |                  |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES                  |      |                  |                  |
| Trade and other payables             | 10   | 234,645          | 367,485          |
| Lease liabilities                    | 9    | 656              | 156              |
| Employee benefits                    | 12   | 475,776          | 449,262          |
| Other financial liabilities          | 11   | 282,000          | 372,125          |
| <b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>     |      | <b>993,077</b>   | <b>1,189,028</b> |
| NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES              |      |                  |                  |
| Lease liabilities                    | 9    | 1,500            | 156              |
| Employee benefits                    | 12   | 68,992           | 67,410           |
| <b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b> |      | <b>70,492</b>    | <b>67,566</b>    |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>             |      | <b>1,063,569</b> | <b>1,256,594</b> |
| <b>NET ASSETS</b>                    |      | <b>1,467,974</b> | <b>1,381,653</b> |
| <b>EQUITY</b>                        |      |                  |                  |
| Retained earnings                    |      | 1,467,974        | 1,381,653        |
| <b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>                  |      | <b>1,467,974</b> | <b>1,381,653</b> |

# FINANCIALS

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

|                                | Retained<br>Earnings<br>\$ | Total<br>\$      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| <b>2023</b>                    |                            |                  |
| <b>Balance at 1 July 2022</b>  | 1,381,653                  | 1,381,653        |
| Profit for the year            | 86,321                     | 86,321           |
| <b>Balance at 30 June 2023</b> | <b>1,467,974</b>           | <b>1,467,974</b> |
| <b>2022</b>                    |                            |                  |
| <b>Balance at 1 July 2021</b>  | 1,218,506                  | 1,218,506        |
| Profit for the year            | 163,147                    | 163,147          |
| <b>Balance at 30 June 2022</b> | <b>1,381,653</b>           | <b>1,381,653</b> |

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

|  | NOTE | 2023<br>\$  | 2022<br>\$  |
|--|------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>         |      |             |             |
| Receipts from customers                              |      | 4,834,833   | 4,314,983   |
| Payments to suppliers and employees                  |      | (5,054,986) | (4,054,717) |
| Interest received                                    |      | 9,806       | 4,154       |
| Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities  | 18   | (210,347)   | 264,420     |
| <b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>         |      |             |             |
| Purchase of property, plant and equipment            |      | (4,150)     | (35,677)    |
| Purchase of financial assets                         |      | -           | (1,000,000) |
| Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities  |      | (4,150)     | (1,035,677) |
| <b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</b>         |      |             |             |
| Payment of finance lease liabilities                 |      | (156)       | (156)       |
| Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities  |      | (156)       | (156)       |
| Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents |      | (214,653)   | (771,413)   |
| held Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year  |      | 1,365,080   | 2,136,493   |
| Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year   |      | 1,150,427   | 1,365,080   |

# AUDITOR'S REPORT

LDAssurance

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

LDAssurance Pty Ltd  
Level 6, 330 Collins Street  
Melbourne Victoria 3000  
TELEPHONE +61 3 9988 2090  
www.ldassurance.com.au  
ABN 89 146 147 202

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BANKSIA GARDENS COMMUNITY SERVICES

### Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

#### Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Banksia Gardens Community Services ('the Association'), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and responsible persons' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Banksia Gardens Community Services, has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- ii. complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not for profits Commission Regulations 2022*.

#### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described as in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not for profits Commission Act 2012* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Responsibilities of the Board for the Financial Report

The Board is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not for profits Commission Act 2012*. The Board's responsibility also includes such internal control as it determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Board is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Board either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Board are responsible to overseeing the Association's financial reporting process

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation

We communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

LDAssurance  
Chartered Accountants



Stephen O'Kane  
Partner

Dated this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of October 2023  
At 330 Collins Street, Melbourne.

# THANK *You!*

## Community partners/individuals

100 Story Building  
Adrienne Smith  
Andrew Lew  
Arabic Welfare  
Australian Friendly Turkish Women's Group  
Australian Relief Organisation  
Berry Street  
Brite Industries  
Brotherhood of St. Laurence  
Conservation Volunteers Australia  
DPV Health  
Faye Bussau  
Fernando Ianni  
Fitzroy Football Club  
Foodbank Victoria  
Jesuit Social Services  
Kim Sweeny  
Melbourne Victory Football Club  
Neighbourhood Houses Victoria  
North West Neighbourhood House Network  
Northern Community Legal Centre  
Northpoint Centre  
Outer Urban Projects  
Phillip 'Yung Philly' Pandongan  
Reclink Australia  
Royal Children's Hospital  
Safe and Equal  
Save the Children  
Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre  
Sunbury Cobaw Community Health  
Tibetan Buddhist Society  
Uniting Vic.Tas  
Victorian Black Sea Cultural Association  
Victoria University  
Women's Health in the North

## Philanthropy partners/supporters

Alcohol and Drug Foundation  
Australian Communities Foundation  
Bennelong Foundation  
Brian M. Davis Charitable Foundation  
Carbon Positive Australia  
Centre for Multicultural Youth  
Equity Trustees - RM Ansett Trust  
Father Bob Maguire Foundation  
Flora & Frank Leith  
Fowler Paine Foundation  
Hart Line Fund  
Helen Macpherson Smith Trust  
Jack Brockhoff Foundation  
Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation  
Merri Creek Management Committee  
Newsboys Foundation  
Ray and Margaret Wilson Foundation  
RE Ross Trust  
Readings Foundation  
State Trustees  
StreetSmart Australia  
The BB and A Miller Fund  
The Kimberley Foundation

## Corporate partners/supporters

CSL Behring Australia  
Melbourne Airport – major corporate sponsor



### Education partners/supporters

Bethal Primary School  
 Broadmeadows Primary School  
 Broadmeadows Valley Primary School  
 Collingwood English Language School  
 Coolaroo South Primary School  
 Dallas Brooks Community Primary School  
 Gladstone Views Primary School  
 Glenroy West Primary School  
 Good Samaritan Primary School  
 Greenvale Primary School  
 Holy Child Primary School  
 Hume Central Secondary College  
 Hume Valley School  
 Kangan Institute  
 La Trobe University  
 Meadow Heights Primary School  
 Melbourne Polytechnic  
 Monash University  
 Mount Ridley College  
 Northern Schools Early Years Cluster  
 RMIT University  
 Roxburgh College  
 Roxburgh Homestead Primary School  
 Roxburgh Park Primary School  
 Roxburgh Rise Primary School  
 Sirius College  
 The University of Melbourne  
 Victoria University  
 Worcester Polytechnic Institute (USA)

### Government

AMES Australia  
 AMP Disability Employment Services  
 Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources  
 Broadmeadows Magistrates Court  
 Broadmeadows Suburban Revitalisation Board  
 Centrelink  
 Cr Jarrod Bell  
 Cr Karen Sherry  
 Hume City Council  
 Hume Library Services  
 Hume Volunteer Gateway  
 Kathleen Matthews-Ward MP  
 Maria Vamvakinou MP  
 Mayor Joseph Haweil  
 Ros Spence MP  
 Senator Lidia Thorpe  
 Sheena Frost, Hume City Council CEO  
 Sheena Watt MP  
 Sustainability Victoria  
 Victoria Police - Broadmeadows  
 Victorian Department of Education and Training  
 Victorian Department of Energy, Environment & climate change  
 Victorian Department of Families, Fairness & Housing  
 Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts & Regions  
 Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety  
 Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet  
 Workforce Australia

## Contact

ABN 54 264 568 661

Phone 9301 8531

[admin@banksiagardens.org.au](mailto:admin@banksiagardens.org.au)

71–81 Pearcedale Parade,  
Broadmeadows VIC 3047  
PO Box 341, Dallas VIC 3047

[www.banksiagardens.org.au](http://www.banksiagardens.org.au)

**EDITORS: GEORGINA WHEELER  
SIYODA JAYAWARDENE**

**DESIGN: ANNA VAN DIJK**

