



2023 Annual Report



Acknowledgement of Country

NMLL acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to First Nations Peoples and their elders past, present and emerging.



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Our Mission

To build the knowledge and skills of individuals and communities to assist them achieve their goals and participate successfully in the Australian community.

Our Values

Our values will be reflected in our behaviour and the way we work:



Compassion

We are sensitive, understanding and caring in our service of each other and all people



Integrity

We are honest, accountable, transparent and fair in all our work and relationships



Respect

We treat each person as we expect to be treated and offering acceptance and support in the face of challenges



Creativity

We develop and co-design effective, innovative and sustainable ways to fulfil our mission



Diversity

We build social cohesion by creating opportunities to engage and value everybody to celebrate diversity



Celebration

We recognise and celebrate the efforts and achievements of our students and participants, their families, and our staff and volunteers

CHAIRPERSON'S *Report*

It is a great pleasure to present my first report as Chair of North Melbourne Language and Learning's (NMLL) Committee of Management.

If one word described 2023 it is challenging. While the worst of the disruption from COVID was over, we were conscious of the need to be prepared if it returned. There was also the ongoing challenge of funding the important programs and activities NMLL provides for our community. To help the Committee effectively respond to these challenges, NMLL's risk management plan was updated to help both the Committee of Management and the NMLL General Manager better identify and assess changes in the environment we operate in. A strategic planning day was also held to help progress our thinking about how NMLL can grow and develop over coming years.

Student enrolments were strong during the year, with the main challenge being the lack of physical space at 33 Alfred Street. On a personal note, despite having volunteered at NMLL since 2014, I had not seen first-hand what actually happens in a classroom until I spent some time as a teacher's assistant. I came away with even greater respect for the hard work, skill and dedication of NMLL's teaching staff.

The biggest challenge, though, came in September when the State government announced that it would gradually demolish the more than 40 public housing towers in Victoria. 33 Alfred Street was listed as one of the first towers to be replaced. The loss of our space on the ground floor of the tower would be very disruptive for our teaching and community development work. As soon as the announcement was made, options for new classrooms and offices started to be explored. As I write this, there is still considerable uncertainty about the timing of the demolition or even if it will occur. But I thank the staff of NMLL and the Committee of Management for their quick action in the face of an important challenge to our operation.

The great work of NMLL throughout a challenging but also very successful year depended on many people and organisations. I thank all the organisations that provided the financial support essential to NMLL's operation. And the work would simply not have happened without the tireless work, imagination and dedication of NMLL's General Manager Cliff Rundle and his staff. I am also very grateful for the work of our Accountant, Robert Pisano, who has provided invaluable assistance for many years. My colleagues and friends on the Committee of Management have generously given their time and energy to assist in NMLL's work, realising its the importance for the diverse community of North Melbourne. And my thanks go out to the volunteers and members of the community who have contributed in many different ways to assist NMLL achieve its aim of helping people build a better life for themselves and their families.

So, on behalf of the Committee of Management of North Melbourne Language and Learning Inc., I am pleased to share with you the Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2023.

David Lansley

TREASURER'S *Report*

2023 was a year of both financial challenges and successes at NMLL. The challenges were mostly in relation to increasing cost pressures and the ongoing constraints in NMLL's income streams and limited resources. These continued to place pressure on NMLL's operations, financial management and overall budget position, and the ongoing balancing act between needing to generate income while containing costs.

The successes were evident in the financial outcomes for the year which, despite the challenges, saw NMLL achieve a full program, finish 2023 with a small annual surplus and retain appropriate financial buffers to support its ongoing operations.

Income and expenditure

(Figures are rounded to the nearest \$1,000)

In 2023, NMLL recorded income of \$901,000 and expenditure of \$892,000, resulting in an annual operating surplus of just over \$9,000. This was NMLL's eighth successive annual surplus, another good result in the face of increasing financial challenges. In terms of income, around 60% was attributable to the Further Education program. This was higher than for the prior year, due to increased activity under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) (in partnership with Melbourne Polytechnic) and Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) program (funded by the Victorian government).

The balance of income came from core community services and support activity (funded by the Victorian Government and City of Melbourne), funding for the Catch Up / Gathering@33 capital works projects (from the Victorian government) and other one-time project activity.

In terms of expenditure, cost inflation continued to create pressure on the budget as described above, including for substantial mandated increases in staffing costs. The growth in costs has significantly outpaced the indexation in core funding, with some funding remaining unchanged for several years. As a result, we have had to increase efforts to limit spending where practicable, as well as generate new income, to try and contain overall costs within funded parameters. This has sometimes meant placing more pressure on already limited resources.

Compared to the previous year, both income and expenditure were down by 23%. This is not a reflection of performance but was always planned as the previous year included significant one-time financial activity associated with the Paving the Way Forward project (discussed in last year's report), with no commensurate activity assumed for 2023.

Operational challenges remain, and the factors that helped balance the budget in 2023, including cost savings achieved, may not be replicable ongoing.

Financial position

(Figures are rounded to the nearest \$1,000)

NMLL's cash holdings at the end of the year totalled \$498,000. This was a reduction of around \$126,000 from the prior year. The reduction was planned and reflected two factors: the spending during the year of grant funding received in the prior year (that was received in advance of the associated activities) and investment in capital works / asset upgrades.

Cash levels remained good throughout and continued to support NMLL's service delivery and operational effectiveness.

Fixed asset spending during the year totalled just over \$54,000, mostly for outdoor furniture and equipment purchases associated with the Catch Up / Gathering@33 capital works projects (part-funded by the Victorian government).

Net assets at the end of the year totalled \$367,000. Of the net assets, \$73,000 was tied in long-term physical assets (including for the new asset spending described above) with the balance of \$294,000 comprising NMLL's retained earnings. This level of reserves or effective working capital underwrites NMLL's planning and ongoing operations and remains appropriate for NMLL's circumstances.

The results for 2023 would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of NMLL's staff, the ongoing faith and support of our funding partners, and the involvement and enthusiasm of our participants. Challenges remain, including not least the potential relocation of NMLL in 2024 should the Victorian Government's planned redevelopment of the Alfred Street Towers commence, though we intend to continue working positively and proactively with our funding partners and the community, to achieve the best possible life outcomes for our participants.

Summary of Results

For the year ended
31 December 2023

Note: Summary figures in this report are extracted from the full annual financial accounts of NMLL for the year ended 31 December 2023.

The full accounts provide more details on the financial performance and position of NMLL, including a description of the accounting policies adopted, explanatory notes, and the independent auditor's report.

	2023	2022
Income	901,335	1,167,419
Expenditure	(892,194)	(1,166,226)
Net surplus for year	9,141	1,193
Cash held at end of year	498,438	623,970
Other short-term assets	103,527	67,501
Long-term fixed assets	73,092	35,489
Total liabilities	(308,474)	(369,518)
Net assets at end year	366,583	357,442

Chris Harding

GENERAL MANAGER'S *Report*

2023 was another year of significant achievement, improvement and innovation across the educational, social and financial dimensions of NMLL's work, as outlined throughout this Annual Report.

The preparation of each Annual Report is a rare opportunity to reflect upon the last and earlier years' activities. From that perspective it is clear that NMLL has progressively built its capability, influence and resources in working towards its mission, particularly since COVID. NMLL has also further refined ways to work with and advocate with local communities, to bring resources to north North Melbourne, to educate, to engage and to help create pathways to employment, further education and opportunities.

In no particular order I'd like to share a few insights. First, an ambitious strategic framework that is embraced by staff is essential to providing direction and impetus. The underlying principle of external adaption and internal cohesion is vital. Second, NMLL makes a valuable contribution to local communities and to the Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector. Third, NMLL is valued by the local communities. Fourth, NMLL is well positioned and has the profile and networks to advocate with and for local communities and deliver large projects. Fifth, and by no means last, NMLL has developed an inclusive, supportive, innovative and very effective work culture which all staff contribute to and draw from.

Ambitious
strategic
framework

Valuable
contribution to
local
communities

Valued by
local
communities

Contributor to
the Adult and
Community
Education
(ACE) sector

Advocate with
and for local
communities and
projects

Inclusive,
supportive,
innovative and
effective work
culture



Thankyous

Although a small organisation NMLL's work involves the contributions of many people. First and foremost, I want to thank the entire NMLL staff for their commitment, innovation, and tenacity throughout the year.

Thank you to the Committee of Management for their direction, advice, commitment and support of the organisation and me.

A big thankyou to the hosted services that operate from NMLL's shared office.

It would be remiss not to acknowledge the vital resources received from Governments and funding organisations. In particular Skills First, AMEP and ACFE which fund education programs, the City of Melbourne and DFFH for funding community development activities and the following organisations and government departments for funding projects conceived and delivered by NMLL:

- DFFH for selecting the NMLL lead consortium for the engagement phase of the Paving the Way Forward
- Scanlon Foundation for funding the Integrate project
- the Department of Industry Science and Resources who funded new classroom desks and chairs
- the Our Suburbs: Living Local Fund for the resources that allowed the refurbishment of the community "shed", which as a result is an increasingly valuable community resource.

Looking forward

Organisations in the Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector face many challenges. Some are to do with the nature of the work itself. Of more concern is the difficult and complex economic, environmental and social context of our work combined with the long term impact of the ever diminishing value of funding. At a time when the work of organisations such as NMLL are increasingly needed, the viability of ACE organisations is undermined by inadequate funding and, arguably, incompatible funding models. Directly addressing these issues as well as building financially sustainable businesses is a challenge NMLL and the sector must continue to grapple with.

My comments skim the surface of another eventful year. The following reports provide some detail.

I'm proud to work at and lead an organisation that makes a positive difference to people's lives. There is much to do and I'm looking forward to working with local communities, staff and the committee of management throughout 2024.

Cliff Rundle



In 2023 our commitment to providing high quality teaching and learning experiences for our students continued to underpin our initiatives and produce positive outcomes across our various programs.

Through our English language and digital literacy programs, our team of dedicated and professional teachers continued to advance our mission to empower adult learners from migrant and refugee backgrounds living in the North Melbourne community. Following is a glimpse of our educational endeavours throughout 2023.

English Language Programs

NMLL has continued to deliver all of its major programs in 2023:

Commonwealth
Government
funded Adult
Migrant English
Program (AMEP)

Victorian
Government's
Skills First
accredited
courses

Adult
Community and
Further
Education
(ACFE)
programs

The AMEP, NMLL's largest education program, reached a significant milestone in 2023 celebrating 75 years of Australia's English language services to migrants and refugees. NMLL is part of the Melbourne AMEP network, the largest network in Victoria, consisting of 15 TAFE providers and Learn Locals, led by Melbourne Polytechnic. 2023 brought some significant changes to the AMEP program. These included the creation of a quarterly Pathways Guidance Community of Practice (CoP), to build and enhance the work done across the Melbourne AMEP Network, and changes to the way initial interviews and placement assessments are carried out. Preparations were also made to implement the new EAL Curriculum framework from the start of the 2024 academic year.

NMLL also continued to deliver English and Digital Literacy classes at the River Nile Learning Centre's women's program in Victoria Street, West Melbourne. This ongoing partnership is valuable for both NMLL and the RNLC and should continue into 2024 and beyond.



Digital Literacy Programs

NMLL's Digital Inclusion Strategy has been progressively implemented over several years to become an integral part of NMLL's education program. It includes expert dedicated assistance, the Tech Connect service providing after-hours access to space, free wi-fi, laptop computers for on-site use, a laptop computer loan scheme for enrolled EAL students and digital literacy skills courses.

The Digital Essentials Level 1 and Level 2 courses are valuable programs focused on building students' digital literacy skills for work, study and broader social inclusion objectives. NMLL's Digital Literacy program is guided by the principles underpinning the Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) that recognise connected digital technologies have changed the way we live, learn and work and play a critical role in social, economic and civil life, together with the understanding that digital exclusion is particularly pronounced among recently arrived refugee communities. The programs are highly responsive to learners' individual needs, abilities and concerns. Whilst some programs focus on phone use for banking apps, downloading learning apps, use of google maps, managing contacts, messaging and privacy settings, other programs focus on typing and keyboard use, saving files, advanced Google searches, locating reliable information sources and verifying URLs as a means of detecting scams. Our skilled and dedicated Digital Literacy (DL) teacher, Robert Domanski, can often be found in the computer room between breaks or after class working one-on-one with students with specific DL needs.



"It's so important to get to know students and discuss their individual needs. Offering practical support with technology problems at the same time as supporting students' development of the skills to enable them to independently access digital technologies, whilst navigating the language barrier to access the information needed to develop these skills is a complex and challenging task."

Pathway Support Program

An exciting new initiative for NMLL in 2023 was the ACFE funded Pathway Support Program (PSP). Designed and delivered by our highly experienced former Education Coordinator, Sam Navarria, the PSP aims to assist learners to complete their current course and provides them with information relevant to education, vocational training, employment, settlement and community engagement. This important program is available to all NMLL students and supports them to make informed decisions about their current and future study.



Over the last 6 months the PSP, through individual appointments with learners, has identified learners' learning and 'life' needs and challenges, which impact both on further education and vocational training as well as attendance and course completion. Key gap areas are reading and writing.

The PSP also highlights the crucial nature of specific employment focused training including understanding the components of the employment journey such as developing a career plan; searching and applying for work and courses online; essential job application documents; job interview techniques, language of employment in context. Digital literacy is essential. Individual areas of need and personal circumstances that impact on course participation and overall wellbeing include food relief, housing issues, citizenship, health and family issues.

Looking ahead to 2024, developing career plans, better alignment between the PSP and AMEP's IPG and strengthening networks with relevant services will continue to be key areas of work.

Community Connections and learning

Each term NMLL students look forward to a whole of school excursion, providing opportunities for learners to explore different activities in Melbourne which they may not otherwise experience. In 2023 NMLL teachers and students visited the Information Centre for Melbourne's Metro tunnel project, 'The big build', the Koorie Heritage Trust in Federation Square, Highpoint shopping centre, Hoyts cinemas, the Immigration Museum and Sandridge Bridge, in addition to learning important beach safety skills at South Melbourne Beach, thanks to Surf Life Saving Australia and our energetic and dedicated EAL teacher, Alex.

“English language learning does not just take place in the classroom and it is so important to build students' confidence in accessing community facilities and exploring parts of this vibrant and diverse city. Excursions are always a hit with students – they love getting out and about and seeing new places.”

In conclusion, our education section of the annual report of 2023 reflects our commitment to providing high quality and engaging teaching and learning programs, fostering inclusive learning environments, and empowering our students to thrive in the community. As we look ahead, we remain dedicated to driving positive educational outcomes and making a lasting impact on the lives of learners.

Sarah Ward

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR'S *Report*

This year felt like a return to normality after weathering the storm of the COVID-19 pandemic in previous years.

NMLL pivoted to embrace a more Neighbourhood House-centred model of work, focussing on delivering regular programs for the community.

We also ran a number of exciting events including our Adult Learners Week Festival, Cherry Picking excursion and a series of smaller excursions as part of our 'Out & About' program. We undertook a hybrid Education/Community Development project called ACFE Adapts seeking to find out more information about community members' awareness of NMLL, allowing us to make our programs more accessible. Lastly, we wrapped up our two-year-long project, Integrate, which supported more than thirty community members facing challenges with housing, employment and family support.

Integrate and Neighbourhood Networking

Integrate began as a project to provide community members pursuing a Commercial Cookery course at William Angliss Institute with wrap-around support to reduce English Language, family, housing, digital literacy and employment barriers. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this project adapted to meet the needs of community members without the Commercial Cookery element, assisting over 30 community members to overcome these barriers. Through this process, we learnt more about the loneliness and social isolation community members were experiencing in the post-COVID-19 era, which inspired the development of our Neighbourhood Networking program. In this program, community members meet on Tuesday mornings to socialise, meet local service providers and participate in craft, cooking and games. An important addition to this program in 2023 has been the Tai Chi lessons provided by NMLL Teacher Alex Binos, which participants thoroughly enjoy. In addition to the activities provided, socialisation is facilitated by our Cultural Liaison Worker, Vivian Lee who interprets between Mandarin and Cantonese and English, in addition to providing facilitation support to maximise enjoyment and participation for all community members.

Food Pantry

In 2023, NMLL made excellent progress towards establishing a Community Food Pantry. In August, we conducted two focus groups with 16 community members in attendance. These focus groups established a strong need for a hyper-local community pantry stocked with culturally relevant items. NMLL then partnered with the Peter Mac Men's Shed who will build two cabinets, a sign and a noticeboard by early 2024. In the meantime, NMLL formed a resident-led Community Pantry Advisory Group and partnered with the North Melbourne Public Housing Residents Association to promote and support the day-to-day operations of the Community Pantry. This project gives community members the opportunity to volunteer with regular restocking and maintenance of the pantry with a view to building job readiness skills in those who are looking to enter the workforce.

Living Local

In 2023, NMLL successfully applied for funding to renovate our outdoor space, a significant undertaking to make it more inviting, comfortable, and usable during the winter months. In 2023:

- the roof was replaced by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)
- café blinds were installed to keep the wind and chilly air out
- heaters and fluorescent lights were installed to keep the space warm and bright
- a drinking fountain was installed near the community garden
- Bunnings sent team members and donated supplies to re-establish a functioning community garden
- tables and chairs were purchased for use during suitable weather
- a storage shed was constructed.

These renovations have made the outdoor space at NMLL a comfortable and functional space enjoyed by students and community members alike.



Gardening

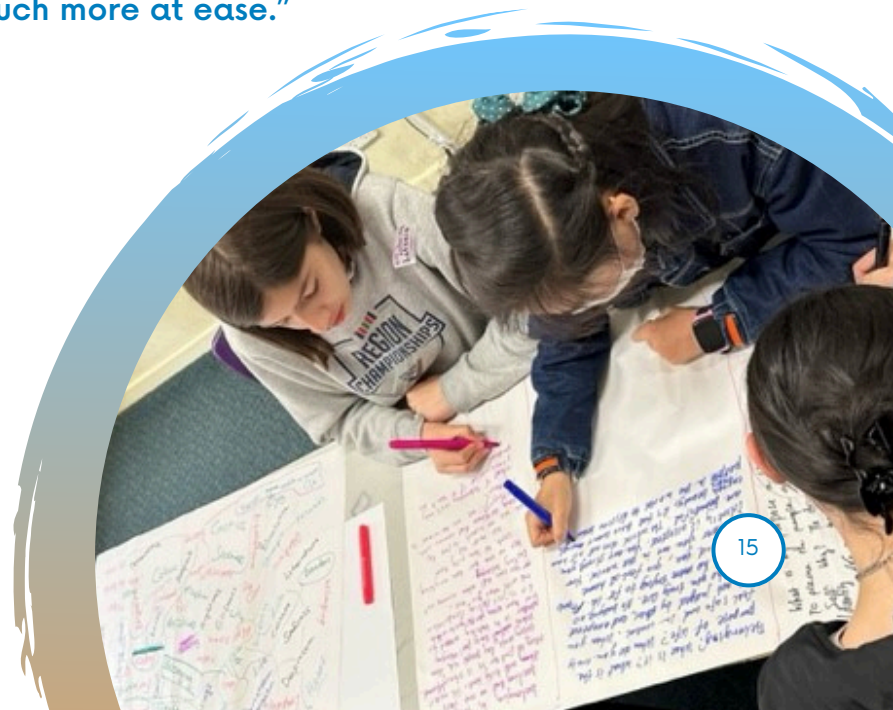
After Bunnings helped us to rejuvenate our garden we established a fortnightly community gardening group where community members meet for two hours per fortnight to maintain and reap the benefits of our community garden, led by horticulturalist Tania Frascarelli. Many participants are community members with their own plot in a Community Garden on the North Melbourne Public Housing Estate, and they have enjoyed learning from Tania about growing a successful garden. This year we grew beans, silver beet, tomatoes, carrots, chilli, lettuce and spinach. While participants greatly enjoy the gardening aspect of this group, they are equally as keen on the social side of it, looking forward to a cup of tea and cake at the conclusion of formalities.

Out & About

We ran Out & About, an exciting excursion program funded by the City of Melbourne's Connected Communities Grant, in 2023. This project included a boat cruise along the Yarra River, a visit to Parliament House, a tour of Melbourne's alleys and laneways, a ride on The Explorer Bus at the Botanic Gardens and a school holiday visit to the Melbourne Museum. Community members enjoyed these excursions immensely, with some community members expressing how lonely they felt before we ran these excursions. Community member and student, Ling Yun, shared the impact these excursions had on her:



"The excursions enriched my holiday life and allowed me to learn more about Australia and Melbourne. They broadened my horizons, increased my knowledge, and I gained a lot. I have been in Melbourne for eight years, but ... I can only walk around or go to China Town. Because of the language barrier, I dare not go anywhere else... Now I feel warm and comforted, and my heart feels much more at ease."



ACFE Adapts

ACFE Adapts was a project designed to measure community members' familiarity with North Melbourne Language and Learning. While we have operated at the same location for 20 years, many residents remain unfamiliar with both our Neighbourhood House programs and our English Language courses. This project allowed us to understand how we can promote our services more broadly, through an increased focus on translation of materials into 7 community languages and a rejuvenated Community Development poster template following a 'poster consultation' to improve the efficacy of our promotional materials. This project also informed our commitment to undertaking a strategy called 'Bumping Places' where we pop up at various locations on the Estate with course and program brochures and a fun activity, meeting residents who are unfamiliar with us.

North Melbourne Public Housing Residents Association

In 2023, the Resident Led Organisation Working Group developed through Paving the Way Forward project achieved the milestone of incorporation, renaming as the North Melbourne Public Housing Residents Association (NMPHRA). NMLL has provided support to NMPHRA from the very beginning and is proud to auspice NMPHRA's To-Leap project which will give the organisation the opportunity to further develop and advance its advocacy on behalf of residents of the North Melbourne Public Housing Estate.

Hosted Services

NMLL has continued to host local organisations and services addressing local community needs. The services include:

- the Pathway Support Program (PSP) which is intended to assist provide support and access to services for enrolled students struggling to attend class. In fact, the demands for assistance also come from local community members. Common issues include homelessness, domestic violence, a variety of health issues, food shortages and assistance with completing Government forms such as applications for public housing
- During the next reporting period NMLL will seek assistance from other organisations to address these matters and/or develop referral processes to specialist services
- Over the five years of its operation at NMLL the Jobs Victoria Employment service (JVES) assisted many people into employment. Despite being successful the service, along with many others across metropolitan Melbourne, was not refunded beyond the 2022/2023 financial year
- The complementary Reconnect service continued to provide assistance to those requiring intense support to seek employment
- The Homework Club, focused on primary school children, continues to grow and regularly has 30 participants
- The Venny to You adventure play operates outside NMLL each Wednesday afternoon complementing the Homework Club and provides a popular free service. NMLL will be advocating for its long-term continuation.

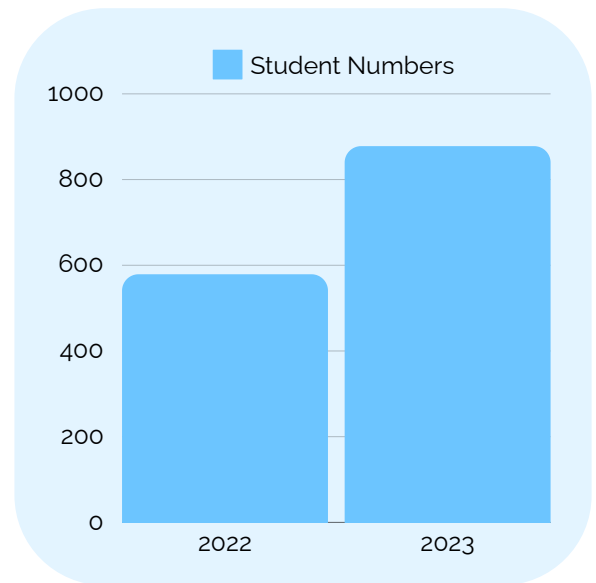
KyMBERLEE SIMPSON

The year 2023 saw a strong, energetic and busy NMLL. Gradually, NMLL recovered from the pandemic's huge impacts and even scaled up in numbers of staff, volunteers and students.

2023 Enrolment

In 2023, the total enrolment numbers (878) dramatically increased by 150% in comparison to ones in 2022 (579). NMLL students are from diverse and multicultural backgrounds. More than half of the enrolments were from students of African backgrounds (Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan and Egypt), followed by students from Asian countries like China, Vietnam, Afghanistan

and some European countries such as Ukraine and Italy. Students from Australia, England and New Zealand also contributed to enrolment numbers. Although NMLL students belonged to various age groups from 18 to over 70 years old, most of them were at employment ages. Moreover, 87.8% enrolments were from female students.



As life nearly returned to normal, previous students resumed their studies and were joined by many new students who wanted to enrol in English courses at NMLL. Although it was a good sign, it was also a challenge for NMLL. Despite the fact that class sizes were expanded to accommodate as many students as possible and minimise the waiting time for students on the waitlist, some students could not start in 2023. That led to the requirement for extra classes in the near future.

Broadened range of activities

Accredited English as Additional Language (EAL) courses are delivered at five levels at NMLL. They are funded by the government under two schemes, Skills First and AMEP (Adult Migrants English Program), for students who meet the eligibility requirements.

Pre-accredited courses, normally known as ACFE courses, including General English and Digital Essentials, were offered at both NMLL and River Nile Learning Centre (RNLC). During the year NMLL successfully delivered new short courses such as Numeracy Essentials for Employment at RNLC and Basic Cooking and Horticulture at Launch Housing.

Pathway Support (PSP) funded by ACFE was a new program for all NMLL students enrolling in EAL courses. Its main purpose was to support students meet their study plans and create career pathway sby providing relevant information and resources or referring to appropriate organisations.

The Cherry Picking end-of-year excursion is always one of the most popular and beloved events held by the CD team. This year, about 100 people including students and local residents took part in the trip. Everyone shared a memorable and wonderful time together with their friends and families.

After hour use and hosted services

NMLL continued to host some weekly and after hour use services. Jobs Victoria Employment Network (JVEN) on Mondays and Thursdays, RECONNECT on Tuesdays run by Wingate Avenue Community Centre provided support to eligible people who would like to return to school or look for jobs by helping them contact training providers, prepare their CVs and introducing suitable job opportunities. For a time, Homes Victoria visited every Wednesday afternoon to assist local residents with housing issues including maintenance requests and applications for public housing.

As one of the outreach providers for PSB4 (Power Saving Bonus, fourth round) service, NMLL successfully helped over 50 local Victorian households claim \$250 for their electricity bills. In terms of IT services, the laptop loan scheme remained open to NMLL staff and students, allowing them to borrow a laptop without a fee (eligibility applied) for the school year.

The Homework Club was still loved by a lot of parents and children. It saw a dramatic increase in the number of participants. This service was run every Wednesday afternoon from 4pm – 5.30pm for grades 4 – 10 students. At the same time, children could also take part in the Venny's mobile playground with a lot of fun activities and a bike program set up in the grassed area in front of NMLL.

Despite the fact that NMLL had tried to provide as many services as possible to meet the needs of students and local people, there were service gaps that needed to be worked out. For example, residents living in the area sometimes came to ask for help with form filling (Centrelink forms, etc.) or legal advice. Even some NMLL students with personal issues like homelessness or mental health did not know where and how to get support. That led to the consideration of resuming some services that used to be hosted by NMLL.



From volunteers to NMLL staff

NMLL's volunteer program is well known. This year, the administration team welcomed more admin volunteers than ever with four people who were both NMLL students and local residents. We were so pleased that two of them later joined the admin team as paid staff. When opportunities allow it is common practise at NMLL for volunteers and students on placement to become NMLL staff. I myself was an admin volunteer at NMLL in 2019 before being employed as administration assistant in 2020. Obviously, volunteering helps people, especially those who just moved to Australia, to gain local work experience and build a network. Moreover, it may bring job opportunities.

The two new admin staff brought additional diversity, experience and language skills to the team, contributing to our smooth and productive collaboration. Those characteristics were very useful for enrolment processes (to explain and guide students in their languages to complete the registration forms), for the Pathway Support Program (providing interpreting and/or translation support during the meetings between the Pathway Support Worker and students), and to review and revise translated versions of marketing materials for the CD team's projects and events.

Acknowledgment

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Furdus Suliman, Nabiha Said and Rhona May Radan, who are wonderful admin team members, for their great work and contribution to the admin team in particular and NMLL in general. Without them, the admin team could not operate smoothly and effectively to bring the best support to NMLL staff and students. Last but not least, on behalf of the admin team, I also acknowledge and highly appreciate the help and support from the NMLL General Manager, teaching staff, CD staff, IT, finance and all students and community members. Together we overcame another year full of challenges and changes. I look forward to working with all of you in 2024.

Hoang Nguyen



THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A sincere thank you to all our supporters from the North Melbourne community and beyond. Your contribution makes an immeasurable difference to the lives of many.





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