

# DANDENONG COMMUNITY & LEARNING CENTRE



*Connecting Communities*

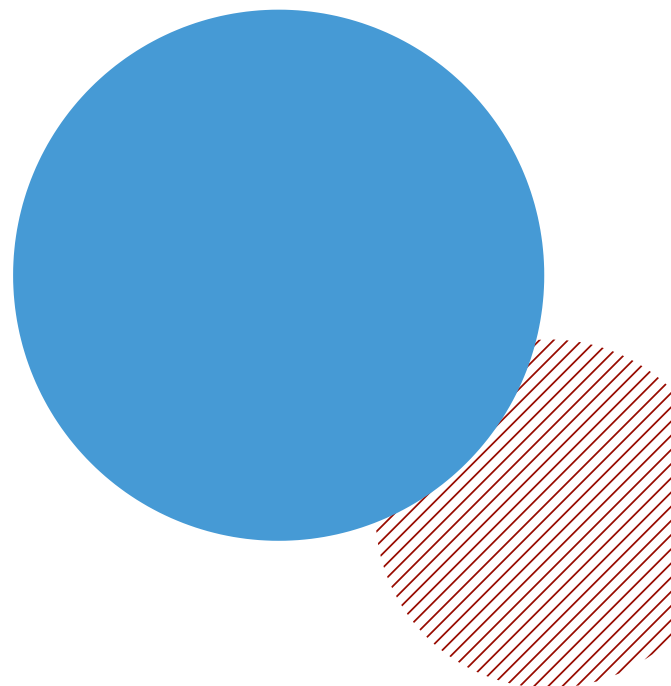
2020/21

ANNUAL  
REPORT



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>01</b>	Chairperson's Report	<b>09</b>	Volunteer Stories
<b>03</b>	Board Members	<b>10</b>	Learner's Stories
<b>04</b>	Education Co-ordinator's Report	<b>14</b>	Treasurer's Report
<b>05</b>	Community shed Co-ordinator's Report	<b>16</b>	Our Team
<b>07</b>	Senior Co-ordinator's Report	<b>17</b>	Our Partners
<b>08</b>	Programs and Services		



# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT



Kathleen has been an active Board Member for 7 years and has been Chairperson for 5 years.

She has a passion for the Centre and the communities we work with.

Her commitment is to ensure that the Centre is viable into the future with a strong infrastructure for us to continue to build while maintaining our community focus.

Acknowledgement of Country  
The Dandenong Community and Learning Centre acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land and pay our respects to elders, past, present and future.

Welcome to another year of interesting news and change that living with COVID has brought to our Centre. Yet again, I am pleased to let you know our staff, tutors, learners and volunteers have all adapted to the continuing changes we have had to manage throughout the year and excelled in their ability to manage these on-going challenges.

Our Centre is now back up and thriving with face-to-face classes. Surveys with learners have determined there are some classes that remain on-line; however, all our learners and tutors are excited to be back in the room teaching and bringing our learners together.

Throughout this second extended period of lock-down we have continued to provide no-cost programs to our asylum seeker learners and their communities. Our Volunteer program is well underway with the grant and support of the City of Greater Dandenong; you can read some of our volunteer stories on page 9.

Our Education Co-ordinator, Diana Lambros, has met all the challenges COVID has presented with strength and resilience, in her work with tutors and management of all classes that have been on-line or face-to-face. Classes have included English, Art, Bakery, Digital Literacy with computers, Employability pathways and Well-being. You will find Diana's, and some of our learners' stories on page 10 of this report.

We have developed an exciting partnership with Wallara and our Community Shed, providing introduction to woodworking classes for adults with different learning abilities. Our Community Shed Co-ordinator, Ian Wilshusen, is greatly enthusiastic and committed to work with the learners and provides for them both on a group and individual learning basis. You can read more about our Community Shed on page 5.

Continuing to run classes on-line and face-to-face, and frequently swapping from one to the other, has been a tremendous commitment from our Co-ordinators team, tutors, volunteers, and staff. Its success is due to their commitment, enthusiasm, and willingness to adapt.

# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Our learners, both new and continuing, have come to classes with a drive to learn and a willingness to share. They have talked of developing friendships, feeling less isolated and gaining skills that enable them to apply for work as well as increasing their English language and other skills, backed by the strong support provided individually and collectively to them by their tutors.

Thank you to our Board of Governance members for your continued commitment throughout another year of change. Earlier in the year we welcomed two new members, Suzelle Allet who also has taken on the role of Board of Governance Secretary, and Leve Louis. Suzelle and Leve introduce themselves to you on page 3.

We do not have a manager's report this year, as the Centre's manager left in November to pursue other opportunities. We are currently in the process of recruiting a new Centre Manager.

Our Treasurer, Gerard Francis, has taken the Centre through another incredible year, and you will find his report on page 14.

We take pleasure in extending a big thank you to our funders who have been a tremendous support to our Centre, learners and communities we work with. We thank you for your commitment to our Centre and look forward to working with you again in 2022.

- Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
- Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (Stronger Communities)
- City of Greater Dandenong Council
- Australian Men's Shed Association
- Victorian Men's Shed
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Department of Education and Training (ACFE)
- Dandenong Magistrates' Court
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communities

To our learners and program participants, we thank you for being part of our Centre and look forward to you joining us next year to continue your learning. To those of you who are new to the area, or have an interest in learning to develop skills, please drop in and say hello and find out who we are and what we do. We are here to support your learning and building friendships in the community.

Happy holidays to our learners, volunteers, tutors, staff, Board members and all our communities in the Greater Dandenong area – we look forward to working with you all again in 2022.

KATHLEEN WEST

# SUZELLE ALLET

BOARD MEMBER AND SECRETARY



Suzelle Allet has over 30 years experience in Education - working in the VET sector and the Community sector - at a TAFE level and at Community Centres. Suzelle has a range of qualifications from Certificate IV in Training and Assessment to a Master of Education.

Suzelle is particularly interested in the Community Sector and using all her experience and knowledge to help DCLC.

# LEVE LOUIS

BOARD MEMBER



Leve is a contemporary educational professional with over 20 years of experience as an educator, lead VET trainer, compliance manager, administrator, curriculum developer, Learning management system (LMS) administrator, quality assurance, governance and compliance consultant.

Leve has an interest in helping communities grow and work towards the common good of the society. Leve is also interested in empowering people through education.

# EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

What a year! The 2020 – 2021 year saw many transitions and changes. Having created a strong online program the previous year, we have now expanded from this to offer our learners and community more options in how they would like to learn.

Our English as an additional language (EAL) learners have enjoyed learning English whilst getting creative with art, sewing and baking classes. Projects included making masks, tote bags, baking birthday cakes and other sweets. They also heard from guest speakers from the CFA and local council. Our EAL level 2 learners have been practising their presentation skills, which they have been able to put into practice by presenting to local community groups.

Our hospitality learners expanded their skills by taking on the challenge of completing the accredited Safe Food Handling course. A recognised entry point for employment. The computer learners added digital literacy to their skill set, being able to stay connected with essential services and family. Our established relationships with local schools and parents continued to flourish, even though due to Covid, it was through the post! Seedlings being sent to parents and children to plant during the lockdowns. These seedlings to soon be re-planted at the schools.

It was clear from the feedback of learners, whilst online classes have been a good option most couldn't wait to come back to the Centre!

We are delighted to have our teachers and learners re-engaging in face to face classes at the Centre, and also in the community. Whilst the COVID-19 Pandemic proved to be a difficult time for all, it is encouraging and inspiring to see how our learners used this time to evaluate their lives and make changes. They have reported taking this opportunity to build on their skills and also learn new ones. Learning skills has increased their confidence in being able to participate in community activities and also take on new work duties or change their career path. We thank four of our learners – Charlotte, Selvia, Leo and Ray for sharing their stories with us.

We look forward to celebrating all their achievements at our end of year party. Last year's party was a hit, bringing together food, friendship and festivities!

As we reflect on the year, resilience and community spirit has been the key for the centre, its learners and the wider community. It is with this resilience, and having the community at heart, that we continue to expand and serve the City of Greater Dandenong.

DIANA LAMBROS.

# COMMUNITY SHED CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

What a challenging year we have had in 2021. My name is Ian, and I am the Co-ordinator of our Community Shed and Community Garden. We welcome all people to our facility and help them to feel free to engage in learning in a relaxed and friendly environment.

Our programs are flexible, and we aim to fit in with participants and what it is they want to learn. I have taken on many groups and help anyone wanting to participate in the class. It's a great opportunity to make, repair and restore items for yourself. We have set up a wood carving machine that is operated via a computer (CNC). Next year, we plan to hold classes that provide opportunity to learn the skills to operate the carving machine as an introduction to TAFE courses. We also have a 3D printer which prints items out of plastic and is also computer operated. As we move into 2022 we are excited to be teaching wood turning skills and traditional woodworking, including toy making for the hobbyist.

This year we put together an exciting program of classes with Wallara, for adults with different learning abilities, which involve participants engaging in the process of making small items of interest for themselves. In addition, we have conducted classes for VET students introducing them to woodworking, which has supported them in gaining confidence, building their skills and working as part of a team.

We are currently working on holding training classes in local primary schools for parents, to provide manufacturing skills in woodwork and home maintenance; interaction in these classes also assists building their English language skills where it is not a first language.

# COMMUNITY SHED CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

We have a large community garden, which is about the size of the average house block in Dandenong. We also have open ground plots for development and are planning on a six-week rotation. We have various fruit trees including apple, plum, fig, macadamia and an olive tree which is laden with fruit. We are seeking volunteers to help in the garden to give people the opportunity to learn horticulture in an introductory form. We are also working with Dandenong RSL to recruit volunteer ex-service people who would like to become involved in community service.

Our Community Shed and Community Garden provides tremendous opportunity as a volunteer, for you to offer your skills and/or learn new ones. You are very welcome to please come and visit us and see what we do and learn how you can volunteer your skills or learn new ones.

IAN WILSHUSEN



PROJECTS OF WOODWORKING  
STUDENTS



# SENIOR CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT



There is no doubt our community has faced unprecedented challenges in the last year. As a team we have demonstrated once again, resilience and care for our community, which is reflected in how we adapted and responded to their changing needs.

Although we have had short periods of normal delivery of classes and services, for most of the year our classes have been delivered on-line; which includes the implementation of the Google Workspace platform. All our tutors have assisted and coached learners to adjust to both on-line and face-to-face learning. This then has enabled us to sustain engagement with our learners and the wider community.

When COVID regulations enforced the closure of our Centre, we continued to support those learners and volunteers who were unable to work on-line. We did this through welfare checks, which then ensured they remained connected to the Centre and broader community.

Three staff members, who are multilingual, worked on a DHHS project which involved explaining in their language Victorian COVID-19 regulations. We greatly appreciate their input and commitment to the project which resulted in DHHS adjusting their translated information based on the feedback received from our staff members.

We very much look forward to 2022 and continuing our connection with learners, service users, partners and the wider community.

ALI AZIZ.

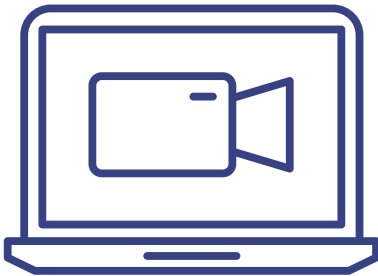
---

# PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The following outlines programs and initiatives we have taken to meet the challenges COVID has presented through the year:

## ***FLEXIBLE TRAINING DELIVERY***

Training was delivered through a range of formats that included workshop, class based, over mobile phone and Whatsapp. Many customised videos were developed to address the identified needs of learners.



## ***ZOOM TRAINING***

DCLC responded to the emerging needs of the community by offering Zoom training at no cost. Many community members attended the training to help with their learning and connecting with family and friends.



## ***97 INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS***

DCLC offered 97 individual programs including Computers, Cooking, English, Sewing, Woodworking and Childcare.

## ***SUPPORTING ASYLUM SEEKERS***

DCLC provided support to asylum seekers, with its online learning programs and through welfare checks. Programs and services were offered to asylum seekers at no cost.



# PRIYANKA RAJA

DCLC VOLUNTEER

Priyanka has been volunteering and delivering English and Computer classes for asylum seekers. Her background and skills in community services has been instrumental in providing learners a quality learning experience. Many learners are engaged and are improving their language and computer skills.



Coming to a class with a group of people who you may not know, in an unfamiliar environment can be daunting, but with Priyanka's support a welcoming environment is created which helps learners feel at ease. She puts in substantial efforts to prepare learning resources and make the learning fun and relevant.

Thanks Priyanka, we appreciate your work, time and efforts.

# ROBYN FRICSONS

DCLC VOLUNTEER

After a lengthy professional career in the community welfare sector, including 10 years working with refugees and asylum seekers in Springvale and Dandenong, I decided to retire. My plan was always to do what I could to try and help new arrivals to Australia. So in 2019 I volunteered to help teach English with Dandenong Community and Learning Centre. I know from experience that being able to speak English is of paramount importance. It is empowering, guards against exploitation, and paves the way for individual choices and ventures. During the pandemic classes were held via zoom, however afterwards classes are now held "face to face".

From 9.30 to 12.30 every Wednesday in Dandenong I help teach English to a group of ladies from Afghanistan. It is an informal, happy group which I thoroughly enjoy. It is an interactive class. We share experiences, knowledge and a love of learning. Not only do the students learn, I also learn so much from them. Each week a different aspect of the English language is covered, keeping it simple to acknowledge that the students have had very little schooling in English. Feedback and their reliable attendance tells us the students really enjoy the class. Further, "face to face" learning is far more enjoyable and instructive than learning via zoom. I would also like to acknowledge Devi Torpy who is my fellow teacher. Her hard work, support and commitment for the class is much appreciated.

Volunteering to teach English is so worthwhile, I couldn't recommend it more highly!

# CHARLOTTE

DCLC LEARNER



My name is Charlotte. I am from Sri Lanka and have been in Australia for 11 years now. I was working as a Secretary at the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation for 33 years.

I am married and have two children, 1 son and 1 daughter, both are married and live in Melbourne. I also have 2 beautiful grandchildren, 1 granddaughter and 1 grandson.

I can speak English but not very fluent, so I decided to join the English class to improve my skills. I started in May this year. I made new friends and developed very good friendships. We are all from different cultures and I am also learning new things from them which I didn't know before.

Since attending English classes from DCLC my English has improved a lot and I feel more confident when having a conversation with my friends. I would like to thank my classmates and my teacher for making it possible. We are like family members who care for each other. I feel very lucky to have them in my life. My teacher is very patient and helps me whenever I need them. I want to continue learning English with DCLC (Dandenong Community and Learning Centre).

# SELVIA

DCLC LEARNER



My name is Selvia. I am from Indonesia and have been in Australia for 3 years now. I used to work in a wedding decoration shop in an admin role.

I couldn't speak English at all when I first came to Australia and since attending classes from DCLC (Dandenong Community and Learning Centre), my English has improved a lot.

I have been attending English classes for the last two years now and really enjoy it as I get to meet a lot of people from different cultures. It is also a fun learning environment and doesn't feel like a 'classroom'. I also completed a Food Handling course and worked at a Bistro. Due to COVID the Bistro closed but I was able to get a part-time job in a factory. The language skills I got from attending these programs has helped me with further study, work and increased my confidence in accessing the internet, so I can plan my future. This has been very important for me as getting a good job and earning a good income helps me but also helps my family overseas as I am also supporting them.

# LEO

DCLC LEARNER



My name is Leo. I always wanted to learn computers but needed some support and encouragement. Alex, a good friend of mine always talked about his on-line computer class and proudly shared and showed me a PowerPoint presentation that he had created. I decided it was time and accepted his invitation to enrol in the computer class for that, I thank you Alex.

Having been stood down from work because of the Pandemic lockdown, eventually each Tuesday (my online computer class) became the most unforgettable day for me. I learned so many things to mention - Word, Excel, Power Point, Internet use, and how to create emails and also to make personal calendars. I was taught the basic skills, elements, functions, etc. and how to apply them to every project assigned to me.

Thank you DCLC for the opportunity given me. A special thank you to Rod for being such a dedicated online teacher; having a very professional attitude dealing with his multicultural students and so patient. This made my Tuesdays an awesome experience.

It seems the lockdowns are over and we are getting back to normal. I am now confident to do any computer task at my place of work, and I will be looking forward to all the Tuesday classes in the future.

# RAY

DCLC LEARNER



My name is Ray. I have been attending the woodworking classes for about 4 years. I have been involved in many creative projects. Most recently I have expanded on my skills and tried woodturning.

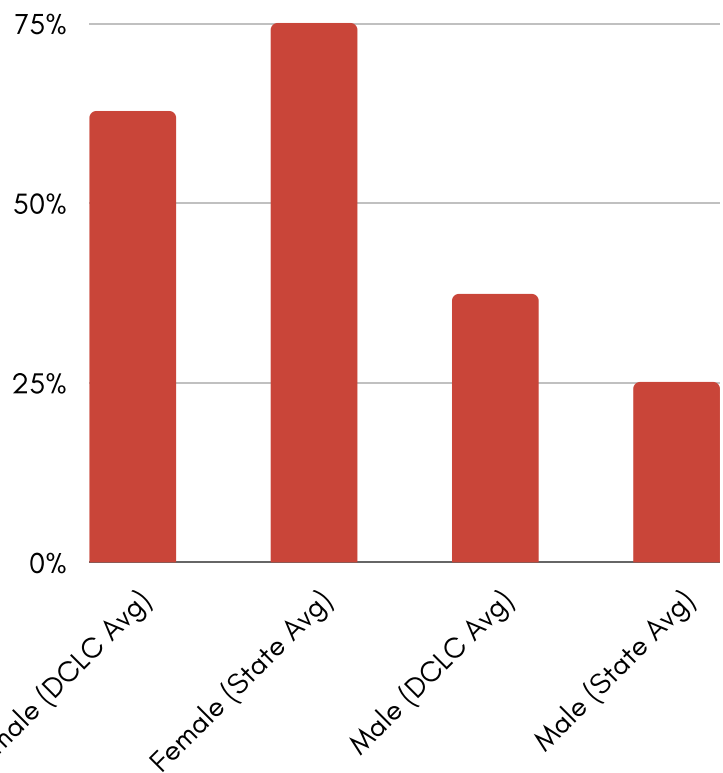
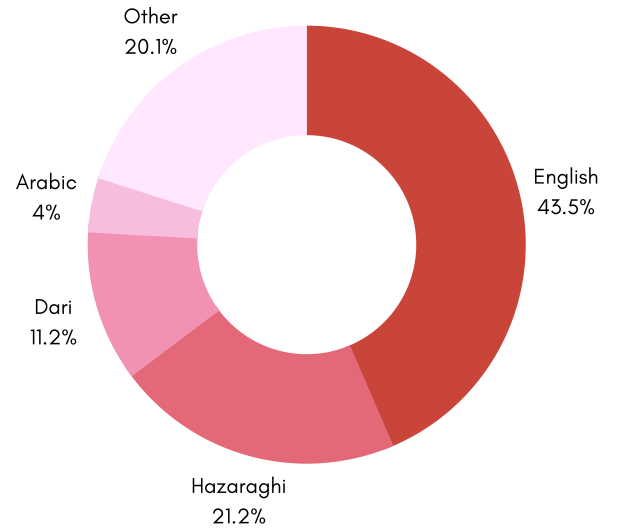
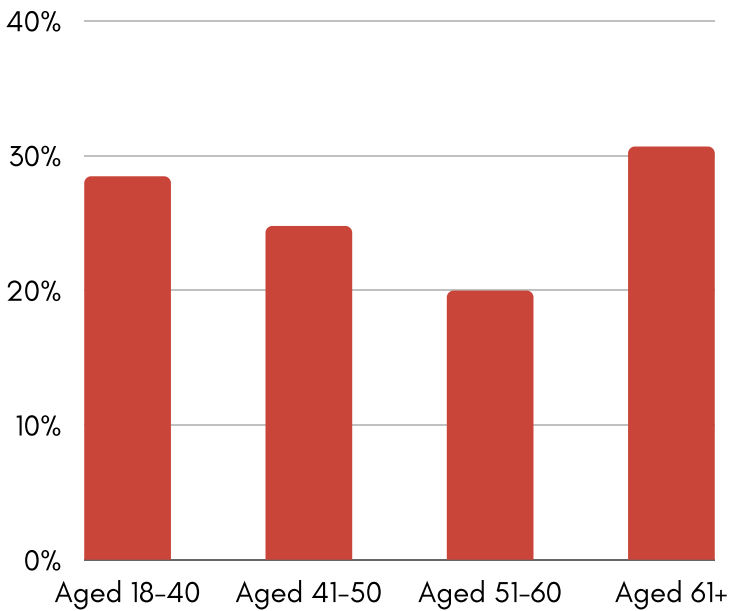
I have used the wood lathes to create wooden pens and also red gum wooden bowls. These are always in high demand from my family members and close relatives!

It was great to be able to come back face to face to the wood working shed.

# PROGRAM DELIVERY

DCLC has offered a range of training programs during 2020-2021. These programs included English, digital literacy, hospitality, woodworking and Introduction to childcare.

Some of the details of these programs are represented in graphs below.



# THE FIGURES

74%

LEARNERS  
BORN  
OVERSEAS

97

INDIVIDUAL  
PROGRAMS  
OFFERED

61%

LEARNERS  
FROM CALD  
BACKGROUND

# TREASURER'S REPORT



“Someone is sitting in the shade today, because someone planted a tree a long time ago.”

- Warren Buffett

Dandenong Community and Learning Centre (DCLC) is currently afforded a shade of stability and financial adequacy during these difficult circumstances in financial years 20 & 21, caused by the contagion.

Its robust performance in the last few years and its invaluable human resource assets and specifically its teaching faculty continue to be the driving force for our stability.

Our Centre has been fortunate to receive Federal and State Government support through different economic support packages to ensure that the centre continues to operate and deliver its services to the Greater Dandenong Community.

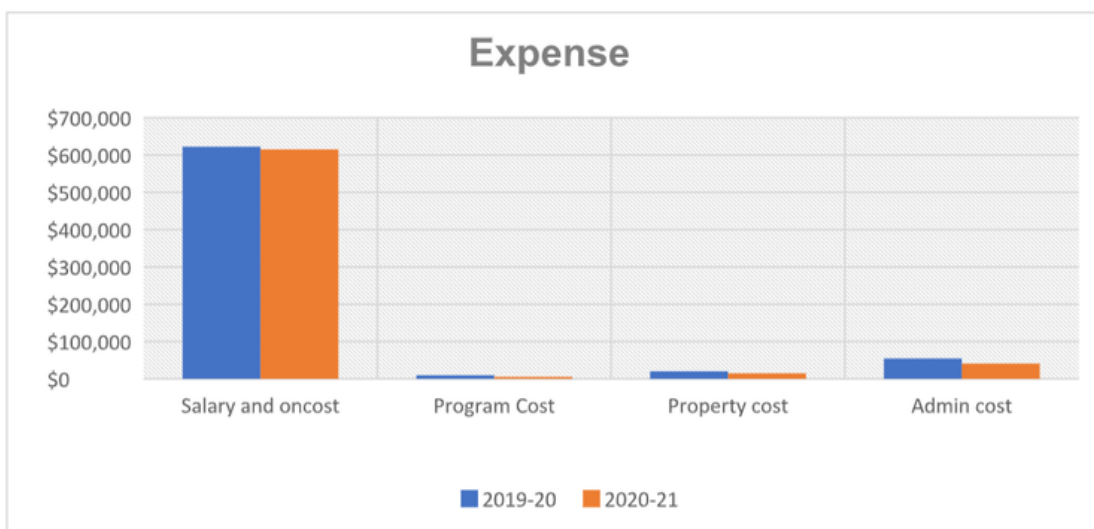
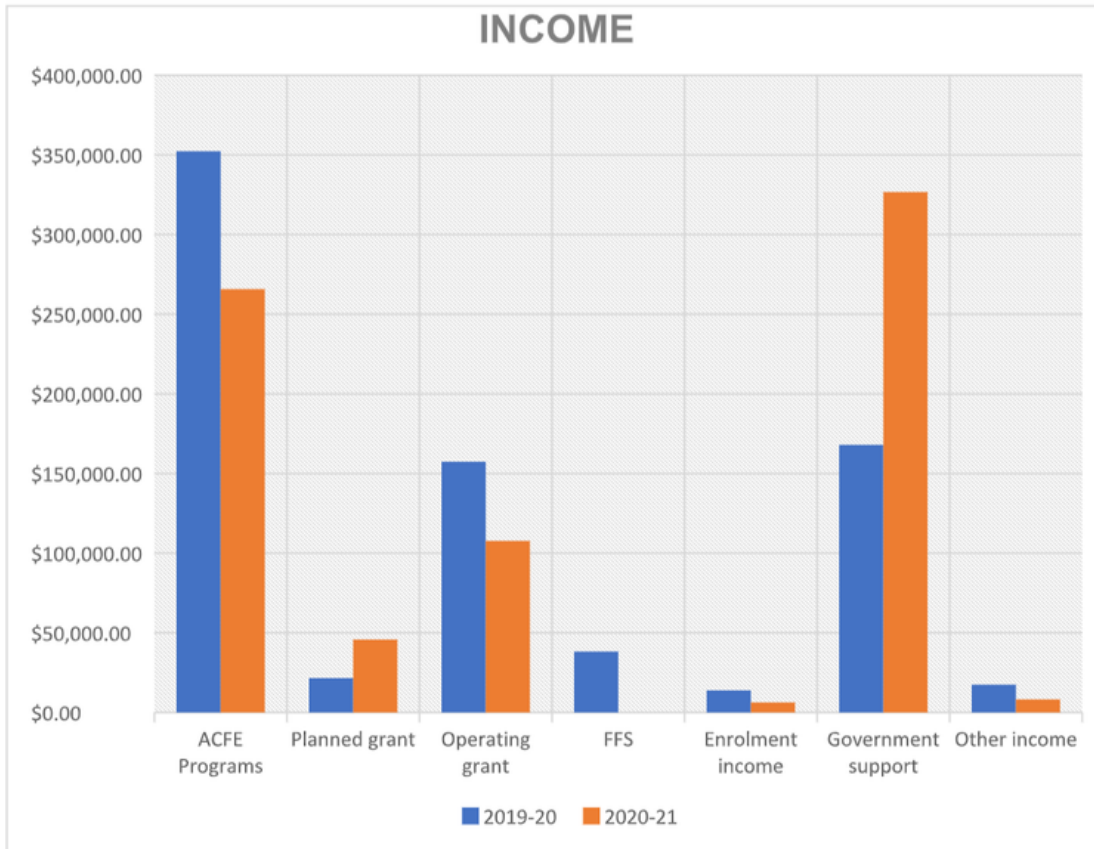
Consequently, DCLC has come in with a higher surplus compared to last year underpinned by the financial support it received from the government and by flexing its operating cost footprint to match the changed operational levels.

## **Income and Expenditure**

The graphs on the following page reflect the different grant/incomes and key operating costs as a comparative with last year. The Centre received an Income of \$ 760,395 and concluded the financial year with a surplus of \$ 83,933 over expenditure underpinned by government support without which we would have incurred a deficit of \$ -242,717.



# TREASURER'S REPORT



# OUR TEAM



## **Board of Governance**

Kathleen West (Chairperson)  
Gerard Francis (Treasurer)  
Suzelle Allet (Secretary)  
Anthony Yeo  
Garry Porter  
Leve Louis

## **Co-ordination Team**

Ali Aziz - Senior Co-ordinator  
Diana Lambros - Education Co-ordinator  
Ian Wilshusen - Community Shed Co-ordinator

## **Finance**

Deepa Rahul Nair - Finance Officer

## **Administration**

Susan Paisley - Administrative Officer

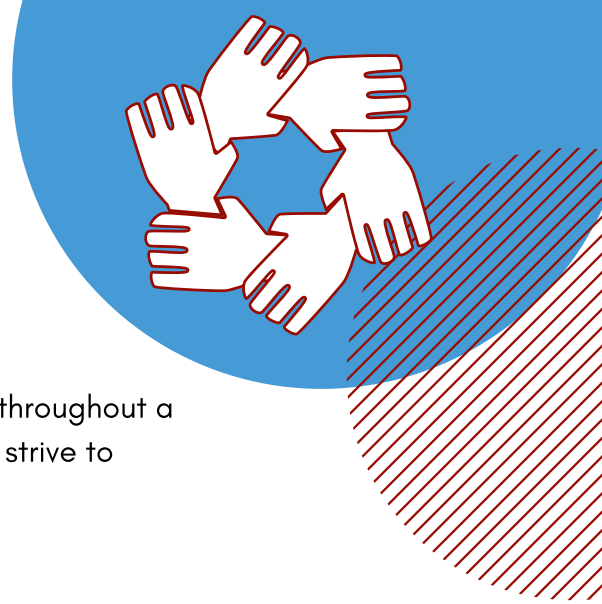
## **Teachers**

Rod Bryson  
Tim Cheng  
Maria Cima  
Sobana Hanif  
Michelle Hood  
Aliya Mossammat  
Rabia Nadir  
Sharon Ramsay  
Sadia Sheraz  
Devi Torpy  
Sebit Tot

## **Volunteers**

Muhammad Arif  
Jason Curtis  
Warunika De Silva  
Robyn Fricsons  
Christian Haider  
Prabhjot Kaur  
Priyanka Raja  
Babbar Singh  
Susan Wilkins

# OUR PARTNERS



We would like to thank our partners for their on-going support throughout a very difficult year, and look forward to working together as we strive to achieve the very best outcomes for our communities.

Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE)  
Anglicare  
Centre for Multicultural Youth  
Chisholm TAFE  
City of Greater Dandenong Council  
Community House Network  
Country Fire Authority (CFA)  
Dandenong  
Dandenong RSL  
Dandenong South Primary School  
Dandenong South Primary School  
Deakin University  
Department Education and Training  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Drug Court: Magistrates' Court of Victoria  
Enjoy Church  
Enliven  
Foodbank  
Interfaith Network of City of Greater  
Jesuran Wellness Centre

Keysborough Learning Centre  
Launch Housing  
Life Without Barriers  
Monash Health  
Neighbourhood House Victoria  
Noble Park Community Centre  
Reaching Out Because We Can  
Rosewood Downs Primary School  
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)  
Servants of 2 Hearts  
Silverton Primary School  
SisterWorks  
Southern Migrant & Refugee Centre  
Springvale Learning and Activities Centre  
Springvale Neighbourhood House  
Stotts College  
The Salvation Army  
Wellsprings for Women  
Wooranna Park Primary School

# OUR VALUES



# DANDENONG COMMUNITY & LEARNING CENTRE



THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Inc No: A0038083E  
34 King Street  
Dandenong, Victoria 3175

---

03 9792 5298  
admin@dandenongclc.org.au  
www.dandenongclc.org.au

---

