



Refugee Communities Association of Australia Inc.
For Refugees | With Refugees | By Refugees

Media Release

RCAA Launches its New South Wales Chapter and Celebrates Refugee Week 2024 at the Parliament House of NSW

On Friday 21 June 2024, the Refugee Communities Association of Australia (RCAA) launched its New South Wales (NSW) Chapter and celebrated Refugee Week 2024 at the Parliament House of NSW in Sydney.

RCAA is membership based, independent refugee-led peak national advocacy organisation. RCAA works closely with people of lived experiences to empower the voice of grassroots refugee communities and people seeking asylum to build their capacity to successfully settle in Australia.

The RCAA NSW Chapter Launch, and the Refugee Week 2024 celebration was opened by Hon Stephen Kampar MP, Minister for Multiculturalism, Minister for Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, and Minister for Sport. It was a time for many Australian with refugee lived experience to reflect on the journeys, struggles and triumphs of those who fled their homes to start new life in unfamiliar lands. Hon Kampar said, “it is a time we must remind ourselves the many qualities refugees possess, which is courage, strength, determination, resilience and perseverance”.

While addressing the launch, the Minister said, “It is not just a milestone but a call to collaborate and call to unity for Australian with lived experience to respond to their issues”. “RCAA has shown itself to be effective voice for refugees and advocate their rights. The NSW Chapter is a welcome addition to our state’s families and groups to support refugees. I look forward to working closely with new chapter for RCAA to benefit refugee communities in our state.” Said Hon Kampar.

Hon Julian Leeser MP, Federal Member for Berowra welcome RCAA to NSW and acknowledged the work of RCAA during COVID-19. He said, “in the depth of COVID-19, RCAA delivered 20 tons of food and supplies to refugee communities and international students, most of which is donated by Vietnamese refugees speaks itself of refugees living with refugees and looking after refugees is what exactly RCAA is about”.

Hon Kampar and Hon Julian acknowledged Nasiba Akram OAM for her exceptional contribution to Australia since arriving as a refugee from Afghanistan in the resettlement of refugees and broader humanitarian work in Australia.”

RCAA acknowledge the invaluable support and guidance provided by Joseph La Posta, CEO Multicultural NSW for the NSW Chapter Launch and look forward to continued collaboration with Multicultural NSW to support refugee communities in NSW. RCAA commends the NSW Government for its historic investment of \$85 million towards building social cohesion and supporting multicultural communities in the 2024-25 NSW Budget.

RCAA Chairperson, Parsu Sharma Lital JP said, “RCAA was established to amplify the voice of refugees with the motto to work “For Refugees, With Refugees, By Refugees”. For too long,



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refugees have been represented by agencies that have limited understanding of refugee experience and needs”. This includes decisions making, program design and delivery,” Said Mr Luitai.

Speaking at the launch, RCAA Deputy Chairperson Nasiba Akram OAM said, “the launch of the RCAA NSW Chapter represents a significant milestone for grassroots initiatives within refugee communities in NSW. It provides a platform for advocacy, support, and community-building, addressing the needs and challenges faced by refugees in the region.”

RCAA works with government agencies at all levels by developing effective consultation and collaboration mechanisms and partners with peak bodies, settlement services, and stakeholders in other states and territories in supporting refugees and people seeking asylum.

To conclude the launch and Refugee Week 2024 celebration, RCAA hosted a dinner at the Thornleigh Community Centre in Thornleigh attended by over 150 community leaders and community members. The launch was attended by RCAA members from NSW, supporters and RCAA board members from other states and territories.

For more information, contact RCAA spokesperson Parsu Sharma Luitai JP on 0412 265 317 or by email: info@rcaoa.org.au