



## FOUNDATION UPDATE - DECEMBER 2023



At the Annual General Meeting, William Bass was elected as our newest Board Member, and I would like to welcome him to the Foundation. Beth Littler was re-elected as Secretary for another term, with Roslyn Black, John Howard, and Victoria Lister continuing on as Board Members.

### Our philanthropy in the community

There have been some great outcomes as a result of our grant activities this year, with four grants totaling \$302,000. The grants have allowed us to help Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) seniors, members of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities who are nearing end of life, People Living with Dementia (PLWD) and their families, and elderly War Widows to live well. On the next page, you can read about how one of our grants is helping to break down barriers to isolation for multicultural seniors. Further stories are on our website [www.easternstarfoundation.org.au](http://www.easternstarfoundation.org.au) and I also encourage you to 'Follow' us on LinkedIn and 'Like' our posts to help spread the good news about our philanthropic work.

We have just closed off applications for this financial year's grant round, and we look forward to assessing the applications and making some announcements in early 2024.

## From the Chair

I am honoured to once again Chair the Board of the Eastern Star Foundation and thank Elizabeth Watt for her service as Chair over the past year. It is wonderful that Elizabeth will continue as Deputy Chair after being nominated at the Annual General Meeting in November this year.

### Board changes

I would like to thank Leigh Kennedy, who finished her term on the Board and decided not to nominate for re-appointment. Leigh has been a loyal and dedicated Member of the Board since the organisation became a philanthropic foundation, and prior to that, she was on the Board of Star Gardens Aged Care Facility since 2010.

### Investment portfolio

Investment markets globally continued to see some turbulence last financial year. However, our investment strategy has a conservative risk profile to ensure our portfolio can withstand market fluctuations over the long term and provide ongoing granting proceeds annually. The balance of our investment portfolio increased to \$11.2 million as at 30 June 2023 and was \$11.3 million as at 30 November 2023. You can see how our investments have been tracking below.

I encourage you to read more about the Eastern Star Foundation's activities in our Annual Report, which is available on our website at [www.easternstarfoundation.org.au](http://www.easternstarfoundation.org.au)

On behalf of the Eastern Star Foundation, I would like to thank the Australian Communities Foundation and our independent consultants for their support this year. I would also like to wish you and your families a safe and happy Christmas and New Year. We look forward to sharing more news next year about how we are empowering those who enhance the quality of life for our ageing communities.

Yours sincerely

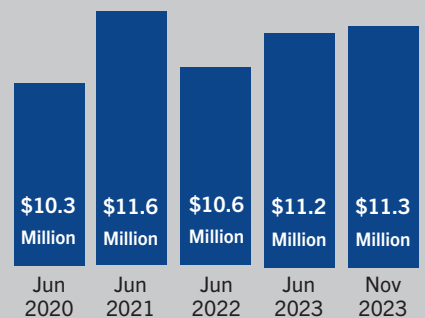
### Jonathan Nantes

Chair, Eastern Star Foundation



Eastern Star Foundation Board Members visited Gunther Village in Gayndah earlier this year to see how the new bus funded from a grant was benefiting residents.

### Value of investment portfolio



**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Eastern Star Foundation**



# Breaking down barriers to isolation for multicultural seniors



Additional seniors who come from diverse multicultural backgrounds are now benefiting from the Multicultural Seniors Social Link Program which was established this year by the World Wellness Group (WWG) thanks to a \$100,000 grant from the Eastern Star Foundation. The program, which is run on Brisbane's Northside where there are fewer community networks and services for multicultural seniors, aims to connect seniors from diverse multicultural backgrounds to each other, to information, resources, and social activities in their local area.

Program Coordinator Yen Ping Chng, who herself is a Mandarin speaker with a professional background in social and community services and aged care, says the group is already building social connections through its co-designed approach. She also says that the group has almost tripled to 30 in just two months after placing in-language advertisements in multicultural media outlets to help attract new members.

"The social group, which meets monthly at the Burnie Brae Centre at Chermside, provides participants with information on healthy ageing topics such as falls prevention, driving cessation, disaster preparedness, mental wellbeing, elder law, and physical activity," states Yen.

"Personally, the group is something I look forward to as it allows people to build connections, make new friends, and fills

a social gap in a senior's life – especially if they are socially isolated."

The program not only provides a social outlet for multicultural seniors, but also tries to break down the barriers to social isolation.

"I really enjoy visiting our group participants in their homes, getting to know them and conducting a holistic wellbeing assessment to better understand their needs," Yen says.

"Many people are isolated, bored, and housebound. Some have chronic mental health concerns that we have responded to by linking people to in-house mental health services".

One of the group's active participants, Kumar, who used to be an academic during his professional life, says that the extent of the challenges that migrant seniors face depends on when they arrive in Australia.

"If they had relocated in their younger days, they may not face as many challenges as those who are only just

relocating with their adult children," said Kumar.

"Having to re-adapt to a new environment and culture is one of the bigger challenges, especially if English is not your first language".

"From a general point of view, racial prejudice, a lack of motivation to go out especially if it is a new environment, and a lack of awareness of social gatherings or events, which can also be caused by a language barrier, can contribute to social isolation for seniors," said Kumar.

Kumar says that more research needs to be done to find the right mix of hosts and enablers to combat social isolation.

"That being said, it is important to have people on the ground to build rapport with our multicultural seniors while learning and understanding their needs – which is exactly what Yen and the program are doing," said Kumar.

"It is important that people feel safe to discuss the problem."

Eastern Star Foundation Chair, Elizabeth Watt, says that the Foundation made the strategic decision several years ago to support charitable initiatives which help to address the issue of social isolation for the aged.

"The Multicultural Seniors Social Link Program aligns well with the Eastern Star Foundation's Vision and Mission which aims to help our aged to participate in their community, have a support network and to have independence," said Elizabeth.

"It is wonderful to hear that the program is already breaking down social barriers for multicultural seniors, and that the Foundation has been able to play a part in that."

**The Eastern Star (Australia) Foundation Ltd trading as Eastern Star Foundation ACN 166 950 321 ABN 36 640 477 592**

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