



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

25 April 2025

Media Release

RCAA Elects New Leadership at 2025 Annual General Meeting

The Refugee Communities Association of Australia (RCAA) convened its Annual General Meeting (AGM) online on 24 April 2025, bringing together members to elect a new Executive Committee (EC). RCAA is an independent, refugee-led peak national advocacy organisation, providing a unified voice for individuals with lived refugee experiences in Australia. Guided by the principle **"For Refugees, With Refugees, By Refugees,"** RCAA represents the authentic voice of grassroots refugee communities across all states and territories, ensuring local needs and issues are met within a coordinated national framework.

RCAA congratulates all newly elected office bearers and EC members on their commitment to serving refugee communities. At the AGM, Parsu Sharma-Luitai JP was elected Chairperson for a second term.

Mr Sharma-Luitai said, "I am deeply humbled and sincerely grateful for the trust placed in me to serve as Chairperson once again alongside the newly elected EC members who bring extensive knowledge and lived experience of grassroots communities. I look forward to working with the new team to amplify the voices of grassroots refugee communities, our supporters and stakeholders."

Reflecting on RCAA's achievements, Mr Sharma-Luitai added, "I am proud of RCAA's leadership in delivering the **'2023 Inaugural RCAA National Conference: Building on the Foundation of Lived Experiences,'** as well as the recognition and granting of DGR Status for RCAA Foundation Ltd by the Australian government."

RCAA would like to thank Ms Catherine Scarth, Chief Executive Officer of AMES Australia, for conducting the AGM as the Returning Officer and for her ongoing support and mentorship since its establishment.

Speaking at the AGM, Ms Iryna Kushnir, a newly arrived refugee in Cairns, shared her challenging journey to Australia from war-torn Ukraine. Ms Kushnir said, "I arrived in Australia without knowing how to read or speak English. Today, I am honoured to work in the local Council, and I am deeply grateful to the Australian government and the people of Australia for welcoming me. Given the opportunity, refugees contribute significantly to Australia's social and economic development, and I am proud to be a small part of this."

Newly elected RCAA Deputy Chair, Ms Dalal Samaan expressed, "I am honoured to be part of the RCAA team, working alongside Chairperson Parsu, who has tirelessly contributed to the organisation's development at all levels. More than ever, we must empower and amplify the voices of refugees with lived experience, who are often left behind, while strengthening their connections with the wider Australian society."



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Mr Sharma-Luitl thanked the previous EC members for their service and their commitment to RCAA. He also acknowledged the contribution of RCAA's State Chapter coordinators for their continued hard work and dedication and looks forward to working with them.

Newly Elected RCAA Executive Committee Members:

1. Mr Parsu Sharma-Luitl JP – Chairperson
2. Ms Dalal Samaan – Deputy Chairperson
3. Mr Elijah Buol OAM – General Secretary
4. Mr Kamal Dahal – Treasurer
5. Mr Altaf Hussein – Executive Member
6. Ms Khin Khin Soe – Executive Member
7. Ms Pampha Bhujel – Executive Member

For further information, please contact RCAA spokesperson, Elijah Buol OAM at 0423 040 875 or ed@rcaoa.org.au.