

MEDIA RELEASE

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KANGAROO FLAT LOCAL ENTERS HISTORY AS VICTORIA'S MULTICULTURAL HONOUR ROLL INDUCTEE

When Mr Tha Wah arrived in Australia after 13 years living in Burmese refugee camps, he didn't think that six years later he'd be receiving an award at a special ceremony at Government House.

Last night, Tha did just that, when he was inducted into the Victorian Multicultural Honour Roll at the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) Multicultural Awards for Excellence.

VMC Chairperson, Mr Chin Tan presented Tha with the award and said he had become a vital part of the Bendigo community.

"In a relatively short time, Tha has achieved what takes others a lifetime - supporting people young and old and raising funds for overseas victims of disasters and remembering the people he left behind," Mr Tan said.

"Tha stood out among the 100 everyday heroes and organisations recognised alongside him today, who all work hard to make Victoria a harmonious, multicultural state that is the envy of the nation.

"Tha began his career in refugee camp health clinics and when he arrived in Australia he obtained qualifications in aged care and began volunteering and working to help others.

"Extending his work to young people, Tha is a full-time Multicultural Education Aide for young Karen school students; supporting them during class, helping parents navigate the school system and sharing his knowledge with teachers.

"He works with community churches for more than four years and is secretary of a new Karen Baptist Fellowship", he said.

Mr Tan said the awards recognise people and organisations who bring together Victorians from more than 200 backgrounds and 135 faiths.

"Through the Multicultural Awards for Excellence, the VMC thanks contributors such as Tha who go above and beyond to make a difference for Victoria's multicultural communities," Mr Tan said.

Mr Tan said the annual awards attracted more than 200 nominations, showing the breadth of work and support for people who make Victoria a great place to live.

“The annual Awards for Excellence confirm the Victorian Government’s commitment to promoting Victoria as a multicultural place, with His Excellency the Honourable Alex Chernov AC QC, Governor of Victoria and the Premier of Victoria, the Honourable Denis Napthine presenting awards,” he said.

Awards were also presented by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship Nicholas Kotsiras, Minister for Local Government Jeanette Powell, Minister for Education Martin Dixon, and Chief Commissioner of Police Ken Lay.

For a complete list of winners in this and previous years, please visit:

www.multicultural.vic.gov.au

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