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SECA CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT 2016/2017

I would like to welcome everyone to SECA's 13th Annual General Meeting. My name is Marius and I have been the acting Chairperson since June 2016. SECA's new centre has been very successful in the past 2 years. It is frequently in use not only by SECA members but by other community groups as the premises is huge and it is situated in the heart of the town.

SECA has been open for 13 years now. It is the only ethnic group in the North West that has been active for this long. I believe that SECA has been successful because of the dedication from the SECA committee members. I would like to thank SECA committee members past and present, SECA members and volunteers for supporting the group. I would also like to thank the community groups that we have worked with throughout the year.

This year SECA has worked with a variety of people from community groups to schools, some of these groups are: Customized, Western Health Trust, Melmount Forum, Strabane Advocate Group, Dennette Interchange Summer Scheme, Shantallow Area Partnership Foundation, Clooney Estate, St Marys PS, Gailschoil, Sion Mills PS, St Catherine's PS, St Marys Cloughcor PS, New Buildings PS, Holy Cross College and also visited Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships such as the Triax Area and Outer West.

This year has been a great success with our 12th Multicultural night with over 400 people attending and the 3 day Diwali festival in which 6 primary schools took part that had over 1000 people overall in attendance. Special thanks to Daljeet Guram for putting all her time and effort to this event without her would not be possible. SECA had many successful events throughout the year.

This year our Youth Group started a Samba band. They began with Music teacher Ronan McKee since after Christmas for 10 weeks, they took part in the 'Let the dance begin' and they also took part in the St Patricks Day parade.

SECA has delivered a number of projects and training programmes in schools and to other community groups such as diversity training and cultural awareness programmes.

I would like to thank all our funders, particularly DfC Ann Mc Murray and Patricia McLaughlin, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, OFMDFM, AIVC and Customized Training Services.

SECA would like to welcome Jennifer Boyle as the new Administrator to the SECA team. Kamini Rao was also made permanent as the Project Coordinator to SECA.

A special mention to Bobby Rao who has retired as Project Coordinator for SECA. Bobby has been with the group for 12 years and has made SECA go from strength to strength. We wish him all the success in his retirement.

Thank you Marius Fritea

SECA Project Coordinator's Annual Report 2016/2017

This year as Project Coordinator has been very challenging but enjoyable as there has been a lot happening. SECA has had so many successful events and projects SECA's youth group is also growing from strength to strength.

SECA presented its Multi Cultural Food Night in St Patricks Hall, Strabane Once again it was a huge success with over 400 people attending and taking part. Before the Multi Cultural Food Night myself, Bozena and Daljeet visited 4 community groups which were Melmount Community Forum, Strabane Advocate Group, Clooney Estate, Shantallow Area partnership and provided them with cooking demonstrations in Polish and Indian foods, Daljeet and Bozena in front of groups of 20 at a time and then everyone got to taste the finished food. On the main night there were food from 6 different countries: Poland, India, Hungary, Romania, Sri Lanka and Brazil. There was various entertainment such as Pop Tap, Irish Dancing, Bollywood dancing, Scottish Bagpipes, Highland Dancing, African Drumming and Polish dancing and a Polish choir.

Our Diwali project was also a huge success with over 1000 people taking part. The event kicked off with 267 children from six local primary schools (St Marys PS, St Marys Clougchor PS, Sion Mills PS, Gailschoil, and New Building PS) coming together in The Alley Theatre Strabane to present Diwali presentations to each other. Daljeet visited each school from the start of September once a week for 6 weeks, teaching them about Indian culture such as dance, art, clothing food, religion and also teaching them about Diwali Festival of Light. Each school performed their interpretation of Diwali through dance, song and acting, when the children finished performing they were all served food provided by Masala. The second day of Diwali took place in SECA offices. This was also well attended with over 50 adults and children attending. Henna art was provided on peoples hands and I facilitated the Rangoli Art workshops. Children created Rangoli art through colouring and using coloured powder. The final day was in the main event held in St Patricks Hall, Strabane. There was a variety of Indian food, music, dancing and

there was an Indian Fashion Show at the end. Over 60 models took part this and over 90 volunteers helped out. Overall this event was very successful and had visits from all local councillors and Mayor Hilary Mc Clintock and Deputy Mayor Jim McKeever. I would like to give special thanks to Daljeet as she provided all costumes and worked tirelessly on this project.

SECA's youth group started Samba lessons in January with Ronan McKee. 23 children met once a week in the SECA offices for an hour. Ronan provided large samba drums and other instruments and taught the children various music skills. The youth group was then asked to lead the opening parade for the Pushkin Trust project 'Let the Dance Begin'. The group also took part in Strabane's St Patricks Day Parade.

SECA provided educational workshops such as Anti Racism and Diversity training in local schools such as St Marys PS and Holy Cross College, we also provided this to community groups and work places such Dennett Interchange and Strabane Health Centre. Other educational workshops were provided to our members such as Suicide Awareness, Food Hygiene, First Aid and Safeguarding Children and Young people.

SECA worked along with Customized Training Services to provide 10 week English Classes, 13 people began this course with 10 people completing it, receiving an Essential Skills Qualification. SECA also provided 10 week Polish classes for young children which was facilitated by a Polish teacher. SECA also held various health nights such as Alcohol Awareness, Mental Health Awareness, and also provided free health checks.

The centre itself has been very busy this year with other groups using the space. It has been used for coffee mornings, dance classes, St Patrick's Day meeting and training projects. SECA held a coffee morning in aid of Foyle Hospice with 90 people attending through out the day and raising £630.00.

SECA has worked with over 20 cases in regards with helping with housing, benefits, visa and passport information. As I am a qualified Welfare Rights Advisor I am able to provide members with benefit information and tell them their entitlements. This year more of the cases are regarding citizenship, this is due to Brexit. Regarding the Brexit issue, SECA teamed up with local MLAs such as Michaela Boyle and Barry Mc Elduff and also the Law Centre NI. Two meetings were held regarding this issue where the MLAs met with the members whom voiced their concerns regarding Brexit. The MLAs took the concerns to the Law Centre NI and decided that a second meeting should be held so the Law Centre can meet the members. Over 30 members attended this meeting so they could seek advice.

SECA branched out to some areas in Derry such as Shantallow, Outerwest and Clooney Estate. SECA also met with the Refugees that are now residing in Derry. I provided presentations to them telling them about the work that SECA does regarding all our projects and also what support we can offer them.

This year our volunteers have been very busy with nearly 600 hours racked up in voluntary work. Without our volunteers none of projects would have been possible so I would like to thank them all for their continued support.

This year I was lucky enough to made permanent as SECAs Project Coördinator. I would like to thank SECA committee for all your help and guidance for the past year, you have all helped me in fulfilling my job role. Special thanks to Daljeet and Bozena for helping out on all the projects. I look forward to the year a head and all the upcoming projects and events that are planned with SECA.

Thank you.

Kamini S Rao

Project Coördinator