

What's in this issue of Settlement News?

Features

Funding news from DIAC	3
A Tenancy Tale from Metro MRC	4
Wrap up from SCOA AGM	5
Congratulations to MRC Southern Tasmania	5
Young people express themselves through photography – Diversitat Geelong	6
Bridging VISA's to be offered for Boat Arrivals	6
Happy 30 th Birthday Pako Festa! – Diversitat Geelong	9
Celebrating Naracoortes Vibrant Multicultural Community – MRCSA	10
What's the latest on the Equal Pay Agreement...?	11
A boost for Social Enterprise and Multiculturalism...FMRC	12
What is Social Enterprise?	13
Interesting legal resources for CALD Communities	14
Conferences coming up	16
National Settlement Policy Network on housing and homelessness	17
Freemantle Multicultural Centre turns 30	18
What you can do when you put your mind to it- A story from Ballarat Community Health in regional Victoria	19
From despair to inspiration- a refugee story from MDA	19
Community Voices forum (Tasmania)	20
Australian Charities and not-for-profit Commission	20

Regular Sections

Message from SCOA Chair – Cedric Manen	1
A message from SCOA Executive Officer - Sky de Jersey	2
News from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship	7
Technology Corner	15

Message from SCOA Chair –

Cedric Manen



It has been a busy and rewarding few months at SCOA, which included our AGM in November in Sydney. I have now been in the role 12 months, and looking back it is great to see what we have achieved together in that time. The AGM provided an opportunity to reflect on this, and also to hear from Professor Andrew Jakubowicz who spoke at the AGM about racism, and the challenges we face as a sector in addressing this important area. The AGM also ratified important constitutional changes. November included the annual FECCA Conference in Adelaide, which provided an opportunity to connect with many members, and in particular present to the conference. My presentation was as part of the panel speaking on 'Australia's Current and Future Multicultural Reality'. I also attended the MYSA youth forum "Speak Out" which was a pre-conference event at FECCA.

Racism has been in my mind lately, strengthened through meeting with Dr Helen Szoke, the recently appointed Race Discrimination Commissioner. I have offered Dr Szoke SCOA's assistance in the important work of combatting racism across the country.

I also participated in three member consultations in the last two months – one in Victoria in early November, one in South Australia which was held just before the FECCA Conference, and one in Hobart in early December. It is good to meet with our members nationally, learning of the challenges facing organisations, and the unique ways they are being addressed.

SCOA welcomes Michael Martinez onto the Executive Committee. Michael is the new Victorian representative, and will work with Rosemary Kelada to bring an important regional perspective to the Executive Committee.

SCOA has given the DIAC significant feedback on the Settlement Grants Program over the past 3 months to inform the most recent changes. We look forward to sharing your experiences as part of our 2012 consultations.

SCOA is pleased to welcome 3 new members to the organisation since our last newsletter, the continual growth in membership is testament to the work we are doing representing your agencies, the settlement sector, across the country.

I wish you all a safe and happy festive season, and look forward to an active and productive 2012!

A message from SCOA Executive Officer - Sky de Jersey

It is a cliché to say it's been a busy period, but November was particularly busy for us at SCOA this year! We held a successful AGM (see more below), attended and presented at the FECCA conference, and continued our round of national consultations in Victoria and Tasmania.



The AGM had a full agenda, with a very interesting talk from Professor Andrew Jakubowicz, drawing on research on attitudes to racism that was undertaken during the Howard government that has just been released through FOI (and extensive lobbying). Changes to the constitution were ratified, and the annual report was tabled ([it can be accessed here](#)).

FECCA was particularly exciting, as I was able to present and consult on the National Settlement Service Standards. We had time to take questions (a rarity at the jam packed conference) and the conversation strengthened the ongoing dialogue about this important issue. We are currently working on collating the results of the survey and consultations to put together a comprehensive report and outline the way forward on this issue in 2012. It is a big complex area, and as I said at FECCA, it is an area that we want to get right.

Paul Power (RCOA) and I also presented at FECCA on Settlement Mobility, following the Settlement Policy Network meeting on this topic.

SCOA continues to focus on engaging with our members, with consultations held in Victoria, South Australia and Hobart in the last two months (reports on these consultations will be available shortly). We also held the Settlement Policy Network meeting in November, focussing on Housing. The first meeting spurred such discussion that we decided to hold a second meeting, one without guest presenters, to allow us to focus on the discussion aspect. While not as many people attended the second meeting (it was scheduled in December!) the discussion was fruitful, and has given us all many ideas to ponder and action in the new year to progress the issue of access to housing for migrant and refugee communities.

I also had the opportunity to attend one day of the HSS/AUSCO conference in November, which was really interesting. It was great to see how refugees and humanitarian entrants are taught about settlement, culture shock and what to expect, both off-shore and on-shore. The AUSCO program has been in place for many years, and the conference strengthened the relationships between trainers and settlement agencies, showing how issues are taught to people throughout their settlement journey.

Attending the DIAC Migration Program consultations highlighted the large numbers of migrants and temporary entrants on work related visas who enter Australia. Although these groups are not always eligible for settlement services, their arrival does impact on the community, and consequently settlement agencies.

Most recently I visited Hobart, facilitating a fascinating workshop "Community Voices" which brought together community members and service providers to discuss five key areas nominated by the community (media, police, employment and education, housing and health). It was a privilege to see the hard work on both sides, and witness the successes of the community in learning how to represent their issues to government and the sector, get their voices heard and work to educate people about their culture and needs. There has been particular success in the area of media, which now runs positive community stories instead of sensationalism journalism. (for more information on this see page 20).

Let me take this opportunity at the close of the year to wish you all a safe and happy festive season, and I look forward to working with you all in 2012. We already have a comprehensive 'list' (I like lists!), and it promises to be another productive year for SCOA (and the sector!).

HOT OFF THE PRESS... DIAC Funding News

Review of Humanitarian Settlement Services Performance Measurements and Contract Management

In May this year, following an independent review by Ernst and Young into the service provision under IHSS by Resolve FM in the Hunter Region (*Provision of Humanitarian Support Services in the Hunter Region*) the Minister for Immigration Chris Bowen appointed Dr David Richmond AO to conduct a review of the HSS program in terms of its adequacy in contract management processes and performance measures.

The report was based on extensive consultation of HSS service providers, departmental officers, community stakeholders, as well as current/former HSS clients over a period of three months in 2011 and was released in December this year. SCOA was able to provide input to this report based on consultations with our members, as was the Refugee Council of Australia and the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council.

Dr Richmond submitted 70 recommendations that could be made to improve the departments overall management and administration of the HSS program, of which all were accepted by the Minister.

Click here to see media release from the ministers' office:

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2011/cb181239.htm>

Click here to view the full version of *Review of Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) Performance Measures and Contract Management*: <http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/settle-in-australia/find-help/hss/review-of-hss-richmond.pdf>

Settlement Grants Program launched by Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs

Minister Chris Bowen and Senator Kate Lundy launched the new SGP round on Thursday 15th December 2011 at Cabramatta Community Centre. An event which was hosted by Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre. The launch was a true community event, with an indigenous smoking ceremony, drumming and song. Minister Bowen spoke about the changes to the SGP program, highlighting the strengths of the program and the work of the settlement sector, while commenting that 'we can always do better'. The changes in the 2012-13 round should contribute to that outcome, acknowledging the need for youth services, and the strengths that ethno-specific agencies bring to their work. The new SGP round also has greater flexibility in terms of timelines, with grants of up to three years, with the option to extend for a further two years. The changes reflect a government move to focus on long term projects to assist in new Australians settle into Australian life.

Applications for SGP funding must be lodged by 5pm AEDST 1st February 2012, with approved funding to commence on 1st July 2012.

For information on applying for SGP funding visit the 2012-2013 application round page through this link: <http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/settlement-grants/applyingforsettlementgrants.htm>

Pictures left: Top: Minister Chris Bowen launches the latest round of SGP applications. Bottom: Uncle Steve performs a traditional smoking ceremony to welcome guests to Cabramatta



A Tenancy Tale from Metro MRC

Without doubt, the ability to rent affordable and safe housing is a central element to effective settlement for new migrants and humanitarian settlers. But housing pressures in most capital cities is making it increasingly difficult for people to find safe and affordable rental housing and more people are seeking help from tenancy services.

The Southern Sydney Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service (SSTAAS) is a specialist project of Metro MRC. Funded by the NSW Office of Fair Trading, the service provides information and advice to tenants in the Southern Sydney catchment (Bankstown, Canterbury, St George and Sutherland LGAs), an area with more than 85,000 tenancies. In the past financial year the service has assisted over 1,600 clients and given around 6,000 advices. SSTAAS operates a telephone information line, supplemented with casework and community education services, and a weekly duty advocacy service at the Hurstville Consumer Trader and Tenancy Tribunal.

In 2010-11, SSTAAS assisted tenants from more than 95 different countries, with mixed English language proficiency which makes it difficult for tenants to understand leases, their rights and obligations. An important role of the service is helping clients to prepare their cases for hearings at the Tribunal. Typically, most of the cases relate to rental arrears, rental bond disputes and compensation sought by landlords. This involves support from the tenancy advocates in engaging interpreters, preparing documentation and explaining the role and process of the Tribunal. The involvement of tenant advocates in such preparation has resulted in cases being better structured and matters often resolved at the first hearing.



Metro MRC Tenancy Team: Xiao Li Cao, Paul Ahearn, Rachael McCormick and Rita Wilkinson

Much of the service's community education efforts target CALD tenants through information sessions to AMES English language classes, ethnic organisations, TAFE colleges and neighbourhood centres; and it engages other services through various committees and interagencies. The new NSW Residential Tenancies Act introduced in January 2011 has placed renewed focus on community education and for tenants to understand the implications of the Act. Some changes have improved tenants' rights, while others make it easier for tenants to be evicted. Key changes relate to the Tribunal's role in matters relating to property damage, period of notice for property inspections when a rental property is being sold, and changes to rents and arrears. Since the introduction of the new Act, SSTAAS has seen a 25 per cent increase in workload and there has been a 30 per cent increase in inquiries relating to termination of tenancies.

The Tenancy Team Leader, Rita Wilkinson, says that the tenancy networks in metropolitan areas are seeing some disturbing trends emerging such as over-crowding of premises and a growing practice of renting premises by the bed which is basically turning dwellings into illegal dormitories. These are unscrupulous practices by some landlords targeting newly arrived migrants and overseas students which are placing people's safety and wellbeing at risk.

Ms Wilkinson says that councils and government need to act on housing issues, not only to protect tenants' rights and personal safety, but to ensure that public health and building standards are maintained to the community's expectations. The community sector including Migrant Resource Centres and tenancy services also need to be part of any discussion on housing and rental issues, and there is a desperate need for local planning and coordination on these matters to address rental housing before things reach crisis point.

While housing and rents are generally more affordable in regional areas, new arrivals tend to look at Sydney as a place where they can be connected to their own communities, family and friends. There are many benefits from living in regional centres, however agencies need to ensure that people fully understand the pros and cons such as the availability and access to support services, employment, training and transport. The cost of car ownership can sometimes negate the savings of cheaper housing.

Article courtesy of Lou Bacchiella from Metro Migrant Resource Centre, Sydney

Wrap up from SCOA AGM

Monday 21st November saw people travel from all across Australia to attend the Settlement Council's 2011 Annual General Meeting. Held at the historic Redfern Town Hall, attendees were treated to an insightful and thought provoking presentation from Professor Andrew Jakubowicz on a report which was commissioned under the Howard government on racism in Australia. The report has not been made public until today. SCOA would like to thank Professor Jakubowicz for his presentation and look forward to the results of your report.

In other business, after some interesting discussion, attendees voted for all but one of the proposed changes to the SCOA Constitution.

SCOA Chair Cedric Manen launched the 2010/2011 Annual Report and also a new printed version of the SCOA 2011-2014 Strategic Plan. PDF versions of both of these documents are available on the SCOA website www.scoa.org.au. If you would like a printed copy, please contact Laura Anderson on (02) 8065 5225 or mso@scoa.org.au.

In other exciting news, Michael Martinez was announced as the new Victorian Representative on the Executive Committee. Welcome Michael!



Above: Attendees at SCOA AGM 2011. Below: Professor Andrew Jakubowicz presents on recently obtained report on racism in Australia



Congratulations to MRC Southern Tasmania on their recent win of BEST COMMUNITY GROUP at the Hobart Myer Christmas Pageant!! Not only did Virginia Bashford and her settlements team coordinate almost 150 different organisations (from small businesses, to schools and everything in between) to showcase their national costumes to the rest of the community, but they managed to impress the crowd with their own team in the march.

Well done team!

Young people express themselves through photography – Diversitat Geelong

During the September school holidays a number of children were given the opportunity to take part in a photography workshop run by a Proyecto Infancia, a non for profit organisation who runs workshops for children around the world. The project came about when a Diversitat volunteer Yineth Moreno suggested that she could run this workshop over the school holidays with the children.

The idea behind Proyecto Infancia was born in Chile in 2006, when Spanish photographer José Mogrol in cooperation with the Chilean Nordic Institute of children's literature, organized an initial photography workshop for children of vulnerable districts of Valparaiso, Chile. The success of this first workshop led to the materialization of further and regular workshops around Chile and later on, the idea was taken to other countries of Latin America such as Colombia, Perú, Brazil and México. Nowadays the project has been extended to other geographical locations such as Kosovo and Algeria and now Geelong!

The two day program at Diversitat was made possible by a local photographer who kindly donated the resources for the 10-12 children aged between 7-12 years of age to be able to complete the program. The aim was for the children to capture images of their local environment, and then come back to create collages of the printed images. As you can see from the picture above, there were many happy participants at the end of the two day workshop. If you would like more information please contact Diversitat on 03 5225 5512



Left: participants show off their finished collages.

Bridging Visas to be offered for Boat Arrivals

A recent announcement by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship Chris Bowen on a change to the management of asylum seeker cases has been well received by the sector. The decision that following initial health, security and identity checks, asylum seekers who have been deemed to pose no risk will be considered for release from mandatory detention, and be granted a bridging visa until such a time that their case is processed, appears to be the first step toward ending the ordeal of mandatory detention for those seeking asylum by boat in Australia.

The first group of 27 to be granted bridging visas under this new policy were all single men from a number of different detention facilities across Australia who had experienced long term stays in detention. Whilst waiting for their asylum claims to be processed, these visa holders will be able to access health services and have the right to work in order to support themselves.

It has been determined that some of these bridging visa holders may be eligible for DIAC funded programs such as the Asylum Seeker Assistance Scheme and the Community Assistance Support Program on case by case basis, but it is as yet unclear what other assistance they will be entitled to.

The impact that this change will have on settlement service providers remains to be seen. With the proposed amount of asylum seekers released under this scheme being up to 100 per month, we are sure many questions will be raised on the process of providing assistance for these individuals as they create their new lives in Australia.

As more information is available we will be sure to pass it along to all our members.

News from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship

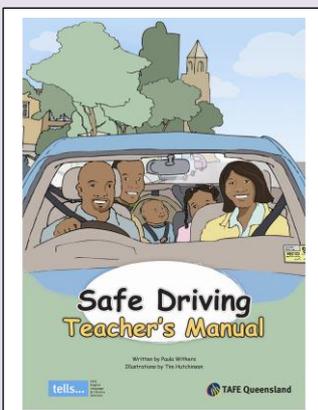
News from AMEP - Queensland Multicultural Awards finalist

On 10 November 2011, the Safe Driving initiative was selected as a finalist in the Queensland Multicultural Awards Ceremony.

The production of the Safe Driving resource is a collaboration of TAFE Queensland English Language and Literacy Services, provider of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, and the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads.

This initiative ensures that all newly arrived Queenslanders attending AMEP classes have access to safe driving education. AMEP students in Queensland will learn key messages about safe driving as identified by the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads. These include obtaining a driver's license, the use of child restraints, the rules around the use of alcohol and driving, speed limits and driver fatigue. The Safe Driving resource combines a student reader and comprehensive teaching resources.

For more information on the publication of the Safe Driving resource please contact Helen Murphy on (07) 3244 5457. If you are interested in purchasing the Safe Driving resource you should contact Ning Lun CING on (07) 3244 5572.



DIAC Settlement Information Support

As you may be aware, information on settler arrivals is available from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's website.

The Settlement Reporting Facility (SRF) is a web-based tool used to create reports through a structured interface (Link: <http://www.immi.gov.au/settlement/>). It is designed to be user-friendly, making reports on migrant settlers easily accessible to settlement and mainstream services providers, academics and others. The data the SRF uses comes from the Settlement Database (SBD), which is a snapshot of migrant settler information from the beginning of each month. The SBD is a collection of various DIAC systems data and information from other agencies on migrant settler details.

The Settlement Information Support Team in DIAC supports this work and provides an ad hoc information service for data that is not readily accessible through the SRF.

Here are some current initiatives you may be interested in.

It is important that mechanisms are in place to ensure that users such as yourself can easily use the SRF and appropriately understand and use the information. The online training package is being redeveloped, there will be a new FAQ document and an extended glossary. These are all tools to facilitate your search for information. It allows us to create a vocabulary we can use to discuss reporting issues with you, ensuring better understanding for all.

The upcoming development of a suite of regular reports will save you time and effort. Initial development of these reports will be based on analysis of current requests to see what types of datasets are commonly requested. We expect that new analysis documents on trends or changes will also be well received. A reduced number of simple reports will enable us to focus on the more complex data requests and provide a more tailored service.

Often we are asked to provide very specific data on migrant settlers in small areas. The provision of this information entails careful management in light of Government requirements to maintain the privacy of clients and prevent potential identification. We are currently developing formal data exchange agreements.

We are continually in the process of ensuring that data collection helps improve the data (and therefore reports) that is available. For example, flagging deceased clients and identifying those who have permanently migrated overseas, and increasing the information store to include such things as country of citizenship prior to acquiring Australian citizenship.



DIAC News continued...

DIAC supports Australia's Local Heroes

What do a Somali community leader, brave tugboat driver and tetraplegic pastoralist researcher all have in common? They are among eight inspirational Australians who were recently announced as their state or territory's "Local Hero" in the Australian of the Year Awards.

The Local Hero award, sponsored by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, acknowledges people who are dedicated to making our communities a better place. They exemplify what being a good Australian citizen is all about. The state and territory Local Hero Award recipients will meet in Canberra on 25 January 2012 when the Prime Minister will announce the national award winners of the:

- Australian of the Year
- Australia's Local Hero
- Senior Australian of the Year and
- Young Australian of the Year.

Read more about your state or territory's inspirational finalists for the Australian of the Year Awards at:

www.australianoftheyear.org.au

You are also encouraged to nominate an Australian citizen who makes you proud. Nominations for the 2013 Awards are now open and may be submitted via the website.

Contact: Ludmila Witer, Director, Citizenship Ceremonies and Community Engagement Section, Department of Immigration and Citizenship Ph: 02 6198 7004 Email: ludmila.witer@immi.gov.au

National Awards for local Government

The National Awards for Local Government recognise, reward and promote the innovative work of local governments across Australia.

The Awards are run by the Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government. Australian Government Departments sponsor different categories of Awards.

<http://www.regional.gov.au/local/awards/index.aspx>

In 2012, DIAC is sponsoring a *Strength in Diversity Award*. This Award recognises local initiatives that promote the benefits of and/or respond to challenges arising from migrant settlement and Australia's cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

The awards open on 1 December 2011. Entries close on 17 February 2012.

This category is open to all councils – large, small, capital city and non-capital city. Providers who are aware of innovative and good practices by local government should talk to their local council members or staff about entering. For more information, refer the *Strength in Diversity* Fact Sheet:

http://www.regional.gov.au/local/awards/files/Strength_2012.pdf

New referral form for CCS

The Complex Case Support (CCS) program has a new and improved referral form (Form 1292). SCOA members, community organisations, government agencies and individuals can now use the new form to refer clients to CCS.

The CCS program delivers specialised and intensive case management services to humanitarian entrants with complex or intense needs. It provides short term targeted support to clients whose needs extend beyond the scope of other settlement services. A person is eligible for services for up to five years after their arrival in Australia.

As well as the capital cities, CCS provides services in regional and rural locations including Geelong, Shepparton, Coffs Harbour, Newcastle, Wagga Wagga, Toowoomba, Townsville and Launceston.

The new form and more information about CCS is available on the Department's website: <http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/settlement-programs/ccs.htm>. You can also call a CCS contract manager on 1300 855 669 (free call) for advice on making a referral.

DIAC News Continued...**Inaugural AUSCO/HSS cultural orientation conference**

The Humanitarian and Refugee Support Branches jointly held the inaugural AUSCO/HSS conference in Canberra on 14-16 November 2011. This conference brought together offshore and onshore cultural orientation trainers with the aim of improving the linkages between cultural orientation programs and building a stronger continuum in service provision to clients.

The AUSCO program and its many talented trainers are recognised as leading the way internationally in the field of cultural orientation. Australia's onshore settlement services are also seen as world leading and the establishment of a structured orientation service in the new HSS program builds on these successes.

The conference was a unique opportunity for service providers to showcase their approaches to cultural orientation, workshop issues and discuss joint strategies. Perhaps most importantly, it was an opportunity to foster close relationships between onshore and offshore cultural orientation trainers.

On the evening of 15 November, participants joined with Senator Kate Lundy and DIAC Secretary Andrew Metcalfe at Old Parliament House to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the International Organization for Migration and to launch the onshore orientation program. Senator Lundy also used her speech to launch a public information booklet on the Onshore Orientation Program, which will be distributed in coming weeks.

Articles courtesy of Karina Sommers, Kylie Mahony and Jonathon Treloar from DIAC

Happy 30th Birthday Pako Festa! – Diversitat Geelong

Pako Festa, now in its thirtieth year, is Geelong's much loved, award-winning, free, annual community arts festival - the biggest of its kind in Australia. Managed by Diversitat and held on the last weekend of February in Pakington Street, Geelong West, it incorporates an extravagant street parade featuring around ninety floats and hundreds of performers representing forty-five affiliated ethnic communities and around sixty other community groups and organisations. The street is lined with stalls selling traditional foods and arts and crafts, and nine separate stages in the precinct offer performances of music and dance as well as interactive workshops and exhibitions. Pako Festa has become Victoria's premier multicultural event, and offers a unique opportunity for those 100,000-plus participants to socialise and celebrate in an arena of ethnic diversity and harmony, as well as gaining an appreciation of the great variety of artistic and cultural expression within Geelong's multicultural community

As part of Pako Festa's thirtieth birthday celebrations we are planning a number of "homages" to its history. 30 Carmen Mirandas will lead the parade down 'Pako' creating colour and movement representing each of the years the great procession has transpired. Leading the way will be Jessica Costa, an extremely talented local singer and arts student who stood out at the 2011 event.

Art on Parade, a sculptural/mechanical mobile installation using recycled materials from previous Festivals and which would be a "float" leading the parade and afterwards would be dismantled into discrete "sculptures" and be transformed into a "gateway" to the festival at the end of Pakington Street, and later still put on display in various local venues for the rest of the year.

The Pako Festa Street Parade starts at 11am, embodies Colour, Culture & Celebration and is one of the most important events at Pako Festa! Encapsulating the very essence of our nation – diversity, dynamism and colourfulness, and above all else cooperation, community inter-connectedness, creativity and the promotion of our humanity – Pako Festa sends a strong message in these troubled times in which we live: our preparedness to interact with, work with and treat each other with dignity and respect demolishes the walls of division and conflicts; bringing everyone together in a spirit of understanding, acceptance and celebration of life itself.

Picture left: Carmen Miranda and Cr John Mitchell, the Mayor of the City of Greater Geelong in the 2011 parade



Celebrating Naracoorte's Vibrant Multicultural Community – MRCSA

This is why the Rotary Club of Naracoorte's Satellite group recently organised a free fun-filled event to bring locals of all cultural backgrounds together in a celebration of the town's diversity...

Abdul Hakimi, Naracoorte resident of over seven years and now a Rotarian himself, said it was important to share stories like his with other locals. "I had no idea where I was going when I escaped Afghanistan to Pakistan then went to a boat in Indonesia, from there we went to Australia," he said. Abdul recognised his journey was one which could have lost him his life.

But danger in Indonesia and Pakistan and the uncertainty of whether their visa applications would ever be approved pushed him to take the risky trip to Australia. "It's win or lose, we put our life at risk to go on a boat. If we lose we die if we win we get to Australia.

Abdul spent time in Adelaide and NSW before he started working in the south east in 2003.

He said many Afghani refugees chose Naracoorte as home because it was a central location for work and a quiet and peaceful place to live. "Here there are easy, good jobs and many adult refugees, they're not educated persons they are looking for simple farm work". Abdul estimates there are over 200 Afghans, including families with children and single people, living in the area, but this number can grow to over 400 in summer when there is more work.

Ghulab his wife and Mohammed his brother joined Abdul in Naracoorte, almost seven years after his arrival in Australia. Mohammed graduated from Naracoorte High School last year and will attend university, while Ghulab spends some time taking care of the children of new arrivals while they attend English classes at Naracoorte's TAFESA campus.



Determined to make a better life for his family, Abdul worked hard to save and began a contracting business for farm work in 2008. Abdul credits his good grasp on English to making friends in the community. "When I came to Australia I had no English, but then I worked with people and picked up many words. I worked hard to meet people and now I have lots of Australian friends as well as my community friends."

He is now a part time employee of the Migrant Resource Centre of SA, helping newly arrived Afghani refugees to settle in the area.

Abdul is happy to help because he remembers what it was like to be

a new refugee. "I'm really quite happy with the life I have now. First thing I hope my wife and brother are happy if they are happy then I am happy. That's the main thing."

About 160 community members and visiting guests attended the official opening of the Naracoorte Migrant Resource Centre at Naracoorte TAFE SA campus last September.

This event coincided with the Eid al-Fitr celebrations, a three day festival Muslims around the world enjoy at the end of Ramadan - the Islamic month of fasting - and with the official launch of the Naracoorte Afghan Community Association. Young members of the Afghan community Yeseen Hakimi and Hadi Mohammed were masters of ceremonies for the celebrations. Following the ceremony, guests enjoyed a selection of Afghan cuisine prepared by local community members.

Abdul Hakimi has been joined by Julie Burdett and both work as casual settlement officers at the centre to help new arrivals with general settlement and most importantly help them develop their understanding of the broader community and services available in the broader community.

The establishment of the MRC in Naracoorte has been two years in the making and is a response to the growing number of migrants choosing Naracoorte as their home. The centre does not provide settlement services only, but is also a hub for social gatherings, community events and English language classes.

(Article continued next page)



“Having a centre like this is very important for migrants to meet, have their activities, to have their English classes and also for the workers to have an office”

Mrs Erika Vickery Mayor of the Naracoorte Lucindale Council welcomed the celebration as another way to get to know Naracoorte’s new residents. “Events like this where we share our festivals and special occasions gives us a greater understanding of what is culturally important to us”, Mrs Vickery said to the crowd. “If you can share your culture with us and in turn we share ours with you, then we will have a greater understanding and appreciation of each other”.

Like many local families, Mrs Vickery said her family came to Naracoorte as migrants over 50 years ago. “We came to Australia for a better life and we were fortunate enough to come to Australia and the Naracoorte community made us very, very welcome. We made a very good life here in Naracoorte and I hope you can do the exact same thing as my family did.”

There’s still a lot of work to be done but I know you are all here to contribute to the economic and social wealth of this county,” she said. **Article courtesy of MRCSA**



What’s the latest on the Equal Pay Agreement...?

“You are among the hardest working Australians. You are mostly women. And it is time you got equal pay.”

These were the opening lines of an address Prime Minister Julia Gillard gave to Social and Community Sector Workers on the 10th November this year. The PM made the statement which most workers in the sector are already well aware of, that the average full time wage in the community sector is over \$10,000 below the average in other sectors, and it was time wages were brought up to parity with the rest of Australian workers.

“Today, I can announce that the Australian Government will join with the Australian Services Union to make a joint submission to Fair Work Australia in the Social and Community Sector equal remuneration case.” Gillard told the audience.

What is in the case put forward to Fair Work Australia:

- The proposed fair pay increase will begin on 1st December 2012 and be gradually phased in over six years
- The federal government proposes to contribute up to \$2billion to support the wage increases

The PM urged the state and territory governments to assist the affected organisations financially, and for those involved to lobby their state and territory governments to be involved.

“the phased introduction recognises the complex funding arrangements in the sector, which involve local, state and territory governments, Not for Profit organisations, commercial providers and the Commonwealth. This will allow community sector organisations delivering Commonwealth-funded programs to pay the new rates, without reducing services to the community. The Government will also increase funding under Commonwealth-State agreements that cover social and community sector employees.”

The next steps: “This historic joint submission will now go before Fair Work Australia’s Full Bench. The Government and unions will ask the Full Bench to confirm that the agreement meets the legislative requirements.”

For a full transcript of Prime Minister Gillard’s speech see <http://www.asumembers.org.au/equalpay/1651-qfair-pay-equal-payq-todays-speech-by-julia-gillard>

A boost for Social Enterprise and Multiculturalism...

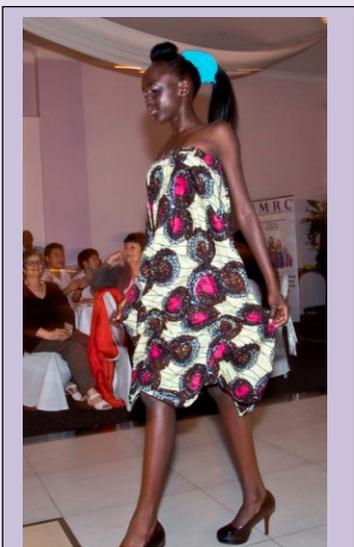
FMRC launches Multicultural Enterprises Australia (ME)

A smoking ceremony...6-inch heels on 6-foot swanky models...rappers, rockers and hip hop dancers...political luminaries...guests dressed to the nines... and an emcee fit for the Emmy's. A rock concert, you may say? Or a movie premiere? Or might it be the grand finalé of the X Factor or Australia's Got Talent? Wrong on all counts! In fact, the dynamic Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre (FMRC) was launching its pioneering and innovative new social enterprise program: Multicultural Enterprises Australia (ME) on this unforgettable Friday night, the 18th of November, 2011.



Above: Uncle Steve performing his smoking ceremony

Multicultural Enterprises Australia certainly empowers clients, as demonstrated in the simultaneous launch of one of its premiere projects—AFRICA KONNECT (AK). AK seeks to create an African-Australian identity by hosting an annual hair, make-up and fashion show which will showcase the African community's best and brightest.



Left and on page to right: Model showcases Africa Konnect fashion, hair and make up.

The highlight of the evening was a “sneak peek” of Africa Konnect’s annual hair, make-up and fashion show. The three enterprising founders of this social enterprise, namely, Gladys, Sindy and Wanyika, presented the creations of five of its aspiring and talented designers—each designer with her own compliment of hair stylists and make-up artists. The models “strutted their stuff” as only hi-octane African models can, and wowed the crowd.



Gracing the event were political luminaries headed by Sen. Kate Lundy, Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, who was flanked by Karen Van Raak of NSW DIAC. Sam Yousef, Fairfield City Councillor, stood in for Mayor Nick Lalich. Representatives from Parramatta and Liverpool City Councils joined in the celebrations—showing how far and wide this program has reached and how many alliances were forged in the making. Neeta City Centre Manager, Margaret Martin and John Crawford, Chair of Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Sydney, were also on hand for the momentous launch. The indomitable aboriginal elder, Uncle Steve, who performed a “smoking ceremony” and did a “welcome to country” as a distinguished guest, was a big hit with everyone.

Great entertainment was provided by an incredible line-up of multicultural artists such as Evan Yako and Kell Taylor of Real Rhythm Studio (another ME-assisted venture), Rodney Disciple, a recording gospel singer nominated for this year's Gospel Singer of the Year Award, and the amazing upcoming singer Vivienne. Not to be outdone, the evening's multi-talented emcee, Effie, kept everyone in stitches.

Bigger and greater things are expected from Multicultural Enterprises Australia (ME) and its social enterprise, Africa Konnect (AK). Watch out for their activities in 2012! Better yet, join the bandwagon and get your own projects developed and launched by ME. Email Suji Upasena on seep@fmrc.net for more information or with a brief outline of your project and contact details if you require support.



Cutting the Cake (L-R): Uncle Steve, Justine (African Women's Cleaning Project), Sindy (Africa Konnect), Sen. Kate Lundy, Gladys (Africa Konnect) and Ricci Bartels (FMRC)

ME's tagline captures its purpose succinctly: "building enterprises...serving communities." Its logo symbolizes the inclusion of all Australians in the definition of 'Multicultural', from the first Australians to the newest Australians.



Social Enterprise...What is it?

It is an area that has been gaining social interest over the past ten years (though it has existed for a lot longer than this!), and yet there is still a lot of ambiguity over what constitutes a social enterprise organisation.

According to Finding Australia's Social Enterprise Sector (<http://www.socialtraders.com.au/>) social enterprise organisations are those that fit the following criteria:

- Are led by an economic, social, cultural, or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit;
- Trade to fulfil their mission;
- Derive a substantial portion of their income from trade; and
- Reinvest the majority of their profit/surplus in the fulfilment of their mission.

<http://www.socialtraders.com.au/finding-australias-social-enterprise-sector-fases>

There are several organisations which have begun operations in the last few years to support this growing industry. Three worthy of mention here are: Social Traders – A force for Social Enterprises <http://www.socialtraders.com.au/>

A not for profit organisation established to support and encourage commercially viable social enterprises throughout Australia

School for Social Entrepreneurs - <http://www.sse.org.au/>

SSE runs practical "Learn by doing" programs in Sydney and Melbourne for people passionate about social change to give them the skills to develop their own social enterprise ideas.

VibeWire - <http://vibewire.org/> is another non profit organisation which assists young people in Sydney to shape their world through media, the arts, and entrepreneurial opportunities through the provision of online support, practical work spaces and mentorship programs.

These are only a small selection of organisations helping to support the current and next wave of social entrepreneurs!

For more information check their websites about or visit:

<http://www.socialventures.com.au/>

<http://www.asix.org.au/> (Australian Social Innovators Exchange)



TAKE THE FINAL SETTLEMENT SURVEY FOR 2011!!!

Following on from various consultations, discussions and research conducted by SCOA interns, we are happy to announce the latest SCOA survey is focusing on housing issues and solutions for refugee and migrant communities in Australia.

Please follow this link to complete the survey. Your time is much appreciated.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SCOAhousing>



Interesting legal resources for CALD Communities

Legal Aid “Visa Cancellation Kit” and “What’s the Law”

“If you have received a letter from the Department of Immigration telling you that your visa might be cancelled, then this kit is for you” These are the words emblazoned on the front cover of a recent resource launched by Legal Aid New South Wales. The **Visa Cancellation kit** is designed as a general guide to anyone who is being faced with the possibility of their visa being cancelled, or where their visa has already been cancelled due to a criminal record. Written in large, easy to read text, the step by step guide takes readers through the process and what to expect including everything from what constitutes a serious crime, to what your rights and obligations are when it comes to immigration detention. Answering many commonly asked questions, the Visa Cancellation kit is a good start for any individual who is facing their visa being cancelled. It is strongly noted that the resource is intended as a guide only, and proper legal advice should be sought for individual cases.

The kit can be viewed online at www.legalaidnsw.gov.au.

The second publication “**What’s the Law? – Australian Law for new migrants**” has been generated as an educational tool for migrants from a NESB to provide basic information on common legal issues faced in Australia. Topics in this kit include: police, renting, Centrelink, child protection, family law and family violence. The guide is aimed at adult ESL students in the Certificate of Spoken and Written English level 2 though is useful for all learners of English. The package can be used in its entirety, or individual sections can be taken as stand-alone lessons. The pack includes a DVD and written material suitable to be adapted to any classroom environment. Work sheets are based on stories told on the DVD, used to educate new arrivals in everything from the who is who in the Australian legal system, to buying a car to what to do if you have a car accident.

You can order a copy of this kit by calling Legal Aid NSW on (02) 9219 5028 or visiting www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/pubsonline.

For more information on the project go to www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/education.

Fair Work Ombudsman “Working in Australia – What you need to know”

Knowing about Australia’s workplace laws is especially important for people of non-English speaking background, where these laws may be different in their home country.

The national Fair Work system covers the majority of workplaces in Australia. It includes laws about the pay and conditions workers are entitled to receive, and how people should expect to be treated at work. The Fair Work system also provides a safety net of ten basic minimum entitlements, called the National Employment Standards (NES), for all workers. The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) is an independent statutory authority with legislative responsibility to educate people working in Australia about their workplace rights and obligations.

To help people better understand the Fair Work system the FWO has a range of in-language materials. These also inform people of non-English speaking background about the FWO, and the tools and resources which are available on the website www.fairwork.gov.au

The new brochure **Working in Australia – What you need to know** details some basic facts about the Fair Work system and how the FWO can help. This brochure has been translated in Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, Indonesian, Khmer, Korean, Serbian, Spanish, Thai, Turkish and Vietnamese. They are available for downloading from the website above.

They have also developed a short video, presented in 14 languages which explain the key points of the Fair Work system. It is available for viewing on their YouTube channel www.youtube.com/fairworkgovau.

If you would like copies of the brochure, poster or a DVD compilation of our You Tube videos please email communications@fwo.gov.au or visit www.fairwork.gov.au



SBS – Your Language App

Listen anywhere anytime

Firstly -What is an app?? In layman's terms, an 'app' (short for application) is any web based program or application that can be accessed on one's computer or smart phone. It has become the quick way to access information, entertain yourself on a long train journey, or entertain your kids whilst doing the shopping. SBS has tapped into this popular phenomenon and made news and entertainment just that much more accessible for those of a NESB. The App is designed for iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch so you can always have access to your favourite SBS radio station (SBS Radio One, SBS Radio Two, SBS PopAsia, and SBSChill). The app is available in 60 different languages, with the programs being streamed 24/7 and includes interactive access to interviews, podcasts and articles. No longer will you miss the radio program in your language, as every program is available on demand up to 7 days after it has been broadcast or else you are able to set alerts to remind you when your favourite program is coming up.

The application is available free from the app store on your device. For more information you can visit:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/radio/article/763/SBS-Your-Language-app>

My Language website

Resources for libraries and Community Organisations

In 2005, seven state and Territory libraries created a portal for people of a cultural and linguistically diverse background to be able to search and find information on the net in over 65 different languages. A new website has recently been launched with the aim of being a hub for culturally diverse communities to share information, resources and programs.

Libraries and communities are able to upload case studies of programs which are being run successfully in their community as an inspiration for others to try out. There are tools and resources for communities to develop their own programs, updated news and ideas from around the country and profiles of communities. The profiles section has links to various cultural communities around the country for users to access information and support.

The Translated Information has fact sheets in over 35 different languages on many topics covered under the broad headings of Health, Legal, Education, Settlement and Libraries.

A library locator will not only show a reader where their local library is located, but also which libraries around Australia have collections in various languages which is handy for those who prefer the concept of holding an actual book rather than reading online (yes this is a technology article, but written by someone who appreciates the value of a good book!)

The site is still in beta testing phase, and any feedback seems to be welcomed along the way, but it is well worth checking out as a great online multi language resource.

You can find the site by clicking here: <http://www.mylanguage.gov.au/>



Have something you would like to contribute to our next newsletter? Please contact Laura on (02) 8065 5225 or mso@scoa.org.au

Not a SCOA member? Visit http://www.scoa.org.au/webapp_767771/Membership for info on how to become a member or call Laura on (02) 8065 5225



Conferences



A Long Way From Home? The Rural and Regional Resettlement Experiences of Visible Migrants and Refugees.

When: Friday 10th February 2012

Where: Carrillo Gantner Theatre, Sidney Myer Asia Centre, University of Melbourne, Parkville 3010

Contact: (03) 9035 4227 E VMR-Project@unimelb.edu.au

Registration:

<http://www.ssps.unimelb.edu.au/research/projects/vmr/events>

What: Regional and rural settlement of migrants and refugees is an increasingly relevant settlement trend in Australia, assisted by government policy and community sector initiatives and motivated by migrants and refugees themselves. Settlement is influenced by the pre-arrival experiences of migrants and refugees, along with a multitude of micro and macro factors in the social, political and economic realms of the destination country which play out differently in metropolitan and regional or rural locations. The visibility of the most recently arrived migrants and refugees from Africa, the Middle East, South and South-East Asia is also a feature of their settlement experience. This major International Conference showcases the work of the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project "Resettling Visible Migrants and Refugees in Rural and Regional Australia" and engages leading academics to provide a wider national, international and comparative overview of regional migration and settlement trends, policies, praxis and reality.

2012 Rural and Regional Law and Justice Conference 18-20 May 2012 - Initial call for papers

Following the success of the inaugural National Rural/Regional Law and Justice Conference in 2010, the School of Law, University of New England, is hosting the second National Conference in collaboration with Deakin University School of Law, to be held 18-20 May, 2012 at BreakFree Aanuka Beach Resort, Coffs Harbour on the north coast of NSW. This is an initial call for papers. Submissions (title and abstract up to 250 words) can be submitted electronically to rrij@une.edu.au. Submitted abstracts must include the following:

- Author
- Organisation
- Position Title
- Email
- Paper title
- Which theme (to the right) the paper fits into

Free public forum:

"Whose Country is it anyway? Opportunities and Challenges for Visible Migrants and Refugees in Rural and Regional Australia"

When: Thursday, 09 February 2012

Time: 6:30 - 8:00pm

Where: Carrillo Gantner Theatre, Sidney Myer Asia Centre, University of Melbourne, Parkville VIC 3010

Light refreshments will be served from 6:00pm

What: Regional and rural settlement of migrants and refugees is an increasingly relevant settlement trend in Australia, assisted by government policy and motivated by communities and migrants and refugees themselves. This exciting Public Forum brings together a diverse panel of speakers to discuss contemporary issues in regional migration, settlement and multicultural affairs in Australia. Can migrants and refugees counter population decline and boost economic growth in rural and regional Australia? What is the future for multiculturalism in rural and regional areas?

Registration:

<http://ecommerce.arts.unimelb.edu.au/categories.asp?cID=15&c=84415>

Contact: Annika Kearton at VMR-Project@unimelb.edu.au or on (03) 90354227

Theme areas are:

- Legal Education and Rural Communities
- Rural Services and Rural Opportunity
- Borders, Boundaries and Rural Law
- Managing Rural Conflict
- Legal Services and Legal Practice in Rural Communities
- Law and Rural Social License
- Indigenous Inclusion



National Settlement Policy Network Teleconference

Housing, homelessness and refugee settlement

The National Settlement Policy Network teleconference was held on Tuesday 8th November 2011 and involved participants dialling in from hubs in each state and territory across Australia. Presenters included:

- Mary Perkins, EO, Shelter NSW, Vice-Chair, National Shelter
- Dr. Selina Tually, Research Fellow - Centre for Housing, Urban, and Regional Planning, University of Adelaide

BACKGROUND

Housing and obtaining secure affordable accommodation is a challenge for many on low incomes in Australia. Refugee and humanitarian entrants also experience significant housing stress, discrimination and difficulties in finding appropriate housing. This issue is prevalent in many areas across Australia, both in regional towns and metropolitan areas, although the nature of the issue may be different. There are issues in relation to housing stock - for large numbers of single people who desire a place to live independently but cannot afford it, and for large families who find difficulty in securing large houses.

REPORT

The presentations from Mary and Dr Tually were both interesting informative, with new information and statistics being presented which tended to paint quite a bleak picture of the housing situation in Australia. Key issues were identified and recommendations were suggested by both speakers. Although there were discussion points distributed to participants prior to the call, unfortunately due to time constraints limited discussion was had. Subsequently a follow up call was organised for the 7th December with discussion as the main agenda item.

For the full report please visit http://www.scoa.org.au/webapp/795396/Latest_Downloads

SCOA is currently conducting a survey on the issue of housing as faced by agencies providing settlement services, so along with the information gained from the SPN, the results of the survey and extensive research conducted by SCOA we hope to have the findings ready to distribute to members in 2012.

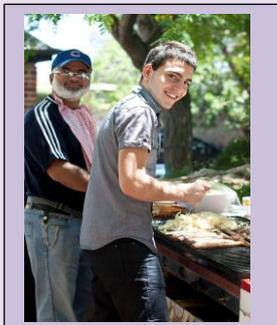
If you would like to participate in the survey, please follow this link to Survey Monkey. The questions should take no longer than 5-7 minutes to complete.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SCOAhousing>



This year the Fremantle Multicultural Centre is celebrating 30 years of providing services to migrants and refugees.

During this time many thousands of new arrivals have benefited from settlement services; accommodation assistance; employment and training programmes; mental health services as well as a multitude of social opportunities to connect with others and ward of social isolation which often comes with migration.



The Centre is always buzzing with people from many cultures sharing their skills and time with one another. Besides the Centre's core programmes, five English classes are offered each week to cater for the various needs of Centre clients; computer classes twice a week assist people to learn the skills they will require to secure employment and education opportunities; and sewing; art and weaving classes enable participants to be creative and build friendships. Many of these activities would not be possible without the many volunteers who give their time and share their skills to assist staff on many levels.

Centre staff and Board had begun planning a gala event at the Fremantle Sailing Club to celebrate the 30th anniversary milestone, but subsequently voted to donate the money which was to be spent on this event to UNHCR to aid towards the humanitarian crisis in East Africa. As the plight of the people from Somalia came to light this seemed a fitting way to acknowledge the Centre's 30th year.

During the past year the Centre has serviced over-2000 clients from more than 50 countries of origin at its Fremantle base and outreach offices.



Above left: Jargaltuya with her daughter Anastasia Alungoo Chester watching puppet show; middle: Ahmed Ismailjee and Sam Yazarlou; Right: Interactive art activities – Dawn Meader (Art teacher)

Left: Vlasta Mitchell (FMC Director) John Tedesco (FMC Board President) and Ann White (FMC Treasurer) with grand-daughter Caitlin Photograher - [Jacqueleen Jackson](#). All photos taken at FMC 30th Birthday celebrations



Congratulations to Ricci Bartels, Manager of FMRC and SCOA Deputy Chair for her recent appointment to the ACOSS Board. Ricci will be wearing her Settlement Council hat whilst she takes on this position and we wish her the best of luck.

SURVEY

You are invited to participate in a confidential online survey on **perceptions and experiences of the police complaints system in NSW**. Community Legal Centres NSW is interested in your views, whether or not you are familiar with the police complaints system. As well as people with police complaint experience, we also need respondents with no experience of the police complaint system. The project is being conducted by Community Legal Centres NSW together with Charles Sturt University, and the results will be used to inform improvements to the current system.

To find out more, and to participate in the survey, please click here:

<http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/arts/agsp/research/complaints-survey/>

The survey closes on 24 December.

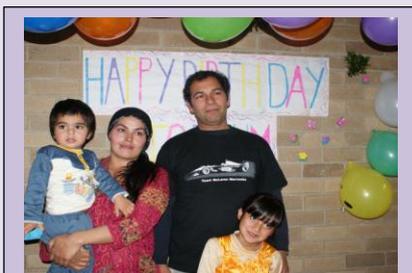
What you can do when you put your mind to it- A story from Ballarat Community Health in regional Victoria

Syed desperately wanted to be a taxi driver and needed to increase his working hours to full time (to top up his part time role as a Carer). Unfortunately he failed the 'taxi driver test' – scoring just 40%. He was told that he was not "ready for this work". His settlement worker called the potential employer to see if they could give some feedback as to where exactly he went wrong. The feedback suggested to the settlement worker that these shortfalls could easily be improved on with a little more guidance and perhaps training. Most of the errors were around Syed not understanding the taxi/passenger system and relationship (because he had never been in a taxi in Australia) and not understanding industry-specific jargon.

"Syed is a very intelligent man who worked in journalism. He is a fast learner and is a very motivated and determined man who just wants the best for himself and his family", commented his worker.

The settlement worker then spoke to a 'trainer' within the taxi company who agreed to give Syed a one-on-one half day training session and then they would see if he would be ready for re-testing at a later date. On that 'training day', Syed ended up only needing a bit over an hour for a training session. They then re-tested him and he scored 90% !!! He is now driving. This has made an enormous difference for him because his visa conditions require him to show 12 consecutive months of full time employment. Together with driving taxis and working with in the disability field as a Carer, he should be able to meet his visa conditions and therefore strengthen his application to enable him, his wife and two young children to remain in Australia.

An example of how a little support (for the client) and relationship building (with a potential employer) can go a very long way. It took just one hour of Syed's settlement worker's time to turn this around from a disheartening outcome to a positive long term outcome.



Syed and his family-
photo courtesy of
Ballarat Community
Health

From despair to inspiration- a refugee story from MDA

Bobby is an outstanding and visionary community leader. His selflessness, determination and passion to serve humanity coupled with his commitment to human rights, social justice and community development principles have earned him incredible respect as well as made him an exemplary icon, community champion and peace agent locally, nationally and internationally.

Bobby's interesting experiences began when he narrowly escaped the civil war in Liberia in 1990. As a teenager, he took care of his five siblings in refugee camps in Guinea West Africa. His experiences of abuse and poverty in refugee camps encouraged him to spend his life serving others. He pursued a career in teaching with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) School System for Liberian and Sierra Leonean Refugees where he taught for four years. He then moved to Conakry to teach English as a second language to business professionals and students at the University De Kofi Annan.

Bobby was resettled along with his five siblings in Australia in July 2003. In Australia Bobby has built a career in community development. He is presently the Senior Community Development Worker at the Multicultural Development Association (a lead settlement service provider in Australia) where his work involved community engagement, planning, capacity building, resourcing, linking, leadership training, empowerment etc... with over 15 new and emerging communities.

This quiet achiever enrolled at the University of Queensland in the first semester of 2010 in the Graduate Certificate of Development Practice program. Come December 2011, Bobby will be the first former Liberian refugee to have completed a master degree at the University of Queensland.

Bobby says "Personally, Australia has provided me a lifelong opportunity to transform as a child born behind a hut under the moon light, due to the lack of electricity, with no birth certificate let alone access (Continued next page)



to health care and had to live through one of the harshest refugee experiences to a well educated, informed, knowledgeable and responsible man is nothing short of overcoming adversity". Bobby insists that, "Australia is a great country with a proud history and tradition of welcoming thousands from all works of life who have contributed significantly in every aspect of the development of Australia. New migrants, refugees and asylum seekers should be given the same opportunities to reach their full potentials, fully integrate and meaningfully contribute to the continuous growth, progress and development of this great nation of immigrants".

Community Voices Forum

The Hobart MRC has paved the way for the refugee and migrant community in Tasmania to engage with a wide range of specialist and mainstream service providers and media through a series of community forums. Through a bottom-up grassroots approach community members have been empowered to connect directly with key figures such as the editor of the Mercury (a local newspaper) and key representatives from the police force. Building these relationships has taken time and effort, but has been well worth it, with great results in terms of community capacity and increases in positive media coverage (to name a few).

The forums have also developed working groups on five key areas where communities are working closely with key agencies and contacts to improve communication and service delivery.

The focus areas are:

- Health
- Education and employment
- Housing
- Media
- Police

The working groups are getting to grips with the specifics of issues facing the community, and include both community members and service providers, a strategy which minimises communication difficulties and connects key people directly. I was honoured to facilitate the forum on December 1st, where community members from the whole of Tasmania (the initiative includes Launceston too) gathered together to hear the progress made thus far, and work together to map out the next steps.

The forum was framed by a beautiful quote which encapsulates this important community effort:

"A shared vision is not an idea. It is not even an important idea such as freedom. It is, rather, a force in people's hearts, a force of impressive power. It may be inspired by an idea, but once it goes further—if it is compelling enough to acquire the support of more than one person – then it is no longer an abstraction. It is palpable. People begin to see it as if it exists. Few, if any, forces are as powerful as shared vision." – Peter M. Senge

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Exposure Draft Legislation and Explanatory Materials'

The Government announced in the 2011-12 Budget that it would establish the ACNC to register not-for-profit (NFP) entities and administer a regulatory and reporting framework for the NFP sector.

The Government has today released exposure draft legislation and explanatory materials for the establishment of the ACNC. These exposure draft materials provide an opportunity for the NFP sector and the wider public to comment on the draft legislation and details of the proposed ACNC.

The exposure draft legislation, explanatory materials and related factsheets are available from Treasury's NFP reform website at www.treasury.gov.au.



On behalf of SCOA we wish you and your families safe and happy holidays! See you in 2012!

*Sky de Jersey – Executive Officer
Laura Anderson - Membership services Officer*