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**W**elcome to the Summer edition of the South Central Region Migrant Resource Centre / New Hope Foundation Newsletter.

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### SCR MRC 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

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On Wednesday the 29<sup>th</sup> November the South Central Region Migrant Resource Centre (SCR MRC) commemorated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a celebration honouring the local communities and all those involved with the Centre since its inception.

The event was held at the Stonnington Town Hall in Prahran and complemented the launch of 'Opening Doors', a publication celebrating 25 years of the SCR MRC and its role in working with migrant and refugee communities and promoting diversity. Attendees included older, more established community groups who have had a long-standing association with the SCR MRC and more recently arrived migrant and refugee communities.

Prefaced with anticipatory drumming, welcoming guests to the event, the *Danbai Dance Group* drummers performed tribal rhythms which prepared guests for the vibrant

multicultural performances that drew from the North, South, East and West of the globe. These included the Bollywood Dancers from the *Jhanak Dance Company* who, in their brightly coloured saris, invoked the crowd to leave any inhibitions behind and join them in their energetic dance. Anthony De Masi, a Magician from the *World of Magic*, continued the exotic atmosphere thereby casting a spell of magic, intrigue and illusion which held a rapturous audience captive and wanting more. *Fiesta Mexico* provided more opportunity for the novice in the audience to practise their manoeuvres surrounded by sombreros.



The MC for the evening Joe Spano, previously employed as Arts and Cultural Officer at the SCR MRC, engaged the audience with anecdotes from the past and presented the current and previous directors and Chairperson including Founding Chairperson Mr. Frank Crean with a crystal globe as a gesture of appreciation for their service and commitment to the SCR MRC and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.

Guest speakers at the event included the Director of SCR MRC Ross Buscemi, Department of Immigration and Multicultural

Affairs State Director John Williams, the Victorian Multicultural Commission Chairperson and previous Director of the SCR MRC George Lekakis and current SCR MRC Chairperson Chris Gahan. Former Prahran Town Clerk David Jesson drove from Bega to attend the event, demonstrating the dedication and respect the SCR MRC has evoked in many over the years.

All speakers congratulated the SCR MRC and praised staff's commitment and dedication to assisting the communities and individuals in the diverse state that is Victoria.

It was a memorable evening and would not have been possible without our sponsors, the City of Stonnington, the Victorian Multicultural Commission and the South Central Region Migrant Resource Centre.

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## SETTLEMENT SERVICES

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Over the months of November and December 12 leaders from the Eritrean and the Sudanese community have been attending a Train the Trainer Budgeting Education Program. The eight session program covered a variety of financial topics such as understanding personal loans, utility and telephone bills. Lyn White from Financial Counselling Victoria provided expertise on understanding personal finances and Pamela Kosij from SCR MRC provided tips on delivering a presentation and group work skills. After much hard work, the leaders formed small groups to present budgeting education programs to their own communities. Some of the leaders have already successfully presented topics. Community leaders are to be congratulated on their dedication to the course and for the information they are now delivering to their communities.

The South Central Migrant Resource Centre & South Sudanese Women's Network have been working in partnership to run parenting sessions for the South Sudanese community, with financial support from the Victoria Multicultural Commission. The training was conducted by ParentZone (Frankston) and facilitator Elizabeth AdongJak a Sudanese community leader, who had taken part in the parenting facilitator training which finished in June this year.

Eighteen newly arrived members of the community attended the six sessions course which explored topics such as the importance of parents working together as a team when raising children, discipline, communication, and adolescents. Some participants had only been in Australia less than three months and the program provided a valuable insight into family life in Australia. The training concluded with a lively award ceremony, filled with much singing and enthusiastic Sudanese dancing.

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## AGED SERVICES

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The Community Visitors Scheme celebrated another year on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2006. Volunteers were invited to lunch and a Floor Show. Tomas Melarejo and Anna Lia from "Showy Salsa Dance School" performed the Tango, Merengue and Salsa which was enjoyed by the volunteers. Following the dance set the volunteers were invited to learn how to Tango and Salsa which was great fun and enjoyed by all.

The Community Visitors Scheme would like to sincerely thank all of our wonderful volunteers who make such a difference in the lives of older people from a CALD background.

The Community Visitors Scheme would also like to thank the Director of the MRC Ross Buscemi and Councillor Chris Gahan for their ongoing support and interest in the program.



On Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2006 the SCR Migrant Resource Centre celebrated International Volunteers Day.

The volunteers enjoyed a relaxing day and had a wonderful time being waited on “hand and foot” which was a pleasure for all of them.

This is the second year volunteers have volunteered their time to CALD communities in Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula.



Madhavprasad Bhatt, Csaba Pokorny, Katie Fan, Irene Robinson, Janine Boyd, Lisa Bernath, Amber Kim, Tan Chaun, Candice Hung, Sanjay Panther, Petra Brenchley, Fab Santucci and Peter Katsabiris.

The Workforce Participation Partnership program is funded by the Department for Victorian Communities to assist Skilled Migrants on a Permanent Residency Visa who have resided 2 years or less in Australia.

If you would like more information or to make a referral, please contact us on (03) 9563 4407.

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## CROSS CULTURAL TRAINING SERVICES

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The South Central Region Migrant Resource Centre provides Cross Cultural Training to service providers and various organisations. Recently, we have delivered training to diverse organisations and have tailored the training material to meet the specific needs of requesting agencies. Topics that have been covered include:

- An historical overview of immigration
- Cross cultural communities
- Recruitment of bilingual workers

If you are interested in arranging Cross Cultural Training for your organisation, please contact us on Phone: 9510 5877 or go to the “Cross Cultural Training” section on our website: [www.nhf.org.au](http://www.nhf.org.au)

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## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

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The South Central Region Migrant Resource Centre (SCR MRC) recently collaborated with National Australia Bank and ANZ to assist skilled migrants with interview preparation through the Workforce Participation Partnership Program.

Over a three week period, approximately 40 skilled migrants were interviewed with occupations as varied as Sales & Marketing, IT&T, Education, Accounting and Engineering.

Each interview was comprised of three parts: Introduction, Scenario-based questioning and Feedback. The interviewers have numerous years experience in corporate environments and were able to impart valuable information back to clients – a process that they would not normally be privy to. This allowed migrants to gain some constructive criticism and feedback on their presentation skills, language, personality and performance.

The SCR MRC would like to thank the following people from National Australia Bank and ANZ for their assistance in the Interview Preparation Project: Katrina Adderley,



The New Hope Foundation Inc.  
*Helping us assist others*

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## REFUGEE RESOURCE CENTRE

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Refugee Week came with many activities for the New Hope Foundation and the various communities. "Meet the Neighbours" at Pipe Makers Park was a great success for all involved.

There has been an excellent attendance at the Burmese, Sudanese and Burundian reference group meetings with John Mirabile and local community service providers. The outcomes of these meetings filter out into the community and also into the various programs and grant application activities that New Hope Foundation are involved with in some capacity.

An example of these groups is the women's sewing group. The regular sewing group is full and another one for the Burundian women is commencing in the New Year. Computer classes for women have been running this term and are well attended and everyone enjoys the learning process.

The Food Access Program has finished its trial and was declared a success. This program has since been adapted to include more families and a more hands on approach. Family groups have easy access to healthy foods and are linked in to a cooking programme and a money management class if they are interested.

The homework group finished for the year with both pupils and tutors claiming a successful outcome.

The Employment WPP program has been going from strength to strength and is over the estimated numbers, not only for registrations but also for placements. The job search training activities have been carried out on a one-to-one basis, a group computer class has also been running for the last 8 weeks. Finding bulk employment and the subsequent resettling process for 30 men in the country

town of Castlemaine has been a learning curve for everyone. This is now known as "The Castlemaine Model" and is being embraced by the employer and the town itself.

We continue to receive furniture donations for the Material Aid program from across the city and this balances out with requests for assistance from individuals and agencies.

### Homework Study Support Group

Every Tuesday & Thursday 4-6pm  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 273 Barkly Street  
Footscray

For details contact:  
John on 9687 4500



### THE NEW HOPE MATERIAL AID SERVICE

#### REQUIRES

THE THINGS YOU DON'T NEED  
ANY MORE BUT ARE TOO GOOD  
TO THROW AWAY

- FURNITURE  
and
- WHITE GOODS

TO GIVE TO NEWLY ARRIVED  
REFUGEE FAMILIES.

Contact Julie on 9687 4500 to arrange  
pickup through our friendly truck service  
- yes we collect your goods!!

# South Central Region Migrant Resource Centre

Website: [www.nhf.org.au](http://www.nhf.org.au)

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## About the SCR MRC Newsletter

The MRC Newsletter is produced by the staff of the South Central Region Migrant Resource Centre and The New Hope Refugee Resource Centre.

If you wish to subscribe to the newsletter or contribute an article (usually 100-300 words in length) please email: [enquiry@nhf.org.au](mailto:enquiry@nhf.org.au)

The contribution deadline for the next issue is: March 1<sup>st</sup> 2007