



volunteer refugee tutoring & community support

Coordinator's message

Hi all,

I can't believe that another month has ticked by since our last newsletter - where has 2008 gone? I hope that you and your tutoring families are all well.

The past month has seen a flurry of activity in the VoRTCS office that can be described in three (admittedly not incredibly exciting) words: budget, grants and IT!

We recently had an increase in our operational budget for 2008-09 approved by the Board of St Vincent de Paul Queensland. The extra funding provided by Vinnies for this year has allowed us to commence recruitment for a part-time administrative officer for the VoRTCS program. With our numbers now tipping near 900 tutors, and the community development program continuing to grow, this extra staff position represents a long-overdue and very welcome extra set of hands. Keep your eyes peeled for the position description and application details. Please feel free to pass this information on to any friends who may be interested.

We recently completed our applications for government-based funding to support our community development work and other activities in 2009. A huge thank you to Heather Davidson, our new funding and sponsorship office, for the large amount of work that she has put in to these submissions - she certainly has hit the ground running and is doing a wonderful job. We expect to know the outcomes of these funding applications by mid-November, so will keep you all posted. Fingers crossed!

We are currently undergoing a fairly major upgrade to our information technology systems. With the very generous support of Mettro - our new website hosts - we will, over the coming months, be upgrading our website, with a view to making it more user-friendly, and incorporating more online material and support for all of our wonderful tutors out there. We aim to do all of this with minimal disruption to our website and emails. However we do ask for your patience and understanding during this transition phase. Don't forget, if you ever need to contact us urgently please don't hesitate to give the office a call: 3010 1070.

As part of this technology upgrade, we will be auditing our database. You can therefore expect a phone call shortly from a VoRTCS team member asking you to confirm your contact details, the names of your tutoring partners, and the details of your tutoring family. We are looking for volunteers who may be interested in donating a few hours of their time to assist us with this audit. See later on in the newsletter for further details.

Last, but certainly not the least, it was with a touch of sadness that we farewelled Julie Tobler from the VoRTCS Committee last month. I'd like to thank Julie for her huge contribution to the VoRTCS Community Development Program over the past few months, and wish her best of luck for the future. We are therefore now recruiting for a new Vice-President (Community Development). If you are interested in finding out more about this role, or general information on how you can get involved in the VoRTCS committee, please don't hesitate to contact me: info@refugeetutoring.org - I'd love to hear from you!

Until next time, Claire

> Contact us

- VoRTCS, c/-St Vincent de Paul, PO Box 3351, South Brisbane, 4101
- Email: info@refugeetutoring.org • Web: www.refugeetutoring.org



In this edition:

Page 2

- > World Refugee Day Community Festival

Page 3

- > Refugee+Youth
- > Refugee+Community

Page 4

- > Tutor meeting brainstorming session
- > New Interpreters Project

Page 5

- > Learning development update

Page 6

- > Business Scholarship Available
- > VoRTCS Database Audit

Page 7

- > Iraqi Community Worker - job available
- > Embracing Diversity Symposium

World Refugee Day Community Festival!

After such a successful year with the festival in 2008, we have had many requests from refugee community members and sector organisations to run another festival in 2009. So just when you thought you could relax, we will be again forming a committee to work towards the next big event. Due to the size of the event, we now need to start the planning and implementation process earlier and will be commencing most of the workshops from January 2009. Committee meetings will be monthly and each member will have a position description.

There are many options for getting involved from helping out with admin to taking on your own festival department. We have also commenced seeking funding and developing the existing partnerships with Brisbane City Council and Multicultural Affairs Queensland for long term investment in the festival. The more the merrier!

The **next meeting** for the Festival Committee will be **Monday October 20, 2008 from 6 - 8pm** at St Vinnies, HQ. If you are interested in getting involved or would just like an update, please **RSVP to worldrefugeeday@refugeetutoring.org** by Thursday October 16, 2008.

Alternatively if you are interested in getting involved with the **funding** side of the project, please shoot an email through to **communitydevelopment@refugeetutoring.org**.



Pix by Minh.



Pix by Minh.



Pix by Minh.



Pix by Minh.



Pix by Minh.



Pix by Minh.

> VoRTCS is a non-profit, volunteer-run program that provides free in-home tutoring for refugee families in greater Brisbane and the Gold and Sunshine Coasts

> Tutors assist refugee families with primary, secondary and tertiary school work, literacy, conversation practice and life skills

> Please refer to the VoRTCS website for further information www.refugeetutoring.org

> If you are interested in volunteering with VoRTCS contact the Volunteers Coordinator: info@refugeetutoring.org

> To refer a family to the VoRTCS program contact the Families Coordinator: families@refugeetutoring.org

> To submit an idea for the newsletter contact the Publications Officer: publications@refugeetutoring.org

> **DON'T forget to let us know if:**

- You change your contact details
- You stop visiting your family (even temporarily)
- You need another tutor to assist your group
- You need more resources
- You need advice
- You are having problems tutoring
- Your family changes their contact details

Events

- > **Tutor meeting:**
Monday Sept 15th at 6pm
(for two hours)
- > **Tutor intake session1:**
Monday Sept 29th at 6pm
(for two hours)
- > **Tutor intake session2:**
Monday Oct 13th at 6pm
(for two hours)
- > **Community Development Meeting:**
Mon Sept 15th at 6pm
(for two hours)
- > **Festival Committee Meeting:**
Mon Oct 20th at 6pm
(for two hours)

Refugee+Youth



Pix by Minh.

We have had a great idea from one of our tutors to initiate a camp for refugee youth in January 2009. The camp will aim to increase the confidence and leadership skills of the youths through a series of workshops culminating in a 3 day camp in January. We have already received great support from the sector regarding this project, so have decided to go ahead. <insert update from Stacey - you can email her at stacey_l_mills@hotmail.com>

If you would like to be involved in this project please send an email to stacey_l_mills@hotmail.com.

Refugee+Community

Prior to the 2008 World Refugee Day Community Festival, a committee was formed for the Community Development Department in VoRTCS. The purpose of this team is to work with the Community Development Coordinator to develop and implement projects to enrich and develop the lives of our refugee families and promote awareness of refugee issues among the broader community. The next meeting will be our first planning session for the development of these programs including topics of **driver education, housing, surf safety, healthy and active lifestyle and eating, culture, theatre, dance** and the **arts** and many more.



Pix by Elise.

This is also a great opportunity to introduce new volunteers to VoRTCS who may not have the capacity to commit to weekly tutoring sessions but would still like to be involved with the program.

If you would like to be involved in this great team, meetings will be held monthly and will commence on **Monday September 15, 2008** from 6-8pm. Please **RSVP** to communitydevelopment@refugeetutoring.org by Thursday September 11, 2008 at the St Vinnies HQ.

All the best, Elise Koppe (CD Officer).

Tutor Meeting

Monday 15th September

Guest Speaker (to be announced)

The Break (with traditional VoRTCS pizza & chat)



Brainstorming

It's Time to Tap the Tutors Thoughts on Training

Please come prepared to Share

A Review on Intake Training is coming up & Ideas are Needed

All levels of experience are keenly sought so start thinking & bring those thoughts with you to the next



Tutor Meeting



Do you know anyone who would be interested in becoming an **interpreter for their community?**

New Interpreters Project: The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd is pleased to announce a new national project funded by the Australian Government to increase the number of interpreters in new and emerging languages in metropolitan areas, and languages where there are shortages in rural and regional areas.

Eligible applicants will attend a workshop to help them prepare to work as an interpreter and apply for a NAATI accreditation test and/or recognition. This project is fully funded and eligible candidates will be subsidised for the full cost of the workshop and application and assessment fees.

For more information go to the BARC! (Brisbane Actionweb for Refugee Collaboration) website: <http://www.barc.org.au> or email Melissa at publications@refugeetutoring.org.

“It is paradoxical that many educators and parents still differentiate between a time for learning and a time for play without seeing the vital connection between them.”
-- Leo Buscaglia

“Learning is not compulsory but neither is survival.”
-- W. Edwards Deming

“Placing the learners in small groups allows them to not only receive and express linguistic information, but to also manipulate it in various forms to gain a full understanding of it.”
-- Don Clark

“I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.”
-- Albert Einstein

CROSS CULTURAL TRAINING IN EDUCATION

Over 30 tutors attended Margaret Bornhorst’s Cross-Cultural Skills in Education over two Saturdays. Margaret, who is one of Queensland’s most experienced and respected cross-cultural trainers, was asked to give a short response, from her perspective, on the training sessions:

After fourteen years as the training and development officer for Multicultural Affairs Queensland, I was pretty sure that the information, skills and experiential exercises in my program ‘Cross-Cultural Skills in Education’ would be useful to the VoRTCS volunteer tutors. I also knew that they would get a lot out of sharing experiences with each other. But even so, the enthusiasm and excitement pulsating on those two Saturday afternoons in June and July was exceptional. There was so much discussion and so many questions that I was not able to cover the full program I had planned. We needed three Saturday afternoons to do justice to the thirst of this group of participants. A teacher’s dream, they were. I could get addicted to running programs for VoRTCS. (And totally spoilt for all my usual audiences.) The really exciting thing for me is the longterm impact that getting comfortable with cultural difference, with cultural ambiguities, with cultural mysteries can have for all those goals of community harmony and cohesion that the multicultural policies all talk about.

Margaret Bornhorst



SMALL GROUP WORK AT CROSS CULTURAL TRAINING Pix by Minh.



Pix by Minh. ONE TO ONE: Margaret amongst the Tutors



Recipes from Africa:

Ethiopian Pancakes

1 teaspoon dry yeast
2-1/2 cups warm water
4 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
Oil

Dissolve the yeast in the water, add it to the flour, and mix well. Let the mixture stand at room temperature overnight. (In winter it takes 2 days to allow fermentation.)

Stir in the baking powder and let the mixture stand for 10 minutes.

Liberian Dried Fish

This is a method of drying which defies all long held views on the preservation of fish and chicken. Refrigeration is the key to keeping these foods fresh and safe to eat. However, African people have devised a method which pre-dates electricity and refrigeration, and despite repeated expressions of doubt as to the viability of the method, we have all tasted and enjoyed fish and chicken preserved this way and can testify to its effectiveness and the intensity of flavour which results.

Clean the fish thoroughly and then rub a little salt into the skin. Put the fish on a rack in a medium oven and leave for 15 minutes.

Turn the oven off, leaving the fish in place. The next day, repeat the process and again the next day also.

The fish is now ready, and can be stored in the pantry ready to be used in dishes for the next week or more.

The same process can be used for chicken.

Business Scholarship available

Lord Mayor's Multicultural Round Table: call for applications

The Lord Mayor's Multicultural Round Table is now calling for scholarship applications from emerging entrepreneurs from multicultural backgrounds. This is a joint project between The Lord Mayor's Multicultural Round Table and Southbank Institute of Technology.

On successful completion of an initial six week course, students will be selected to continue studying to complete a Diploma of Business - Specialisation in Entrepreneurship.

Applicants must be residing within the Brisbane City Council local government region and applications must be received by
19 September 2008.

For more information go to the BARC! (Brisbane Actionweb for Refugee Collaboration) website: <http://www.barc.org.au> or email Melissa at publications@refugeetutoring.org.

VoRTCS Database Audit

We will be updating our database over the next few months. This will involve phoning all of our tutors to ensure we have current personal details and tutoring details listed.

You can expect a phone call from one of our volunteers during this period.

For this process to run smoothly, we need about 30 volunteers. We will be having a one day working bee, with lunch and snacks provided, where each volunteer will be given a short list of people to call.

Please email Melissa at publications@refugeetutoring.org if you're interested in helping out.

Do you know anyone who might be interested in this job?

Sudanese cinnamon tea

Ingredients

4 cups boiling water
4 english tea bags or 4 teaspoons of loose-leaf english tea
4 cinnamon sticks (approx 1/2-inch)
4 lumps of sugar, plus extra sugar

Directions

1. Place 4 cups of boiling water in a tea pot with the tea & allow to brew for a few minutes then stir.
2. Place 1 cinnamon stick & 1 sugar lump in a tea cup & pour the tea slowly over them.
3. Serve with an additional bowl of sugar lumps for guests to add if they like. (You may also add a cinnamon stick to the tea pot whilst the tea is brewing for a stronger cinnamon flavour).

Banana with Beans (Burundi)

Ingredients:

500 ml dried red kidney beans
4 green bananas or plantains
2 tbsp palm oil
1 small onion, thinly sliced
1/4 tsp salt
Hot pepper to taste

Preparation:

Soak beans for 3 hours, then boil in water for about 30 minutes, or until tender. Drain. Peel and chop bananas. Heat the oil and brown the onions. Add beans, bananas, salt and hot pepper and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add 4 cups water. Simmer until bananas are cooked and about 250 ml liquid is left. Serve hot.

Iraqi Community Worker part time position.

The Romero Centre is seeking an Iraqi person to work with Iraqi individuals, families, groups and the Iraqi community as a community worker.

IRAQI COMMUNITY WELLBEING WORKER (part-time)

The Romero Centre in Dutton Park provides services to refugees. We seek an Iraqi person to work with Iraqi individuals, families, groups and the Iraqi community. The appointee will be familiar with supporting families and individuals with settlement assistance. Good interpersonal skills, commitment to the Centre's values and an ability advocate on behalf of others are essential. It is critical that the applicant be able to work in an interfaith environment.

The position is for one year, 11.5 hours a week, under the SACS Award, Level 5.

For further information, phone **0407 578 682** or email **coordinatorromerocentre@bigpond.com**.

Applications close 10th September 2008.

Embracing Diversity Symposium, Mon 29 Sep 08

There is a Symposium on practical approaches when working with diversity on Monday 29 Sept 2008, 8.15am - 4.30pm at the Logan Entertainment Centre.

Session topics:

- Cultural awareness sessions from Burundi, Congolese, Sudanese, Samoan and Muslim communities.
- Cross cultural communication
- Community engagement
- Intercultural and cross cultural conflict
- Cultural perceptions and perspectives.

Hosted by Multilink, ECCQ, MAQ.

For govt & private sector \$185, early bird \$170/ Non govt orgs \$165, early bird \$150

RSVP for early bird by 29 Aug and 22 Sept for final payment.

To book or for more info, ring Multilink on 3808 4463, or email: jessica@multilink.org.au