

Creative Partnership Celebrates Youth Camps Success

A creative and productive partnership between the Northern Territory (MCNT), the Sydney-based Forum on Australia's Islamic Relations (FAIR) and the Islamic Society of the Northern Territory (ISNT) was the indefatigable driving force behind two successful team-building activities over the recent school holidays.

The "Back Out: Journey to the Heart" boy's camp and the "Sailing the LeaderSHIP" girl's retreat, funded by the Australia's Government's National Action Plan, forged lasting friendships between young people from the local Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

These activities were held at Base Camp Wallaroo, which is an adventure camp facility run by Adventure Bound NT, situated in spectacular tropical savanna country just off the Arnhem Highway halfway to Kakadu.

The National Action Plan addresses the issues of marginalisation and alienation, particularly for young Muslim people, promotes understanding and dialogue among all Australians and builds on those elements in society that bring us together rather than divide us.

Kuranda Seyit and Omeima Sukkarieh, the skilled facilitators from Sydney were great, and the participants had the time of their lives. Come on a journey and experience the cultural interaction and sense of achievement as Muhammad Atiq Haider and Susan Crute share their stories with us.



Participants at the girl's retreat

right way. The third main activity was rock climbing which was more on the side of fun but we did learn how to get over some fears and help each other. Later that night we all gathered around a camp fire. We discovered that one of the fellow campers had a gift for singing and we enjoyed a few songs before going to bed.

The next morning some of the Muslim girls woke up at 4 am to pray. The rest of us woke up at around 7:30 to get ready for the days main event: The Flying Fox. The flying fox was originally planned to go for about two hours but didn't finish until after lunch which pushed a few activities out but it was worth it. It helped many of the girls get over their fears and believe in themselves.

This camp has been a great experience for all of us that went. We've learnt a lot about believing in ourselves, working together and getting to know people before judging them. At the end of this camp all of the girls (including myself) have become good friends with each other and we all intend on staying in touch. We all would like to thank everyone who participated for doing an awesome job.

Susan Crute

My Experience at the Girls Retreat

On the 8th of July 6 Muslim girls & 6 non-Muslim girls, left from the Islamic Center in Darwin to go on a two day retreat at Base Camp Wallaroo. At the start of this camp between the Muslim community and the Non-Muslim community, not many girls knew each other. We were partnered up with our Buddy for the rest of the camp. Our main leader (Omeima) introduced us to the Unity Bowl, which involved us putting away something we treasured a lot into a bowl and by doing this it sort of made us all one.

The main activities for the first day were the stereotypical activity, which involved us understanding what it's like be in each other's shoes and labeled something we are not. The second main activity was based around team work and leadership, this had us working together to help each other and looking towards someone to lead us the

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Sailing the LeaderSHIP Girls Retreat – Reflections from the Facilitator

Now that I am back in Sydney, I often find myself reflecting on my time in Darwin and am sincerely grateful for the experiences I had with the fantastic young women I met on my journey there.

Base Camp Wallaroo was a meeting place for a new generation full of new ideas and hope for the future to come. It was a meeting place for new people to come together and not assimilate but rather to unite in a shared process of learning and discovery of new religions, cultures, languages ... girls who learnt that they shared the same vision for a better future and on their journey they confronted the same fears together.

They built greater respect and belief in themselves and towards others. They shared hopes and desires and in laughter and tears they grew as young women and I truly believe became even better human beings. I will always be eternally grateful for the opportunity to be part of this journey and I have never been so proud of a group of people in my life more than the girls.

I would like to thank Doug and his incredible staff from Adventure Bound NT provided us with an opportunity to reflect and grow on our journey and to dream up a future for ourselves and the world beyond the retreat.

I would also like to thank Sharin and the MCNT staff and the parents and community for trusting me with their children and the project and I am looking forward to continuing my relationship with them in the future on this project and others.

Working with Sharin especially was fantastic. The entire project I am certain would not have been possible without her fabulous supportive family and the friends at the Mosque who were so welcoming to me and my colleagues from Sydney.

Finally, I would importantly like to thank my colleagues from Sydney, Omar and Natic, the TV Crew from UBI TV who also shared our journey and vision. I am excited about the documentary that their hard work will produce and it was a pleasure to be working with them.

Until our next journey together ...

Omeima Sukkarieh

Facilitator - Sailing the LeaderSHIP Girls Retreat

My Experience at the Boys Youth Camp

On 23rd June we left the Islamic centre of Darwin with 11 boys within the Islamic community and 3 boys within non-Islamic communities. I only knew around 2 – 4 boys at the start of the camp. There were 3 Facilitators that came from Sydney (Kuranda, Adam and Ibrahim). The camp was held at Base Camp Wallaroo.

Once we got there we had an explanation of the camp rules and facilities. Then we were put into 2 groups and had a partner for the rest of the camp and my partner was Jack. After that we got to know each other by making a name that started with our first letter (e.g. mine was merciful Muhammad). The activity that we did the first day was team building. This is where we worked together in a team and had to do some challenges. We also played group activities together. (e.g. Swimming and cricket).

On the second day we did rock climbing, high ropes, low ropes and canoeing. We also had a lecture from Doug about bush survival. That night we had a camp fire. Our Imam (Adama Konda) gave us a talk on how to identify our real identity within our hearts by going away from all the technology.

The third day we did flying fox, role plays. This was the first experience on the flying fox for me and it was a great experience and I will never forget it. The last day, we went for a bushwalk 9-11 km, and we were given a compass and a map. We had to find our way to the given destination. I was chosen to be a leader of my group; there were 7 boys in my group. All of us did well.

This was a great experience for all of us. I learned new leadership skills, way to get around the folks, trusting others, believing in yourself and working as team. At the end of the camp I knew all of boys very well and we still are good mates. We had a lot of fun together. I would like to thank all the organisers and the volunteers to make this camp a great success.

Muhammad Atiq Haider



Participants at the boy's camp



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Partners in Culturally Appropriate Aged Care Project

Janet Brown Project Officer
COTA offices Spillet House
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The aims of project are to:

- Ensure the special needs of older people from migrant backgrounds are recognized and dealt with correctly.
- Improve the links between aged care providers, migrant communities and the Department of Health & Ageing.

Service Provision

- To assist Aged Care Service Providers to provide culturally appropriate aged care, which is free from prejudice, includes understanding cultural diversity, an awareness of cultural norms and values, avoids stereotyping and which promotes community cultural links.
- Provide aged care service providers with cultural information appropriate to client requirements.
- Providing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities and individuals with information about residential aged care facilities and other aged care issues such as healthy ageing.
- Encourage residential aged care facilities to develop multilingual admission information & documents
- Encourage the use of Non Verbal Communication Books (NVCB) for clients unable to communicate effectively in English.
- Distribute information regarding the various aged care services available, community based services; such as community care packages (CACP) and residential aged care facilities.

Networking

- Promote communication and co-operation between service providers and CALD communities.
- Promote PICAC resources and activities by supporting culturally specific seniors' social groups, multicultural Seniors Month activities, Harmony Day activities, and information sessions.
- Develop, resources and present information sessions to community groups on topics including culturally appropriate aged care, community based aged care, residential aged care facilities, the Charter of Residents Rights & Responsibilities, Residential Aged Care Rights and broader healthy ageing issues such as the Seniors'

Quality Use of Medicine program (SQUM), Falls Prevention and Beyond maturity Blues.

Training & Resource Development

- Provide cultural competency training to aged care service providers and other allied groups.
- Provide a resource library and cultural briefings.
- Obtain resources / information about aged care, including multilingual copies of selected Dept. of Health & Ageing documents and general health care issues.
- Obtain resources / information on the subject of other cultures and culturally appropriate aged care.

For information contact via

Ph: 8941 1004 Fax: 8941 5011 or

E-mail: janet.brown@cotant.org

MCNT Welcomes Immigration Detention Policy Changes

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT) welcomes the significant reforms in immigration detention policy announced by Senator Chris Evans, the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, on Tuesday 29 July.

The changes mean that detention will only be used as a last resort, that the onus for proof is reversed so that the department will need to prove that a person should be detained, and that detention will be for as short a time as practicable.

Mandatory detention will be used only for people who pose a risk to society or repeatedly breach visa conditions in Australia, or require health, identity and security checks while being processed offshore as unauthorised boat arrivals.

Asylum seekers from now will be able to remain in the community while their immigration status is being resolved. These reforms will ensure that the prolonged detention of asylum seekers – including children – who pose no threat to the community, will no longer be justified.

The MCNT applauds these changes, which in addition to the recent abolition of the temporary protection visas (TPVs) and the overturning of the Pacific Solution, are restoring humanity and integrity to the treatment of people fleeing persecution and seeking refuge in Australia.

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BUILDING BRIDGES IN GOODNESS AND KINDNESS

After years of successfully activities under the banner of the "Goodness and Kindness Program" conducted within both primary and secondary schools, the interfaith based Together for Humanity Foundation is now offering two exciting programs for schools. The **Together for Humanity Workshops Program** provides an opportunity for students to learn about diversity, commonality and question assumptions about identity with engaging, diverse presenters. The **Service Together Program** offers a more in-depth experience. Together for Humanity facilitators will challenge

and support students to work with students at another school and guide their collaboration in a joint service learning project.

Last year the Team from Together for Humanity ran "Goodness and Kindness workshops" in approximately 15 schools in the NT: 11 in Darwin/Palmerston and 4 in Alice Springs.

The feedback was very promising and the dedicated team worked hard to get a representative in the NT to build on the past year's showcase.

Together for Humanity Foundation successfully obtained a small grant from DIAC to operate in the NT.

Heather Laughton, an Arrernte woman from Central Australia, works on the program in the NT on a part time basis. She is based in Alice Springs and has visited Darwin over the past 3 months to re-establish networks and find



volunteers to assist with workshops.

To assist Heather with this valuable work and very large task the Multicultural Council NT has offered support and guidance. MCNT will also provide office space and be the contact office in the Darwin region for the Together for Humanity Foundation.

One of the objectives of the Foundation is to educate over 20,000 children to be more accepting of others and feel more empathy toward people who are different from themselves and to make our world a better place.

NEWS FLASH NEWS FLASH NEWS

Check out our website for more details
www.togetherforhumanity.org.au
Contact Heather on
diversity@togetherforhumanity.org.au
OR ring MCNT 89459122 for further contact details.



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Australia's Citizenship Test found to be flawed and discriminatory

Australia's citizenship test is flawed and discriminatory, according to Richard Woolcott AC, former head of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and chair of an independent appointed panel charged with reviewing the test.

In a recent interview for ABC Radio's Sunday Profile program, Mr Woolcott foreshadowed major changes to the test. He stated that the test actively discriminates in favour of migrants and refugees who have been educated in English to a high standard prior to their arrival in Australia, and that many of the questions are unnecessary and irrelevant.

In late April, the Federal Government announced the appointment of an independent committee of seven eminent Australians to review the operation and effectiveness of the Citizenship Test. Apart from Mr Woolcott as chair the committee comprises former Olympian Rechelle Hawkes; SBS director Paula Masselos; refugee advocate Julianna Nkrumah; Australia Day Council CEO Warren Pearson; former Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Rtd Chris Ritchie AO RANR; and legal expert Professor Kim Rubenstein.

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT) has actively campaigned on behalf of its constituency against the introduction of the Citizenship Test since it was first proposed in mid 2006. The Multicultural Council welcomes Mr Woolcott's comments which reflect widely held concerns in the community that the Citizenship Test in its current form disadvantages migrants and refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds.

It is the MCNT's view that citizenship **should not be** predicated on learning English and having an understanding of Australian history and society. Citizenship is about commitment and contribution, about rights and responsibilities, and about a sense of belonging to, and identity within, a new society.

It is heartening that the Citizenship Test Review Committee has been consulting with and listening to the views from informed and interested members of the community. The MCNT looks forward to the results of the committee's review and trusts that future policy directions will ensure that fairer and more inclusive arrangements are adopted as the pathway for residents to become citizens.

China Earthquake fund-raising event, "Food for a Cause" in Smith Street Mall

"Food for a Cause" was an innovative fund-raising event in Smith Street Mall organised by Darwin's Buddhist and Chinese communities in response to 7.8 magnitude earthquake in Sichuan Province, southwest China on Monday 12 May. As well as great food, there was also great entertainment to promote, and attract people to the cause.

The key to the success of "Food for a Cause" on Saturday 31 May was the participation of a number of traders in Smith Street Mall – including Satay King, Bangkok Delights and Chok's Place in the Galleria, Rendezvous Cafe of Star Village Arcade and Zen's Kitchen of Paspaley Centre Point – providing food for sale to the public with the proceeds donated to the Australian Red Cross for the China Sichuan Earthquake Appeal.

Donna Quong as the MC and Ken Hutton as the sound technician did a great job. The program was headlined by young emerging star Yuliana Pascoe and featured the Chung Wah Society drummers, the Bindi Babes, cellist Rebecca Harris and flutist Jefferson Chen. The event was a great success with more than \$26,000 raised for the earthquake appeal.



Yuliana Pascoe and the band playing at "Food for a Cause" in Smith Street Mall.

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Notices



Dignity and justice for all of us



2009 Harmony Calendar Poster Competition

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory and the NT Division of the United Nations Association of Australia are inviting the Territory's Middle School students (Year 7 to Year 9) to submit poster artworks for publication in the 2009 Harmony Calendar sponsored by the NT Government.

The theme this year is the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). We want our young people to express the spirit of the Articles of the UDHR through original inspirational artworks. The closing date is Friday 17th October, with an award ceremony in Darwin on the UN Human Rights Day, Wednesday 10th December.

For individual entry forms and more information about this competition, or to book a poster workshop for your school, phone the Multicultural Council on 8945 9122.



MCNT's AGM Thursday 25th September

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory Inc (MCNT) invites financial corporate and individual members to its Annual General Meeting on Thursday 25th September 2008 at the MCNT community room from 5.00 pm.

Nominations are encouraged from interested members of the community to serve on the 2008-09 MCNT management committee. To find out more, phone Fiona at the MCNT on 8945 9122 or email admin@mcnt.org.au

CulturFest: Our Culture Our Pride

Saturday 20th September at Malak

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT), in partnership with Darwin Community Arts, is presenting CulturFest 2008 at Malak on Saturday 20th September from 5.00 pm to 9.00 pm.

CulturFest is an annual event for the wider community to experience and celebrate the richness of cultural diversity through food, arts and crafts, performance and film. Come and join us for the festivities.

MCNT members and ethnic community groups are invited to participate in CulturFest 2008. To find out more and to join the steering committee, phone Fiona at the MCNT on 8945 9122 or email admin@mcnt.org.au

Top End Women's Legal Service

TEWLS

The Top End Women's Legal Service is providing a free outreach service for women at the Multicultural Council in Malak.

The service is available every second Wednesday from 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm.

All appointments are confidential and interpreters can be booked.

For appointments phone the Multicultural Council on 8945 9122.

For bookings outside these hours contact Fiona at the TEWLS on 8982 3000.

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Darwin's Buddhist Society Celebrates 25 Years

The Buddhist Society of the Northern Territory celebrated its 25th birthday with a Light Offering on Sunday 18 May at the International Buddhist Centre. This celebration was the culmination of a special Wesak program of events from Saturday 10 May.

The evening was a great success. The audience of more than 200 shared in the inspirational program which featured a performance from the Dhamma Children's Class as well as a slice of the huge birthday cake. The special guests included long-term patron, the Honourable Austin Asche AC QC, former Administrator and Darwin's new Lord Mayor Graeme Sawyer.

Buddhism has had a presence in the Territory since the 1870s with the Chinese gold miners at Pine Creek. The Buddhist Society of the Northern Territory and the International Buddhist Centre was formally established in 1983 by members of the local Buddhist communities and interested friends living in Darwin at the time. Now 25 years later the Buddhist Society is a diverse multi-faith community with practitioners from the three major Buddhist traditions: Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana.

The Buddhist Society aims to provide for the spiritual needs of Buddhist practitioners in the Territory. The International Buddhist Centre welcomes all members of the community to come to learn about Buddhism, to meditate or to simply enjoy the special peace and tranquillity of their unique precinct at Leanyer.

To find out more about the Buddhist Society of the Northern Territory, visit their new website at www.ntbuddhist.org



(L to R): Lord Mayor Graeme Sawyer, Hon Austin Asche AC QC, Surya Silva, Audrey Ko and Ming Cheung



ANTI-POVERTY 12 – 18 October 2008 WEEK

Anti-Poverty Week is an Australia-wide initiative that began several years ago and continues to grow. To find out more, check out the website on www.antipovertyweek.org.au

The main aims of Anti-Poverty Week are to:

- strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship around the world and in Australia; and
- encourage research, discussion and action to address these problems, including action by individuals, communities, organisations and governments.

The success of Anti-Poverty Week depends on individual people and organisations taking action to organise an activity with friends, colleagues or other groups. Any activity, large or small, that helps people to express their interest and concern about any aspect of local, national or global poverty is very welcome.

For Anti-Poverty Week there will be a photographic display in Casuarina Square and Palmerston Shopping Centre from Monday 13th to Saturday 18th October. Join us for a free breakfast to help fight poverty and disadvantage – from 7am at either Goyder Square, Palmerston on Thursday 16th October, or in Bennett Park, Darwin on Friday 17th October.

NT Shelter is the convenor for Anti-Poverty Week in the NT again this year. You may have your own ideas. Just remember, this is one week in the year when we can all do something about poverty. To find out more about what is happening locally or to plan your own event or activity phone Toni at NT Shelter on 8927 5600 or email: eo@ntshelter.org.au

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Introducing Some of our Committee Members

Dr Fergal Fleming, President

Fergal has lived in five countries (South Africa, Zimbabwe, England, New Zealand and Australia). Fergal has a PhD in Geography from the University of NSW. Although an immigrant, Fergal has a Tasmanian convict ancestry and has Scottish, Irish, English and Portuguese descent. Fergal has an interest in issues relevant to the refugee and migrant settlement experience. Fergal is currently a volunteer on the St Vinnie's mobile van sunset outreach service, and has worked as a volunteer assisting a surgical team undertake reconstructive surgery in Eastern Indonesia. Fergal and his wife Marg have an ongoing and intense commitment to a remote health services project in Uganda and have been working there as volunteers for 8 months over the past three years.

Ms Heather Prendergast, Committee Member

Heather grew up on a farm on King Island and came to Darwin in 1979. She spent 14 years volunteering in the Pacific, Asia and Africa with Australian Volunteers International and United Nations Volunteers in Kiribati, Cambodia, Bhutan, Laos, Mozambique, Eritrea and Ethiopia. Heather currently works with the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training and over the past 3 years has worked for Settlement, Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship in the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, and the Office of Multicultural Affairs in the NT Department of the Chief Minister. Heather volunteers with Red Cross on the breakfast club project at Manunda Terrace and emergency services. Heather enjoys serving on the MCNT Committee to maintain links with the multicultural community.

Mr Tissa de Silva, Committee Member

Tissa works currently as the structural engineering manager for OPUS Quantec McWilliam NT and works as a volunteer for the Melaleuca Refugee Centre. Tissa first came to Australia in 1966 from Sri Lanka as a post-graduate student, and returned to Darwin in 1973 as a migrant sponsored by the Commonwealth Department of Works to Darwin as a senior structural engineer. Tissa has worked extensively in Canberra for the government and private sectors and during his time there designed and built the Lao Buddhist Centre in Canberra with volunteer labour from the Lao community. Tissa is passionate about supporting the settlement and integration of new migrants within Australian society, and particularly in their interaction with the first Australians, the Aboriginal people.

Office Bearers

Name	Position	Portfolio
Fergal Fleming	President	Disability, Seniors, Media and Health (joint)
Luchi Santer	Senior Vice President	Promotion and Marketing, Ethnic Schools (joint), Health (joint), Women's Affairs (joint)
Jenny Medwell	Vice President	Immigration (joint), Settlement and Citizenship, Racism (joint), Family and Children's Services (joint)
Joanna Albert	Secretary	Global Issues, Ethnic Schools (joint), Immigration (joint) and Racism (joint)
Sharin Qureshi	Treasurer	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity, Social Inclusion and Women's Affairs (joint)
Harry Spirou	Committee Member	Arts and Culture
Ferdous Mitchell	Committee Member	Family and Children's Services (joint)
Heather Prendergast	Committee Member	Human Resources
Tissa de Silva	Committee Member	Education, Employment and Training
Jackie Antoun	Committee Member	Indigenous and Legal
Kevin Kadrigamar	Committee Member	Youth Affairs

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