

REFUGEE REFLECTIONS

Issue 5 : (DEC-JAN 2016)

Features:

- 1 Year End celebration
- 2 Retiring HCC Principal
- 3 Welcoming 2016

Year End Celebration

The Canterbury Refugee Council staff, members, and supporters attended the Annual Refugee Council Dinner on the 11th of December, to mark the end of the year and the beginning of the next one. We enjoyed light hearted conversations around the dinner tables in a relaxed atmosphere away from the busy offices. We took the opportunity to discuss and celebrate the successful running of the council and addressed our continued efforts in moving forward and making improvements and plans.

2015 has been another busy year for us at the Refugee Council. We achieved our goals and hope to reach new milestones in 2016!

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Community members bid farewell to retiring HCC principal

The Refugee community development sector along with the members of the refugee communities bid farewell to Brent Ingram, the principal of Hagley Community College. Brent has served as principal of the Hagley College for 25 years and has been instrumental in propagating refugee education in Christchurch. Under Brent's leadership Hagley saw several important milestones in refugee education the most notable being Hagley Refugee Programmes which comprises of a range of programmes for all ages. The Refugee Programme is a first of its kind in New Zealand and provides a wide array of courses-there is after school Homework programme for the kids as well as Adult literacy classes and ESOL classes. Brent has made some bold decisions as a principal and has been involved in opening the prayer rooms for Muslim students.

The farewell function was well attended and had students presenting a Bhutanese Cultural performance which was much enjoyed. There were heartfelt speeches from Brent's colleagues at Hagley all praising his excellent leadership skills and ability to make those around perform their best. Mike Agar who is set to take over from Brent also gave a short speech and the shoes that he has to fill. Other notable speeches were from the refugee community leaders as well as the sector.

Brent was given a painting from a member of Bhutanese community and other gifts from his colleagues. He was also presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by the Canterbury Refugee Council in recognition of his work for the refugee communities in Christchurch

The event was warm and well attended by the members of the community.

Welcoming 2016

Dear Readers

Happy New Year

On behalf of Canterbury Refugee Council, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the first issue of 2016 of Refugees Reflections. We started this newsletter in the beginning of last year with the intention to update on activities and news of the Council. Additionally, RR aims to provide an ideal forum for exchange of information on all the refugee related news in Canterbury. To ensure that we make it a platform for dissemination of useful information, we have guest contributors from different organisations writing about relevant topics.

For the upcoming year, we wish to encourage more contributions from the community development sector and the service providers. We also welcome comments, feedback and suggestions that could enhance the quality of the newsletter; please feel free to contact me at contact@canterburyrefugeecouncil.org.nz

Thank you. We hope you will enjoy reading the newsletter and find it informative.

Sumaiya Nasir,
Manager

Editor: Sumaiya Nasir
Designer: Ikran Ahmed