



Refugee

Newsletter of the Australian Refugee Association

A chat with Celian by Lawrie McCauley

Well fed, well spoken and very well educated, 32 year old Celian is never going to be the poster boy for refugees in Australia. The ARA Sudanese Case Work Coordinator knows the horrors of life in refugee camps, including Kakuma, but to sit and chat with Celian is to be filled with hope, not pity.

"A lot of people in Australia do have the image of refugees starving – of illness, suffering and malnutrition," Celian said. *"It is a perception conditioned by culture. We see the World Vision advertisements but people here know very little of suffering and war."*

"I am an optimist and I believe that perception is changing or, if not changing, there are new elements being added all the time and it is being fine-tuned."

"The people of Australia are quite generous. A lot of money goes into making sure we open the door for refugees. We need to know where they are from, their history, in order to help them better. It will take time but with more knowledge will come better policy"

Celian has a thirst for knowledge. His university degrees in philosophy, religious studies and social science have not only helped shape his life but also his spiritual outlook on the world.

Fortunately for our community, the centre of that world for Celian, wife Naa Koshie and their Australian-born children, Esther, 4, and Jeremiah, 1, is right here in Adelaide.

"This is our home," he said. *"We are looking for bigger things. We have big, big plans."* Naa Koshie is studying to become a teacher. Celian plans to further his study with a Masters Degree. Together they have helped initiate a project to fund a multi-purpose centre in Sudan to offer training and support for those in need. They are also paying for Celian's nephew, Juma, to be put through school.

With a common link to all of us, Celian has the everyday hassle of setting up a home, raising his children and going to work. But – and it's a big diversion from the norm – Celian warmly embraces the call to reach out to other parts of the world and, through ARA, embraces those who have come to Australia to live.



Celian Kidega – ARA Sudanese Case Worker and Coordinator.

"We do sacrifice," he said. *"That means saving money and using money well. When you have a specific amount, that goes towards the house, ourselves, our children and helping out our relatives when we can."*

Celian knows if peace and prosperity were to suddenly, perhaps miraculously, appear in places like the Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Liberia, the need to rescue refugees would diminish and he could be out of a job.

That would be his dream come true. Problem solved.

In the meantime, he is working hard to help other refugees integrate as best they can and settle into Adelaide life. Not all integrate as well as Celian. But none could ask for a better teacher or role model to fix that problem.

Celian is not the poster boy for refugees in Australia – but with a change in perception on our behalf and an increase in financial support and understanding... one day the Celians of our world will be.

ARA gratefully acknowledges the support of its Corporate Partners and supporters. Together we can make a real difference to the lives of many.



The Harmony Project

As part of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's Living in Harmony Programme, ARA has been working with four Adelaide primary schools throughout 2008. "The Harmony Project" has allowed students from different cultural backgrounds to better understand what it means to be a refugee, to appreciate multicultural Australia and to debate what it means to be Australian.

Highlights have included a Harmony Day celebration with Lieutenant-Governor Hieu Van Le, a student exchange and dialogue sessions concerning the concept of Australian values and their importance in the community.

Project participants will meet for the last time to celebrate their achievements and to enjoy fun activities such as African drumming and henna tattoos.

We are currently in the final stages of producing a DVD and teaching manual about the project for widespread use in South Australian schools, in the hope that the program be expanded in the future. A project launch will also be held towards the end of the year.

For more information on the Living in Harmony programme, visit www.harmony.gov.au



Students participating in the Harmony Project

Employment achievements

The 'South Australia Works Western Adelaide Recognition and Achievements Ceremony' was held in early October at the Parks Community Centre.

The Minister for Employment and Training, the Honourable Paul Caica MP, recognised the success and achievements of the South Australia Works participants, sub-contractors and the ESF Network.

ARA accepted an achievement award for 'Excellence in undertaking a skills formation program with South Australia Works'. This award was presented for the Manufacturing training that was held at Thebarton Senior College over two terms in 2008.

Manager, Employment Services, Hafez Zamani nominated three of the participants who have gained employment in the area of Manufacturing since completing the training. These participants also accepted awards for 'Excellence in undertaking a skills formation program with South Australia Works'.

We congratulate Ghulam Houssaini, Bharat Patel and Ravinder Negi for their endeavours together with the dedication of ARA employment staff.



Award winners with ARA Staff, Hafez Zamani and Sarah Lovell



Participants from the August group at the completion of the course

Job-Ready Set Go

Young people engaged through new program

ARA has commenced an exciting new program – *Job-Ready Set Go* – which is aimed at students aged 15 to 25 who want to get part time work. It is recognised that many young people who are at school, TAFE or University want to get part time jobs but many of them are unsure of how to go about it.

Job-Ready Set Go is an 8 week workshop program that covers topics such as how to look for jobs, resume writing, interview skills, OH&S, taxes, and Centrelink. Industry professionals and employers (such as Bunnings) are brought in to talk to the group throughout the course. Participants engage in role plays of interviews to gain a real sense of what it is like to go to an interview, and to experience answering questions about themselves. *Job-Ready Set Go* has strong support from volunteers who form the mentor component of the program. Each participant is linked with their own mentor, who actively supports them to apply for jobs and prepare for interviews.

Our first group ran from August to October with 18 participants and we are very pleased that we have had our first young person successful gain employment. Beckha Uwezo is now working at Hungry Jacks – congratulations Beckha! With 20 participants in our second group (October to December), it looks like this will be a very busy program.

Job-Ready Set Go has been funded by the Office for Youth for three years and new groups commence approximately every 10 weeks.

For more information, contact Ian 8161 3308 or Natalie 8161 3311.



Government of South Australia

Office for Youth

Stuck for a Christmas present for the person who has everything?

Why not make a donation to ARA in their name? ARA will acknowledge your donation and also send a card to the person in whose name you have made the donation. Please consider this wonderful way of sharing the Christmas Spirit.

For further information, please contact Erika on 8161 3322 or erika.marshall@ausref.net

ARA is supported by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) through the Settlement Grants Program (SGP)



My view | Rebecca Scheucher

For six weeks recently, I was lucky enough to conduct my research on communication and culture in non profit organisations at The Australian Refugee Association.

It was a wonderful experience and I learnt a great deal about the way in which ARA conducts itself as a positive and hard working organisation within the community. I have found the people within its walls incredibly inspiring as staff members, volunteers, clients and representatives from other organisations work together to make a difference in the lives of others and help our community flourish.

The values ARA upholds are incredibly strong, and this is evident through the hard work and positive attitudes of the people who work towards the organisation's goals. I have found a consistent can-do consensus throughout, and although money and resources are always a prominent issue throughout this particular sphere of community work, ARA's people strive to work with what they have got and make positive changes.

The relationships between co-workers are also heart-warming as people here work together and share common beliefs, which evokes a lovely sense of community. I have found myself become very attached to the Australian Refugee Association, and have from a research perspective, found it difficult to be objective considering the values of ARA and the tireless efforts that are put in to make the world a better place for those who have been less fortunate in their lives, a bias I will of course have to flag in my report.

All in all it has been a positive and inspirational journey for me, and I hope to present ARA with a useful report of my findings and hopefully some day soon contribute myself as a volunteer.



Benefit Concert | Erin Kelly

Two years ago, I visited Baxter Detention Centre. That day, and the people I met there, made a huge and lasting impression on me. This year I am completing Year 12 at the Mt Barker Waldorf School and I chose to centre my Year 12 Special Project on the stories of those who have come to our shores seeking protection, and some of the difficulties they have faced after their arrival.

The Benefit Concert was held in the school hall earlier this year. The aim of the evening was not only to raise funds for ARA, but also to raise awareness of the plight of refugees in Australia, as it is sometimes too easy to close our eyes against uncomfortable truths.

I organised a team of mostly young performers: singers, musicians and dancers. A group of the lower school students helped with serving tea and coffee on the night. The audience of 120 - 150 people was more than I had expected. Above all things I was blown away by everyone's enthusiasm and the general willingness to help, give time, talent and support. The evening with two and a half hours of great entertainment was enjoyed by everyone.

Through the generosity of BHP Billiton's Matched Giving Program, we were able to double the amount raised, bringing our total effort to \$2,200.

Thanks to all those who generously gave a bit of themselves to make this possible, the evening went better than I had dreamt it would.

Jennifer West, Educational Administrator at Mt Barker Waldorf School says, *"We recognised the caliber of the work Erin undertook and were delighted with the wonderful concert. The school looks forward with interest to see what Erin takes with her out into the world."*

Editor's Comment: ARA gratefully acknowledges Erin's support together with the school, her family and BHP Billiton for this wonderful effort.

2008 Annual General Meeting

We were privileged to have His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC CSC RANR Governor of South Australia present at our Annual General Meeting held on 21 October 2008. Following his address His Excellency took the opportunity to meet with some of our members and supporters.

At the AGM, President David Linn, announced that ARA's Board of Management would comprise the following for the coming year:

President	David Linn
Vice Presidents	Elizabeth Bleby, Patricia Muncey
Treasurer	Wayne Turner
Board Members	Maria Barredo, Robert Cole, Peter Engelhardt, John Harley, Marie Hogan, Kath Milne, Bryce Whetton

John Harley and Robert Cole join the ARA Board for the first time. Both bring a wealth of experience to the table.

John Harley who was appointed Public Advocate in 1999 graduated in law from Adelaide University and was admitted to the South Australian Bar in 1969. He practiced in the City for 30 years as a partner in the firms Norman Waterhouse & Mutton and Finlaysons. He is a Past President of the Law Society (1997-1998), the President of the Notaries' Society of South Australia Inc and the Chair of the Human Rights



At the AGM:
Ms Lindsay Simmons MP
Member for Morialta,
Mr David Linn - ARA President,
Mr Wayne Turner - ARA Treasurer and
The Hon. David Ridgway MLC

Coalition in South Australia. He is a member of the Ethics Committees of Calvary Hospital and the Department of Health. John is also the Chancellor and a Canon of the Anglican Diocese of The Murray.

Robert Cole is the current CEO of the Epilepsy Centre which operates in South Australia and the Northern Territory. He has a commercial background and is a marketer with broad experience in the service industries, retail and property development. Robert's Board Positions include: Director of Epilepsy Australia Ltd, Director of the Joint Epilepsy Council of Australia, Acting Chair of the Physical & Neurological Council of South Australia and Chair of the IBE International Editors Network.

Our thanks are extended to everyone who attended the AGM, and all those who helped to put the evening together: Bethlehem House, Finsbury Green, Christine's Catering, Government House, West Adelaide Football Club, Tron Civil Contracting, Shelley Lilley and ARA Volunteers and Staff.



Film Night – Double Feature

Sundays 7 & 14 December 2008 - 6pm
Chelsea Cinema, Kensington Park

Australia

Adventure/Drama
Hugh Jackman, Nicole Kidman

Quantum of Solace

Action/Adventure
Daniel Craig, Judi Dench

This event is held in partnership with the
Adelaide Combined Lodges

Tickets: Adults \$14.00 Students \$7.00

Bookings essential: Please contact Erika
on 8161 3322 or email: erika.marshall@ausref.net



Staying in touch with ARA

There are many ways we can stay in touch with you and share our message and stories about our work.

Our newsletter 'REFUGEE' is a quarterly publication. If you would prefer to receive this via email, please advise Erika on 8161 3322 or Erika.marshall@ausref.net

We appreciate that many of you would prefer email contact to save the environment and to help ARA save on postage and printing.

We appreciate your feedback and look forward to hearing from you.

Migration Manager

ARA has recently welcomed Edvania (Nia) Lopes to its Management Team. Born in Brazil, Nia has been in Australia since 1999 and in Adelaide since 2002.



Nia has a degree in Public Relations and a post graduate in Marketing. She first started working at ARA in 2003, assisting at reception as a volunteer. In 2004 she started working for Libby Hogarth & Associates, together with handling administrative duties at ARA. She became a Migration Agent in 2006.

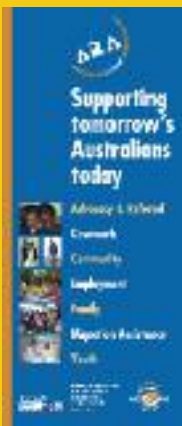
With a wealth of experience in marketing and migration, Nia has a passion for people, enjoys cultural diversity and likes to learn about different traditions and costumes.

Nia's organisational strengths will ensure that ARA's Migration Services continues to grow both as a business and as a support to our refugee and migrant client base.

Thank You!

Special thanks are extended this quarter to participants of the Sunday Mail City Bay Fun Run; in particular our two ARA runners, Danielle De Nadai and John Mwate. A big thank you to you and your friends and family for a great fundraising effort.

Thanks are also extended to United Way who have supported ARA with funds to purchase some display banners which we can use at Events or Presentations. We are delighted to acknowledge Wayne Smith from United Way for his support together with the support of his staff and the United Way Board.



How you can help

Donations in Memory

ARA occasionally receives donations given in memory of a person in lieu of flowers being sent to a funeral.

Arrangements for this type of donation can generally be made with your Funeral Director who, in conjunction, with ARA will make sure that envelopes are available at the funeral.

Each donor is sent a receipt for the donation and the next of kin is later advised of names of individual donors and the total contribution from all donors.

For further information, please contact Erika on 8161 3322 or erika.marshall@ausref.net

Editors Note:

ARA welcomes contributions to REFUGEE. Please contact Erika Marshall for details. Erika.Marshall@ausref.net
Direct: 8161 3322

Please note the views represented in REFUGEE are not necessarily those of ARA.

Australian Refugee Association
304 Henley Beach Road
Underdale SA 5032
Phone: 08 8354 2951
Fax: 08 8354 2953
Email: fundraising@ausref.net
Web: www.ausref.net

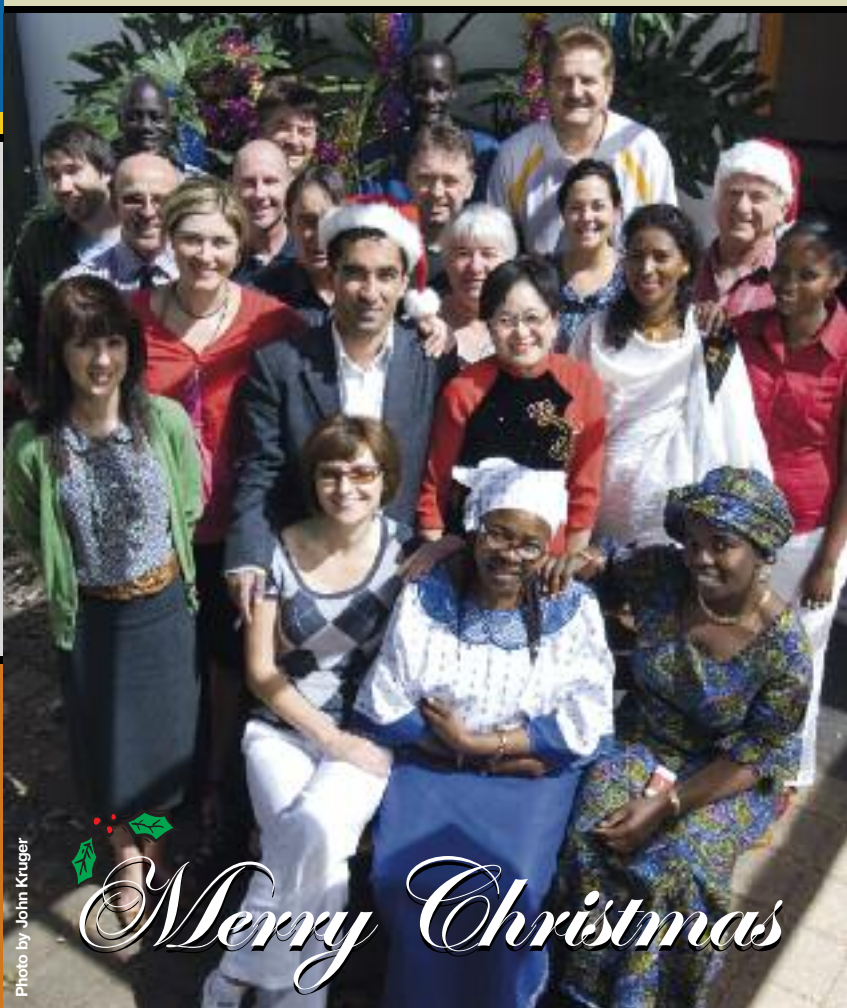


Photo by John Kruger

Merry Christmas

We wish all members, friends and supporters a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.