

## REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT MENTORING PROJECT PILOT

### Organisations Involved & Contact Details

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### Aims & Target Group

The aim of the pilot project was to utilise mentors to support and guide clients from a refugee background towards appropriate career pathways in terms of employment or further study.

Another aim of the pilot was also to make industry contacts with a view to opening doors for refugees in the workplace and securing workplace and employment opportunities where possible.

### Project Description & Components

1. Induction training for mentees and mentors (this covered roles and responsibilities of each party and emphasised the fact that the process is mentee driven).
2. Refugee specific employment skills training for mentees.
3. Mentor support meetings.
4. Capacity building of mentees (including accompanying them to an information sessions for traineeships & organising work experience placements).

Of the total 20 mentors who attended induction training, 13 mentors were deemed compatible with the mentees in the program and were matched accordingly. Some mentors could not be matched due to the following reasons:

- Industry the mentor was employed in did not interest the mentee.
- Travelling distance between mentor and mentee was too great to meet on a regular basis.
- Maturity level of the mentor, in terms of adequate experience, knowledge and empathy to be an effective mentor.

## Process

REMP was actively supported by the Steering Committee members comprising Auburn Council, Auburn Migrant Resource Centre, ACL and Auburn Youth Centre.

The pilot demonstrated that even in a relatively short period of time with adequate support refugee clients gain employment and/or improve their access to employment opportunities and/or pathways.

With a view to opening doors for refugees in the workplace and securing workplace and employment opportunities where possible, AMES made the following workplaces who expressed interest to support the project in the future:

- St Vincent's Hospital (MOU signed),
- Zurich, Auburn Council Library,
- Bankstown/Peakhurst Uniting Care Aged Care Hostel and Julia Ross,
- IKON, Y Hotel, and
- Woolworths.

## Outcomes

The outcomes achieved which were:

- client secured a traineeship position at St Vincent's Mater Hospital.
- clients engaged in a work experience placement.
- clients gained employment (part time and casual).

Approximately half the clients were involved in studying or wanted to study with support from their mentor.

Over the period of the pilot, mentees showed a marked improvement in their level of self-confidence, which translated into improved job search skills and networking abilities. Mentees themselves stated that the support they got from their mentor was invaluable. They also said they felt they had **'gained a friend' and 'didn't feel isolated in Australia anymore'**.

## Challenges & Obstacles

- Find compatible mentors.
- Continue to offer support to mentors who have been matched with mentees until their one year commitment to the mentee has run its course.

## Funding

The project was mainly funded by Dooley's Catholic Club through the Community Development Scheme Expenditure funding commonly known as 'Clubs Funding' which is administered by Auburn Council. AMES also channelled some funding from the Community Capacity Building Grants towards the project.

Images

