

# NEWSLETTER

MIGRANT ACTION TRUST (MAT)

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MIGRANT ACTION TRUST  
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Celebrating 'International Volunteer Day,' Migrant Action Trust wishes to acknowledge, in this newsletter, its volunteers for their tireless support and assistance.

## More hands make job lighter



(L) Aqsa prepares workshop materials

(Above) Aqsa gets training in Quickbooks Accounting System

Office work became lighter at MAT when Aqsa Mohsan came to volunteer.

Originally from Pakistan, she came to New Zealand in 2006 to join her husband, an Assistant Accountant, who was studying at the time.

Clean and green New Zealand impressed her so much that she decided to stay. Like some migrants, the right job eluded her despite her high credentials.

But life must go on and she decided career change in Early Childhood Education. We appreciate her efforts and wish her all the best of luck.

## In their DNA to be productive



Opting to be more productive while jobsearching, they volunteered their skills and expertise

(L-R) Alma Soriano, Rom Ipapo, Agnes Granada (MAT Co-ordinator), Paolo Collado and Len Sanvictores

With MAT's recent expansion, IT skilled migrants are helping to tidy-up the MAT computer network system and website.

More importantly, they are playing a vital role in the development

of digital hub website and training manuals for MS Office applications in the "Mt Roskill Digital Hub" project.

Very competent, focused with great attitude and work ethic, any employer wanting productive people in their work place will not regret hiring any of them.

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### Upcoming workshops

#### "Positioning Job Applications for Engineers, Accountants and IT"

When: 5 December 2009  
9 am - 12 noon  
Where: Glenfield Community Board Meeting Room  
(beside Glenfield Library)

To register, call 629 3500 or email [info@migrantactiontrust.org.nz](mailto:info@migrantactiontrust.org.nz)

## Media Resources ‘Make-over’



Both his parents are doctors who wanted Kevin Fontanilla to have taken up medicine but he studied Media Design instead.

MAT was privileged to have him as a volunteer in graphics design. The colourful and trendy designs of MAT brochures, display banner, letterhead and business card were all done thanks to his craftsmanship.



Brochures and display banners posted in MAT office designed by Kevin

## Never Too Busy to Help



Credit goes to Ado Flores, Joy Caballero, Yen Uera-Tesoro and Dennis Maga who were MAT volunteer speakers at Jobsearch in Tough Times workshop on 14 November at the Glenfield Community Board Meeting Room.

It was so popular that migrants requested another session to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> Dec, 9am to 12 noon in the same venue.

Remi Cruz, Ado Flores and Joy Caballero will be speaking about positioning job applications for engineers, ac-

countants and IT professionals respectively.

The migrant community is fortunate to have migrants such as those mentioned to volunteer their time despite their busy schedules.

## Behind the Scenes Volunteers

**R**ichard Barter - a Kiwi and one of the founders of MAT has been the Board Secretary since 2003.

Wearing many hats, mostly in the area of economic sustainability for community, he currently chairs the Mt Roskill Community Board.

He is also the Manager of Resource Development at the Tear Fund. This role takes him to many parts of the world where he meets face-to-face victims of disasters, calamity and the poorest of the poor.

His global experience enabled him to relate to the many cultures who come to Migrant Action Trust.

**D**r Camille Nakhid, originally from Trinidad and Tobago, is a Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Sciences in Auckland University of Technology.

Educated abroad and in New Zealand, she published a number of social development papers mostly about Maori and Pacific people.

Not many people are aware that Camille was one of the founding member, and still is a member of the Waitakere Ethnic Board.

Her first encounter with MAT was in Nov 2007 where she worked with staff members and volunteers in putting together a submission to the new immigration bill. She recently facilitated the migrant's forum held in Glenfield last 30<sup>th</sup> May and in Waitakere last 5<sup>th</sup> Sept.

These forums resulted in migrants' petition, signed by 2,626 individuals and is now in the parliament for deliberation.

**A**soka Basnayake is proud to be a Sri Lankan New Zealander. Asoka is currently working in the disability sector in communications.



*Front row (L-R)  
Asoka Basnayake [Deputy Chair], Tanya Suin [Member], Navin Kumar Sharma [Treasurer]*

*Back row (L-R)  
Richard Barter [Secretary], Camille Nakhid [Chairperson]*

She also produces a weekly community radio programme Ethnic Women's Voices.

She joined the MAT board as she is passionate about the migrant sector especially migrants making decisions about themselves in migrant organisations.

She brings to the board her skills in journalism and media, research and communications and her experience in migrant settlement as well as her extensive networks.

**T**anya Suin came to New Zealand as a skilled migrant in 1996 and is currently working as a Community Social Worker for the Auckland District Health Board.

Although she became MAT board member in 2007, Tanya has been a MAT volunteer mentor for job seeking migrants since 2006. Her JP duties bring her in contact with wide ethnic groups.

This she does, on top of her other community involvement as member of COGS Local Distribution Committee, VP of Waitakere Ethnic Board, member of Waitakere Asian Support Group for City Council and Police and Mercy Hospice Chinese Support Group.

**N**avin Kumar Sharma, principal of Murray Sharma & Associates, is a practicing accountant who migrated from Fiji in 1988.

Working as an accountant and business advisers for various accounting firms during earlier years in New Zealand, he decided to establish his own practice in 1992. His busy work did not prevent him from volunteering and became part of the Board in 2007

**R**emi Cruz, originally from the Philippines, migrated to New Zealand in 2003 after a 20-year working stint in Brunei.

Before being involved with MAT initially as a volunteer mentor and later as a Trustee, he gave free advice and assistance on employment search to new migrants in Wellington and Auckland.

Remi, a Chartered Professional Engineer, an International Professional Engineer, and a Professional Member of IPENZ, runs his own engineering consultancy practice in Waitakere City.

## Volunteers Making a Difference

The MAT initiated Migrants' Petition finally reached the parliament on 17 Nov 2009. Presented to Darien Fenton, MP Labour Party and Keith Locke, MP Green Party on 14 Nov at Glenfield Community Board Meeting Room, it was signed by 2,600 individuals.

The petition was the output of two forums, face-to-face meeting with Immigration Minister Jonathan Coleman and many volunteer hours of Camille Nakhid, Asoka Basnayake, Dennis Maga, Kenneth Leong, Mel Libre and Russell Wood.

More volunteers came to help during the events like Cristine Panuelos, Martin Fontanilla, Rommel Villadiego, Myrna Guevarra, Julie Ilagan and others too many to mention in this small space.

To our volunteers, thank you for giving more than you have received. This world is a better place to live in because of you. Thank you again.



*Mel Libre (MAT volunteer) and Agnes Granada present the Migrant's Petition. (L-R) Mel Libre, Keith Locke, Darien Fenton and Agnes Granada*



*MAT staff and volunteers during the presentation of the Position Paper to Immigration Minister Jonathan Coleman last July 2009.*

*(L-R) Kenneth Leong (volunteer), Kevin Cameron, Agnes Granada (MAT staff), Richard Barter (volunteer), Minister Jonathan Coleman, Russel Wood (volunteer), Dr Jackie Blue (MP National Party), Dennis Maga (volunteer), Asoka Basnayake (volunteer), Honey Rasalan (MAT staff) and Mel Libre (volunteer)*

### Become a Friend of Migrant Action Trust

*by making a donation. You can claim 1/3 of your donation as a tax rebate.*

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#### **ASB St Lukes Branch**

12 -3077-0509589-00

and email us your details at

[info@migrantactiontrust.org.nz](mailto:info@migrantactiontrust.org.nz)

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