

NEWSLETTER

MIGRANT ACTION TRUST (MAT)

MARCH 2011

ISSUE 14



Where would MAT be without volunteers?

MAT provides Voluntary Work Experience to job seeking migrants. The volunteer job must add value to a migrant's CV so that it benefits both parties.

The service has been offered since 2006 and MAT has seen 95% of its volunteers finding meaningful employment because while they are serving as volunteers, they are simultaneously being mentored in their job search.

MAT is privileged to host talented migrants through this service.

Henry Manas, a volunteer since September 2010, originally from the Philippines who has an IT background. He developed an Access programme to manage MAT's database.

Today, that programme is well used by other volunteers, Nikki Gamer and Evelyn Rivera who are helping in the office administration area.

Working part-time in a retirement village, Nikki made use of her spare time and volunteered at MAT since January 2010. Evelyn on the other hand is a recent migrant. Her fiancée recommended MAT as a good place to volunteer her time.

Nikki and Evelyn are doing fabulous job in their assigned tasks particularly in the customer service area. They are both very caring, they make everyone feel like



Having dedicated and hard-working volunteers get the job done at MAT. (From top clockwise) Jimmy Dionisio, Jane Mueke, Henry Manas, Evelyn Rivera and Nikki Gamer

kings and queens.

Jane Mueke is a recent volunteer. Originally from Kenya with a background in Human Resource, she's currently working on a special project alongside Honey Rasalan, MAT's Project/Funding Coordinator. Jane too, like the rest of our volunteers, is doing a fantastic job in her special assignment.

Jimmy Dionisio is also a recent

volunteer. We appreciate his dedication assisting the community groups and the microenterprise clients of MAT in preparing their financial accounts. His accounting skills are very much needed to ensure that the accounts of the COR members are up-to-date.

We take this opportunity to thank Henry, Nikki, Evelyn, Jane and Jimmy for helping MAT.

Solutions to migrants' challenges, birthing in MAT Common Office and Resource

Korean Women's Association of New Zealand

As MAT reported last year, Eun Hee, President of Korean Women's Association of New Zealand (KWANZ) is very keen in raising KWANZ to the next level. She has moved forward and in January 2011, more computer classes in Korean language were held in MAT's premises.

Supporting their desire to expand, Honey Rasalan, MAT Project/Funding Coordinator, has organised some of KWANZ Executives to run a 3-day training.

The brief training held in MAT, increased their understanding of programme development that aligns with KWANZ objectives as well



The lady executives of KWANZ were more than happy to toil for 3 days to gain knowledge and skills in project development and funding application writing.

(From left) Honey Rasalan, Regina Rhee, Eun Hee Kim and Grace Kim.

as meeting the needs of their community.

The training also enhanced their ability to complete grant applica-

tion forms – a daunting job for the Executives prior to the training. More activities are in the pipeline to build KWANZ's capacity.

NZ Somali Women Inc - Sewing Lessons in English

The Sewing School for women of the NZ Somali Women Inc (NZSWI), since it started in 2007 attracted a lot of interest due to its potential of becoming a community enterprise thereby creating jobs for the ethnic women whose main barrier to employment is the inability to communicate in English as well as

the lack of occupational skills appropriate to the New Zealand environment.

The sewing school initially intended for Somali women through the years developed into a multi-ethnic sewing school. The school, however, had only teachers who spoke English and communication

between the teacher and students proved challenging.

While there's been modest successes in training the women, English remains to be biggest barrier to move forward. To address this, a new English sewing course for ethnic women was started in March 2011 and this is being held in MAT's premises.



The NZSWI ladies were keen to learn English terminologies specifically used in the sewing and clothing industry. (Right) Samples of the ladies' creations.



Dresses

Bisaya Speaking Filipinos

There are 170 dialects in the Philippines, Tagalog being the dialect that holds the Filipinos together and English is spoken by the majority.

In 2008, the Bisaya speaking Filipinos living in Auckland, formed Katilingbang Bisaya of New Zealand (KBNZ) to preserve their happy and fun-loving nature and above all their language and culture of family orientation and devotion.

After three years of high energy events and programmes, which kept the membership busy, KBNZ wants to move to the next level.

Rosendo Menchavez, President of KBNZ and the rest of the Executives felt it was fitting to do some strategic planning. The first meeting



The KBNZ holding its strategic planning at MAT meeting room.

was held in MAT on 5th March 2011. The spirit of unity is running high within the membership (the highest in the Filipino community) and the

leadership is aiming to continue for many years to come.

ONKOD Somali Youth Development Inc

Members of ONKOD were not present at the recent refugee youth forum held on 19th February. Their input would have been valuable.

But the community wants to hear their input so Honey Rasalan reminded the Executives of ONKOD Somali Youth Development Inc that they were formed to assist their peers and invited them for a planning meeting. ONKOD accepted

and the first meeting was held on 6th of March 2011 in MAT.

To assist the process, Honey facilitated the discussion of issues presently faced by the Somali youth such as: employment and language barriers, cultural identity and separation from some of the family members, misunderstandings within the home due to conflict of cultures, lack of social, sporting and recreational activities and difficulty

to access some of the mainstream services.

During the discussion, it came to light that the ONKOD Executives were sincerely concerned about their youth. They intend to hold more meetings and will encourage more Somali youth to participate so that they can jointly develop programmes to overcome their challenges.



The ONKOD Executives spent 3 days of intensive workshop to identify concerns facing youths of refugee background. The team came up with 5 priority areas and were able to produce 5 possible projects to address the identified concerns.



Planting new seeds of multi-ethnic partnership

Maile Uluave is the Coordinator of Multi-Educational Support & Services Trust (MESST). She and her team run various programmes for children, women, parents, adults and elderly because in the Tongan culture, family includes 3 generations sometimes 4.

Fadumo Ahmad on the other hand is the Chairperson of the NZ Somali Women's Incorporated (NZSWI). NZSWI runs programmes for children, youth and women. One of these programmes is the sewing class.

Maile and Fadumo met at MAT's Common Office and Resource where they started building a friendly relationship. From this new found friendship, Maile and Fadumo have partnered together in sharing the use of sewing machines in the sewing school.



"In unity there is strength". NZSWI and MESST are working together to provide better outcomes in their own community. In this case, NZSWI's sewing tutor is training the ladies of MESST.

These days, the Tongan ladies are also taking sewing classes three times a week between 12 to 2 pm while the machines are not being used by the students of NZSWI.

Tongan and Somali community are planting a new seed of multi-ethnic partnership.



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