



MIGRANT ACTION TRUST

growing confident communities together

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Newsletter of Migrant Action Trust

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Danran Helps Japanese Migrants

Over 40 Japanese migrants aged between 40 and 70 years who now live in Auckland are members of Danran which was formed a year ago. In Japanese Danran means 'happy family time' and the group believes that well-being integrates mental health (mind) and physical health (body) resulting in more holistic approaches to disease prevention and health promotion.



Some of Danran's meetings have been held in MAT's premises. Recently, an outdoor event was organised by Tatsuo Nishimura, MAT's Japanese Social Support Coordinator. Held in Cornwall Park, One Tree Hill, 30 members came together for a barbeque. Everyone had a good time, chatting, laughing and making new friends. Everyone who attended is looking forward to the next one.

Please email Tatsuo Nishimura tatsu.migrantaction@xtra.co.nz if you know of any Japanese migrants who might be interested in joining Danran.

Neighbourhood Day

The Neighbourhood Day event at Molley Green Park Reserve, Roskill South on 23 March was a blast. There were lots of entertainment from live music, dance, cultural performances, international food, carnival events, a giant water slide and other activities for the family.

The Living Wage movement and Migrant Action Trust shared a stall on the day. Just about all the kids in the park had 'living wage' sticker on their shirt including big kid Mayor Len Brown. Kids also loved Migrant Action Trust's 'lucky dip' fund-raiser.

Indeed it was a day of celebration. Mt Roskill community came and showcased its uniqueness and diversity.



Living Wage Movement and Migrant Action Trust staff posed for a photo with Mayor of Auckland City Len Brown

Voluntary Work Experience

Voluntary work experience is one of the jobsearch services that MAT offers to migrants. Since it started in 2008, the experience has been highly successful in terms of helping migrants find meaningful employment. This service is mutually beneficial for MAT and the jobseekers because the jobseekers have helped MAT while in return it has helped jobseekers find employment.

One of these volunteers was Kiran Vegunta from India who was seeking an IT job. He volunteered at MAT in December 2012, just at the time when MAT was reconfiguring its office and computer lay-out in its new home at 766 Sandringham Road Ext. Kiran was an enormous help with technical support and proved to be very capable, a great team player and showed a common sense approach to problem solving. MAT highly recommends him to anyone looking for someone with great IT skills.

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Butol Izbal is also from India and has been living in New Zealand for 21 years. As a student at Auckland University she demonstrated her active citizenship through her involvement in Islam Awareness Week, the Muslim Youth Advisory Council and at Career Expo assisted at the 'Help Green our Uni' club stall.

Giving back to the community was her motivation to volunteer in MAT helping Honey Rasalan. She's currently involved in implementing the upcoming multi-ethnic toy library, a joint venture between Al Nejash and MAT. Her psychology background has also been useful to Sharlene Pacaigue in the development of MAT's employment programme for youth in Mt Roskill.



Top photo Kiran Vegunta



(From left) Honey Rasalan orienting Butol Izbal

If you are seeking for a local experience and would like to take part in Migrant Action Trust's 'Voluntary Work Experience' programme email Sharlene at sharlene.migrantaction@xtra.co.nz

Start Right in New Zealand Seminar

The second Start Right seminar for 2013 was held on 1 March. Shortly after this seminar, MAT received the following email:

*Hi Agnes, Thanks a lot for the wonderful and motivational seminar for our career success.
Regards, Ranbir Kumar*

One of the participants was really fired up by the seminar and left a comment:

I had a very good time in this session. I would like to form a group for those of similar situation. Guillermo

There were 12 participants in this seminar representing 9 different nations, including Nigeria, India, Fiji, Thailand,

Japan, Philippines, France, Italy and Sri Lanka. This seminar received an excellent evaluation from the participants. Please email Sharlene at sharlene.migrantaction@xtra.co.nz for information about the next Start Right in New Zealand seminar.



New Graduates Encouraged

New international student graduates were encouraged and warned at the same time at Agnes Granada's speech at the graduation ceremony of Kiwi Institute of Training and Education (KITE) on 27 February. She shared her smooth and successful journey in New Zealand with the graduates, emphasizing that the key to it was maintaining a good attitude and she used the old adage 'attitude not aptitude determines your altitude'

She further reminded the graduates that migrants' immigration to New Zealand comes with responsibility including responsibility to yourself. "Let's value ourselves so that other people will value us. We possess skills and talent to make a great contribution to New Zealand" she said. "Accepting an employment with unfair terms and conditions is NOT valuing ourselves, for if we accept it, trouble is on its way. Aspire to obtain an employment which pays a living wage, the income that will cover the cost of living in New Zealand plus the ability to participate in the society".



left-right) Agnes Granada, MAT Trust Manager and Normie Yaneza

Granada closed her speech with another reminder that well-settled migrants should help those migrants who are still struggling.

Our Mind Likes the Familiar

MAT's theory is that New Zealand employers find it easier to pronounce the English name 'Harry' rather than the Japanese name 'Harunobu' because the former is an English name and so the mind likes the familiar. The 'familiar' principle works when people have something in common. This principle has also worked in attracting Japanese to MAT for they now have someone from their own ethnicity to talk to.



Top photo (left-right) Agnes Granada & Shoichi Isogai.
Right photo (left-right) Asami Seino & Tatsuo Nishimura

The 'familiar' principle works when people have something in common.

Shoichi Isogai and Asami Seino are both Japanese and the 'familiar' principle is activated because Tatsuo Nishimura is in MAT.

Shoichi has sought interview coaching support from MAT while Asami recently volunteered to do accounting work. Shoichi has had a few interviews so he's not too far away from his dream job. Asami, on the other hand, will be earning 'local experience' credits as she assists MAT with its bookkeeping and accounting. Like Linda Zhou and Harunobu Tsuchimochi, former MAT accounting volunteers who are presently working in a chartered accounting firm, Asami will also succeed in finding her dream accounting job.



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