



**migrant resource centre**  
southern tasmania inc.

*Issue 19, October 2011*

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## MRC EVENTS

### Royal Agricultural Show 2011

The MRC craft exhibit at the 2011 Royal Hobart Show represented the creative craft and talent of the MRC Arts & Crafts Program Workshop Leaders. Tabitha Nyirahabimarn (Rwanda), Sara Karimi (Afghanistan) and Zemenay Gebremichael (Ethiopia) displayed their work and provided interaction and information on their culture and craft to the public. Baindu Tamba (Liberia) travelled from Launceston to join the display and worked on her home-made weaving loom as an active working demonstration for visitors.

The display was very well received and provided a colourful and creative atmosphere in the Creative Craft Pavilion. Many thanks to Marion Woodward from 'The Royal Agricultural Society of Tasmania' for her ongoing support, to the exhibitors Baindu, Tabitha, Sara and Zemenay and to MRC staff and MRC volunteers who provided support for the exhibitors and MRC staff members Emily Conolan and Suzanne Feike during the four day exhibition.

We gratefully acknowledge funding for the MRC Arts & Crafts Program by the Department of Premier and cabinet under the Community Capacity Building Grants 2010.



**Tabitha Nyirahabimarn with her exhibits at the Royal Agricultural Show 2011 display**

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### Drumbeat Program

This year humanitarian refugee students at the Elizabeth College were able to participate in the Drumbeat program run by the Phoenix Centre. It has been a huge success thanks to the two

wonderful facilitators Renee Valentino and Tony Waller. Drums are used as a way to explore relationships, emotions, attitudes and beliefs. Suzanne Peacock (ESL Teacher) said "It has helped our students to communicate without always relying on just words. They have shared their feelings in a relaxed environment with their friends to support them." Moving to Australia is not easy and the Drumbeat program provides support to the students to cope better with their new life.



Some of the comments made by the participants on the Drumbeat program include:

***"We communicate very well together when we are drumming."* (Isaac)**

***"We work together as a team and you are not alone – you are not scared."* (Hana)**

***"When I do Drumbeat I am responsible for my part so it makes me happy and more confident."* (Shiva)**

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### Keeping Balanced – Mental Health Week 2011

The Phoenix Centre held a Mental Health Week event at the Glenorchy Civic Centre on Friday 14 October. Over 55 participants attended the all day event; including service providers, students, school chaplains and members of CaLD communities. Judy Saba, a Cross-Cultural Psychologist and Churchill Fellowship recipient from Sydney, led participants through a dynamic interactive training session around the issues of working with diversity in mental health. The Elizabeth College Drumbeat students also

provided wonderful entrainment with their drumming performance. All who attended agreed that the discussion, information, and practical tools shared were relevant and greatly appreciated.

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## **Intergenerational Support and Psychological Wellbeing Among Older Chinese Women**

On Saturday 22 October the MRC hosted a very interesting seminar presented by Professor Iris Chi.

Professor Iris Chi taught at the University of Hong Kong for 17 years, and was honoured by the City of Hong Kong for her public and community service to the city's ageing population. She is an honorary professor, member, consultant and advisor to more than 30 organisations including Peking University and the World Health Organisation.

Professor Chi spoke about her research into what makes older Chinese women achieve a higher level of wellbeing and happiness. In her research she studied how the women were affected by helping their sons and daughters in three ways:

- Providing financial support to their adult children
- Providing help with household tasks
- Taking care of grandchildren.

Professor Chi's research clearly showed that older Chinese women's sense of wellbeing and happiness was very much improved through taking care of grandchildren. Interestingly, those women that provided financial support to their adult sons and daughters reported that they felt reduced wellbeing and happiness.

However, the older women's wellbeing and happiness was shown to also depend on receiving appreciation from their sons and daughters: in the Chinese culture this would be called Filial Piety, or Devotion.

This is a very interesting result, and may well be the same among women in other cultural groups.

Another point of interest in these findings is the impact that China's One Child Policy will have on the social and family fabric of that vast country. The research shows that the care and wellbeing of older people is deeply embedded in giving and taking of care across generations. Questions are starting to arise: who will take care now that, since the late 1970s, families have only one child? There will be fewer cousins, aunts, uncles, and other extended family members to offer support. Will this result in the building of large nursing homes in China?

More than 40 people came to listen and ask questions, many from Hobart's Chinese community.

The Seminar was provided in partnership with the Australian Association of Gerontology, and the opportunity was offered through the University of Tasmania's Wicking Centre.

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## **MRC Annual General Meeting 2011**

The MRC Annual General Meeting was on Thursday, 27 October 2011 at the Glenorchy Civic Centre. It was a very successful meeting attended by around 75 people including stakeholders, MRC members, staff, volunteer's and clients.

During the meeting the MRC members unanimously ratified the revised constitution for MRC. An election was conducted for the position of MRC Board - Committee Member and the following positions have been filled on the MRC Board for 2011 - 2012

<b>Chairperson:</b>	Martin Modinger
<b>Vice Chairperson:</b>	Otto De Vries
<b>Secretary:</b>	Alison Burrows Cheng
<b>Second Secretary:</b>	Don McNicol
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Maureen Rudge
<b>Second Treasurer:</b>	Paul Patel
<b>Committee Member:</b>	Parisa Aminzadeh
<b>Committee Member:</b>	Helen Burnett
<b>Committee Member:</b>	Tim Mangan

**Committee Member:** Margaret Baikie  
**Committee Member:** June Templer

Many thanks to the guest speakers, entertainers and MRC staff whose combined efforts ensured that the meeting was successful.

The 2011 Annual Report 2010-2011 is available to view on our website

<http://www.mrchobart.org.au/content/annual-report>

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## **Community Forum**

On Thursday 1 December 2011 the MRC, African Communities Council of Tasmania (ACCT) and members of the CaLD communities of Tasmania will be presenting a forum to be held in Hobart at the Stanley Burbury Theatre at the University of Tasmania. The forum will bring together CaLD community members from around Tasmania who will report on progress from four working groups that have been formed to identify issues and solutions around the key areas of police, media, housing, education and employment. This forum will build upon two earlier forums held this year in April and July. It is an opportunity for the working groups to present to a range of service providers from across the Government, Community and Private Sector with the aim of making positive steps towards resolving these issues.

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## **Myer Hobart Christmas Pageant 2011**

The 2011 Myer Christmas Pageant will be held on Saturday, 19 November in the city of Hobart. The MRC will be participating with new, emerging and established community groups. It is a great opportunity for communities to parade their traditional costumes, creative props, music skills and join in the festivities of the day. A workshop will be held on Friday, 4 November at the MRC Connect Training Room, Glenorchy from 10.00am – 1.30pm to make props and colourful decorations for the parade. If you would like to participate in the workshop or parade, please

contact Emma Mathieson or Natalie Pausin at the MRC on 6221 0999.

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## **MRC Service Update**

### **MRC 'Connect'**

#### **Job Coaching at 'Connect'**

The Job Coaching program at Connect is well underway with most participants already getting to the interview stage in their job search. The Job Coach Kiros, is working with participants on both short term and long term employment goals.

#### **IT Training at 'Connect'**

Connect commenced IT Training for members of the Bhutanese community on Friday 14 October. It is intended that by the end of the program in early December, the participants are able to share their knowledge with other community members with lower level English. Community members can also book computers at the Connect office to practise their IT skills.

#### **'Connect' North**

MRC Connect's programs for Northern Tasmania is now well and truly established. The first steering committee meeting consisting of representatives from DEEWR, DIAC, MRC North, Polytechnic and JSA Providers was held on 28 September.

Connect North has also been busy providing support to a number of clients and has been successfully linking prospective employers and job seekers.

#### **Job Coaching at 'Connect' North**

Connect North will also be running a Job Coaching Program commencing towards the end of October. The program will be conducted similar to the Job Coaching in Hobart and will be run by Alister Mckinnon.

Alister is a part time staff member at MRC North and will take on the additional role of Job Coach along side his work as Community Development Officer. Alister has strong links with employers

and with the migrant community and will be an asset to our Launceston project.

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## **MRC Positions Vacant**

### **CaLD Community Connections**

#### **Project Officer Launceston (0.6 FTE)**

The Phoenix Centre is part of a national network of torture and trauma support services and is managed by the Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tas) Inc. The Phoenix Centre is seeking to employ a Project Officer for their National Suicide Prevention Program in Launceston on a part time basis (0.6 FTE).

#### **Administration Assistant (Full-time position)**

The Phoenix Centre is seeking an experienced Administration Assistant to support the Phoenix Centre Manager, staff and clients in Hobart. This is a great opportunity for a dynamic, flexible, self motivated individual to join an interesting multidisciplinary team.

This position is for a fixed term contract until 30 June 2012, but with possibility of extension.

A copy of the Position Descriptions and selection criteria can be obtained from the Migrant Resource Centre by calling - 03 6221 0999 or emailing [reception@mrchobart.org.au](mailto:reception@mrchobart.org.au).

Only applications addressing the selection criteria will be considered.

Please send applications marked "confidential" to Chief Executive Officer

Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tas) Inc  
49 Molle St.

Hobart TAS 7000

OR email: [employment@mrchobart.org.au](mailto:employment@mrchobart.org.au)

Applications close 5pm - Monday, 7 November 2011

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## **MRC Staff**

MRC welcomed the following staff over the last month-

**Geoff Dugan** - joined the Phoenix team as a counsellor/advocate for clients held in detention at Pontville. Geoff began his career in the mental health field working for the NSW Health Commission as a registered nurse and community development officer. He has since been in private practice for the past 35 years, counselling and teaching, both within Australia, the US, New Zealand and Japan. With a wide variety of training experience in many fields of therapy, he now sits comfortably with the knowing that skills help, but respect, openness, listening closely and a willingness to learn about the person you are with are essential.

Along with his counselling practice, Geoff has been developing an organic farm at Koonya (Tasman Peninsula) for the past five years.

**Beth Lord** - commenced work in the National Suicide Prevention Program at The Phoenix Centre in late September. Prior to working at MRC Beth coordinated a Youth Mentoring Program at Anglicare; and before that worked with students newly arrived to Australia, at Guilford Young College.

Born and bred in Tasmania, Beth, her husband and three little girls (now teenagers and young adults) moved to Melbourne; had a three year stint in Singapore (which included lots of travelling around, particularly in Asia), than back to Melbourne before finally coming 'home'. All this moving around gave Beth a little 'taste' of living within a cultural framework quite different to her own, and encouraged her to work with people she finds incredibly interesting and inspiring; many who've had no choice but to leave behind their country, culture, friends and family; amazing and very brave people.

When not working Beth loves spending time at Coles Bay (her favourite place in the world!), fishing, kayaking, cooking (eating) and travelling (& eating).

**Deborah Stroh-Reilly** joined the Phoenix Centre as Project Officer/Administration Assistant. Deborah's involvement with MRC began as a volunteer teaching English to the African elders which she felt was a joy and privilege. After that, she helped out at the Molle Street office reception on a short - term contract. Deborah feels that being a product of immigrant parents (English mother, Austrian father) has helped shape her world view and working with, and amongst other cultures, is a small contribution to make a difference.

Deborah has previously worked in a myriad roles ranging from landscaping, marketing, organising, researching, customer service, skiing, television production, managing, writing (including a recipe book) and teaching English. After travelling and working in many parts of the world, a job for ABCTV brought Deborah to Hobart 11 years ago. And now she has two delectable Tasmanian daughters! To relax, Deborah enjoys bushwalking, skiing, bike riding and orienteering with the family, all balanced out with a daily dose of meditation!

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## Focus on our Volunteers

### Multicultural Volunteering Expo

On Wednesday, 21 September three MRC staff – Grazina Smith, Ros Goodsell and Amy Kay represented MRC at the first Multicultural Volunteering Expo at the University of Tasmania. The Expo was organised by Volunteering Tasmania in partnership with UTas and the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service.

The Expo was a good opportunity to network with other volunteer organisations, display resources and meet potential volunteers. The MRC staff generated strong interest amongst the students and received some expressions of interest for volunteering.

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## Cultural Calendar Dates: November 2011

**November 1:** Melbourne Cup - The Melbourne Cup is Australia's premier horse racing event that 'stops the nation'. It is always held on the first Tuesday in November. November 1: Anniversary of the Revolution -Algeria

**November 1:** National Day - Antigua and Barbuda

**November 1:** All Saints' Day - This Christian day honours saints, known and unknown. Saints are men and women recognised for lives of holiness and devotion to God or who were martyred for their faith.

**November 3:** Independence Day Dominica

**November 3:** National Day - Federated States of Micronesia

**November 3:** National Day Panama

**November 4:** Prosperity Feast - The Mandaean community are an ancient religious community from southern Iraq and Iran.

**November 4:** National Day -Tonga

**November 7:** Eid al Adha - The Feast of Sacrifice commemorates the ordeal of Abraham who was asked to sacrifice his only son to prove his faith to Allah (God). November 9: Independence Day Cambodia

**November 10:** Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib - Guru Nanak Dev was the founder of the Sikh faith and way of life. Sikhism stresses the importance of doing good deeds rather than merely carrying out rituals.

**November 11:** Remembrance Day - This day marks the anniversary of the armistice which ended the First World War (1914–18). We observe one minute's silence at 11am in memory of the millions who died or suffered in all wars and armed conflicts. November 11: National Day Angola

**November 12:** Birth of Baha'u'llah - On this day people of Baha'i faith refrain from work and celebrate the birth of their faith's founder.-Baha'i

**November 16:** International Day for Tolerance - Tolerance does not mean indifference or a grudging acceptance of others. It is a way of life based on mutual understanding and respect for others, and on the belief that global diversity is to be embraced, not feared.' UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon-United Nations

**November 18:** Proclamation of Independence - Latvia

**November 18: National Day Oman**

**November 19:** National Day Monaco

**November 22:** Independence Day Lebanon –

**November 24:** Martyrdom (Shahidi) of Guru Tegh Bahadur - Guru Tegh Bahadur, the 9th Guru, sacrificed his life to defend the religious freedom of another faith.

**November 25:** White Ribbon Day - This day is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Everyone can show their commitment to ending violence against women by wearing a white ribbon.

**November 25:** National Day -Bosnia and Herzegovina

**November 25:** Independence Day -Suriname

**November 27:** First Sunday of Advent - Advent is observed with the lighting of advent candles,

display of wreaths and special ceremonies. Advent also anticipates the coming again to earth of Jesus Christ.

**November 27:** Al Hijra/Muharram (New Year) - Muharram is the first month of the year on the Islamic Calendar and marks the New Year for Muslims.

**November 28:** National Day -Albania

**November 28:** National Day -Mauritania

**November 28:** Proclamation of Independence Day -Timor-Leste

**November 30:** St Andrew's Day - St Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland. His feast day, 30 November, is the national day of Scotland.- Scotland

**November 30:** Independence Day -Barbados

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**Tune in to Hobart FM 96.1 to get more updates from the Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tasmania) Inc on the last Monday of every month. Next broadcast is on Monday, 28 November 2011 at 1pm. If you would like to contribute any community updates or articles, please email**

**[aanil@mrchobart.org.au](mailto:aanil@mrchobart.org.au)**

**Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tasmania) Inc  
49 Molle Street, Hobart 7000, Tel: (03) 6221 0999 Fax : (03) 6231 1264  
[www.mrchobart.org.au](http://www.mrchobart.org.au)**