

Multicultural Project

Just like other years this year has gone so quickly! The Multicultural Project has been very busy with its' various new and old programs. Due to ongoing needs some of the programs such as English conversation classes, Multicultural Cooking classes have been going on for years. The project also has organised new activities.

The highlights of this year's programs are:

English Conversation classes

This year we have offered 3 conversation classes per week. The levels of conversation classes are from beginner to intermediate. The classes are focus on basic grammar, pronunciation, discussion on current affairs and other community and government's resources such as health systems, transport, Department of Fair Trading etc. The demand for English conversation classes has increased throughout the year. These 3 classes are full now, so we have to put lots people on the waiting list.

We have been receiving a fund from the City of Sydney Council for the English classes for couple of years. This extra money is helping us to provide better quality classes for the community. We have been very fortunate to have skilled and qualified teachers who contributed their valuable time for the classes. I like to thank to Julie Flood, Josh Knuts, Tony Barrett and Mae Cotterell who have contributed so much their time for English classes. I also like to special thank to Jann Piggott who have been teaching as a volunteer teacher since 2003.

Multicultural Cooking Classes

Multicultural cooking classes held on every Friday. These classes are very informal. Classes are run by the participants who bring their own recipes and try them out at the class. Bangladeshi, Chinese, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Indian, Indonesian, Italian, Iranian, Irish Spanish, Turkish and many more dishes were cooked through out the year.

Students from English classes also attend these classes which give them opportunities to practise their English informally with others. These classes are good source of social gathering and networking as well as sharing cultural values and beliefs. Cooking classes also play a vital role in the Surry Hills Community where most people are isolated in the inner city or are living in high rise buildings.

Monthly Excursion

Our monthly excursion programs went very well whole trough the year. This project is run in partnership with the Central Sydney Community Transport and City of Sydney Council.

Elderly people and pensioners from Surry Hills and its' neighbouring suburbs join the trips which take them to different scenic places in NSW.

Vocational courses

The Multicultural Unit at the Ultimo TAFE ran the Flower Arrangement and Hair and Beauty courses. The main purpose of these courses is to provide ideas of different TAFE courses, so students can move to the Job industry or more advance courses at the TAFE. Both classes were full. Some students found these courses very creative, interesting and useful. We are hoping to work more closely with the TAFE and organise more courses for the next year.

Sewing classes

This is a new project which started this year in November. This is a joint venture with the Northcott Community centre. Classes are unstructured. People can bring anything they like to sew. Classes are held from the Northcott Community Centre. Most participants are the public tenants from the Department of the Housing and non-public tenants as well. Besides learning how to sew, soicializing is another aspect of this project. We have a volunteer teacher, Sonia Antipenkov who has 45 year tailoring experience from Ukraine.

Walking Group

Every Wednesday morning (8 am) a group of people meet at the Neighbourhood centre and then they go for an hour walking. Every week they go to different places in Surry Hills and other inner city area.

Besides these projects the Multicultural project conducted different focus groups, Surveys and one to one informal conversation to get the feedback about our services and find out new needs for the community. The projects has advocated for different issues such as refugees, asylum seekers, tenants etc. The project explored different sources of fundings to get money to run different activities.

One of our focuses is on information dissemination. The project also has arranged several information sessions and has distributed current and relevant information to our clients time to time.

I would like to thank to our centre, Coordinator Anthony Stratford, all my colleagues at the centre, the Management Committee and the Multicultural team – Anna Kovic, Denyse Roberts, Barry McFarlane and all volunteers, the City of Sydney Council, The Central Sydney Community Transport, Multicultural Unit (TAFE Ultimo) and the Department of Community Services for their enormous supports and contributions.

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