

STEPS EDUCATION & TRAINING
ADULT MIGRANT ENGLISH PROGRAM
SPRING EDITION



STEPS AMEP COMMUNITY NEWS

Teaching migrants English not only provides language skills that help to settle successfully in to life and work in Australia, it also provides a vital social aspect that helps build a sense of community, forms friendships and delivers a sense of belonging.

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We welcome new students, get in touch with us on 1300 585 868

YOUR NEWS



Joel Stevens
Executive Manager
STEPS Education & Training

Welcome to our spring Edition of the STEPS Adult Migrant English Program Newsletter, and a big welcome to all of our new students!

We've had a very busy winter and with the new Spring, we have new classes, new courses and new connections forming across our wide AMEP family. It's a very exciting time of year.

We're so proud of all our students and we relish in the wonderful melting pot that is our classrooms, that brings together our students' stories and rich cultures.

Our aim is not only to provide quality education and training to our students to enhance and improve their life here in Australia through language skills, but also to provide a place of support, to build community and friendships.

I look forward to hearing all your news from the classrooms over the coming months.

Best Regards

Joel Stevens



NEW NIGHT CLASSES PALMERSTON

Free English Lessons at STEPS Palmerston
Commencing October 2019
Wednesday & Thursday nights
6pm-9pm
palmerston@stepsgroup.com.au

08 7922 5710



CALL OUT ALICE SPRINGS!

Are you able to offer Family Day Care places to assist our AMEP students with child care while they attend class during the day? Please contact us on

08 8950 7600

Free child care is available in our Darwin campuses, while students attend their AMEP classes.

1300 585 685

FLEXIBLE CLASS TIMES

Flexible class times to fit in with your family, work, or other study commitments. You have the option of attending classes during the day or night, on the days and times that suit you best.

Casuarina: Monday to Friday
8.30am – 2pm & Tuesday & Wednesday 6pm – 9pm.

Palmerston: Monday to Friday
9am – 2pm & Tuesday & Wednesday 6pm – 9pm

Alice Springs: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
8.45am – 2.30pm & Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 5.30pm – 8.30pm



FROM WAR TORN SOUTH SUDAN TO NEW HOPE IN ALICE SPRINGS

Ruben Tut

STEPS AMEP Student, Alice Springs

Refugee Week is celebrated every June, is a time to celebrate refugees' contributions to our society and to raise awareness and learn through their stories.

Most days in Alice Springs, locals can see an African man pushing trolleys at their local Coles Supermarket, while Ruben says it can be a tiring job, it's one he's so grateful to have and one he enjoys.

Ruben Tut and his wife Mary came from

South Sudan to Australia a few years ago, they first arrived and lived in the central highlands of Victoria, before moving out to Alice Springs with their two children.

Both Ruben and Mary religiously attend their Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) classes at STEPS Education & Training in Alice Springs to improve their English language skills, and some mornings can be seen knocking on the classroom door, eager to start their lessons.

STEPS Business Manager Philip Allnutt says he admires Ruben's tenacity.

"The way Ruben is so dedicated to improving his life is extraordinary," he said.

"He has such a great personality, and a real sense of humour, but it's his dedication to learning and improving his family's life, that is a real stand out.

"He wants to learn and is so committed, he hangs off every word his AMEP trainers say.

"In his 51 years, he's seen a lot and also been through a lot," Philip said.

Philip says Ruben's journey has been remarkable, from a construction background in war-torn and repressed South Sudan to life in Kenya, working for the United Nations Command Rear in refugee camps, then to Australia, he's emerged with a spirit and kindness that is truly admirable.

"I worked with the United Nations back home supporting displaced families with food,

housing and tents," Ruben said.

"The UN employed me to build concrete foundations, and housing, running a crew of 20 workers helping the South Sudanese refugees.

"All the Somalian, Ugandan, Congolese, Ethiopian and Eritrean became refugees and lived in Kenya."

He says he loves Alice Springs' life and that his main aim now is to better his English through his AMEP studies to progress up the ladder in employment into a career in the disability care sector.

"I need to learn, I benefit from practising my reading, writing, talking and listening at AMEP"

"I like using the computers at STEPS and learning about the jobs in Alice Springs.

I'm getting help in class to help improve my English so I can study for a new career

When looking for work previously he was faced with severe language barriers until he discovered the assistance available to him and his wife Mary through their AMEP classes.



Michel Salumu Kangakolo gets 'Ready for Work.'

NEW 'READY FOR WORK' PROGRAM FOR GRADUATES

Finding and settling into a new job can be a challenge fortunately, support is on hand for those who need that extra help gaining language and job skills necessary to secure and settle into work in Australia.

From English language support to help finding employment, STEPS provide opportunities for a smoother transition through the new Ready for Work program.

Ready for Work, or Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET) program, is a sub program of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), a free service for eligible migrants funded by the Australian Government.

STEPS Education and Training Executive Manager Joel Stevens said Ready for Work can be a "next option" for migrants who have completed the AMEP program.

"After students have improved their English language skills through AMEP, they can think of our Ready for Work course as the next step," Joel said.

"The main focus of this program is finding a job. So while the classes are centred on English studies, they have a work focus, such as learning the right words to use at work and understanding Australian practices and work culture."

STEPS Ready for Work class is set to commence in Casuarina, Darwin in October and will run for eight weeks. The course has a component of face-to-face employment coaching as well as work placement where students can gain valuable work experience.

"It's exciting for us and the students about to embark on this Ready for Work program knowing they will gain valuable skills and work experience to help them settle successfully in Australia," Joel said.

"We hope to run many more Ready for Work classes in the future, as many of our students have a real desire to find work."



STAFF PROFILE

Jennifer Lopes

AMEP Teacher, Alice Springs

WHERE DO YOU TEACH AMEP?

STEPS Education & Training, Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR JOB?

Working with new Australians to help them become part of our multicultural country.

Helping people feel confident to use English socially and for employment.

The enthusiasm and motivation our clients bring to learning English.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY TEACHING TO YOUR STUDENTS?

The power of language to communicate and how they can transfer their language skills in their first languages to English.

How Australia is a multicultural country and how people can benefit from keeping their own culture and languages alive, but also the importance of fully embracing the freedom, laws and democracy that Australia has to offer.

WHAT DO YOUR STUDENTS TEACH YOU?

Many students have been through very difficult experiences in their life and remain so positive and are determined to create a new life here. This teaches me about how strong and resilient people are and also how lucky I am to have grown up in a very safe country like Australia.

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HELPS NEW MIGRANTS FEEL A SENSE OF BELONGING IN THE COMMUNITY?

Language is the key to belonging as it enables them to communicate with others

and be part of their community. Meeting other new migrants in class and making friends also helps people feel like they belong. Getting work and being able to provide for their families also gives a sense of pride and belonging.

If possible, joining in to play a sport or a group exercise enables people to belong to networks outside their immediate family, as well as giving physical and mental health benefits.

WHAT'S SOMETHING MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I lived in East Timor during the assassination attempt of the President and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Jose Ramos Horta.

I love teaching students who are motivated to learn!

YOUR COMMUNITY



ENHANCING OUR SOCIAL FABRIC THROUGH A JOURNEY OF QUILTING

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Harmony Day, a day that celebrates cultural diversity. Nationwide celebrations will run for an entire week this year, celebrating Australia's fascinating cultural diversity. ABS data tells us that 49 per cent of Australians were born overseas or have at least one parent who was, we also identify with over 300 ancestries and speak more than 70 Indigenous languages.

In celebration of both the 2019 International Women's Day and Harmony Week, the women in the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) and Skills for Education & Employment (SEE) course at STEPS Education & Training in Palmerston, Northern Territory have been partaking in a handmade quilting project as part of their coursework.

The sewing classes go far beyond learning the basics of sewing and measuring, they provide a platform for social interactions and friendship building. Importantly, the group work helps the women to develop not only literacy and numeracy skills, it also builds confidence practising conversational English in a relaxed setting.

The quilt was displayed in the City of Palmerston Library in Darwin, Northern Territory as part of an International Women's Day and Harmony Week exhibition. It then returned to STEPS Education & Training in Palmerston for their Harmony Week celebrations, before embarking on a journey of almost 3000km from Darwin, Northern Territory to the STEPS Pathways College based on Queensland's Sunshine Coast.

STEPS Pathways College provides students living with a disability a pathway towards independence and the opportunity to achieve their goals.

The sewing team of 11 students was led by STEPS volunteer Kerri Roberts assisted by Maria Stephens, both former SEE students, the project was overseen by SEE trainer Mark Roscoe.

Kerri and Maria said they gained so much confidence since joining the sewing group and have formed some wonderful friendships, both experienced and knowledgeable sewers, they now offer their time to volunteer at STEPS teaching students to sew.

Kerri made a public speaking presentation on behalf of the sewing group at the City of Palmerston Library's Women's Art Exhibition launch and morning tea. An event attended

by Mayor of Palmerston Athina Pascoe-Bell and Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Sally Sievers. Kerri attributed the confidence gained through her SEE classes and volunteering at STEPS to providing her with the courage to take on the public speaking task.

The quilt is predominantly orange, the colour chosen to represent Harmony Week. The colour orange signifies social communication, joy, warmth, encouragement, happiness and enthusiasm. The people on the quilt represent women, for International Women's Day.

From its humble beginnings in a Darwin classroom, the quilt has quickly become a project of so much more than just sewing skills, it has connected people from all backgrounds and become a platform to enhancing the social fabric of the community.

This quilt was crafted by people from diverse backgrounds and experiences, it shows that the making of a simple quilt can really become a symbol for inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone.

MARY'S MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

This year's annual National Volunteer Week May 20-26 is a celebration to acknowledge the generous contribution of our nation's volunteers.

Volunteering Australia estimate thousands of events will be held across the country to celebrate and thank the six million Australians who volunteer their time to the community.

Volunteering Australia CEO Adrienne Picone says volunteers contribute an estimated annual economic and social contribution of \$290 billion.

The theme of the 2019 celebrations is 'making a world of difference', and that's exactly what STEPS Education & Training volunteer tutor Mary Martin is doing for her cohort of Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) students in the Northern Territory.

Mary has worked for the Northern Territory government in a range of roles for more than 34 years, largely in the field of workforce attraction and skilled migration.

She was on verge of retirement and said she was looking for a volunteering activity that was going to be both challenging and rewarding.

"Working in skilled migration exposed me to many cultures and gave me an in-depth

insight into the importance of English language in employment and career progression in Australia," Mary said.

"It has also highlighted to me the challenges adults from different backgrounds face in language acquisition.

“The Australian workforce is quite unique, particularly with the hierarchical orientation, this presents many challenges to migrants”

"I initially volunteered with STEPS as I believed that my background would place me well to help others and would give me a meaningful activity in retirement," she said.

Mary's long list of credentials certainly makes her more than just 'well placed' to support migrants learning English to settle in to Australian life.

She holds a Certificate IV in Credit Management, a Bachelor of Business, Master of Business in International Business & Marketing and a Graduate Certificate in Migration Law.

She's participated in international ministerial delegations and represented the Northern Territory in Ministerial and Senior Official skilled migration policy groups.

But it is her kind spirit and reliability that makes her stand out and shine to her students and co-workers at STEPS Darwin.

STEPS Darwin business manager Michael Crawley says Mary is a passionate and committed volunteer.

"She is very valuable to all of us here, teachers, staff and students, we're lucky to have her," he said.

Mary believes the AMEP cohort are unique.

"Their personal stories are quite levelling," she said.

"I think we generally don't appreciate the personal hardship they have experienced, sometimes I think as Australians we don't know how lucky we are," Mary said.

"I am continuing to learn through my volunteering and I feel I am getting more back from the students and staff than I am contributing."

STEPS Darwin have a range of interesting and rewarding volunteer roles available for people of all abilities and backgrounds, get in touch and find that rewarding feeling of 'giving back' on 1300 585 868.



IN THE CLASSROOM

Our classroom is more than just a space to learn, it's the centre of our AMEP community



The vibrant Alice Springs cohort

AMEP TAKES FLIGHT IN ALICE!

Alice Springs is a buzzing multicultural hub of diverse people, and the new free English classes offered in the AMEP brings a wonderful cultural mix to our classrooms. We have people from South Sudan, Cambodia, Syria, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, and China, just to name a few!

Our teachers Jennifer and Janine have a wealth of knowledge and experience in teaching, education and teaching English as a second language. Many thanks to our wonderful volunteer Lisa, who generously lends her time to assist the students. Our classrooms are abuzz with our students' rich cultural backgrounds and vibrant spirits for learning!



Students are ready to roll

CASUARINA STUDENTS ARE ON THE ROAD!

Casuarina students have been busy learning all about car care in a new initiative designed to assist with basic car operation & inspection before driving.

The course was a mix of theory and practical learning, helping students to identify the parts of a vehicle, inspect and test the engine, temperature, RPM, fuel, electrical, cooling, tyres, brakes, and fluid levels on a vehicle as required, and much more. They also identified and recorded a range of information about their cars, had a visit from mechanics, and received certificates on successful completion of the course. They're ready to hit the road!

STEPS COLLABORATE TO EMPOWER MIGRANT WOMEN

STEPS Casuarina have partnered up with Australian Red Cross Migration Support Programs (MSP) to deliver workshops designed in the spirit of empowering, as well as harnessing the many strengths that come from the women's refugee and migrant communities in the Darwin area.

The free workshops for the Adult Migrant English Program students, held recently at the Red Cross Casuarina hub, include sewing classes, upcycling, hair and make-up tutorials, jewellery and accessory making as well as social morning teas.

Red Cross senior officer Sabeeha Nihad says the initiative is also about having fun, connecting migrant women through social activities to form bonds and friendships.

"Our work with refugee, asylum

seeker and migrant women in Northern Territory is a highlight and close to our heart, where our focus is on connecting these women with the wider Australian community," Sabeeha said.

"Our Migration Support Programs have been working with refugees, asylum seekers and migrants for more than 25 years.

Red Cross is working closely with STEPS on capacity building, social connection and engagement of refugee communities

STEPS AMEP student Nathalie Nkongolo says the workshops are a great idea that give her a sense of involvement in her local community.

"I am really enjoying the workshops as they help me learn and I am hopefully looking at owning my own sewing business," said Nathalie.



Workshops designed to harness many strengths

To date, Red Cross Australia have had around 150 participants from various communities in the Darwin area.

The products that come out of these workshops will be showcased and sold at the 'Joy of Many Colours' fundraising fashion show event at the Charles Darwin University Theatre.

Red Cross Australia believe that these activities encourage the women to expand their knowledge, grow their capabilities, and increase their confidence and self-worth.

The women play an integral part

in a productive and contributing Australian community.

Through these connections not only do the women excel, but their families also have the opportunity to benefit, as does the whole Darwin community.

STEPS Education & Training run a range of courses for the community and believe in the importance of community collaborations.

For more information about our collaborative workshops contact STEPS Casuarina on 08 8925 5600.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT DIRECTORY

There's a wide range of support available in your community, for more information contact the below support services or ask STEPS for more information.

Darwin

Melaleuca Refugee Service	(08) 8985 3311 24 McLachlan St, Darwin City melaleuca.org.au
Anglicare NT	(08) 8946 4800 11 Palmerston Circuit, Palmerston anglicare-nt.org.au
Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory	(08) 8945 9122 Shop 15, Malak Place, Malak mcnt.org.au
Relationships Australia NT	1800 650 276 5 Shepherd Street, Darwin nt.relationships.org.au
Australian Red Cross	(08) 8924 3900 Level 1/13 Scaturchio St, Casuarina redcross.org.au

Alice Springs

Multicultural Community Services Central Australia	(08) 8952 8776 5b Wills Terrace, Alice Springs mcsca.org.au
Women's Safety Services of Central Australia	(08) 8952 6075 PO Box 3219, Alice Springs wossca.org.au
Anglicare NT	(08) 8953 1422 Cinema Complex 10/10 Leichhardt Tce, Alice Springs anglicare-nt.org.au
Salvation Army Alice Springs	(08) 8951 0200 88 Hartley Street, Alice Springs salvationarmy.org.au/alicesprings/
Mission Australia	(08) 8958 6000 81 Hartley Street, Alice Springs missionaustralia.com.au



AMEP
FACEBOOK
PAGE

Our facebook page is the best place to keep up to date with all our news and it's where our people connect – come and join us!

@STEPSAMEP



EDUCATION
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We welcome new students, get in touch with us on 1300 585 868 or visit www.stepsamep.com.au

The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is funded by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs.