

Uniting Care NSW ACT
www.asylumseekersfoundation.com
 PO Box 829, Five Dock NSW 2046
 Phone: 0418 261 160
 ABN 78 722 539 923

BASF News

Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation

Newsletter
 March 2012



Vegetarian Feast!

Saturday, 14 April
 Join an innovative vegetarian cooking workshop and lunch with Ling Halbert, renowned Taiwanese chef, who makes cooking delicious Taiwanese dishes simple and easy.

It's hands-on, fun, and you will learn effortless, tasty and impressive meals and get to enjoy the food you prepare and a glass of wine with fellow students.

When: Saturday, 14 April 2012, 11.30am to 3pm

Where: Wei-e Era Taiwanese Vegetarian Café, 4 Burwood Road, Concord

Cost: \$60 includes workshop, lunch, tea and a glass of wine

To book:
 Email Susan at basfevents@gmail.com or call Susan
 Tel: 9555-1213

Thank you

We are very grateful to all our wonderful supporters who opened their hearts to our special urgent appeal for support just prior to Christmas. We received a grand total of \$60,285 which not only covered the months we were worried about but will also enable us to fund an extra four weeks of support for asylum seekers. The generosity of large donations of \$1000 and more was balanced with equally generous and appreciated donations of \$30 - all of which combine to make some very desperate refugees' lives a little easier.

Last year we received \$343,674 in total, which supported 198 individuals and family members with the largest group of refugees coming from North East Asia. Our need for financial support is ongoing, which is why we make an appeal to you in each newsletter, and will always ask for your support at Christmas and in May, just before tax time. We are grateful for every gift and to everyone who attends an event to help us raise funds.

Thank you
Virginia Walker
 Honorary Chairperson

BASF News

Congratulations to Debby Nicholls on her OAM award

Debby has worked tirelessly as a founding member of BASF and Balmain for Refugees (BFR) to support asylum seekers and refugees for over 12 years. Debby has visited Villawood Detention Centre weekly for over 12 years and has given her time with enormous and consistent generosity during that time. Debby's contribution to asylum seeker and refugee advocacy and support has been immeasurably important to the work of BASF and BFR.

Making Your Donations Safe and Easy

To ensure we have sufficient funds through the year we are grateful for everyone who gives a little each month, as that is the backbone of our funding. To make a regular monthly gift part of your charitable giving, please fill in the

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**With thanks to our
supporters:**



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form attached to this newsletter.

Do You Make Donations Using Your Credit Card? Our banking security has been updated to ensure your details are even more secure and as a result we now require the three-digit number on the back of your credit card to process your donation. We have updated our donation form to make it easy to include in future.

Can You Leave Us a Golden Goose?

A gift included in your will to benefit BASF is the golden goose that can provide regular golden eggs for BASF! Perhaps not exactly golden but a lump sum invested in an interest bearing account would provide small dividends which could be used to provide long-term support for refugees. Please ask your lawyer to include a gift when you write or next amend your will.

Please pass these important details to your solicitor: Leave to UnitingCare NSW - Bridge for Asylum Seeker Foundation PO Box 829, Five Dock NSW 2046: ABN 78 722 539 923.

Make Snail Mail Redundant!

At BASF we work hard to minimise costs. You can help us by having your newsletter delivered by email rather than snail mail, eliminating the cost of paper, envelopes, printing, and stamps. Sending 20% more newsletters by email will save us around \$370, which is close to the cost of supporting 4 refugees for a week. If you can, please consider requesting an email newsletter from asylumseekersfoundation@bigpond.com.

Don't forget!

Pass on your newsletter to friends who may be interested in supporting us too - the bigger the family of BASF supporters the more impact we can have every day.

Thanks to Our Newest Volunteer

Carolyn is our new volunteer who is assisting with our database by updating and taking care of the details to ensure we only send newsletters where and when welcome and also send donation receipts and invitations to events. Thank you Carolyn, we are delighted to have you on board.

Asylum Seeker News

A Case History: Hannah's Story

Hannah (not her real name) came to Australia from a Muslim African country. Her brothers had discovered that she had formed a friendship of which they disapproved and had threatened to kill her.

Fortunately, she already had a passport and was able to get a visitor visa to Australia. She applied for a permanent protection visa as soon as she arrived, but after months of waiting learned that she had been unsuccessful. She applied for a review, but again after several months of waiting learned that she had not been granted refugee status on the grounds of lack of evidence.

The Refugee Review Tribunal had decided that "because honour killing was illegal in her home country" she was not entitled to protection. This decision ignored other information provided, which stated that perpetrators were generally not charged and, even if they were, prison sentences were frequently suspended. It also ignored the most obvious problem: that had she stayed in her home country, by this stage she could be dead. An appeal to the Federal Magistrates Court was also rejected.

During the time she had been waiting for an outcome, Hannah formed a relationship with a man which she had hoped would lead to marriage. Instead, after two years, the relationship broke down. It was at that stage that Bridge for Asylum Seekers began giving her support. A member of Balmain for Refugees was also assisting Hannah in requesting Ministerial intervention. It took another 18 months of research and argument, but finally, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship accepted that Hannah had a well-founded fear that her brothers really would kill her if she returned to her home country, and she was given permanent protection in this country.

Now a proud Australian citizen, Hannah is studying to be a lawyer.

Christmas Gifts

Some refugees celebrate Christmas, many more do not - but we like to mark this time of the year with a small gift for each refugee we support. Last year we reviewed the gifts we give and considered what would be most appropriate and of value. As talking to family and friends is essential to maintain the mental health of refugees we gave prepaid phone cards.

The refugees who received these gifts were very excited and grateful to receive these cards. Ali, who is separated from all of his family, was able to speak to his mother in Bangladesh for only the second time since he had arrived, as the cost of a call is more than his budget will bear. He said "I am so happy, my mother is so happy, we cried and we laughed, today I am still smiling, thank you for letting me hear her voice."

Many, many thanks to the staff and friends of UnitingCare head office and to Mosman Uniting Church parishioners whose generosity provided these gifts.

What's on/coming up/just been?

Did You Come To Say Hello?

Several volunteers had a fun day out telling people about BASF at the Italian Festa stall generously donated by Leichhardt Council on 29 October last year. Many BASF friends stopped by to say hello and buy a raffle ticket. The raffle raised \$605 and was won by a local woman who had never won a prize before!

We met more of our supporters and raised \$723 at a wonderful carol singing evening in Pioneer Park, led by the Leichhardt Espresso Chorus on Sunday 18 December.

Support from Leichhardt Council and Espresso Chorus, and being 'charity of choice', is much appreciated and is a testament to the Councillors' and community's spirit in supporting asylum seekers.

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Tel: 0418 261 160 or email asylumseekersfoundation@bigpond.com and we'll call you.

Donations of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible.

For direct bank deposit:Account Name: **UnitingCare - BASF**BSB: **634 634**Account no: **100028813**

To ensure that you receive a tax-deductible receipt, please email your name and address, the date of the deposit and the amount deposited to asylumseekersfoundation@bigpond.com.

To print donation form, please see:http://www.asylumseekersfoundation.com/documents/BASF_Donation_Form_2012.pdf**To pay by cheque or money order, post to:**

Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation:

PO Box 829, Five Dock NSW 2046

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