



## VoRTCS Connect – September 2013

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### Bridge to Brisbane Wrap-up

*5km participants L to R: Win Tin, Caitlyn Perkins, Bianca Nisbet, Deb Nisbet, Christopher Franklin.*

Congratulations to the ten runners and walkers of the VoRTCS team who did us proud in completing the Bridge to Brisbane fun run. And many thanks to the generous donors who supported the team.

Together, you made this our best year yet. Online donations received to date now total almost \$1200.

By all reports it was a great day. The mood was upbeat, the weather perfect, and the team was in fine condition, all arriving at the starting line very early in the morning.

### Quick Links

- [Our Website](#)
- [Donate Now](#)
- [Facebook](#)

### HAVE YOU JOINED US ON Facebook?

Facebook is now up and running and continuously growing. Please [click here](#) and Like our page to keep up to date with daily news and

facts.

Completing the 10km event were: Conor O'Brien, Eilish Copelin and Jessica Peterson. In the 5km event we had: Bianca Nisbet and her mother Deb, Christopher Franklin, Helen and Paul Gunning-Stevenson, Caitlyn Perkins and, to the delight of the team, a member of one of our refugee families, Win Tin (Burma).



Caitlyn, who is one of Win Tin's tutor team, said that six months ago she'd never have dreamed he would do something like this but as soon as she mentioned it, he jumped at the chance. She said it was amazing to see the difference tutoring has made to this man and his family.

Special thanks to Committee member Conor O'Brien, right, for organising our team.

### **FREE ESL Training for Tutors**

Tafe Queensland is running a free course in tutoring English as a second language (ESL) to support migrants and refugees in the community.

The course will build foundation skills in working with people who are just beginning to learn English.

Unfortunately, places are limited and we've only recently been advised of the scheduling, so please act now if you are interested. Contact details are on the attached flyer.

### **Calling for more volunteer tutors**

With more than 2000 refugees settling in Queensland each year, mainly in the South East, the need for support continues to grow. Families can require several years of help to learn English and to understand how their new community works.

A recent audit of the VoRTCS database has given a clearer picture of tutor and family numbers. There are currently about 290 tutors assisting 568 refugees. VoRTCS is aiming to increase tutor numbers to ensure families in need can receive support.

You can help by promoting tutoring among your family and friends, as well as work colleagues. We have developed a flyer, attached, that you can print and hand out, or pin up in your work lunchroom.

There are two training sessions scheduled before the end of the year and we'd like to see big numbers attending.

To register for the October intake, go to:

<http://www.vinnies.org.au/vortcs-new-tutor-training-oct-2013-qld> and for November training, go to:

<http://www.vinnies.org.au/vortcs-new-tutor-training-in-nov-2013-qld>

If you have an organised group that's interested in the program and in potentially providing financial or tutoring support, we can send out a VoRTCS representative to talk with them, or provide you with a powerpoint you can use yourself. Just let us know.

## **Are you finishing tutoring your family soon?**

Perhaps you're getting ready to graduate your family and wondering what next. Maybe you'll take a little break before moving on to a new family - or you may be thinking about another way to contribute to the program. If so, you may like to consider using your valuable skills to help to train new tutors.

We are currently searching for new members to join our wonderful team of trainers. With training occurring every month and about 25 tutors completing each course, we really need some more help.

In a team of trainers each month, we have:

- the training leader (Marion Mc Mahon)
- a coach( Ian Tanner or Marion Mc Mahon)
- a lead trainer (Don McIvor or Rachael Taylor)
- a junior trainer (Stephanie Bashford, John Dooney, or Ron Morris)

and, to make sure we're always developing, we'd like to have some new recruits on the team - people who are interested in learning how to become trainers themselves and assist in delivering the learning modules to new volunteer tutors.

You can see by the list of team members that there is always plenty of assistance, so the task is not daunting and it's a terrific way to use your tutoring experience.

As the year draws to a close, we are reviewing and updating the training package which makes it a great time to become involved as the whole team will be learning together. We would also welcome some fresh ideas.

If you would like continue to volunteer with VoRTCS and be part of the training team, please e-mail Bianca([bianca.nisbet@svdpgld.org.au](mailto:bianca.nisbet@svdpgld.org.au)) and Marion will follow it up.

## **Where Do Our Families Come from?**

Our tutors help refugee families from many places around the world, particularly the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

The countries of origin of the settlers will differ over time, depending on the global situation.

In 2011-12, over 2000 refugees settled in Queensland, with the greatest numbers from Iran, Congo and Afghanistan. The main cultural groups are Hazara, Kurdish, Persian/Farsi, Arabic, Tamil, Congo, African, Iranian, Tutsi and Rohingya (Burma).

Most refugees settle in the Brisbane region, as well as in Toowoomba, Rockhampton and in Far North Queensland.

Refugee families in Brisbane receiving support from VoRTCS, are located across the city. The top six suburbs are Moorooka, Inala, Zillmere, Mitchelton, Kedron and Brackenridge, but our tutors also help families in suburbs such as Sandgate, West End, Nundah, Taringa and WavellHeights.

Given the families we support are so geographically dispersed, we encourage interested volunteers from throughout Brisbane to join our tutoring teams.

Table: *Top ten source countries, Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) Arrivals, Queensland, July 2011-June 2012*

<b>Country of birth (Top 10)</b>	<b>Number</b>
Iran	414
Congo	360
Afghanistan	345
Myanmar	281
Bhutan	191
Iraq	150
Sri Lanka	101
Somalia	99
Pakistan	57
Sudan	40

Source: Diversity Figures Snapshot, *Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs*

### **Zonta Advancement Grants for Women**

The Zonta Club of Brisbane North is offering 4 grants of \$1000 to improve the status of women. One is for a woman from a migrant or refugee background.

It can assist with the cost of educational courses, child-minding while attending courses, books for study/research, transport assistance to access development opportunities.

If you are tutoring a woman who may be interested, please read and follow up on the attached flyer.

### **Feedback**

We would love to hear your feedback and ideas for stories in future editions. Please email [publications@refugeetutoring.org](mailto:publications@refugeetutoring.org)

Also, if any of your team is not getting this newsletter, please ask them to contact us so we can add their name to the list.

Please visit our website at [www.vinnies.org.au/vortcs-refugee-tutoring-qld](http://www.vinnies.org.au/vortcs-refugee-tutoring-qld)  
Donate to our cause [click here](#).