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If you would like to support our work, your donation will be most gratefully accepted. Your donation will enable people from refugee and Indigenous backgrounds to continue to benefit from our educational programs. The Edmund Rice Centre Western Australia is a registered charity.

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. As we are required to issue a tax receipt for all donations, please send an email to info@ercwa.org.au when you donate, including your *full name, postal address, email address and donation amount*. You may also choose to make your donation to a specific project.

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Newsletter

Issue 51

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From the Director

In recent years the Edmund Rice Centre WA partners with Aquinas College to hold a Harmony Weekend Family Camp at Camp Kelly in the forests of Dwellingup.

Funded by Lotterywest, the camp aims to promote cross cultural understanding and build support for newly arrived people from a refugee background. Around 90 people are expected to come together on August 23-25 this year.

Fostering understanding and compassion seems so important in our society today as I see increasing negativity from some of our politicians and the media.

Last month the UNHCR released its Global Trends Report. 68.5 million people were displaced from their homes across the world at the end of 2017. It is the biggest increase the UNHCR has seen in a single year. It now means that a person is forcibly displaced from their home every two seconds – more people than the population of the United Kingdom.

At the Edmund Rice Centre WA we work hard to support and welcome as many newly arrived refugees as we can.

Vale Brother Geoff

We sadly acknowledge the passing of Brother Geoff Seaman who died on Saturday 11 August 2018 following heart failure a few days earlier. It is difficult to say in a few sentences what the impact of his passing will be on so many people.

Until last week he was teaching English to his class, meeting with people to arrange an interest free travel loan, advocating for the disadvantaged in our community and being in community with Br Jim and his fellow Christian Brothers.

Br Geoff served many years as a highly respected and dedicated Christian Brother and teacher in Catholic Schools throughout Australia. Since the early 1990's he has lived and worked in Girrawheen and surrounding suburbs supporting newly arrived refugee families as well as teaching scripture in government primary schools.

Br Geoff was a founding member of the Edmund Rice Centre 20 years ago and as well as volunteering as an English teacher he served as a member of the Board for 6 years. In 2003 Br Geoff was awarded the Centenary medal in recognition of his service to education and support for the disadvantaged in our community. Br Geoff was a very active member of the St Vincent de Paul Society and for many years chairperson of the migrant and refugee committee. His gentle nature, outstanding service and presence to all will be greatly missed. Br Geoff's spirit will continue to be an inspiration to all who knew him. May he rest in peace.



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Banners in the Terrace

Each year, Shires around the state compete to win the best banner design to be displayed in St Georges Terrace, Perth. The Moorditj Koolangka after school group designed this year's winning banner for the City of Stirling.

Our entry was created by artist Esther McDowell (Yabini Kickett) who worked with the children.

The banner shows the Waugual; the creator of the land and flowers.

The children, aged from 7 – 12 years, came up with the snake design and the Milky Way in the background. The design is also a celebration of our 20 year commitment to the community.



Dream girl

Dream Girl is a powerful film that inspires women to dream big. Our youth leaders attended the documentary screening which featured young women who have faced adversity to become CEO's and owners of big brands and businesses in America. The objective was to inspire entrepreneurs in WA. Edmund Rice was kindly offered a complimentary table for 10 young women in our programs. Our girls walked away with a sense of hope and inspiration.



Finalist in Small Business Awards!

A team from the Edmund Rice Centre attended the gala celebration. As a small organisation in the community, we were delighted our work was showcased in these awards.



Because of Her We Can...

Working alongside Girrawheen Senior Highschool Yokayi Program and prolific Noongar Artist/Performer Karla Hart. We developed this project to celebrate the strong women in the girls lives as part of NAIDOC week 2018. The project was developed and funded by the Edmund Rice Centre WA's Aboriginal Youth Arts Program. The video screened on the digital tower at Yagan Square throughout NAIDOC Week.



To see the full video, you can go to our YouTube channel ERCWA Aboriginal Youth Arts.

Our outreach services in Thornlie

At Thornlie, we facilitate a number of social support groups for parents and children. The workshop provides a range of skill-building, parenting and develop self-confidence for the participants.

These also help participants discover their potential in dealing with practical settlement matters and being part of the community.

The parents speak Arabic and come from Syria and Iraq. For this group we provide a crèche for children who are not old enough to attend school. The parents also enjoy sharing meals together.



Success at Tennis

Our Local Parks program aims to provide free sporting participation opportunities to all young people, with a focus on those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This term we partnered with Tennis West and the Nollamara Tennis Club to run a seven week trial. Two of our participants were Jeras who is 11 and Penelope who is 9. They moved to Australia in 2010 from Uganda with their parents and siblings. They had never played any sports outside of school, so they were very enthusiastic when they heard about the free tennis program.

At the end of the trial both said they really enjoyed themselves especially seeing the improvement after every session. They loved meeting new friends and being part of the community.



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