Bridging The Gap

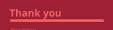
Refugee, New and Emerging Student Communities at Western Sydney University



Bridging The Gap

Refugee, New and Emerging Student Communities at Western Sydney University













Background

Western Sydney

- Multilingual skills
- Area with large cultural/social diversity
- Many from disadvantage backgrounds

Students of refugee background face additional barriers

- · High percentage with history of trauma
- Language challenges
- Competing priorities/obligations
- Loss of identity/educational opportunities



Office of Widening Participation

Who are we?

- Undertake activities to contribute to the ideals of access, equity and social justice
- Aim to promote and provide all potential students with the opportunity of access to, and successful participation of higher education
- Provide support to assist students in successful completion of study
- Assist in removing barriers to higher education: financial, physical, emotional, social and/or cultural



Our Program

Community Education Liaison: Refugee, New and Emerging Communities Program

What we do:

- Provide options regarding access to higher education
- Enhance engagement with communities, community groups and stakeholders
- Create awareness of opportunities for non-traditional students
- Create positive opportunities for engagement and learning through university based retention programs
- Collaborative approach involving students, communities and stakeholders
- Reduce barriers to higher education



Uni Taster Day

What do we do?

- Bringing communities to Western and bringing Western to the community
- Programs developed through collaboration and consultation with community groups and stakeholders
- Programs aimed at prospective students and their families

A typical 'Taster Day

- · Transport and lunch provided
- Opportunity to engage with Western staff and students (student ambassadors, academic and professional guest speakers
- · University campus tour
- Inspirational sessions
- Feedback





Uni 'Campfire' Chats

What do we do?

- Encourage and motivate students currently studying at Western
- Provide targeted support (Academic assistance, jobs on campus, welfare

The 'Campfire'

- Provide a sense of community
 - · Shared discussion, friendships, mentoring
- Promote resilience
 - Overcoming barriers and challenges





Community Engagement and consultation

What do we do?

- Attending and participating in community events
 - Blacktown Refugee Welcome Picnic
 - SSI Youth Collective E3 Youth Forum
 - Community forums, dinner and cultural festivals

Investing in the Community

- Provide information and targeted support
 - Scholarship workshops, aspiration building
 - Community presence
- Overcome cultural barriers







Thank you

Any questions?