

## ASYLUM SEEKER LEGAL SUPPORT DONATIONS

### CAN YOU GIVE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT?

Across the River Nile we currently have 40+ students of which 16 are asylum seekers; most of whom were boat arrivals, making the journey to Australia in 2013. Many have spent time on Nauru, Christmas Island and other immigration detention centres, such as Darwin and Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation (MITA) in Broadmeadows. Some of our young women and their families who arrived by boat have spent up to 3 years in detention centres and only been released into the community recently. They were unable to commence their protection Visa application until invited to do so by the government in late 2016 or early 2017.

Most of our young asylum seeker students have not worked since arriving in Australia. If they are young mothers or studying VCAL full-time, there is little opportunity to engage in work. Furthermore, many of our women are still developing the language skills to be able to feel confident to undertake paid work. This means they do not have the money required to pay for a migration agent or immigration lawyer to assist them with their asylum claim. An experienced immigration lawyer costs \$3,000 (at a minimum) to \$6,000, depending on the complexity and nature of the claim. This does not include accredited translation of documents, such as drivers' licences, marriage certificates and passports. Each page of a document will cost at least \$60 to translate, so if an asylum seeker has 15 pages to translate, a further \$900 is required.

Currently, our students seeking asylum are at various stages of their applications for asylum; some have almost completed theirs with the assistance of lawyers from not-for-profit organisations. However, several of the young women at our centre are still on extensive wait lists for not-for-profit legal support. With the impending, and highly unrealistic deadline of October 1<sup>st</sup> set by Minister Dutton for applications to be completed, there has become an urgent need for us to provide financial support to our students to access legal support.

It has been our tradition to work with students in a holistic way and assist with removing any barriers to their education. Many of our young women are in Australia alone, or with young children only, and are still developing the skills to advocate for themselves. Often, they have complex needs and require advocacy support with Centrelink, housing, counselling, access to phone and internet, transition and pathways, work-readiness and in many other ways. By advocating for students and resolving issues, it allows them to maintain focus on their learning and stay engaged at school.

Now, one of the biggest barriers for some of our women in pursuing their education is the looming October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline and the urgency to ensure that their applications are submitted. Navigating these legal complexities has become all-consuming for some of our students and is impacting on their ability to pursue their education, as well as affecting their mental health in general. In keeping with our tradition for supporting our students by removing barriers to their education, it has become imperative that we provide financial assistance so that our most vulnerable women who are yet to access legal assistance can secure a reputable and knowledgeable immigration lawyer. This will help ease the overwhelming sense of burden and stress that they feel on a daily basis. Having a supportive lawyer working on their case will allow our students to focus their attention back on their studies and will give them renewed hope of securing a Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) or Permanent Protection Visa in the coming year, providing them some stability.

Please consider giving a tax-deductible donation to RNLC so that we can provide our most vulnerable women with legal representation from an experienced and reputable immigration lawyer who will give them a chance of securing a stable environment in Australia through a Temporary or Permanent Protection Visa.

**Ways to Donate** are summarise on page 2.

<b>For information contact:</b>	Welfare Director	John O'Shea	john@rnlc.org.au	0408 852 283
	Director	Lisa Wilson	lisa@rnlc.org.au	0419 584 134

## GIVING A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT

- empowers disadvantaged refugee & asylum seeker women to participate in our community on a more equal footing
- educates mothers, thereby educating whole families
- prepares children, most of whom have experienced trauma, for their early years learning
- provides paid employment for qualified but unemployed childcare educators of African refugee heritage
- supports new arrivals on pathways to higher and vocational education and employment
- leverages every dollar given through our substantial volunteer effort and broad community support
- delivers an award-winning, student outcome centered, professional education model

## YOU CAN DONATE BY

**Electronic Funds Transfer to** *River Nile Learning Centre Inc Gift Fund*  
Westpac BSB: 033 132 Account No. 308382

**Cheque payable to** *'River Nile Learning Centre Inc'*  
Posted to Level 1 / 117 Capel Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051

**PayPal Online** via this e-link <http://rnlc.org.au/funding/donation/> which provides an instant receipt

**RNLC is an ACNC Registered Charity, endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office for charity tax concessions and as a Deductible Gift Recipient. All donations of \$2 and above are tax-deductible.**

Donation levels: We appreciate any level of donation but if you would like to join our Formal Giving Program, annual donor levels (which can be made in instalments) are:

Supporter up to \$999

Friend \$1,000 to \$4,999

Patron \$5,000 or more

Emails from Donors to RNLC Director – Lisa Wilson C/- [lisa@rnlc.org.au](mailto:lisa@rnlc.org.au) with your name and address are appreciated so we may acknowledge your contribution. You can also advise if you prefer your donation to be anonymous.

If you wish to make a time to meet with Lisa and visit our Centre before deciding if you would like to make a donation or if you would like to consider supporting us in other ways, you can email Lisa on [lisa@rnlc.org.au](mailto:lisa@rnlc.org.au) (preferred), or phone (03) 9329 8425.

**For more information contact:** Welfare Director      John O'Shea      [john@rnlc.org.au](mailto:john@rnlc.org.au)      0408 852 283  
Director      Lisa Wilson      [lisa@rnlc.org.au](mailto:lisa@rnlc.org.au)      0419 584 134



***'We make a living by what we give, we make a life by what we give' – Winston Churchill***