IT Literacy Program, Preston Mosque – video transcript 5/11/12

Narrator:

La Trobe students are volunteering their time to help migrant newly arrived and elderly Muslim citizens, bridge the digital divide. Students from all backgrounds, international and Australian, from different degrees and areas of study are dedicating themselves to help people from the Muslim community in Melbourne’s northern suburbs to surf the net, keep in touch with loved ones, and enhance their employability.

Baha Hehia – Preston Mosque:

This program started after a conversation with Paul Wait from OMAC, Office for Multicultural Affaires and Citizenship, we were thrashing around some ideas, what the community need, what we could do for the community. There has been some interest raised by the community that they would like to learn some computer skills.

Narrator:

The IT Literacy project is being conducted at the Preston Mosque, and is in its fifth week of running with a view to continue the program into phase two.

Joanna Shaw – International Student Services Coordinator:

This IT Literacy program at Preston Mosque is of huge value to the Muslim community here. We were asked to train elderly Muslim representatives of the Mosque and new arrival Muslim community and it means we’re able to give them basic IT skills so they can be empowered to use computers and to get on-line.

Amne Merhi:

I like to learn quickly because I’ve been taking a few sessions, but till now I haven’t been able to use the internet, I hope I learn quickly so I can contact my family in Lebanon.

Narrator:

The initiative is a partnership between La Trobe University, the Preston Mosque and Infoxchange, and is financially supported by the Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship and the Islamic Council of Victoria.

Joanna Shaw:

International students get a lot from volunteering opportunities, it means they get an opportunity experience the Australian communities, so they get exposed to the diversity of the Australian society, they get skills and experience and with this particular program they get to train in English so it looks fantastic on a CV.

Michelle Ralte (student):

It helped me develop my leadership skills, as we get to teach the class and also get one on one interaction with the students.

Marus Yang (student):

The best benefit I receive from volunteering work at La Trobe is that the communication to the local community and the people in the local community.

Narrator:

La Trobe has a proud history of offering practical experience to its students, be that through volunteering or clinical placements. In fact, for over 30 years La Trobe University has pioneered socio-legal studies by offering the Clinical Legal Education program.

Narrator:

La Trobe is dedicated to local community engagement and actively seeks to encourage multicultural ties between students and the people in the local area. The La Trobe Award program is one way we promote student volunteering and activity, it formally recognises student-volunteering efforts on and off campus.

Joanna Shaw:

The La Trobe Award is a fantastic program at La Trobe University where students, domestic or international, get recognised for their volunteerism. It means that they get a number of credits, if you like, or points towards a gold, silver or bronze award, according to how much they volunteer in the community. So it means that they get the experience, but they also get formally recognised, which is great, it looks great on the transcript and it makes them stand out from the crowd.

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