



Refugee Employment Program

Success Story - Milestones in Metro

Karim Mansour



Karim is a 22 year old man from Syria who moved to Australia in 2017 on a subclass 202 Visa. Before moving to Australia Karim lived in Syria with his brother and parents where he was studying law at university.

Due to the dangerous situation in Syria, Karim and his family were forced to leave their home and seek refuge in Lebanon, where they resided for 8 months but were unable work due to lack of jobs and work rights. Karim, his parents and younger brother were granted a visa from the UNHCR to resettle in NSW, Australia in 2017.

He currently lives in West Ryde and began studying English at TAFE. His brother and parents are also studying English. Karim is the oldest brother and regardless of his efforts of securing work he was unsuccessful.

I've applied for more than 100 jobs since arriving in Australia and have had no luck, not even an interview, said Karim.

Before being accepted into the Woolworths Refugee Employment Program (2018 Christmas Intake) Karim had no previous paid employment in Australia, even though it was an important goal for him and his family that he could start living a new life in Australia.

It is very important to me to improve my language and to get experience in Australia and also to save money for the future.

When I got the call from Community Corporate and accepted into the Woolworths program, I was so happy but still didn't want to get my hopes up. It was after I did the two days of their training program, that I started to believe – I may have found the start to life in Australia I was hoping for.



Above; Karim and team at Kings Cross

The team at Community Corporate, really believed in me and gave me every chance to succeed in Woolworths. Its hard to explain even though the training was so much fun, it was so focussed and really helped me plan for my future and understand the importance in believing in myself, measuring my success and giving it a go with a smile and the right attitude was all I needed" said Karim.

Karim was placed into a new Metro store in Kings Cross and did his work experience on-the-job training at Chatswood prior to the new store opening. Karim received resoundingly positive feedback from the store manager, his peers and customers and started paid work in the Kings Cross store on 7 November 2018.

Karim like many of the other refugees expressed sincere thanks to Woolworths for opening their doors and hearts to them.

Thank you for caring for the refugees and giving me a chance to work and get experience in Australia, said Karim.

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Above; Karim receiving his award

Now, 5 months on since he started his paid role as a team member in Kings Cross. Karim was promoted to Acting Team Leader in a relief role in the Fresh Food – Produce section, working with the inaugural Refugee Employment program champions in Metro.

"It was obvious from the beginning, Karim's attitude, reliability and desire to learn and succeed would make him a huge asset in my team"

I nominated him for my store's employee Shining Star award, which he won, and went onto win the award for the group. He was then selected and he actually won the state award for February as well.

Karim is just one of many shining examples of the amazing team members to come through this Woolworths Refugee Employment Program and our partnership with Community Corporate – he is the perfect example of how we can influence the conversation on refugees and showcase that they are in fact a real asset to this country and will help build Australia's economic and social prosperity said Panetelis Archontides.

Community Corporate is the proud national partner in delivering Woolworths Refugee Employment Program and excited to expand opportunities into Queensland, South Australia and Victoria over the coming months. The commitment from Woolworths to this workforce-led initiative has now assisted close to 100 refugees access their first job in Australia and more importantly, given them a positive first experience of working life in Australia.

"Community Corporate feels very privileged to work alongside the team at Woolworths, from its leadership, store managers, people and culture teams and the everyone involved who genuinely live their values and invest in diversity and inclusion.

"We are seeing not only amazing retention rates over 90% after 12 months now among our program participants, but that there is career progression and opportunities for career development within the business, which is extremely exciting and more importantly life changing for our newest Australians.

– Woolworths truly do 'bring a little good to everyone, everyday' said Carmen Garcia, CEO Community Corporate.