

THE A.R.A.B. PROJECT NEWSLETTER

The Arabian Road to Aspiration and Belief



Welcome to our Spring Edition of our newsletter for 2016 about the Big Lottery Funded A.R.A.B. Project. I am Jenn Harrison, the Skills and Development Project Manager here at the Yemeni Community Association in Sandwell and on behalf of our Team, we hope you enjoy finding out about what we are doing to support people into employment or training, supporting volunteering opportunities, enabling people to build self-confidence, or playing an active role within their local community.

These are exciting times for the YCA and we have come a long way since the project began. However, having supported people with their English speaking skills, provided training and qualifications and helped a number of fun events and activities, we still have much more to do.

We want to be the type of organisation that supports local men and women into local jobs. We want to raise your confidence to access training that helps you into employment or progress within the workplace. We want to help you develop new skills and take care of your health and well-being. We want to be able to raise awareness of difficult issues within the community such as the stigma associated with mental health, money management & financial debt.

In this newsletter, we aim to bring you inspiring stories, exciting opportunities and keep you informed about local issues. If you have any ideas on what you would like to see included in our newsletter, then we are all ears! Contact Jenn or Nadia by phone on or at 0121 525 3909 or email jennifer@yca-sandwell.org.uk and nadia@yca-sandwell.org.uk.

In the meantime I hope you enjoy this first edition.

Classes for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)



Learning English or improving what you already know is really useful if you want to study, get on in work or learn more about your rights and responsibilities. And, if you have children, it is a great way to help them with their schoolwork.

We are taking applications for our FREE ESOL accredited and non-accredited classes. Classes are for both men and women and booking is essential. Contact Jenn or Nadia by phone on or at 0121 525 3909 or email jennifer@yca-sandwell.org.uk and nadia@yca-sandwell.org.uk.

Fantastic success with our Buddy Project



Having launched the 'Buddy Project', last year, 8 ladies have successfully passed their induction and confidence building training. A fantastic and encouraging group of individuals, each one of them excelling in developing the necessary skills required to support people within the community achieve their goals and aspirations, whilst developing their English speaking skills.

A key part of launching this initiative was that feedback informed us that people, females in particular stated that even though they access courses such as ESOL, they do not use English language outside of the classroom environment due to lack of opportunity and confidence, leading to continued isolation, lack of integration and lack of aspiration to progress. This is another way in which a buddy can be a support.

This programme is not just for women though, we also support men, so if you would like to receive some support from one of our Buddy's or volunteer to become a buddy yourself, we would love to hear from you, please contact either Jennifer or Nadia for more information on this, our details are at the end of our newsletter.



Spotlight on Aisha

Aisha is one of our Volunteer Buddy's here at the YCA. Aisha joined the programme to build her confidence in supporting people and wanted to return to the workplace. Once a full-time housewife, Aisha holds a University Degree and Diploma in Computer Design and is a Arts Graduate. Fluent in a number of languages, Aisha took part in one of our ESOL Classes and wanted to develop her own English speaking skills by becoming a volunteer buddy. Throughout the Buddy Training Programme, Aisha gained qualifications such as Safeguarding and Data Protection and developed skills such as mentoring and befriending, communication, confidentiality, equality and diversity, building trusting relationships, recording information and self awareness.

Aisha said of the course "I developed my vocabulary, communication skills and self-confidence... I would consider this course to other students very proudly as this course is the best learning step".

Ragih Muflahi, Chief Executive Officer for Yemeni Community Association said "Aisha is just another success story in this project. If you look hard enough, you can unearth many gems within our community".

Jenn Harrison, Skills & Development Project Manager said "Aisha is a fantastic advocate of the Buddy Programme, she embraced the training wholeheartedly, challenging herself throughout and I am so proud of what she has achieved"

Since her training, Aisha has returned to the workplace and now works part-time as a Supervisor within the Care Sector.



'Women's Hour' at the Lodge Community Centre



We are passionate about making women feel empowered and to be able to make positive decisions about their future.

Following a series of consultation events in November and December 2015, We launched '[Women's Hour](#)' at the Lodge Community Centre in West Bromwich, in order for women to be able to engage with the Skills and Development Workers and discuss any issues or concerns that they need support with. This could range

from returning to work, employment support, how to manage your money, making new friends. Pension advice, benefits, parenting classes, new mom advice, employment support, health and fitness, and much more!

'Womens Hour' at the Lodge Community Centre, Lodge Road, West Bromwich, B70 8PJ will take place from the Wednesday 20th April 2016 from 12.15pm-1.15pm. We want to grow the numbers in this group, please don't be shy come along and meet the team.

Coming soon! 'Women's Hour' at the Cradley Heath Community Centre.

For more information on this, please contact either Jennifer or Nadia for more information on this, our details are at the end of our newsletter.

**Amelia Earhart once said
"The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity."**

Health & Wellbeing

14 ladies are now regularly participating in our "Women Only YOGA" classes, held at the Lodge Community Centre, Lodge Road, West Bromwich, B70 8PJ every Wednesday between 1.30pm and 2.30pm. To celebrate the initial launch, those who registered and paid the advanced fees, received a free yoga mat. Sessions are run by Punam and has been endorsed by Shaykh Paul Salahuddin Armstrong of The Association of British Muslims who stated:



"After reviewing the non-religious Yoga you presented to us, we are pleased to confirm this form of Yoga is halal (lawful) according to Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). Indeed, physical exercise forms part of a healthy lifestyle. From a spiritual perspective, people have a responsibility to look after the physical bodies Allah entrusted to us in this life, in addition to their souls.

Keeping these points in mind therefore, we not only certify your Yoga classes as halal, but would like to take this opportunity to highly recommend them as a way Muslims and people in wider society can improve their health and well being."

We want to be able to run aerobic sessions, walking clubs, swimming, Zumba or dance classes, but we need enough interest and numbers. So we need to hear from YOU, so that we can provide you with the activities that you want.

YCA's Community Gym

At the Yemeni Community Association in Sandwell, Greets Green Access Centre, we have a community gym , At a cost of just £5.00 per month, this is a cost effective way to stay fit. We have men and women only sessions, so look at our website <http://yca-sandwell.org.uk/activities.htm> for more details.



Be part of our Project Steering Group

Would you like to play an active part in your community and ensure your voice is heard! Have you passion, drive and determination to make our project a success, if the answer is YES, then we want to hear from you. We will provide you with the training and support.



Working mainly in the target areas of West Bromwich, Cradley Heath and Smethwick., we would particularly like to encourage people who have marketing and publicity skills, people who like to organise community fun and social events or want to develop their administrative skills.

If you would like to do some volunteering and would like to be part of our team, then please call us at the YCA or contact either Jennifer or Nadia for more information on this, our details are at the end of our newsletter.

Over 100 people have been supported by the Yemeni Community Association's A.R.A.B. Project since it was introduce over 2 years ago, will you be the next one?

Skills, Training & Development

Thanks to funding from the Big Lottery Fund, The YCA are running a number of courses designed to support people into employment, gain personal confidence, support through volunteering opportunities or just gain new skills and have the chance to meet new people. Whatever your reason, we hope you will feel inspired to enroll of one of our courses.

You may want some support with writing a C.V., help with a job application form, do you need some help with interview techniques and understanding workplace ettitique. Whatever, support you need get in touch.

COURSES COMING SOON!

Would you like to gain new skills?

Receive support in finding employment?

Enrol on one of our courses!
Conditions Apply

- Level 2 Health & Safety in the Workplace
- Level 2 Food and Hygiene
- Level 2 Manual Handling in the Care Sector
- Volunteering & Mentoring
- Responsible for Information (Data Protection)
- Employment Support & Job Club
- ESOL

PLACES ARE LIMITED
PLEASE BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

SIGN UP NOW! To register on any of these courses, please contact Jennifer or Nadia on 0121 525 3909

COMING SOON!

Arabic for Beginners
(Adults Only)

Would you like to learn Arabic?

Well here's your chance to take this opportunity to enrol on our 10 week 'Arabic for Beginners' course.

Mixed classes will be held on Monday evenings between 6-7pm at a cost of £50 (payable in advance).

Limited places for up to 12 people.

To register on this course, please contact Jennifer or Nadia on 0121 525 3909

 **LOTTERY FUNDED**

If you want to contribute towards any future newsletter, have an inspiring story to tell our readers or you want to subscribe to future mailings, please get in touch with Jennifer or Nadia at the Yemeni Community Association in Sandwell. Our contact details are:

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