

MEDIA RELEASE

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JOBS SUCCESS FOR AFRICAN AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

An innovative employment program working with African Australians is showing that it is not only AFL star Majak Daw who is kicking big goals at the moment.

The African Australian Inclusion Program is a partnership between Jesuit Social Services and the National Australia Bank that provides paid work experience placements for people from African communities. Today the program celebrated the recruitment of its 100th participant.

At an event in Melbourne to mark the occasion, Jesuit Social Services CEO, Julie Edwards said, "This is a great example of how business and communities can work together to overcome disadvantage and build a more just society. Eighty six per cent of people who have completed paid work experience and mentoring through this program have moved into further employment. This is a remarkable achievement that should be built on throughout our business community."

"The success of the program is testament to the contribution of many supporters, particularly from within African Australian communities. The role played by NAB must be applauded. Staff members at Jesuit Social Services and NAB identified an issue in the wider community and used the resources they had available to take positive action."

Today's event also marked the launch of research into the benefits of the program. Noting this, Ms Edwards said, "The research found that for every one dollar invested in the AAIP, stakeholders were receiving an equivalent of \$6.24 in social value. It shows that providing genuine work experience can open the door to further opportunities for people from migrant communities."

"This program provides a model that other businesses might use in order to help those people who are marginalised in our community for whatever reason, the opportunity to enter the workforce, get some all important experience to equip them to move on to full time and ongoing employment. In doing so, business can meaningfully contribute to building a better and more inclusive society."

Jesuit Social Services is a not-for-profit organisation which works to build a just society by advocating for social change and promoting the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged young people, families and communities.

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Available for Comment:

- Program participants who have taken part in the *African Australian Inclusion Program*
- The Hon Lindsay Tanner, Former Federal Minister for Finance and Deregulation who championed the program from its outset
- Representatives from National Australia Bank
- Julie Edwards, CEO, Jesuit Social Services

Background Information on the African Australian Inclusion Program:

- The AAIP Began in 2009 as a three month program with three participants.
- The program provides a professional bridging and training program for qualified African-Australians, including six months paid workplace experience. The program aims to provide commercial experience and learning opportunities for participants, including enhancing their business networks.
- In the AAIP, each participant is paired with a mentor, a coach and a buddy, all of whom provide them with support throughout the duration of the program. Other forms of support and development opportunities within the working environment include skills workshops which are conducted by NAB staff as well as opportunities for participants to engage with different areas of the business.
- 106 participants have gone through the program to date
- 43 Females and 64 Males
- 16 African countries represented (Burundi, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe)
- Positions have been in IT, Finance, HR, Corporate Responsibility, Business Administration, Customer Care Centre
- 86% of participants finished their 6 months placement have gone on to employment in NAB or external organisations
- The program expanded to Perth in 2013, one position in Tasmania 2013, and in Sydney in 2011
- A social return on investment study of the program calculated that it had generated \$6.24 in social value to stakeholders for every \$1 that was invested.