

14<sup>th</sup> October 2019

# Media Release



## **BELA Graduates to celebrate their achievement as emerging leaders and advocates.**

SydWest Multicultural Services is pleased to announce the upcoming graduation for the twelve young people from the Blacktown Emerging Leaders & Advocates (BELA) program at a special event on Tuesday 29 October 2019 from 4.30pm at their offices in Blacktown.

The graduation event will feature inspirational speakers from the young people who have attended the program, sharing the impact the program has had on them and work they are already doing on key issues for them.

The twelve young people in the BELA program are all from refugee migrant backgrounds, who have been managing the resettlement process into the local community. They are all in a process of finding and using their voices as leaders. They represent Afghanistan, Iraq, South Sudan, Pakistan and Kenya.

The BELA program consisted of a series of structured training sessions and was coupled with each BELA participant being paired with an experienced Mentor. These relationships have been building and part of the graduation event will include Mentors and mentees sharing their experiences.

*Developing the capacity of migrant and refugee young people is important to SydWest as it ignites their passion to become active participants in Australia's civic life and to have input in the design of policies that affect them, said Elfa Moraitakis, CEO of SydWest Multicultural Services.*

SydWest Multicultural Services is pleased to advise that a special guest for the evening is Mr Kevin Conolly, Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Member for Riverstone and representing the Acting Minister Geoff Lee, Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors & Veterans, who will present the graduation certificates.

### **STATEMENT ENDS /**

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### **About SydWest Multicultural Services**

SydWest Multicultural Services is a leading organisation for all cultural diversity issues responding to community needs and opportunities.

We offer flexible and integrated service models across the life course of refugees and migrants, supporting the self-determination and empowerment of our diverse communities. [Learn More](#)

SydWest is an innovative employer of choice, with passionate, qualified and experienced bilingual and bicultural staff who are sensitive to the languages and cultures of the communities we represent. [Read More](#)

With locations in Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Penrith and Rouse Hill, we cover all matters of cultural diversity in the region.