

21 June 2023

Mayoral Message

Dear Residents



Dr Karl Kruszelnicki, Anh Do, Frank Lowy and the late Les Murray are well-known Australians with something in common. They built their success and fortunes after fleeing their homeland as refugees.

This week we acknowledge the many refugees, like them, who have found sanctuary in our City. We celebrate their courage, resilience and the valuable contributions they make.

National Refugee Week (**18-24 June**) is also a reminder of those who are detained in detention centres, waiting to be settled. Many have experienced extreme hardships and have fled to Australia for safety reasons.

As a migrant who came to this country without speaking a word of English, some 24 years ago, I empathise with their plight and their resolve in calling Australia their home.

I'm proud to be the Mayor of a City that has long been a welcoming place for refugees. Canterbury-Bankstown is home to refugees from all around the world, contributing to a variety of

cultures, languages and traditions.

For the past 21 years, our City has been recognised as a "Refugee Welcome Zone", and has worked hard to create an environment that fosters social harmony and promotes inclusion.

I'm committed to upholding these values and fostering a community that embraces diversity and upholds justice and compassion. So how fitting it is for me to swear in another 250 citizens this week, some coming here as refugees.

If you would like to hear some of the compelling stories of refugees in our City, their journeys to safety and finding freedom, I encourage you to come along to the Canterbury-Bankstown Multicultural Inter-agency's Refugee Week event at the Bryan Brown Theatre tomorrow, **Thursday 22 June**. To register, visit **cb.city/RefugeeWeek2023**



Clr Bilal El-Hayek
MAYOR

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