



MEDIA RELEASE
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Best mates succeed at TAFE

Born into the dusty, overcrowded confines of the world's largest refugee camp, Dadaab in Kenya, Somali refugee Abdi Bashir Mohamed dreamed of getting an education and pursuing a better life.

Since 2014 Abdi has called Townsville home and thanks to the Australian Government Department of Education and Training funded Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) at TAFE Queensland North he is now progressing towards his dream of becoming a qualified accountant.

"The [AMEP] teachers helped me develop confidence to interact with others and learn about the Australian way of life. The program also gave me skills in effective writing and improved my English," Abdi said.

Earlier this year Abdi commenced a Bachelor of Accounting degree at James Cook University, an achievement he says would not have been possible without the AMEP.

"It provided me with the platform I needed to further my education," he said.

Abdi's dream is one he shared with close friend and former camp mate, Naafac Musdaf Ahmed. Like Abdi, Naafac wants to become an accountant.

"I have always loved math, so I have always wanted to be an accountant," he said.

Earlier this year Naafac commenced a Diploma of Higher Education, which is the final stepping stone before he can enrol in a Bachelor of Accounting degree.

Abdi and Naafac's journey from Dadaab to tropical North Queensland has motivated them to help others.

"I want to be a leader in my community. I hope that what I have achieved inspires others to further their education and pursue their dreams," Abdi said.

Naafac often meets with newly arrived refugees and encourages them to enrol in the AMEP.

"Education is so important, it helps people improve their English, make friends, adapt to the culture and find a job," he said.

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It has been a long journey for the two men, who waited four years for their visa applications to Australia to be approved

Naafac remembers the day clearly.

“I was shocked and extremely happy. I couldn’t wait to come to Australia.”

Abdi was more nervous.

“It was my first time going on a plane. I was very scared because it was such a long flight. It took more than a day to travel here.”

Naafac arrived in Townsville several months before his close friend.

“When he came here I played tour guide,” he said.

He showed Abdi around the city, which looked a lot different to their former desert home and both men have enjoyed trying new food. In the refugee camp they lived on a diet of rationed beans, cereals, flour, maize and porridge.

“I love eating pizza, it’s my favourite. I also really enjoy chocolate, avocados, carrots, apples and fish and chips,” Abdi said.

Naafac said, “My favourite things to eat are spaghetti, chicken, fish and chips, capsicum and I love mangoes.”

The men are sharing their story to mark Refugee Week, 19-25 June, 2016.

Filming, photographic and interview opportunities can be arranged. For more information please contact TAFE Queensland North Communications and Public Relations Officer Sarah Weir on 0408 746 747

Further information:

About the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

The AMEP provides up to 510 hours of free English language tuition to eligible migrants from the skilled, family and humanitarian visa streams, to help them learn English to assist with their settlement in Australia. The AMEP is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. In Queensland, the AMEP is delivered through TAFE Queensland. For more information please visit tafeqld.edu.au/amep.

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