



Media Release

Refugee students prove the power of education

The Public Education Foundation will be awarding twelve prestigious 'Friends of Zainab' Scholarships, next Tuesday 21 February 2012 at 10.45am at Parliament House in Sydney.

The 'Friends of Zainab' Scholarship supports refugee students studying in NSW public high schools and universities.

The Awards will be presented by Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales.

2012 was the first year that the Friends of Zainab Scholarship was offered state wide, open to all students in public high schools who have a refugee background.

"All twelve award winners have battled considerable odds to get where they are today," says Verity Firth, Chief Executive of the Public Education Foundation.

"The award winners are all refugees from countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Burma, and Rwanda. Most of them received limited schooling before their arrival in Australia, and have spent at least some time living in refugee camps.

"All of them have shown enormous courage and determination in seeking a better life in Australia. Their stories show the life-changing power of education.

The Scholarship was originally established in 2002 by Dorothy Hoddinott AO, Principal of Holroyd High School. It was part of the support program offered to refugee students at the school.

"Friends of Zainab has made a huge difference to the extraordinary success of young refugees at Holroyd High and has helped many of these courageous and highly motivated young people to success at university, as well," says Dorothy Hoddinott, instigator of the scholarship.

"Friends of Zainab has provided real, practical support for the education of young refugees as they move into full participation in our Australian society. Education is about making a difference, and that is what this scholarship does," Ms Hoddinott said.

"The gift of education is the greatest gift we can give young refugees," Ms Hoddinott concluded.



Winners of the 2012 'Friends of Zainab' Scholarship – by region

North Coast

Iginas Gasengayire, Orara High School, Coffs Harbour (originally from Tanzania)

Hunter/Central-Coast

Malik Anne, Callaghan College, Jesmond Campus (originally from Senegal)

South Western Sydney

Iram Ghaleb, Miller Technology High, Miller (originally from Iraq)

Farah Adam, Liverpool Girls High School, Liverpool (originally from Iraq)

Western Sydney

Peroza Hussaini, Arthur Phillip High School, Parramatta (originally from Afghanistan)

Munbah Dorlleh, Chifley College, Mount Druitt Campus (originally from Liberia)

Sydney region

Khin Moe Aung, Menai High School, Menai (originally from Burma)

Philomene (Fifi) Giraneza, Menai High School, Menai (originally from Rwanda)

Leila Gholami, Sydney Secondary College, Blackwattle Campus (originally from Afghanistan)

Tahmineh Jafari, Cleveland Street Intensive English Centre (originally from Afghanistan)

Riverina

Ram Khanal, Murray High School, Albury (originally from Bhutan)

Mawi Than, Wagga Wagga High School, Wagga Wagga (originally from Burma).