



Research-based Global Field Placement Melbourne, Australia

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Global Activities Scholarship Program



Facts about Australia

- Population: 22 million
- Melbourne is Australia's 2nd largest city at 4 million
- 89% of population is concentrated in urban areas
- Australia is roughly the size of the continental United States at 3 million square miles
- Melbourne is one of the most multicultural cities in the world
- 46% of Australian residents were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas

Agency

The Brotherhood of St Laurence is a non-government, community-based organisation concerned with social justice. The BSL's mission is to research, develop and deliver innovative and high quality services practices and policies to drive change that benefits all Australians (bsl.org.au).

The African Australian Community Center will assist the African community to be empowered to grow in capacity and in time run this as an entirely community-led facility, to further engage specific target groups such as young people and to ensure that activities at the center address community needs through a community development rather than a welfare model.



Field Placement

Commonality in Difference? Settlement experiences of visible refugees in Australia: A comparison between Vietnamese and African refugee youth

Research Questions

- How do the experiences of young, visible refugees differ from that of the refugee youth community generally?
- What additional barriers do young, visible refugees face in the areas of education, employment, and youth justice?
- What parallels exist within the experiences of young Vietnamese and Africans as visible refugees?
- How are settlement services addressing specific concerns impacting young, visible refugees?

Classroom Connections

SW 823 *Comparative Cross National Analyses of Social Service Systems* played an integral role in my understanding of how resources, societal values, and demographics can shape social welfare policy both in the United States and around the world. Suzanne Savas's SW683 Evaluation course prepared for potential evaluation projects while abroad. My field work at The Detroit Initiative with Professor Gutierrez exposed me to qualitative interview processes.

Skills Developed

- Researched the topic of refugees through performing a literature review
- Developed interview schedules and focus group protocols
- Conducted 10 semi-structured interviews with community leaders and youth service providers
- Co-facilitated a focus group with African youth
- Analysed qualitative data for themes and illustrative quotes

Advice

- Live with native Australians
- Take time to travel to Queensland and dive the Great Barrier Reef
- Be sure to listen more than you talk
- Spread out your placement over 15 weeks to allow a few days off each month for self-care
- Initiate conversation while riding the subways, walking around town or sitting at cafés



Quotes from the Community

"It is always a very difficult life because you are always being considered as a refugee. Even if you become a citizen like myself, it is just good in purpose but in reality and in job participation that's not the case. You always be a refugee, you always be someone who come from somewhere else. You always, you know find it hard to compete." - African community member

"When I started hanging out with the Sudanese community, I felt like we always did the same thing that other cultures did but in a way we were getting harsher punishments" – African youth focus group

"Most jobs you know somebody that knows somebody that knows somebody that can get you a job. But if we don't have that kind of network how are you going to get job opportunities?" – African youth focus group

"For a community to succeed you have to empower them and empowering them means they are given the opportunity to do the things for themselves" – African community member

"Africa has got 54 different countries. Only in my country where I came from, Ethiopia, we have 83 different languages spoken... but we are talking about almost a billion people in a continent, in one country you might find 300 tribes." – Youth services provider

"If we are not prepared to learn from them (African youth), we cannot be able to teach them." – Youth services provider

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