

How to better support young people Community of Practice

Toowoomba Club Like Family

Hussein Rasho, Maysar Qaso, Mushtaq Haji, Saad Hammo and Jalal Al Khudher arrived in Australia as humanitarian entrants from Iraq. They arrived with no prior English language experience and AMEP was fundamental to their establishment of English skills and knowledge of the Australian culture. Over 18 months these students have taken part in the AMEP Youth program. The TAFE Queensland Youth Program is for AMEP students aged between 16 and 24 and focusses on social, civic and economic participation and personal well-being. They have also learnt about job and study pathways, job skills and English skills.

The student's AMEP teacher, Kelly Barron from TAFE QLD, Darling Downs, approached the local Rockville Rovers Football Club to enquire about students joining the team, one of which was Saad Hammo. Saad played for the season; while the rest of the students watched him play and train. After the first season the students felt encouraged to join the team and felt comfortable to approach the coach themselves.



Kelly attended several games to support them. She was also in regular contact with the Club secretary and president who were extremely supportive of the students and their participation in the Club.

They were featured in the Toowoomba Chronicle after the Rockville Rovers progressed into the Premiership's Grand Final. The article was titled:

ROVERS UNITED **Toowoomba club welcomes refugees into the 'family'**

Several of those students received awards for their accomplishments throughout the season. Qaso is now playing in the premier team and was recently voted as one of the top 5 players to watch.



When speaking about their experiences of playing in the team they said the experience has helped them to feel like they belong in Australia. They said, "You join because it is like family and that's important". All of their oral skills, understanding of colloquial and conversational English as well as their confidence has improved and they are far more engaged in the classroom. Their experience has also helped them develop goals and clear pathways on how to achieve these goals. Maysar would like to be a personal trainer and Hussein would like to start a Cert II in Automotive Underbody. Saad, on the other hand, is working as an interpreter at a local school and would like to be a police officer while Mushtaq is studying English for Academic Purposes at the University of Southern QLD and Jalal is still studying in the AMEP.