

humeleader.com.au

NEWS 13

CRAIGIEBURN



Saleha Talash founded the Hume Afghan Association.

Picture: DENNIS MANKTELOW

Starting life for a second time

REFUGEE WORKS TO WELCOME NEWCOMERS

Natalie Savino

WHEN Saleha Talash arrived in Australia, the future that had been hard to imagine back in Afghanistan quickly spun into focus. Now, after battling adversities of her own, the Craigieburn woman hopes to bestow the power of education on other newly-arrived migrants, particularly women, to give them their best shot at life.

Ms Talash migrated here in June 2011.

She was born in Kabul, but her family, including three sisters and four brothers, were forced to flee ongoing conflicts, escaping to Pakistan with just the clothes on their backs.

Being a teenager in a refugee camp was hard, but she managed to finish Year 11 before her father made the difficult decision to risk everything and find a better life in Australia.

But settling into a new country was far from easy for the young migrant, who said she initially went through a period of isolation.

"I didn't have any connections," Ms Talash said.

"It was very hard because I didn't know where to go and how I should find friends and how (to) find my networking and things like that."

Five years on, she is making sure others know where to turn for support.

After arriving, she persisted through language barriers to complete her VCE studies and undertake a two-year dual diploma of counselling and community service work.

She took part in leadership training and since founded the Hume Afghan Association, a welcoming group fostering social inclusion and connectivity.

As well as setting up a

Dari language school for kids and adults, the group established a volleyball team to promote health and wellbeing.

Ms Talash also partners with Dianella Community Health once a week for "Tea with Afghan women", a project inspired by the cultural habits of her home country and designed to reduce social isolation and cultural barriers.

She said she had found a better life in Australia, one with peace and freedom.

"We know we are safe (here), we have a future," Ms Talash said.

Ms Talash will perform a cultural dance as part of a Refugee Week celebration on Thursday at the Hume Community Hub, hosted by Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre.

Refugee Week celebrates the contribution of refugees to the community and runs until June 25.

CRAIGIEBURN

More volunteers wanted for SES team

LEARNING skills, facing new challenges and meeting friends are among the drawcards of volunteering with the State Emergency Service.

And now the Craigieburn unit is calling on interested

members of the community to join their enthusiastic team.

They are looking for people aged 18 and over, especially those with daytime availability, to jump on board.

An information session will run at 10am on July 12 at the Craigieburn SES headquarters, 151 Craigieburn Rd.

Details: craigieburnses.com or facebook.com/craigieburnses

V1 - HOVE01201MA

NEWBRIDGE

Wallan

— Sample the good life and call it home —

UNIVERSAL DEVELOPED BY



YOUR NEW HOME IS HERE

newbridgewallan.com.au

1800 1 UNIVERSAL

1800 186 483



HUME LEADER, Tuesday, June 21, 2016 13

press reader Printed and distributed by PressReader
 PressReader.com • 21 604 378 4624
 COPYRIGHT AND PROTECTED BY APPLICABLE LAW