

# CONNECTING CULTURES

ISSUE 30 SPRING 2018



*English for work  
& everyday life*



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LANGUAGE PARTNERS  
NEW ZEALAND

Working with former Refugees and Migrants

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in English Language  
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Work Talk  
Police Recruit Literacy  
Job Mentoring

#### At home

ESOL Home Tutoring  
English for Migrants



Taking part in the workplace is important for effective settlement. Increasingly, New Zealand companies are recognising the advantages of investing in former refugees and migrants. They are typically hard-working and highly motivated employees, keen to build new lives and contribute in their new country.

Working with businesses to ensure staff have the right English to communicate well and work safely is a priority for our organisation. We appreciate that starting life in a new country has its challenges, and more so for people who've fled war-torn countries and spent years in refugee camps.

One business featured in this *Connecting Cultures* is Nelson-based XLam; 30 per cent of their workforce are former refugees, and Chief Carpenter Dan McKean says XLam wouldn't be efficient without them. In the article, Dan talks about the company benefits of workplace lessons; their staff now have the skills to communicate at work, meaning a higher level of safety and quality.

English Language Partners has also been working in partnership with other settlement and tertiary providers to improve the everyday communication skills of New Zealand's newer community members, and this *Connecting Cultures* reflects on some of these successes.

I'd like to thank the Honourable Iain Lees-Galloway, Minister of Immigration, for his 'Guest Word' contribution to this issue.

Nicola Sutton



Chief Executive

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Honourable Iain Lees-Galloway, Minister of Immigration

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# *‘Doing the right thing’ for business success*

Once a month, XLam staff gather outside for barbecue day.  
Amy Ridout | Photos Chris Wastney



Maung Hla Pan,  
carpenter, XLam



Dan McKean (right) with Maung Hla Pan and XLam colleagues

**English for Employees is a 45-hour course for residents who are in work. The programme runs in ELPNZ centres around New Zealand.**

“We all eat lunch together, like family,” says Dan McKean, who is responsible for XLam’s continuous improvement. “It’s a way to celebrate small wins.”

Today, with rain bucketing down in sheets, an outdoor cookout has been swapped for a pizza delivery, to be eaten in the canteen.

Preparing to break for lunch, workers in orange vests move around the large factory, where the company manufactures laminated timber, used to build “all kinds of amazing buildings,” Dan says.

There are 39 workers on the shop floor, and a third are from Myanmar. Carpenter Maung Hla Pan arrived in New Zealand in 2008 and has been with the company for two years. He speaks carefully, picking his way slowly but assuredly through his new language.

When he was young, Maung worked with his father, building houses, and farmed rice. When he was 21, he left Myanmar, spending the next 15 years in a Thai refugee camp. He knew little about New Zealand before he got on the plane, but grabbed the opportunity to start a new life.

Learning English was just one of a number of barriers Maung has had to overcome on his journey. “At first when I came here, I couldn’t do many things, I had to be taught so much.”

However, honing his language skills with English Language Partners has transformed his working life.

“Learning English has helped me with health and safety. It’s very important to ask things related to what we’re doing here. I can understand better, working with others.”

It also helps him connect with his colleagues. “I work with Indian men, we can’t speak each other’s language but we speak in English.”

He’s still learning every day, he says. Some words are still difficult, words with a “sh” sound. “Fish, ship, that’s a difficult sound,” he says, adding that his four children, who picked up the language easily, make fun of his accent.

XLam’s first Burmese employee joined the company back in 2014.

“Our former CEO went down to Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology and asked if there was anyone suitable to join the company,” says Dan. “And they said, ‘I’ve got the best guy for you!’. And that was it.” ▶





Maung Hla Pan (centre)  
with XLam colleagues.



“

Not only do our workers now have the skills to communicate with everyone, it means there is a higher level of safety and quality.

– Dan McKean, Chief Carpenter, XLam

”

It's important for Dan to know where "his guys" come from. "It's really important to identify with their individual stories, and discover how to develop as a company with them.

"Our motto here is, 'do the right thing'. We strive for excellence, and that means doing the right thing in every aspect of our work and in our relationships."

Each week, English Language Partners conducts classes in the company boardroom. As English levels improve, so does the company's culture, Dan says.

"Not only do our workers now have the skills to communicate with everyone, it means there is a higher level of safety and quality. Understanding more English means they can do quality checks, and helps us encourage further personal development."

Knowing English is far more than a day-to-day convenience, Dan says. In fact, the future of the company rests on his Burmese workers' knowledge.

"If they have greater than basic English, it enables us to potentially have enormous success.

They're 30 per cent of the company, we wouldn't be efficient without them."

And, of equal importance in a company where everyone is "like family," a shared language means a growing staff camaraderie, Dan says.

"There's an understanding of a friendly exchange of laughter. The more time you spend on the shop floor, the more the jokes become freely available."

"Our Burmese staff are proud to be New Zealanders. They'll say, 'I'm a Kiwi' and I say, 'okay, show us the haka then,' which always makes them laugh."

Each week, teacher Trish Standing joins XLam's Burmese employees in the boardroom for lessons. There's a clear advantage to holding classes at work, she says.

"With classes after work, students have to come in the evening, which is challenging when you work all day."

Coming to the workplace means tutors can also ensure lessons are relevant. "We can tailor lessons to the workplace, and really focus on what students need to learn," Trish says.

"When lessons take place at work, and are related to what they're doing, they have more motivation. To be successful at work you need English."

"And in the community," adds Dan. He would like to see more workplaces adopt XLam's stance of employing former refugees.

"We live in a multicultural society, I'd like to see that reflected in New Zealand's companies. Our success depends on it." ✨

[www.xlam.co.nz](http://www.xlam.co.nz)

**More about English for Employees:**  
[www.englishlanguage.org.nz/english-for-your-employees/](http://www.englishlanguage.org.nz/english-for-your-employees/)

# Keep on truckin'

CAL ISUZU in Hamilton is New Zealand's number one Isuzu truck dealership.

Alison Robertson | Photos Michael Jeans

CAL ISUZU employs 76 staff; some required to do specialist work to keep the big rigs on the road.

Umesh Nand is a diesel mechanic who's been in New Zealand for 11 years, and with CAL ISUZU for five. Recently, he's been working with an English Language Partners' teacher to improve his written English. What's more, he has his lessons 'on the company' in company time.

Umesh is Fijian Indian and his first language is Hindi, and while his

spoken English is pretty good, his boss, Mechanical Service Manager Alex Boles, thought his written language could do with some fine tuning.

"Every truck we service has a job story and we need to understand that story correctly," says Alex.

"There's no room for error or misunderstanding. It has to be absolutely accurate. Our customers are paying big money and they need to understand what they are paying for, that what they have requested has been done, and we need to be able to clearly

demonstrate that the price we're charging for the work is justified."

Alex had worked with English Language Partners when two Sri Lankan mechanics needed to improve their English, but they studied off-site at night classes. Because Umesh lives in Huntly, Alex says it made sense for him to learn at work.

"He needed a bit of a push to accept our offer of English lessons, but since he started we've definitely seen improvements. He can see where he's gone wrong and he's self-correcting." ►

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Umesh Nand, CAL ISUZU and Jo Kettell, English Language Partners







Alex Boles, CAL ISUZU  
with Umesh Nand

Umesh's lessons are **custom designed**,  
with a focus on workplace communication.

“

I see English learning  
as a good investment.

– Alex Boles, Mechanical  
Service Manager,  
CAL ISUZU

”

Umesh's major issue was tenses; past, present and future. In his job stories, Umesh must state what needs doing, what he's done and what remains to be done. Get the tenses wrong and there can be confusion and at worst, a vehicle could go out on the road without the necessary work being completed.

The job stories are the focus of the weekly sessions Umesh has with teacher Jo Kettell. "It's very targeted learning," Jo says. "We go through

the job stories and Umesh is able to see where he's made a mistake and correct it."

Jo says Umesh is now a lot more confident about speaking up in the workshop if he doesn't understand. He's extending his vocabulary and is also better at making himself understood.

Umesh admits he was initially nervous about taking lessons.

"It was a bit scary," he says. "But I am comfortable coming to lessons now and I'm definitely more confident. Not just at work, but at home too. I'm able to use better English and I can practise with my children."

Alex says diesel mechanics are hard to come by in New Zealand, with about 90 per cent recruited off-shore.

That can be a long and complicated exercise, so it makes sense that once

you have employed someone, you do your best to retain them.

"I see English learning as a good investment," Alex says. "The only cost is an hour's work, so it makes sense to have it as part of a worker's induction. I see it as a win-win."

Meanwhile, Jo says she takes her hat off to CAL ISUZU for their forward thinking.

"They recognised they had a problem and addressed it. I think more workplaces would find value in doing the same." ✂

[www.calisuzu.co.nz](http://www.calisuzu.co.nz)

**More about how we help with  
English for work:**

[www.englishlanguage.org.nz/  
english-for-your-employees/](http://www.englishlanguage.org.nz/english-for-your-employees/)





Eric Finlay, Clay Bricks  
with Ted Rediang

# Building a new life, *brick by brick*

Being a small town on busy SH1, Huntly is often overlooked, but taking the time to leave the main road can reveal a few surprises.

Alison Robertson | Photos Michael Jeans

**T**ake Clay Bricks, for example. It's owned by former brick-layer Eric Finlay and his wife Vickie, a former nurse and trained midwife. Nearly 20 years ago, the couple bought a piece of land, cleared the gorse, built a huge shed and installed a dryer, kiln and everything else necessary to make clay bricks.

Today, they make half a million bricks each month. The plant can operate 24/7, the clay is sourced locally, and the bricks are sold all over the North Island. There are eight full-time staff; two of the team are the Finlay's sons

and three of the workers are new migrants.

Ted Rediang is one of the new ones. He came to New Zealand from the Philippines as a skilled migrant on a resident's visa. Having worked in IT, including for IBM, he thought he'd get a job fairly quickly.

However, the computer programmer with more than 10 years' experience says he must have applied for 50 positions without success. Then his wife found English Language Partners online.

They went to the Settlement Centre Waikato, in Hamilton, where staff recommended English Language Partners' Work Talk programme.

Ted says it was just what he needed. "In the Philippines, our CVs are long and detailed and include photos and a lot of personal information. Mine was definitely too wordy. Work Talk taught me about customising each job application, and about the preparation that needs to be done before an interview."

Work Talk participants spend a total of 48 hours on the programme, ►



Ted Rediang, Eric Finlay  
and Angie León Rodríguez,  
Clay Bricks

learning how to approach employers, prepare for interviews, develop professional networking skills and tailor CVs. "It's like a very long orientation," Ted says.

He followed up Work Talk with a Migrant Employment Solutions (MES) programme which helped him secure the job at Clay Bricks. MES is run by Hamilton Multicultural Services Trust, which collaborates with English Language Partners to support individuals into work. "Before Work Talk I was getting so frustrated, and without it I wouldn't have been able to get the job."

Ted says he's happy in his work and has no plans to leave anytime soon.

Eric is pleased with the way Ted has slotted into the business, coming on board not long after the factory had undergone a substantial upgrade, including a new building, new kiln and dryer and other working machinery.

"There are so many things that can happen when you're commissioning a new plant," says Eric. "So many faults that arise. Ted saw a lot of these and he learned quickly. He wasn't shy about speaking up."

It wasn't only the kiln and dryer Ted had to work on; he needed to understand the workings of 'Lucy' as well. Lucy being an AGV (automated guided vehicle) weighing 5,500kg,

and used to move huge stacks of bricks. "He came to grips with adjusting the robot that stacks the bricks onto pallets, and the stretch hood wrapping machine."

Eric says he'd definitely take on more new migrants if he needed more staff. "I don't think it would matter whether their English was perfect or not," Eric says. "Because when you're troubleshooting, you always go to the machine to be 100 percent certain about what's happened."

Ted usually works nightshift, and, more recently, his wife Aileen has started working full-time at the factory too, at the end of the production line in quality control. Their two young daughters, aged four to nine, are looked after by Ted's older sister who, incidentally, financed Ted's education back in the Philippines; Ted being the youngest of 12 children.

Another person inspecting the end product is Angie León Rodríguez. The former real estate agent from Colombia also completed the Work

“

Without Work Talk,  
I wouldn't have been  
able to get the job.

– Ted Rediang,  
Clay Bricks

”

Talk programme. "My English still needs work," she says. "I did very basic English at school. It's sometimes difficult to understand what people are saying but I've just got to try. Work Talk was useful for giving me confidence to speak. I'm enjoying the work I do here."

Eric's pleased with Angie's progress and he has started to give her more responsibility, encouraging her to learn more about the technical and computing parts of the operation.

"If other employers were looking for staff, I wouldn't hesitate to recommend taking on new migrants." ✂

[www.claybricks.co.nz](http://www.claybricks.co.nz)

**For more about Work Talk:**  
[www.englishlanguage.org.nz/  
learn-english-in-new-zealand/  
learn-english-for-work](http://www.englishlanguage.org.nz/learn-english-in-new-zealand/learn-english-for-work)

**Work Talk is an intensive four-week course.**

**"Work Talk taught me about the preparation that  
needs to be done before an interview."**

**– Ted Rediang, Clay Bricks**



# Getting former refugees *on the road*

A joint English Language Partners and New Zealand Red Cross initiative in Nelson is giving former refugees the freedom – and employability – of being able to take to the open road. Joanna Davis | Photos Chris Wastney

One of the first things Luis Godoy will do when he gets his driving licence is take his family to the golden sands of Kaiteriteri.

"I love it there," the 29-year-old says of the world-renowned beach that is an hour's drive from his home in Nelson.

On a more practical note, a driver's licence will also improve Luis' work situation. He works for a joiner and his employer currently needs to transport him to job sites.

Luis is taking part in a joint English Language Partners and Red Cross

programme to help former refugees get their driver's licence.

The ESOL Road Code programme, taught by English Language Partners, helps participants learn the theory to sit their learner's licence.

The Open Road programme, delivered by Red Cross, provides the practical 'behind-the-wheel' lessons people need before taking a road test to gain their restricted licence.

The programmes are funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and the Ministry of Social Development, in recognition of their importance for increasing ▶

“

It's their licence to independence, jobs and freedom.

– Adrian Courtenay,  
*English Language Partners*

”



Adrian Courtenay,  
English Language Partners,  
Margo Ruhen, Red Cross,  
and Luis Goday



Luis Goday

former refugees' independence and helping them secure employment.

Luis and his wife and children fled violence in Colombia for Ecuador, where they lived for two years until New Zealand offered them a permanent home.

When the offer was made, Luis says he turned to his wife and said: "New Zealand? Where is it? I think it's far away. We better find out where it is."

Coming to New Zealand, he says, is "the best thing that's ever happened in my life. I give thanks to God."

Luis rode a moped in his home town of Buenaventura. But he soon realised that in New Zealand, driving a car was "very important".

"Here, it's more necessary," he says. "And also, I have a big family." His six children range in age from three to 15.

Adrian Courtenay, from English Language Partners, said some refugees had not driven before coming to New Zealand.

"So it's not just the challenge of a new country and new language; it's a lot to take on board."

Adrian says ESOL Road Code uses "lots of visuals and key words" to help the students, whose level of English is usually initially low.

He said the course also involved in-the-field education, such as taking the students to a roundabout and explaining what was going on, who was giving way to whom, etc. This helps learners prepare for their learner licence test.

Red Cross Open Road Coordinator Margo Ruhen says one of the main barriers to employment for refugees is transportation.

"Especially in regional areas, such as Nelson, public transport is not the best. Considering the first steps on the employment ladder are often into horticultural work, you need to be able to get there."

Red Cross allots positions on Open Road courses according to need, taking into account employment need and other factors such as social isolation, and whether the family is a single parent family.

"Usually we prioritise getting one licence per family so they can get to work, and get to the supermarket or the doctor's or hospital in an emergency."

Margo says the participants are "just ecstatic" on graduation.

She recalls one student whose wife was pregnant. "He was able to drive her to hospital when she was giving





Adrian Courtenay,  
Margo Ruhen  
and Luis Godoy

birth. "Another woman was able to take her children to sports commitments after school.

"Driving was never in her realm of possibility in the village she came from. It totally opened possibilities in the world for her."

Adrian says he loves to see participants' delight when they are successful. "It's really a huge deal. The look on their faces and the gratitude they express ... they're so excited.

"Because it's their licence to independence, jobs and freedom." ✨

## ESOL Road Code

**English Language Partners'** programme runs in Auckland, Waikato, Palmerston North, Nelson and Dunedin. Contact your local centre for more information: [www.englishlanguage.org.nz/our-centres](http://www.englishlanguage.org.nz/our-centres)

ESOL Road Code is funded by the Tertiary Education Commission.

## Open Road

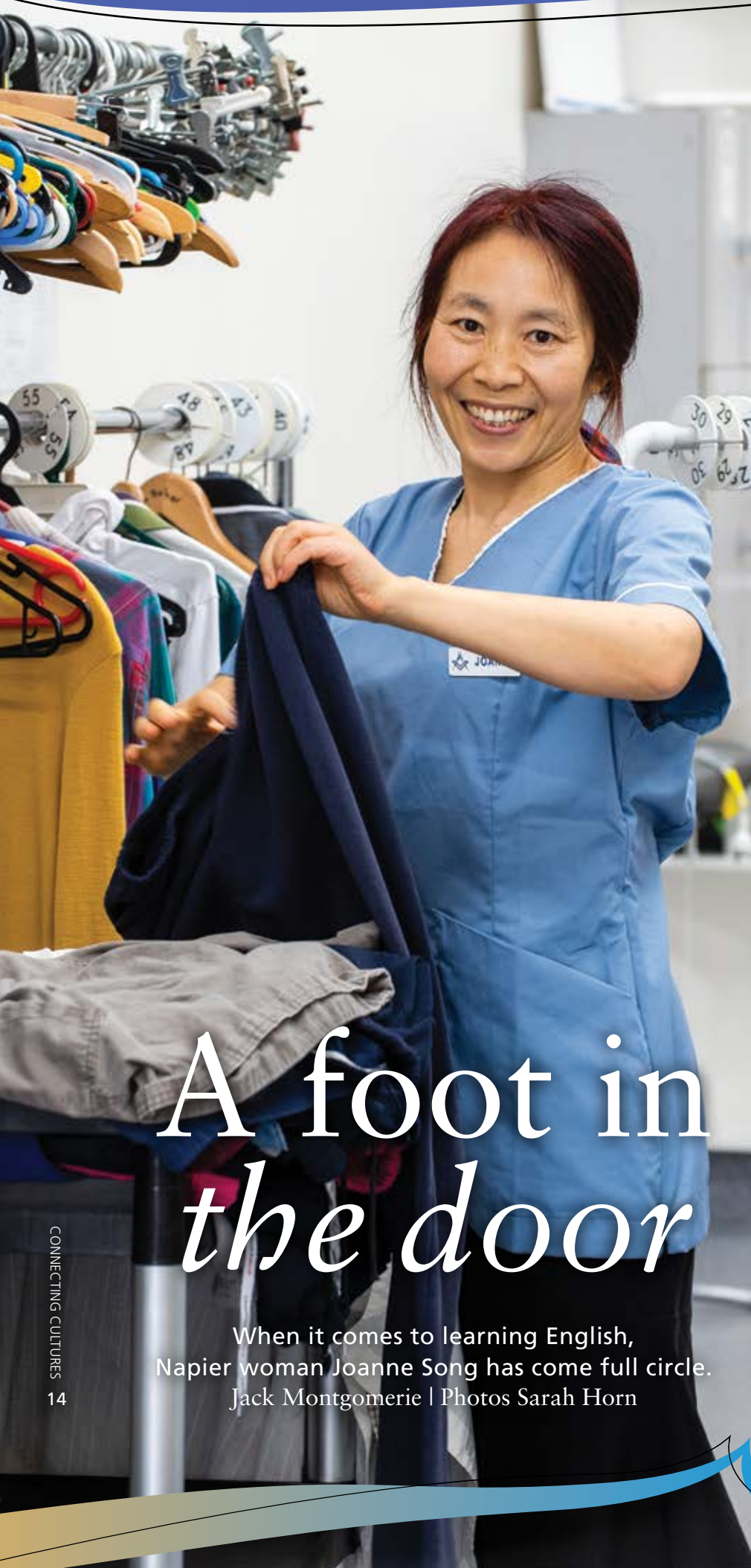
**Red Cross** runs Open Road in South Auckland, Palmerston North, Nelson and Dunedin. To volunteer: [www.redcross.org.nz/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/resettlement-driver-training](http://www.redcross.org.nz/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/resettlement-driver-training)

**Auckland Resettled Community Coalition** runs Open Road in West Auckland and Auckland Central. For information: [arcc.org.nz](http://arcc.org.nz)

**Changemakers** runs Open Road in Wellington. For information: [crf.org.nz/open-road-driver-training-former-refugees](http://crf.org.nz/open-road-driver-training-former-refugees)

**Hamilton Multicultural Services Trust** runs Open Road in Hamilton. For information: [www.hmstrust.org.nz/passport-2-drive](http://www.hmstrust.org.nz/passport-2-drive)

Open Road is funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Ministry of Social Development and the New Zealand Transport Agency.



# A foot in *the door*

When it comes to learning English,  
Napier woman Joanne Song has come full circle.  
Jack Montgomerie | Photos Sarah Horn

Before coming to New Zealand in 2017 with her husband and son, Joanne Song worked as an intermediate school English teacher in Yantai, China.

"I was born in the same province as Confucius. I've visited his hometown."

Joanne found the transition from the textbook English she had taught to everyday Kiwi conversations difficult.

"I was almost afraid to talk on the phone. I thought 'My English is so poor, I cannot even communicate with people. How can I find a job?'"

Today Joanne works in the laundry and kitchen at the Taradale Masonic Rest Home and Hospital.

"Joanne had a real warmth about her," Quality and Operations Manager Wendy Maynard says, remembering their first meeting.

"We look for people who are a fit with our organisation, and for our culture, and she interviewed very well."

Nowadays, Joanne is a valued member of the facility's team, but finding work in New Zealand was not easy for her initially.

The process she encountered was quite different from when she got her teaching job in China, where she needed to pass some examinations and give a lecture in front of experts.

"I started searching for jobs in Napier online a little, but not successfully."

A friend told her about Work Talk, an English Language Partners' course for newcomers wanting to join the workforce, and asked if she would like to go for it.

"I said absolutely, yes!"

Writing CVs and cover letters were new experiences for Joanne. She says her classmates encouraged each other and she appreciated the patience of teacher Valerie Danes.



"After that course, I had a new way of thinking. It was about giving new hope. That was the most important thing."

Joanne prepared for job interviews by role playing 'employer' and 'job applicant' with classmates.

"It was exciting," Joanne says, adding she was "a little bit nervous, just like a real interview."

Joanne also learnt helpful tactics for making phone calls. Studying the NATO phonetic alphabet made it easier to spell out her name on the phone when applying for jobs.

"A for Alpha, B for Bravo..."

Another job seeking approach Joanne learnt was cold calling – asking about job opportunities and leaving her CV with potential employers. That method got Joanne her current job.

"You have to get a foot in the door," Joanne says, recalling the idiom she learnt about the importance of making contact with people.

After first knocking on the doors of three rest homes, Joanne turned up on the doorstep of Taradale Masonic, on a summer day in 2018.

When invited for a job interview, Joanne was surprised at how well the practice interviews had prepared her for the real thing.

"Nearly every question from the course showed up in the interview," she says. "After that interview, I appreciated that one-month intensive course so much.

"Without English Language Partners, I would not have improved a lot. I'm very pleased with myself."

When she started work, Joanne had new challenges to face. As well as managing her daily tasks, Joanne needed to learn the facility's emergency procedures and human resources processes.

"To begin with it was quite hard. It was totally new."



Wendy Maynard, Joanne Song and Saskia van Zijp, Taradale Masonic Rest Home and Hospital



Joanne Song with Valerie Danes, teacher, English Language Partners

However, she was encouraged to ask questions, and now feels more confident in her job.

Wendy says Joanne's improving English skills have helped her pick up many "Kiwi phrases" and become more independent in her work.

"Some of the mandatory training we do with Fire and Emergency, Joanne did struggle to understand.

"We're talking about fire systems, mini-mimic panels, fire zones versus evacuation areas, that's not just English, it's specific to that particular process. We did a refresher education session and she was able to ask some really insightful questions."

Joanne has also used her Mandarin skills to translate correspondence for a local business with a potential Chinese supplier.

She hopes her growing English will have other advantages, like making it easier to take part in parent-teacher interviews at her son's high school.

Now Joanne has appeared at a recent Work Talk course to answer questions about her successful job search.

"People are from China, Taiwan, Brazil, Japan, Korea, all different countries. I felt like I am even a little bit useful for others!"

She has also recommended Work Talk to friends, and they have reported positive results.

Joanne's English journey has taken her from one end of the classroom to the other and back, and she doesn't plan to end her journey anytime soon. ✂

Taradale Masonic Rest Home and Hospital  
[www.ndmt.co.nz/care-facility](http://www.ndmt.co.nz/care-facility)

**Contact your local centre about Work Talk:**  
[www.englishlanguage.org.nz/our-centres](http://www.englishlanguage.org.nz/our-centres)

# A winning connection

On a Friday morning, it's easy to find Saraswoti Rimal and Aung Win.  
Story & photos Leigh Dome

Saraswoti Rimal and Aung Win are busy improving their computer skills, thanks to a collaboration between English Language Partners and the Universal College of Learning (UCOL) in Palmerston North.

The idea developed as UCOL's Education Head of School, Dr Bridget Percy, recognised that "UCOL had the facilities to help out a worthy community group, and we went from there," says Bridget.

Located directly across the road from UCOL's Palmerston North campus, English Language Partners already had an association with UCOL: as a member of their Stakeholder

Advisory Group. "It made perfect sense for us to offer our computer suites, when they are available, to English Language Partners' students," says Bridget.

Both Saraswoti and Aung Win have been attending the class since its inception. Fifty-eight-year-old Aung Win from Myanmar says he didn't know anything about computers when he started two years ago.

He's now quite adept on the keyboard and admits, apart from learning about basic computer operation, he likes to keep up with the news and weather online.

Bhutanese-born Saraswoti says the regular computer classes have given her confidence and plenty of English reading and writing practise. She enjoys being on the campus and was delighted one day to overhear her native language, Nepali, being spoken by another UCOL student.

Saraswoti has a large extended family and says her three children, in particular, are very proud of her studies. "I learn a lot of little bits every time. A big thank you to UCOL."

ESOL Literacy teacher Catherine Taylor says UCOL's gesture is enhancing the learning of over eighty English Language Partners' students, who have limited access to computers.

## NETWORK NEWS

### 'Big Girls' shine a light

Giant puppets and paper lanterns lit up Wellington in a parade to mark 125 years of women's voting rights. Learners from Palmerston North and Porirua centres led the August celebration.



### Language through knitting

Auckland West centre's innovative lesson 'Knitting and Numeracy' made language learning engaging and fun for this ESOL Literacy class in Massey.



### Food, friendship and English

Shared lunches are big at our Northland centre. Twice a month, learners and volunteers get together to catch up, enjoy a variety of food and practise English in a relaxed way.







Aung Win and Catherine Taylor, teacher, English Language Partners



Aung Win, Saraswoti Rimal with Dr Bridget Percy, Education Head of School, UCOL

"Our ESOL Literacy and ESOL Intensive students can improve their digital literacy skills through regular use of UCOL's equipment," she says.

Catherine and other English Language Partners' staff and volunteers are on hand to help students during the class.

Sessions are held regularly during term time and last about an hour. Tasks are linked to class topics and can include searching for video tutorials and websites. "They become more familiar with basic keyboard skills and internet terminology," says Catherine. "They also learn simple Microsoft Word functions."

As part of the agreement with UCOL, English Language Partners' students

are also entitled to a student bus pass, allowing them to travel for free around the city. "This is a significant benefit, as it removes barriers they can encounter in getting around," says Bridget.

Jess Yap, English Language Partners manager in Palmerston North agrees. "The students are very appreciative to UCOL," she says. "To be able to travel by bus to school and shopping are steps towards our students' goals of living confidently and independently in New Zealand.

They also regularly participate in UCOL's International Festivals. "They add to the campus diversity and are a welcome part of our wider family," says Bridget.

"UCOL does not have an ulterior motive, this is not a recruitment drive – we want to make a positive difference in our community."

Jess says she is very thankful to supportive UCOL's administration and timetabling staff who have helped with scheduling computer lab access.

"We hope to continue this close working relationship for many years to come." ✂

[www.ucol.ac.nz](http://www.ucol.ac.nz)

**Get in touch to discuss partnering with ELPNZ**

[www.englishlanguage.org.nz/our-centres/](http://www.englishlanguage.org.nz/our-centres/)

### Pink ribbon fundraiser

A 'pink-tastic' lunch honoured a Karen Kiwi breast cancer survivor with close ties to our Palmerston North centre. A former ELPNZ volunteer made the amazing cake.



### Class wins national award

Christchurch's unique NZ Sign Language class for deaf former refugees won '2018 Community-based programme of the year, Tangata Tiriti' at ACE Aotearoa's Awards.



### Local marae welcomes learners

Palmerston North learners were welcomed onto Te Rangimarie Marae. They cut harakeke and made flax flowers. The trip was organised with help from Manawatu Multicultural Centre.



# Putting our hands up *to be counted*

Honourable Iain Lees-Galloway, Minister of Immigration

New Zealand has always been a nation that strives to be part of our global community, to put things right, and to play our part. We are a small nation, of limited resources, but one of the characters that defines New Zealand is that we'll do our best to do the right thing.

Around the world, there's an extraordinary number of people who face hardships that most New Zealanders couldn't bear to contemplate. It's the right thing we can do to offer our home and hospitality as refuge.

That's why, when Labour was in opposition, the Party supported calls to 'Double the Quota', and we were pleased when pressure caused the then-National Government to make the first increase in New Zealand's refugee quota in 29 years. However, that increase – from 750 to 1,000 – was not enough, and that's why, during our first term, the Coalition Government has lifted the refugee quota to 1,500 each year, from 2020.

It is essential we plan this correctly and ensure we have the right resources in the right places to welcome refugee families. Community support, health and mental health services, and, of course, housing are critical parts of making sure former refugees can get what they need to settle here.

As part of our planning, the Coalition Government made significant investments in refugee support in Budget 2018, providing \$14 million in new



funding to build and operate two new accommodation blocks at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre – literally laying the foundation to increase our offer for refugees, and nearly \$4 million in additional funding for the Refugee and Protection Unit.

Beside my role as the Minister of Immigration, I am also the Member of Parliament for the electorate of Palmerston North: a refugee settlement city. I personally know the benefits refugee communities bring. The cultural diversity offers an incredible advantage, but so too are the benefits of new perspectives, international connections and incredibly hardworking new migrants (citizens) eager to roll up their sleeves and contribute to their new communities and the economy.

One of the most outstanding parts of being an MP is the work I can do on

behalf of our people and our communities. One thrilling experience I had as a local electorate representative was advocating for refugee families.

One family from the Congo received an enormous effort by my electorate office over seven years to help reunite their family members, some of whom were scattered across the world. Because some family lacked even the most basic of citizenship papers, most people said it couldn't be done. If buying painkillers without a driver's licence is difficult, imagine how hard it is to move countries when you lack any proof of your identity.

But thanks to tenacious advocacy from the electorate office, we were able to find the right information and advocate successfully to the UN and the Government. The family, now three generations, are thriving and continue to make a positive contribution to the Palmerston North community.

Just recently, I announced the reinstatement of Christchurch as a refugee resettlement city, an important milestone in its earthquake recovery. What really interests me now is knowing how Christchurch will once again share in the benefits that refugees bring. ✨



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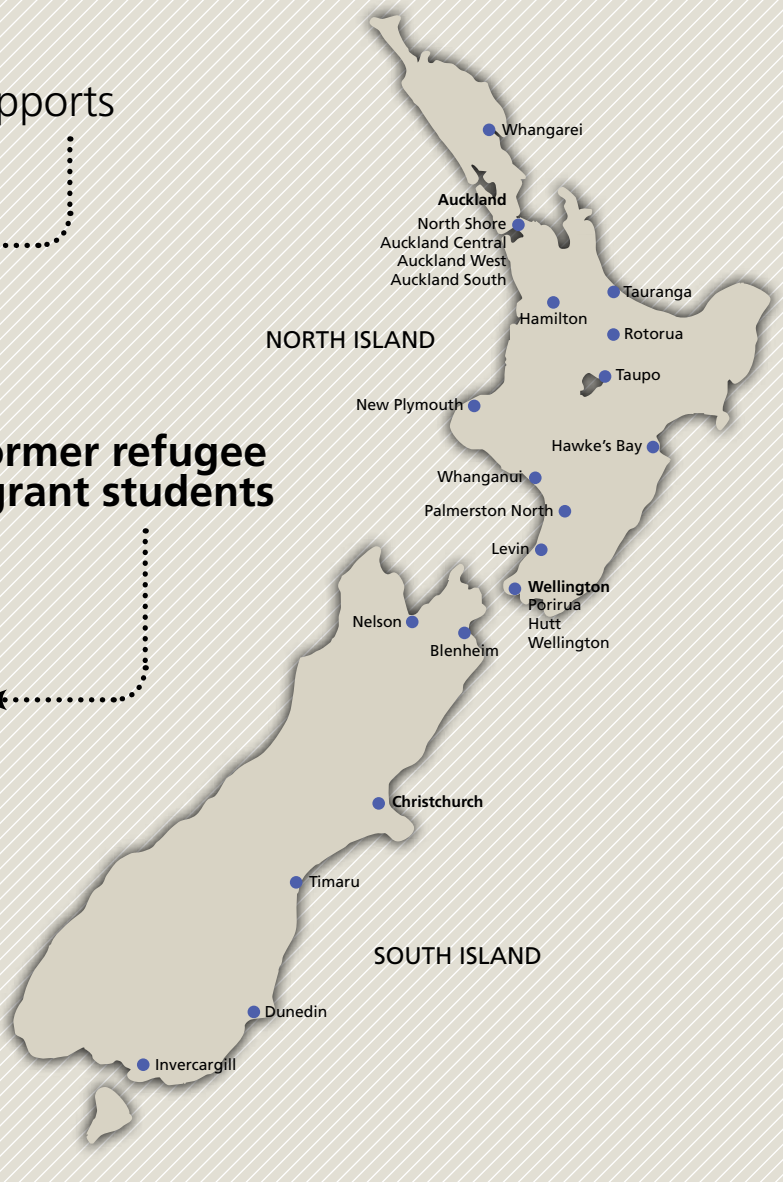


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# *Work with former* REFUGEES & MIGRANTS



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