

Aaron's story . . .

Aaron Roussos regularly employs newly arrived people from culturally diverse backgrounds to work with food and beverage at the Darwin Convention Centre. His first exposure to the potential benefits of taking on refugees came about when CHARTTES Training Advisory Council ran the *Cooking up Skills* program targeting refugees, migrants and unemployed people within the Darwin area. The program was so successful, the Darwin Convention Centre employed nine of the 11 participants – refugees from China, Africa and Bangladesh.

Aaron says newly arrived people from culturally diverse backgrounds are stable employees who are looking for and are committed to permanent employment. What makes them such desirable employees is their genuine appreciation for the opportunities their workplace can offer them.

With the hospitality industry being heavily reliant on seasonal business, many employers take on backpackers during their busiest months, but Aaron sees more benefit in hiring refugees and migrants.

“Many hospitality employers hire backpackers, but we believe the cost of training these people when they are in Darwin for a limited time is too expensive, and backpackers do not have the same commitment to the job.”

“Refugees often establish a more personal relationship with their employer and bring a diverse range of skills, knowledge and culture that enriches the workplace and benefits all of us. This helps us with staff retention and the sharing of knowledge. We value this”, Aaron said.

Aaron believes that in a highly multicultural environment such as the Top End it is appropriate that the workplace reflects its community, and in his experience, the percentage of employees who don't work out seems to be the same across all groups of people.

“Overall these staff provide a valuable contribution to the successful operation of the Darwin Convention Centre.”



Aaron Roussos
Food and Beverage Manager
Darwin Convention Centre

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