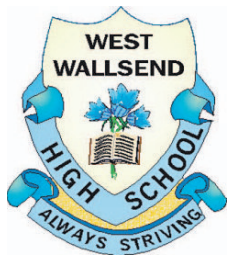
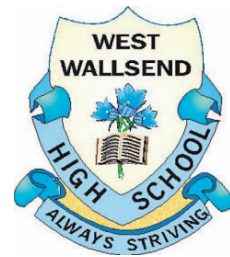


Secondary entry #11: West Wallsend High School



THE WESTY WHISPER



West Wallsend High students in the UON High Achievers program: Daniel Roxby, Blake Ciappara, Matthew Crawford, Molly Maddock and Sian Keating. *Picture: Rebekah Green*

Top learning opport-uni-ty for students

By **STEPHANIE CODY**

THE University of Newcastle High Performing Students Program is giving an opportunity for high school students to fulfil their academic potential.

Students recognised as high achievers were interviewed to be part of a program that recognises and expands on their academic ability. This program allows students to undertake a first year university course, which is facilitated at Merewether High School.

Approximately 40-45 students from years 10 to 12 were selected to complete the 15-week course for 2015, with engineering, health and diseases, and 2D studies being the main areas of study selected by the UON.

The engineering course encourages understanding of the engineering practice and its role in society. Teamwork, organisational skills, and decision-making are integral to the course. The health course focuses on helping the students to learn about the key organs of the body. Students enrolled in the 2D Studies course have been experimenting with different artistic techniques and mediums, and forming ideas to create major works which were on display at the *Depth* exhibition, held at the Newcastle University Art Gallery on July 16.

A student awaiting a course result said he would "definitely do this again" given the opportunity.

By **STEPHANIE CODY**

WELCOME to Australia is a not-for-profit organisation which is helping refugees connect and feel welcome in our community.

The organisation was founded by a Christian pastor, Brad Chilcott, after attending a rally where a 10-year-old boy was holding up a sign that said "Sink the Boats". He thought that Australia really needed a change of attitude, and therefore created the idea of Welcome to Australia.

Welcome to Australia has two main goals – the first is to welcome newly-arrived immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers into Australia, and to help them get connected into the community through building relationships and friendships.

The second goal is to provide a contact point for Australians to meet with people of other cultures and religions, with the aim of providing a real experience to foster understanding of the cultures, as well as the hardships and struggles of the people.

One of the ways that Welcome to Australia Newcastle is going about achieving this is through the monthly barbecues at Heaton Park, Jesmond through summer and at the Welcome Centre during winter.

The barbecues are free. The food is halal, with vegetarian options provided. The barbecues give a



Forming friendships and raising awareness of the plight of newcomers. *Picture: Stephanie Cody*

chance for everyone to interact, play some cricket or soccer and meet new people.

Welcome to Australia Newcastle is also running cultural evenings each Friday night, with any donations going to support the P&C at Islington Public School, which also supports the refugee community.

Welcome to Australia Newcastle gets no official funding and is currently supported by the local

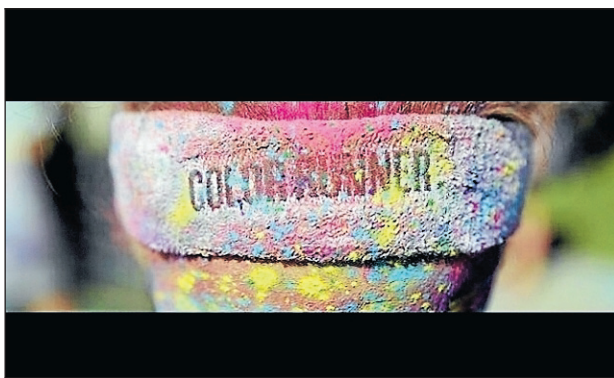
branch director's custom furniture business, and through donations from the community.

The organisation also works closely with refugee service providers, such as Northern Settlement Services (NSS) and Settlement Services International (SSI), the Ethnic Communities Council (ECC), and Amnesty International.

In Newcastle, Welcome to Australia has connected with roughly 30

Afghan translators, their wives and children, the Congolese community, through The Grainery Church, refugees from Sudan, Burma, Iran, Syria, and many more. Welcome to Australia now has branches at more than 11 different locations.

 **For updates or to be involved, email:**
newcastledirector@welcometoaustralia.org.au



Rainbow Runners, as created by the Color Run help raise awareness for charities.

Running as rainbows for charity

By **KIARA GIBSON**

FOUNDED in 2011, the Color Run is now the single largest event series in the world, more than tripling in size since its inception, and is known as "the happiest five kilometres on the planet" by participants, who conclude the event by participating in a celebratory Finish Festival.

Held this year on June 28,

the Color Run raises awareness for The Global Citizens Foundation, the Cancer Council, Make-a-Wish and Starlight Foundations as well as a number of organisations local to the host city.

This year's events took place in Newcastle, the Gold Coast, Sydney, Adelaide, the Sunshine Coast, Perth and Melbourne.

Participants pass through six colour zones. This covers

the participant in colour made from food dye and corn-starch. Participants are asked to wear white so the vibrant colours will stand out while raising awareness for some local charities and organisations.

This year also launched Australia's first ever night Color Run. Participants were asked to wear black for this run. The colours are more vivid and glow in the dark.

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