



Speech by

Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE; NEW FARM RECOVERS FESTIVAL

Ms GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (9.12 pm): On Tuesday, 1 March I joined the Premier, the Multicultural Community Centre director, Jeannie Mok, and her husband, David Mok, at the Multicultural Community Centre to congratulate the 56 people who graduated with new qualifications through the Multicultural Community Centre's One Stop Shop. Assisting unemployed people from diverse cultural backgrounds, including many who do not speak English as a first language, to earn a local and nationally recognised qualification opens up many new doors into the workforce and will help each participant to secure a brighter future for themselves and their families. There were also many distinguished guests at the event. I often see the member for Capalaba there. He has almost never missed a graduation ceremony.

Earning a certificate III in aged care or children's services through the Brisbane North Institute of TAFE is an important step for a group that comes from many different countries and backgrounds. Some 36 people have found work after completing this project and the remaining 20 have signed up for further training. It is great to see that the project's success is already evident.

The MCC One Stop Shop is funded through the state's successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative. A \$444,000 government grant will see a total of 159 unemployed people who come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds assisted through this project. Small classes of like-minded people, understanding and experienced teachers and the extra support MCC provides to address cultural and language barriers makes this a very positive training program. I congratulate Jeannie Mok and her team at MCC on this great program. It is great to see so many people graduate and the participants enjoying the ceremony and obtaining a job.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate and thank the New Farm Neighbourhood Centre and other local organisations for their outstanding efforts in organising the New Farm Recovers Festival held on Sunday, 27 February. I want to particularly thank service manager Fiona Hunt, president Michael Drummond and Zanda Adrian-Walla who together organised a wonderful community event which involved businesses, schools and other local groups coming together following the recent devastating floods.

Councillor David Hinchliffe provided BCC funds and together we assisted the staff from New Farm Coles, which generously donated food and drinks for the barbecue tent where we fed free of charge many residents who attended the event. Students from New Farm State School and Holy Spirit did a great job entertaining the crowds with their choirs and it was great to see the pictorial show put together by Feral Arts. Following the floods the New Farm community came together like no other to help those in need, and the New Farm Neighbourhood Centre led the way in providing community assistance.

I fully support the Under 1 Roof report *A silver lining: community development, crisis and belonging*, which was ably launched by Wendy Hovard, president of 139 Club. A warm and big thankyou to all of the many businesses in the area that supported the event, which went a long way to helping New Farm recover. I look forward to other community events similar to the one that was held on that Sunday. It was a great way for the community to come together, share their stories of the floods and get their lives back in order.