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The Katina Woodruff
Children's Foundation, Inc.



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Overcoming challenges for a better future

ANNUAL REPORT

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OUR STORIES



HOPE FOR NEW WAVES OF DESPAIR

The Katina Woodruff Children's Foundation exists to offer hope and a way forward for children facing desperate challenges.

Often resulting from forced migration due to refugee situations, the need to flee troubled areas for safety and protection, and escape turmoil beyond our imagination.

For the last two years, we have faced new waves of migrants arriving for many reasons, including the war in Ukraine and the return to power of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

In both cases the children keep coming and in desperate need of the interventions that we can provide through Katina's work, the work of our Committee of Management and the generous care of donors and sponsors. Thankfully, we are able to help these children and their families and carers.

UKRAINE - A NEW START

The war in Ukraine is resulting in children from both Ukraine and Russia landing on our shores.

Killing and war is now normalised for some of these children, and some demonstrated aggression and anger.

Some were so obsessed by the war memories that they constantly drew pictures of war weaponry, tanks and drones during art time.

Thankfully, each of these children have moved beyond their anger and aggression and are learning to interact with peers in a safe and peaceful manner.

Pictures in art time are now changing to focus on beauty, family and joyful experiences. The teachers credit the work Katina is doing with the children for turning that corner of transition.

A delightful afternote is that some children from Ukraine are becoming solid friends with the Russian children, which demonstrates the futility of the situation from which they had to flee.

Often the mother and children has had to leave with the father remaining behind to serve in the military.

Sometimes contact with the father is scarce. This is not an easy situation, but we are able to provide support so the children can adjust to their new life in Australia.



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OUR STORIES

ESCAPE FROM AFGHANISTAN

In our recent history we have had the satisfaction of being there for children and their families who had assisted both the Australian and US forces in Afghanistan. They were assured that they would be protected if the USA or Australia withdrew forces as the repercussions of their support would be life-threatening. The actual swift withdrawal did not allow for this protection, however, and crowds of those needing our protection and evacuation were left stranded at the airport and at the mercy of hostile forces.

Some were evacuated, but day after day it became more and more helpless for those left behind. On the last days in which evacuation was possible, some of the families we serve were among others crowded near the plane hoping beyond hope that they would be saved from the inevitable. For reasons they do not fully understand, they were whisked into the evacuating plane and brought to a neutral country and then onwards to Australia.

Days later, still in shock, still with fresh memories of those they had to leave behind and still sensing the strangeness of leaving every material and family connection behind, these families sought out a place for their children to start learning English and gaining an education in this new, strange country.

Thankfully, the authorities recognised that these families were in need of the sessions we provide and they were introduced to Katina. These parents were incredibly relieved to realise that help was available even in these unsurmountable odds. Over the following weeks Katina had regular sessions with these children and the teachers reported the interventions were bringing a sense of wellbeing and belonging.

The children learned to play with peers from many cultures and also learned to trust, and not fear the school authorities.

A BRIGHT FUTURE



Now our contact with those who have transitioned is less frequent as they settle, but their teachers, parents and others report that the support from Katina was critical to helping these children move forward. No longer frozen in trauma but now feeling safe and supported in their new home.

Indeed, the memories and losses endure.

These families know that they will never see their extended family again and what they left behind is no longer the same, but they are learning to value Australia and the life opportunities and freedom it provides.



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OUR IMPACT



From tears of fear to smiles of joy

The real impact of our work is not measured in facts and figures.

It is measured by the changes in the children who, by teacher observation as well as our own, were struggling to adapt into the Australian classroom setting and among their peers who, then, following their sessions with Katina, enter into the classroom at peace and with a smile and happily interact with peers.

They start enjoying those around them instead of seeing them as a threat, interacting well with peers and contributing to the class.

From tears of fear to smiles of joy is the biggest measure of success one could ever ask for in our kind of organisation.



85
Kids



16
Nations

We do have other indicators which help us realize the scope of this impact:

This past year we have served 85 individual migrant or former refugee children who display issues with which we can help, and which without exception overcome the issues that were hindering their settling into their new life and context. This is the largest cohort yet.

Further, the countries from which these children come are multiple children from Ukraine, Russia, and Afghanistan as well as those from Pakistan, Guinea, Zimbabwe, Papua New Guinea, Vietnam, India, Sri Lanka, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Sweden and Germany.

We have information that further children will be coming from parts of China, Ukraine, Afghanistan and Russia and we are preparing for them now.

None of our services, however, would have been possible if it weren't for our support network for which we are deeply appreciative.



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SUPPORT NETWORK

INAUGURAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR



This year saw a first for us as we appointed 12 year old Jack Holley as our inaugural Youth Ambassador as a result of his enthusiastic and creative fundraising and communication for the Foundation.

He produced a social media campaign with a video message to support his event 'Jack's Run for Refugees', which raised significant money and exceeded even his wildest hopes as others were inspired by his vision and resourcefulness.

Thank you, Jack, for demonstrating unusual initiative and creativity in helping others understand the need which we address and the plight of the children we serve and bringing this message and empathy to the next generation.



We want to thank the Channel Seven Telethon Trust for making major contributions to our work for the second sequential year, in our partnership.

Their grant has assured our viability and success. We thank you to the entire Channel 7 Telethon team for their hard work to raise awareness and funds for those who work with vulnerable children and thank them for including us in their funded groups this year.

We also cannot thank enough the over 105 individual donors who have supported us through the GiveNow site either through one of our fundraising events (i.e. Jacks Marathon, Bob and Sue Walk to Make a Difference or other events) or through regular giving be it annual, monthly or one-off. Our donors have ranged from \$5 to \$12,000 but we know each one brings not only financial resources but networks of communication, helping us to tell our story to the wider community. Thank you for caring.

Further community buy-in has been evident through a small grant from the City of Fremantle, small sponsorship by Grillo Burgers in Fremantle, ongoing project planning from the Fremantle Rotary and Small Business Network and ongoing dialogue with the Fremantle Foundation and other local groups with which we have shared.

We also thank local business identity Santo Merenda of Lifestyle Salads and the Merenda Foundation for donating seed funding toward the purchase of a much needed vehicle for our work, which was then matched by an anonymous donor and another donation from Sheyne and Bev Walsh. These gifts enabled us to finally purchase a vehicle this year which will be dependable and safe transport for our site visits and for attending Katina's sessions at the school and other locations.

Thank you for showing your support in this way for this practical contribution to the ongoing wellbeing of the organisation and our founder, Katina Woodruff-Roberts.



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SUMMARY DATA

FINANCES



In the past financial year (2022-2023) our total income raised for all purposes was \$85,098.70 which covered our current operating year expenses of (\$48,444.48), our special purchase of a quality vehicle (\$26,000.00) and monies toward a corpus to underwrite an increased remuneration package to come closer to a realistic salary in the coming year.

While this income is impressive, it is also reflective of the one-time project for the purchase of an automobile and in no way indicates we can lessen our efforts in fund-raising and partnerships in the new year. Thank you to all for this significant outcome, especially as this result reflects giving in a time of financial hardship for many in Australia.

Thank you, again, to every individual and organization who helped us this past year

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership has remained stable during this year with the exception of the resignation of Mr Simon Matters from the Committee and membership. The entire committee has served with distinction.

Their donation of time and expertise to our endeavour is vital. Few associations and their boards of management would be able to match the expertise or commitment of this organisation, even in much larger charities. They are indeed an impressive group.

The quality of our membership has helped us in this tremendous outreach we have with those who are traumatised and suffering.

PARTNERS

Our partnership with both Beaconsfield Primary school and the community has centred our emphasis now on people within the Fremantle catchment area. However, we also receive requests from families who have heard of Katina's success from other refugee and migrant families, which we treasure. We have also benefited from our networking with Leadership WA.

We thank our honorary Auditor and accounting adviser for helping us maintain our accountability. The careful audit by Poonam Kapoor. Her work has not only given us the feedback toward credibility, but also the ability to approach other bodies such as the Commerce Department, with confidence and authenticity. Poonam is meticulous in her work and checking of detail and compliance, yet provides this service without charge.

But the key work we do is not with structures and procedures, but rather with children, their family, and their environs. The infrastructure is valuable and essential, but our main mission is equipping children and their families as well as those who interact with them.



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SUMMARY

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Our year has been rewarding - knowing we have served well the school and the community. The continuation of the formal in-home and neighbourhood visits has bridged the results attained in the classroom to ongoing success within the home and community. We have worked with children and families associated with the Beaconsfield Intensive Language Centre (Beaconsfield Primary School).

Further, some parents brought their children to us directly for the work that Katina accomplishes with those who are traumatised and, as a result, immobilised by their lack of adjustment into the wider community. The importance of liaising with other practitioners from non-anthropological backgrounds cannot be overstated as it is part of the mentoring activity that the Foundation accomplishes through the work of Katina Woodruff-Roberts.

This year the new principal of the IEC contacted Katina telling her the good reports she receives from staff and requesting Katina to continue working with the team at Beaconsfield. The new principal has likewise provided a letter of commendation and support for the work that Katina does.

I especially want to extend my thanks and gratitude to our Board. Indeed, our governance is strong and viable because of our dedicated and talented group which brings expertise, commitment, and years of effective service in both the corporate and charity worlds. We are honoured to have each member. Thank you Peter Bowler (Executive Director, Trained Consultants), Lisa Macrides (Senior Consultant, Julie Bishop and Partners), Donna West (Director Coastal Facilities Management at Department of Transport WA), and Kenneth Ferguson (Long Term Western Australia Educator with extensive experience with migrant and ESL Students). Without you, the report we celebrate today would not be possible or exist. You are crucial to the successes we have, and words fail me when I try to express how grateful I am to each of you.

As previously mentioned, we have covered our expenses for this year. However, we are cognisant of the need to pay our practitioner a wage rather than a small stipend. Growth in regular income is still needed. Our financial viability is possible in a large part to the Board's voluntary service and the staff's willingness to continue to serve for minimal remuneration, which we, as a board, would like to correct when funding increases to the next level. Sincere thanks to each one.

While these are still days of developing our corpus of funding we none-the-less see major contributions to the children and their families being served, the school and wider neighbourhood where they live, and staff development among others who are also observing and being informed by the methodologies developed for and on behalf of our foundation by the director, Ms Katina Woodruff-Roberts.

As chair, I am incredibly thankful for opportunities for the foundation to make major contributions to our society and the success that the anthropological approach is making. These are good days, and we now will move from strength to strength.

In summary, our success continues to build over the years. We value those who give to support the work that the Foundation does, and we also thank Katina Woodruff-Roberts for her vision, tireless efforts and passionate success with the children and the families she encounters through this work.

Robert L Woodruff BSc MDiv DMin PhD
Chair