Introducing Edona Dzemaili

Edona Dzemaili connected with Adult Community Education through The Junction Community Centre in 2018 when she came to do her Certificate 3 in Community Services student placement at the centre. She proudly told us that this was the first thing that she had ever completed. She enthusiastically became involved in many of the Adult Community Education classes and activities at the centre and after successfully completing her placement decided to stay on as a volunteer. During her time with the Centre, Edona supported, then joined the sewing and literacy classes and taught 1:1 basic literacy skills to ACE students.

Edona has successfully gained both voluntary and paid work, is a highly valued member of the Junction Community Centre, has joined a number of classes and activities, enrolled in vocational study and was most recently interviewed to become a youth ambassador. She undertook training to deliver workshops for the centre’s Anti-Racism campaign and delivered the first workshop along with her colleagues at our recent launch.

Edona is additionally a participant in both the yoga and circus skills classes - being selected as a volunteer for the latter to assist youth build confidence through dance and circus skills. To further entrench herself in community, she assists with the centre’s choir and community lunches. Edona volunteered to take the minutes and assist at the Festival of Now through the Mental Health Coalition SA and after the first meeting was offered a paid position to continue in this role.

Edona enrolled in a Bachelor of Social Work but felt it was a little more than she could manage so instead enrolled in a Certificate 4 in Mental Health. She was recently selected for the Welcoming Futures Intercultural Youth Leadership Program which gives young people aged 20-30 opportunities to become more socially, culturally and politically aware by providing training in leadership, team, media relations, public speaking, event planning and more.

Edona has found a place where she feels she ‘belongs’ and this has brought her great comfort. She’s been encouraged to express herself without fear of retribution and is comfortable voicing her opinion and recognising that her contributions are valuable. She knows that she matters - something she earlier questioned. She easily works with all age groups and is comfortable with clients from all walks of life that present at the centre. She’s sensitive, bright and has an endearing nature that people quickly warm to.

In her own words, “I have grown tremendously as a person. My self-esteem and self-confidence have increased to the point where instead of shying away from adversity, I embrace it knowing I have support. I can now confidently say that my sense of self is so much stronger being provided with the opportunities I have been given to grow”.

Edona has now enrolled in a Certificate 4 in Mental Health and anticipates returning to university in the future.