

# Berhe Meles



Berhe Meles was born in Ethiopia but he moved with his parents to Sudan when he was very young.

As a refugee, he arrived in Australia with his sister when he was 27 years old, having spent many years in a refugee camp.

When Berhe came to the Tasmanian Polytechnic he barely spoke any English but within 12 months he had a job!

Berhe was accepted into the Work It Out course through Migrant Education at the Tasmanian Polytechnic.

The Work It Out course is a work readiness program for humanitarian entrants and migrants. The student learns Workplace English and becomes familiar with Australian workplace culture and practices.

As part of the course, the student undertakes a work placement to put into practice the skills they learn in class.

This Migrant Profiles initiative is supported by Skills Tasmania to tell employers about the commitment, enthusiasm and skills that many migrants can offer to the workplace.

*“Work It Out” is a Migrant Education work preparation program funded by the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship through the Adult Migrant English Program.*

When the teacher went to organise a work placement for Berhe at the Golden Tulip, a well-known bakery in Sandy Bay, the owner at the time said he'd like to offer Berhe a job there as a pastry cook.

"I had some experience as a baker in the refugee camp in Sudan and have a real 'can do' attitude and good work ethic," said Berhe.

"I accepted the job offer of course!

"Now I continue my English studies at night."

Berhe was given on-the-job training and his supervisor made sure he was comfortable with understanding the recipes he worked from.

Berhe's job is permanent full time with all the conditions that come with it such as holidays.

"I can afford to support myself and my sister. Having a job has had a really positive influence on me.

I've now got my driver's licence and bought a car and I can also help family members in Africa a little," said Berhe.

Berhe relaxes on his weekends off, playing soccer socially with friends and he is saving hard for his future.

"I feel really proud to be successfully employed in this community," Berhe said.

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