



hon. **bronwyn pike mp**

state member for melbourne

Electorate Office
146 – 148 Peel Street
North Melbourne 3051
tel 03 9328 4637
fax 03 9326 8747

media release

Wednesday, 21 April, 2010

LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR VICTORIA'S AFRICAN COMMUNITY

Skills and Workforce Participation Minister, and Member for Melbourne Bronwyn Pike today congratulated 33 members of Victoria's African community who have been selected to undertake a 12-week leadership program at Victoria University.

The project is the brain child of advocacy and support group, African Think Tank, which has received funding from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Victoria Police and Monash University to build the organisational capacity of African community associations.

Ms Pike said the 33 participants are members of 12 African nations and during the program each will develop a project to help link their own communities into wider support networks across Australia.

"The project has been designed to build the effectiveness of African community associations through improved organisational governance, coordination, communication with governments and the community and leadership skills," Ms Pike said.

"African community organisations have made it clear that they need support for training in key areas of organisational management."

The project will enhance the community's capacity to participate. Program graduates will use their enhanced skills to contribute to an inclusive Australia said Mr Haileleul Gebre –selassiet the projects manager.

Federal Member for Melbourne Lindsay Tanner said the African Think Tank Leadership Development Program was in line with a key outcome of the 2007 Federal Government's Settlement Conference.

"The Conference recommended that Government and service agencies assist African leaders to develop structures which enhance the self determination of their communities," Mr Tanner said.

"The African Think Tank does exactly that and I commend the Chairman, Dr Berhan Ahmed and the entire organisation for taking up this initiative."

Media contact: Glen Atwell on 0457 307 010 or www.premier.vic.gov.au

Ms Pike said the training program was designed to cater for volunteers working in small community organisations and their need to learn specific management processes to help run their organisations effectively.

“The course will begin this month and will be held every second Saturday morning at Victoria University’s city campus and will conclude with a formal evaluation,” she said.

“To ensure as many people attend the course as possible, the African Think Tank will assist participants with child care and transport expenses.

“The Brumby Labor Government strongly supports this initiative, which will deliver much needed skills to an important part of our local community.”