

STAR 10th National Conference

STAR's annual National Conference takes place 10-11th November at the Human Rights Action Centre in central London.

£25 gets you all meals, crashpad accommodation, speakers ranging from MPs to refugees, workshops and free entry to the STAR 10th Conference party, featuring live bands and DJs.

Come and spend the weekend with students, young people, and young refugees and asylum seekers from across the UK who have the same questions and concerns as you.

For more details:

- 🌐 www.star-network.org.uk
- ✉ conference@star-network.org.uk
- ☎ 020 7840 4443
- 👁 Look out for a STAR conference flyer
- ★ Contact your local STAR group

Dates for your diary!

21st September
International Day of Peace

26th September
Still Human Still Here at Labour Conference

1st – 31st October
Black History Month

17th October
International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

17th October
Independent Asylum Commission public hearing: Asylum Support and Destitution

27th October
Community Service Volunteers (CSV)
Make a Difference Day, nationwide

9th November
International Day against Fascism and Anti-Semitism

10th – 11th November
STAR Conference, London

11th November
Remembrance Sunday

STAR has launched a brand new website!

The new site has:

- ★ A dedicated news section for STAR members to post stories
- ★ An up to date (members only) resources section
- ★ Up to date information on latest volunteering opportunities with STAR and much more!

Go to www.star-network.org.uk

STAR (Student Action for Refugees)

National Office, 3 Bondway, Vauxhall, London SW8 1SJ Tel: 020 7840 4442

Web: www.star-network.org.uk

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STAR News

THE QUARTERLY UPDATE FROM STUDENT ACTION FOR REFUGEES

Issue 35 Autumn 2007



Scottish Success in Scrapping Tuition fees for asylum seekers

Great news! STAR in Glasgow – along with Edinburgh University, Universities UK and a number of others – have been campaigning over the last year for a fair deal for asylum seekers who've been through school, but are stuck in limbo and blocked from continuing their education at university.

Now, as a result of their determined and consistent campaigning efforts, the law has changed! At the beginning of August the Scottish Executive confirmed a policy which will see tuition fees waived for all children of asylum seekers who have been in Scotland for more than 3 years.

Education Secretary Fiona Hyslop stated that “regardless of where they come from and why, any child living in Scotland should receive care, protection and education.”

This is a great success. Let's hope that England and Wales follow suit. More information is available at www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Ending Destitution

The **Still Human Still Here** campaign to end the scandal of destitution among people refused asylum is gathering pace, just as STAR members prepare to add their voice to the growing outcry.



Campaigners sleep out in support of Still Human Still Here. Copyright Peter Richardson

During the summer hundreds of people took part in over 20 sleepouts throughout the country as a mark of solidarity with people refused asylum. They sought to raise awareness about thousands of people being driven into abject poverty in a deliberate effort by the Government to force them to leave the UK.

Over in Parliament **Still Human Still Here** is lobbying to amend the UK Borders Bill (passing through the House of Lords right now) to ensure that people refused asylum continue to be entitled to basic support while they remain in the UK. It will also end other outrageous practices such as denying treatment for cancer and forcing pregnant women to give birth alone at home.

The movement to end destitution is well placed to create change, with lawyers, faith groups, anti-poverty charities, voluntary, refugee and human rights organisations joining together to fight the injustice of the Government's 'destitution policy'.

STAR will be campaigning on this issue in 2007/8. Find out more and take action at www.star-network.org.uk

STAR EARNS ITS FIRST SCOUTING BADGE

This summer saw the World Scout Jamboree come to Chelmsford, UK, bringing together 40,000 Scouts from over 180 countries to celebrate 100 years of scouting!

With a team of dedicated volunteers STAR and UNHCR delivered a number of activities at the event, to raise awareness of refugees and the situations they face. Activities included leading scouts in a reconstruction of issues refugees face when fleeing persecution, through 'Journey to Safety', as well as a UNHCR computer game 'Against All Odds' and an expression of solidarity with refugees through thousands of hand prints. Scouts and young people can continue to help refugees internationally and in their home countries, by visiting www.unhcr.org/scouts and by putting their "Hands up for Refugees".



Scouts put their hands up in support of refugees everywhere



Music, mud & fundraising for STAR at Glasto

The Worker's Beer Company offers charities the chance to raise funds for their activities. Myself and a group of STAR members worked shifts behind the bars. The work we did was paid, but the wages we earned went to STAR. Not a bad deal, considering we were provided free entry to the festival.

We also got the chance to share ideas for STAR activities. Andy and Hannah, from Swansea STAR, gave us some good advice for running an effective society. We hope to support one another's projects in the future.

For me, a personal highlight was watching Damien Marley play "Buffalo Soldier" straight after a shift. It felt like the perfect post-work drink, with new friends and a truly spine-tingling musical moment.

Patrick Scott-Graham, Liverpool STAR

STAR will be heading to more festivals in 2008 – if you would like to get involved please email volunteering@star-network.org.uk

Summer Camp Unites Children



Volunteers were unsure as to how much the local museum appreciated 30 children dressed as Harry Potter paying them a visit!

When do the members of Glasgow STAR sleep? What with their campaigning success, they also found the time to organise and run a summer activities camp for children from 2 Glasgow primary schools.

The week long camp saw children and STAR members build giant nesses, make t-shirts, learn the New Zealand Haka and visit museums.

And what made the project so special was that it involved both local children and

children from asylum seeking families – a rare and important opportunity to break down barriers and preconceptions about each other.

Siobhan Foulner, camp organiser, said of the camp 'I am very happy with the outcome and proud to have been part of the project. Both the children and the volunteers seemed to have thoroughly enjoyed themselves. I feel that the camp fitted very well into a niche where there seems to be a demand for such a programme.'

Do you wanna go MADD in October?!

Britain's towns and cities are packed with fascinating museums, galleries and cultural attractions. To many asylum seekers and refugees, these are hidden places that nobody has ever taken the time to show them.

This autumn STAR is teaming up with CSV Make a Difference Day to change all that! We are inviting all STAR groups to organise a one-off,

one day visit for students and asylum seekers/refugees to a local museum or gallery in their town or city.

Visits need to take place between 20th October – 4th November 2007. The National Office can provide you with a pack to help you organise your visit, and support in securing free admission to your chosen venue.

To find out more information and how you can get involved email Russell on: volunteering@star-network.org.uk