

A decorative red ribbon graphic that starts on the left, loops upwards, then downwards, and finally loops back to the right, framing the central text.

Westfield

Local Heroes

2018

Westfield Local Heroes were nominated and voted for by their communities, with the three successful Westfield Local Heroes per centre each awarded a \$10,000 grant to support their affiliated organisation's work, programs or activities.



Westfield

Local Heroes

In the first year of the Westfield Local Heroes program, we received an overwhelming response and many heart-warming stories after asking the local community to nominate individuals who promote wellbeing and harmony in their communities.

We congratulate every one of our nominees and recognise the important contribution they make to their local community.



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WODEN

ACT



Nathan Costigan Tara Costigan Foundation

Committed, Motivated, Noble

Family tragedy puts Nathan on a path to help others

Nathan Costigan is a man on a mission sparked by a family tragedy.

Until his cousin Tara Costigan was murdered by her partner in 2015, domestic violence was not part of his world.

Three years on Nathan is digging deep to help other families escape violence and avoid the same grief.

He does this as a volunteer for the Tara Costigan Foundation, established by his uncle.

"My motivator is to give families the opportunity that they deserve, particularly the children," says the devoted father and husband.

Dedicated social workers known as Tara's Angels are currently helping 17 families, who have escaped violence, move on to normal lives.

Nathan volunteers his time as an ambassador to raise funds. He is a well-known and respected Canberra resident and people listen when he talks about the cost and devastation of family violence.

"Our catchphrase is respectful relationships," says Nathan.

"That's across every single thing we do in life. We have to be respectful and kind and it will make the world a better place."

Sometimes it's the simple things Nathan does that helps keep survivors safe.

He recalls one woman who was so overwhelmed by her huge, overgrown yard that she almost called her former abuser for help, 12 months after she escaped. Nathan, who has a fencing business, popped over with three of his workers in their lunch-break. They had the garden tip-top in 45 minutes.

"The stress relief for her was massive," says Nathan.

Nathan is proud to be voted a Westfield Local Hero.

"I am almost speechless to be recognised in Canberra with so many good people out there."

The \$10,000 grant to the Tara Costigan Foundation is invaluable and will help fund another Tara's Angel.

Tara's Angels are qualified, experienced and devoted social workers/caseworkers, who are provided free of charge to people who have escaped a violent relationship. Tara's Angels provide up to 2 years of support to help navigate a complex web of services and overcome personal barriers.

"It costs over \$160,000 to keep an Angel," says Nathan.



Suzanne Tunks Stella Bella Little Stars Foundation

Dedicated, Caring, Inspired

Suzanne turns her grief into positive action

Baby Stella has left an amazing legacy.

Her mum, Suzanne Tunks, has set up a foundation in honour of the beautiful girl who battled chronic illness all of her short life.

Turning her grief into action, Suzanne founded the Stella Bella Little Stars Foundation in 2012.

The foundation aims to brighten the lives of children battling serious and long-term illness.

It also offers practical support to families, through food and petrol vouchers, emergency accommodation and respite care.

Suzanne is the manager and main driver for the foundation and she is always looking for new ways to support parents.

One of the newest initiatives is the Stella Bella Children's Centre, which opened in 2017 and has a section for chronically ill children.

The foundation helps fund a specialist nurse and a qualified childcare team who look after the children while their parents take a much-needed break.

Families often lose at least one income as parents become fulltime carers for their child. This can cause a financial burden that adds to their worries about a sick child.

"A lot of those families don't have any money because they have children in hospital all of the time," says Suzanne.

The children are given a boost through events such as a camp and movie nights, or the Little Star Beads program where they receive a special bead as a reward each time they undergo a medical procedure.

The beads are then strung together as a symbol of their courage.

Suzanne feels humbled to be voted a Westfield Local Hero but says her team members deserve all of the accolades.

The foundation will use its \$10,000 Westfield grant to fund stress-relieving yoga classes for parents and childcare by a paediatric nurse for their children.

"I have really seen a need for the parents to have some more support and I've been trying to get this program off the ground for a while," says Suzanne.



Malakai Reinhard ACT Young Carer

Selfless, Hardworking, Fighter

Brave Malakai balances school with caring for his mum and sister

Malakai Reinhard is not your average teen.

The 15-year-old balances school with caring for his mum, Lenna, and five-year-old sister, Kataya, both of whom have significant health issues.

"It's just something I do for my family," says Malakai. "We support and love each other unconditionally."

Malakai manages the housework, the shopping, pays the bills and makes sure Lenna and Kataya get to all of their medical appointments.

Thanks to his determination his mother and sister are also able to keep in regular contact with their friends.

Malakai regularly messages his mum during the day to make sure they are okay, have had their lunch and taken their medication.

But the inspirational teen still manages to fit in his studies and hobbies of metal forging and training for WWE (wrestling).

There have been times when Malakai has been the only person in the house able to make a decision.

"I've had to call an ambulance or other family members for help," says Malakai, who receives support from Carers ACT.

"Other proud moments are when I see my baby sister do things I've taught her, like cooking, drawing and writing."

Despite the demands at home, Malakai always finds time to talk things out with friends who are struggling with bullying and other teenage issues.

"Being a carer so young, I instinctively want to help people. I've been in tough times and know what it's like to be with supportive friends."

Malakai says it feels amazing to be voted a Westfield Local Hero.

A \$10,000 Westfield grant will be awarded in Malakai's honour to Carers ACT. It will be used to help fund a drop-in centre.

"It will be a safe place for young carers to get know each other and go get support," Malakai says.

Carers will also be taught life-skills such as budgeting, cooking and navigating NDIS applications and plans.

Your 2018 Finalists

Tom Campbell | UN Youth ACT

Dedicated, Inspiring, Incredible

Tom dedicates his time to the operations of UN Youth ACT, a national youth-led organisation that aims to educate and empower young Australians on global issues, equipping them with the skills and inspiration to make meaningful change in the community. As the President of the ACT branch, Tom leads a team of 40 young, passionate members aged 18 to 25. He ensures the ongoing success of the programs that the team deliver and runs sessions himself on leadership, negotiation and public speaking.

Danielle Dal Cortivo | Raize the Roof

Empowering, Smart, Inspirational

Danielle is the CEO and driving force of Raize the Roof, an initiative developed to support children who are disadvantaged due to illness and poverty. Danielle's invaluable commitment to the organisation sees her coordinating activities such as fundraising events, as well as leading the operations of Raize the Roof, to ensure that it can continue to support children in need.

Joshua Schwartz | Make-A-Wish Australia

Caring, Positive, Empathetic

Joshua is an integral part of the Make-A-Wish team, bringing to life the wishes of sick children throughout the Canberra region. Joshua – who is a former wish child himself – passionately strives to ensure that each wish is achieved, volunteering his time to personally meet with the children and their families throughout the process. He has also shown an ongoing dedication to raising awareness of Make-A-Wish in the local community through fundraising, managing events and recruiting new volunteers.

Recognising all of our 2018 Nominees

Tom CAMPBELL

UN Youth ACT

Nathan COSTIGAN

Tara Costigan Foundation

Danielle DAL CORTIVO

raize the roof

Deborah EVANS

Tjillari Justice Aboriginal
Corporation

Marg PEACHEY

ACT Wildlife

Malakai REINHARD

ACT young carer

Joshua SCHWARTZ

Make-A-Wish Australia

Rebecca TREGURTHA

Trove Canberra

Suzanne TUNKS

Stella Bella Little Stars Foundation

John VANCE

Belconnen Community Service



If you or anyone you know would like more information on what support is available:

AUSTRALIA

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800

MensLine: 1300 78 99 78

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732

NEW ZEALAND

Lifeline: 0800 543 354

Suicide Crisis Helpline: 0508 828 865

Kidsline: 0800 54 37 54

Depression Helpline: 0800 111 757

Samaritans: 0800 726 666

Family Violence Information Line: 0800 456 450



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