



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.



Westfield

MANUKAU CITY

NZ



KJ Hundal Do Good Feel Good (Alliance Community Initiatives Trust)

Passionate, Dedicated, Selfless

KJ took a pay cut to give himself more time to do good

Getting young people to tidy up is a challenge many parents never overcome.

So when a group of 10 to 24-year-olds willingly spend 10 weeks cleaning up a South Auckland alleyway, it's a big deal.

It shows the positive impact the Do Good Feel Good (DGFG) movement is having in the community, says volunteer KJ Hundal.

"This is one of many social activations we do as a youth-led movement."

KJ jumped at the chance to volunteer when the Do Good Feel Good movement started in 2015.

"Events such as sports and leadership meetings encourage young people to become change agents," he says.

"We meet on a regular basis to plan these events, to talk about what needs to be done," says KJ.

DGFG is aimed at young people in the suburb of Mangere, where some families struggle financially.

"I grew up in South Auckland and I have seen kids who haven't been able to be a part of something like this during school or at home," says KJ.

His commitment to DGFG goes above and beyond.

He even cut back his paid work for six months — reducing his salary in the process — to help grow the movement.

He also covers the cost of giving lifts to leaders who don't have transport to make sure they can join in event planning.

"It was a way for me to give back to the community because with Maori and Pacific culture there is always a sense of family and providing as much as you can."

KJ feels humbled to be recognised as a Westfield Local Hero.

DGFG will use its \$10,000 Westfield Local Heroes grant to fund new events and to ensure its survival.

"There will also be new merchandise for the kids to enhance their sense of belonging and ownership of the movement," KJ says.



Maree Steunebrink Humans of South Auckland

Relentless, Brave, Passionate

Maree tells stories that bring people to life

Social worker Maree Steunebrink is more used to helping other people tell their stories than having stories written about her.

She is the Director of Humans of South Auckland, a non-profit project inspired by Humans of New York that helps local people share their personal stories of hope and pride.

She put up her hand to help the charity, which was founded by a friend who wanted to bring the community together following the tragic death of a local student.

The stories are posted on Facebook, Instagram and a dedicated website.

"We've also done a couple of art gallery shows and had our stories as a regular feature in a newspaper," says Maree.

Apart from her, there are two other storytellers.

Maree took over as Director when the Founder left Auckland two years ago. Since then, her infectious enthusiasm has kept the project going from strength to strength.

Maree and the other writers have so far brought 200 stories to life. They rely on people to write in to nominate friends or family with an inspiring tale to tell.

One story that stands out for Maree involves a couple named as foster parents of the year. They became foster parents when they were unable to have their own children. But when interviewed they had some exciting news. They were pregnant. They were determined to keep fostering, however.

"They are an incredible couple," says Maree.

A 12-year-old boy who created a short film about his younger brother who had died from cancer also touched Maree.

"It was chosen for a film festival and was shown in New York's Time Square."

Maree is delighted to be a Westfield Local Hero as it shows the stories are uniting the community.

The \$10,000 Westfield Local Heroes grant awarded to Humans of South Auckland will fund more of Maree's story-telling workshops in schools. She says it is therapeutic for vulnerable students to share stories about their hardest moments or an incident that changed them.

"The feedback we get from teachers is that they had no idea what the kids had been through and they now understand each other more. It tells young people they have value and to me, that is super important."



Rebecca Va'ai Saintz Up Performing Arts Trust

*Passionate, Dedicated,
Selfless*

Astounding things happen when Becks helps kids find their voice

It's amazing what can happen when Rebecca (Becks) Va'ai and her team encourage children to find their voice.

Not all become TV sensations, but one testament to their good work is Selevasio Tu'ima of *Little Big Shots* fame.

When he started at Saintz Up Performing Arts Trust (SUPA) he was so shy he barely said anything.

But in 2017, the 13-year-old wowed millions of fans after being flown to Australia to sing on the TV show.

"Over the last couple of years, he's just really flourished and really grown into a wonderful young man," says SUPA Founder Becks.

"Our vision and mission are to use the performing arts to build confidence and self-belief so the children can reach or chase whatever dreams they may have."

"It could be a simple thing where a child puts their name forward for a student leadership role at school or goes for a trial with a rugby team."

The 400 or so kids aged three to seventeen who attend SUPA all leave with skills beyond music and dance," she says.

Becks and her partner, Nainz, started SUPA in 2009. It sprang from Lil Saintz Dance Crew, which she and sister Vaimoana created three years earlier for her nieces.

Within a few years the girls had won national competitions and eventually won a silver medal at the 2011 World Hip Hop Championship.

Other kids were clamouring to get involved. Private tuition was out of reach for most, so Becks sourced sponsorship to keep fees to a minimum.

Her passion is contagious, with several former students, including her nieces, coming back to teach the next crop of kids.

Becks is overwhelmed to be a Westfield Local Hero.

"Our team are the heroes, giving up their time knowing they could be paid a whole lot more somewhere else," she says.

SUPA will use its \$10,000 Westfield Local Heroes grant to pay for operating costs, including venue hire and the purchase of musical equipment.

"It will make more dreams come true," says Becks.

Your 2018 Finalists

Neil Denney | Friendship House

Energetic, Public-Spirited, Committed

Neil has been the CEO of Friendship House for the last 3 years where he provides a safe, all-inclusive space for those in need. He has also established Parenting and Violence Prevention programmes to include all cultural groups within the South Auckland community.

Renee Mose | Village Collective – Family Life Education Pasefika

Empathetic, Determined, Unique

Renee has developed Fusion, a mentoring programme for young Pasifika LGBTQI secondary students that supports the personal development of Pasifika Rainbow Youth. As an employee of Village Collective, Renee provides one on one and group mentoring sessions for LGBTQI youth in a safe and supportive environment.

David Ringrose | Family Success Matters

Kind, Honest, Passionate

David runs Fathers For Families, a programme that encourages men to reflect upon their role as a father and partner. As a volunteer, David has changed the lives of many men in the local community by challenging their existing belief systems and putting an end to negative cycles of abuse.

Recognising all of our 2018 Nominees

Melissa ATAMA
Clendon Pride Project

Colleen BROWN
Manurewa Neighbourhood
Support Inc

Graeme BRYANT
Ambury Park Centre for Riding
Therapy

Lynette BURTON
Family Ministries, Clevedon
Presbyterian Church

Jenn HOOPER
Changing Places

Andrea DEETH
Child Care & Child Safety

Neil DENNEY
Friendship House

Betty DOWSWELL
Victim Support Counties
Manukau Central – Division of
New Zealand Council Of Victim
Support Groups Inc

Emma DUNN
Smash Fit by Emma Dunn

Joseph FA'AFIU
Gateway Community Trust

Roger GREEN
The Retreat NZ

Judi HARTLEY
Dress for Success Incorporated –
Auckland

Yvonne Hinemoa HAWKINS
Citizens Advice Bureau Otago Inc

Jenn HOOPER
Changing Places NZ

Philip HORROBIN
Babystart Charitable Trust

KJ HUNDAL
Do Good Feel Good (Alliance
Community Initiatives Trust)

Jo HUNTER
YMCA of Auckland Inc

Hannah JACOBSON
St John Youth

Jit KAUR
New Zealand Sikh Womens
Association Incorporated

Ana KIREKA
Child Cancer Foundation

Leighton LEEVARD
HeartKidz NZ

Marcella MAIHI
Mā te Huruuru

Renee MOSE
Village Collective – Family Life
Education Pasefika

Swanie NELSON
Cooper Cres OTARA

Patricia PRESSNELL
Victim Support Counties Manukau –
Division of New Zealand Council Of
Victim Support Groups Inc

David RINGROSE
Family Success Matters

Maree STEUNEBRINK
Humans of South Auckland

Tapuosi Marco SULLIVAN
Early Childhood Education Centre

Victoria TAUPAU
#INSPIRE

Essendon TUITUPOU
Faith City Trust Board

Rebecca VA'AI
Saintz Up Performing Arts Trust

Sir John WALKER
John Walker Find Your Field of
Dreams Foundation

Caine WARREN
Man Up New Zealand



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



SCENTRE GROUP

Owner and Operator of **Westfield** in Australia and New Zealand