



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.

The logo for Westfield Plenty Valley VIC is centered within a dark red circle. A thick, vibrant red line weaves through the background, starting from the left, looping around the circle, and extending towards the bottom right. The word "Westfield" is written in a bold, black, italicized serif font.

Westfield

PLENTY VALLEY

VIC



Prabhat Sangwan Brothers and Sisters Foundation Inc

*Selfless, Communicative,
Determined*

Prabhat takes things into her own hands to end a stigma

Prabhat Sangwan has taken it upon herself to help end the silence and stigma around mental health among members of Melbourne's Indian community.

Concerned that her friends, family and community at large were experiencing mental illness in silence, Prabhat decided she had to do something to raise awareness and encourage people to seek help.

"That's why I started volunteering with mental health organisations, including the Brothers and Sisters Foundation," says Prabhat.

"We are a registered foundation and always looking for opportunities to provide assistance and services to disadvantaged people living in Melbourne to achieve their potential for a better life."

Already balancing a full-time job and raising a young family, Prabhat regularly volunteers her time to promote mental health awareness around the Plenty Valley region.

She has also started a mental health support group dedicated to the Indian community with help from Mind Australia and the Whittlesea Council. Through the group, Prabhat actively assists people to find timely and culturally supportive medical and social support.

She says she is blessed to have been voted by her community as a Westfield Local Hero.

"By voting for me, they have actually voted for mental health, which is a very positive sign," she says.

The foundation will use its \$10,000 Westfield grant to fund a stigma-breaking community event to coincide with World Mental Health Day in October.

People attending the event will be treated to a fun family atmosphere with entertainment. There will also be mindfulness sessions and stories about mental illness from community members who have been through it.

"It will be the first event of its kind for Indian community mental health in Victoria," Prabhat says.



Anthony Dionis Mill Park REBELZ Basketball Club

*Passionate, Dedicated,
Unconventional*

The coach who jumps through hoops to be inclusive

Anthony Dionis is no ordinary sports club president and the Mill Park REBELZ is no ordinary team.

With his mantra of "every child can play", Anthony works hard to ensure every player who puts on a REBELZ singlet feels like a winner - no matter the final score.

Over the past five years, he has dedicated himself to ensuring that the Mill Park REBELZ basketball club is an inclusive and affordable club that operates on the principles of fun, fitness and participation so all members have a positive experience.

"It is about the kids having fun because it is a domestic club, not a rep club, and one of our strongest points is that every player gets an equal amount of court time, whatever their skill level," Anthony says.

Despite running his own business, Anthony devotes countless hours every week to the club, coaching multiple teams, chairing committee meetings, mentoring junior coaches and actively participating in fundraisers.

Last year, he and a group of other club members took that dedication a step further and established a special needs academy within the club, making it possible for children with varying needs and abilities to feel supported and included.

He now coaches the academy on top of his other work, describing it as a fantastic experience for kids and parents alike.

"Many of these kids have never had an opportunity to participate in organised sport before and they absolutely love it," he says.

Anthony says it feels great to have been voted a Westfield Local Hero.

The club will use its \$10,000 Westfield grant to buy new training equipment for the club's domestic teams and the special needs academy. It will also fund the development of coaches to upskill and attract more people.

"The special needs academy alone costs about \$3,000 per season to run and we have been funding it out of our own pockets so this money will be a huge benefit," Anthony says.



Karen Bryant
Northern Hospital

Selfless, Dignified, Caring

Karen offers Indigenous hospital patients a gentle guiding hand

When Indigenous patients and their families need help making their way around Epping's Northern Hospital, Karen Bryant is the person they turn to for cultural support.

As Senior Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer at the hospital, Karen provides assistance with admissions and navigating the complex health system.

"I work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients to offer a range of culturally appropriate support and advocacy to improve the patient journey," she says.

A tireless worker, Karen is also there to support Indigenous families during points of crisis such as family violence.

She ensures her clients have access to community services and programs to support and maintain their health after leaving the hospital and also gives support with emotionally difficult processes such as end-of-life planning.

"At times of crisis, people are overwhelmed and not thinking straight, but we help by approaching every situation in a positive manner and breaking issues down so they can be tackled one piece at a time," Karen says.

But Karen's work at the hospital is just the beginning of her contribution. She's also a longstanding member of the local Aboriginal Reconciliation Group and spends countless hours educating the broader community and health systems about Aboriginal culture.

"The cultural training allows our mob to express diversity and gives the doctors and nurses some practical tips about communicating and engaging with Aboriginal people," she says.

Karen says she is extremely humbled and excited to be voted a Westfield Local Hero by her community.

"This gives me another incentive to keep striving for the best health outcomes for my patients and it is great to be valued by my peers," she says.

Northern Hospital will use its \$10,000 Westfield grant to buy essential items for Indigenous patients in need. This will include toothpaste, toothbrushes, nappies, non-perishable food and clothing.

It will also fund artwork to create a culturally-appropriate and welcoming environment for Indigenous patients at Northern Hospital.

Your 2018 Finalists

Tim Forster | Mill Park Blue Light

Passionate, Dedicated, Committed

Tim is a current serving member of Victoria Police and for the past 15 years has worked with the Blue Light organisation in Mill Park. Blue Light helps to bridge the gap between local police and young people, by providing safe and fun activities, such as; dance parties, camps, boxing programs and more.

Nishtha Goel | Kool Moon Events Inc

Charismatic, Hardworking, All-rounder

Nishtha volunteers her time and skills to support several community groups, such as: Kool Moon Events, Whittlesea Multicultural Community Council, Whittlesea United Women's Group and more.

Samuel Johnson | Love Your Sister

Passionate, Humble, Determined

Samuel co-founded non-profit organisation 'Love Your Sister' with sister Connie following her terminal cancer diagnosis. As a young mum of two, Connie was determined to raise awareness of early detection and funds for cancer research. Sadly, Connie passed away last year, however Samuel is continuing what they started and is working tirelessly to fulfil his sister's wishes.

Recognising all of our 2018 Nominees

Claudio ANGELUCCI
B2C Technologies Pty Ltd

Munish BANSAL
Family

Karen BRYANT
Northern Hospital

Thomas DI PALMA
The Scout Association of Australia,
Victorian Branch

Anthony DIONIS
Mill Park REBELZ Basketball Club

Tim FORSTER
Mill Park Blue Light

Nishtha GOEL
Kool Moon Events Inc

Greg HEATLEY
Sth Morang Junior, Senior
Football and Netball Club

Samuel JOHNSON
Love Your Sister Foundation

Bernadette REEVES
Mernda Dragons Rugby
League Club and Touch
Football Association

Prabhat SANGWAN
Brothers and Sisters
Foundation Inc

Simon SMITH
City of Whittlesea

Sevda TANKIR
Nisa United Inc

Melissa TUMEO
Melissa Tumeo Music

Alex TZELEPIS
Bundoora United Football Club

Wes WRIDGWAY
Doreen RSL Sub Branch



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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