



*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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A thick, vibrant red line that flows from the left side of the frame, curves upwards and then downwards, passing behind a central circular element, and continues towards the bottom right corner.

*Westfield*

CAROUSEL

WA



## Todd Meyn Dismantle

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*Selfless, Inspiring, Energetic*

### BMX pro jumps in to help kids repair bikes and their confidence

Todd Meyn was just like any other 10-year-old who enjoyed riding his bike around the southern suburbs of Perth when a friend dared him to take a jump off a homemade ramp.

He was hooked. "It was awesome. One of the best feelings ever," Todd says.

He started riding at the local Belmont skate park whenever possible, which "kept him out of trouble" as a teenager. He graduated to pulling stunts for a living with action sports group Nitro Circus.

After a decade in the US, the Belmont-raised BMX star has returned to Perth. Now, in between travelling the world with Nitro, he volunteers as a bike mechanic with BikeRescue, the flagship mentoring program of the Dismantle youth organisation.

"When I was growing up I had a lot of positive influencers who were really good to me," Todd says. "Now I'm in that position. I see a little kid and I treat them like they're my best friend and want to inspire them too."

BMX pros spend a lot of time modifying their bikes and Todd has become an expert bike mechanic – with lots of skills he can share.

The program targets disengaged school students with low attendance and motivation. Participants get to fully strip and restore two bikes each – one for charity and one to keep – while building their confidence and social skills under the watchful eye of the bike mechanic.

"The program is more about praising than criticising," Todd says. "You can relate to the kids and talk to them about what's going on in their home life. The program helps kids work through a problem and use these problem-solving skills in other areas."

Todd says it's awesome to be voted a Westfield Local Hero, but he thinks he's the one getting the payback from volunteering.

"To be able to go back to where it all started and help the community where I grew up is so rewarding. In fact, it's almost selfish – that's how good it makes me feel!"

Dismantle will use its \$10,000 Westfield Local Heroes grant to help activate three more BikeRescue programs – supporting 30 at-risk young people.

"The money will be used to reach more kids and give more schools the opportunity to be part of the program," Todd says.



**Lisa Whittle**  
C3 Langford

*Generous, Compassionate,  
Purposeful*

## Lisa's community dinners bring all types to the table

As a committed member of her local C3 church, Lisa Whittle was always casting around for ways to bring the community together.

It was the rising crime rate and a break-in at the church that prompted the out-of-the-box idea to create Love Langford, a regular communal dinner which Lisa oversees.

"After the break-in, there was talk of putting a fence up. But we thought we would change our outlook," says Lisa. "Instead of keeping ourselves isolated, we wanted the church to be the hub of the community."

Although free for all, the meals are in the style of a community gathering rather than a charitable soup kitchen.

They are for anybody, not just those in need, says Lisa. "At the heart of it, our intention is just to really get to know the community."

The first dinner was in 2015, and there have been no more break-ins. Love Langford operates every fortnight providing meals for up to 200 people from all corners of the community.

One special regular was an Indigenous woman who touched Lisa's heart.

"She was living in public housing and started coming to the dinners.

She was one of our first volunteers and this gave her a sense of purpose and a place where she belonged."

The woman died tragically and many people gathered and sought comfort from the church, "which identified her as a valued part of our Love Langford community", Lisa says.

Lisa is "blown away" to have been voted a Westfield Local Hero. But she's quick to mention the many people who give up their time to help set up and prepare the meals.

"We have about 20 to 25 people who volunteer each fortnight, so I would love all of them to be recognised," she says.

The church will use its \$10,000 Westfield grant to fund a mini-van to transport isolated community members who couldn't otherwise make it to the dinners.

"We have so many people who are seniors, disabled, or for safety reasons can't walk alone, so we will be able to pick them up," says Lisa.

There are also plans to buy a freezer. "At the moment, the amount of food we can keep for people is limited. We make everything fresh, so having an extra freezer means we can freeze leftovers and give them away," she says.



## **Emma Gardiner** Nulsen Disability Services

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*Devoted, Selfless, Motivated*

### **Caring Emma gives students an invaluable life lesson**

Thanks to Emma Gardiner Perth high school students are learning to feel comfortable in the company of people with complex disabilities.

"So many people don't know where to look or how to act around people with complex disabilities," says Emma, who facilitates the Nulsen Youth Patron Program.

"One of the highlights of my work is seeing these high school kids standing up for people with complex disabilities and saying, 'they're just the same as you and me'."

Emma is employed by Nulsen Disability Services and students taking part in the program visit the organisations' supported-living homes. They invite the residents to attend school events such as sports days, arts and music events.

Through their interactions, the students develop a greater understanding of the needs of people living with a disability, and also expand the social networks of all involved.

Mum-of-two Emma knew immediately that Nulsen was a good fit for her when she was looking to re-enter the workforce. She says she loves everything the charity stands for.

"Having the courage to support people with challenging needs is important to me," Emma says.

The organisation was established more than 60 years ago at a time when children with severe disabilities had nowhere to turn and continues to support people with complex disabilities and their families and advocate on their behalf.

Emma is "extremely grateful" to have been voted a Westfield Local Hero and feels proud that this will help raise awareness of disability issues.

"It means that the community gets to see how important it is that we recognise, accept and support every community member, and nurture them to be the best person they can be."

Nulsen Disability Services will use its \$10,000 Westfield Local Heroes grant to strengthen the Youth Patron Program and its alumni group.

"The grant will go towards exploring more opportunities for alumni members to stay connected with people with disabilities," Emma says. "We are working with three schools at the moment but are hoping to add another."

# Your 2018 Finalists

## **Rita Kleinfeld Fowell** | Midland Information Debt and Legal Advocacy Service (Midlas)

*Selfless, Inspirational, Giving*

Rita is a qualified Restricted Practice Lawyer who has volunteered with Midlas 3 days per week for the past 12 months. Rita provides invaluable, free legal support to families experiencing Domestic and Family Violence, supports clients in court and assists in getting crucial protections in place for families at risk of violence and abuse.

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## **Karoline Jamieson** | Nardine

*Passionate, Genuine, Dynamic*

Nardine women's refuge provides safe and secure accommodation for women and children escaping domestic violence in their homes or community, including assistance with overcoming the impacts of violence and abuse through support with housing, education, accessing benefits, employment and counselling. As well as being the CEO, Karoline spends time working 'on the front line' with staff and clients and is always looking for ways to further assist and support our clients.

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## **Evelyn McKay** | Be My Koorda

*Inspiring, Dedicated, Caring*

Evelyn McKay is the founder of an Aboriginal disability support group in Perth called Be My Koorda (Koorda means friend in Noongar language), helping 28 families and over 30 children to form friendships, develop skills and grow in self-confidence. What started as a simple wish, expressed by her two children to make some friends, Evelyn has worked incredibly hard over the past few years to establish Be My Koorda and to offer vital support to families in need.



# Recognising all of our 2018 Nominees

**Leanne BARRON**  
Starick

**Chance BATEMAN**  
Wirrpanda Foundation

**Travis CLARK**  
Variety WA

**Shirley Anne FORTINA**  
The Nappy Collective

**Emma GARDINER**  
Nilsen Disability Services

**Natasha GEORGIU**  
Sevenoaks Senior College

**Nicole GORDON**  
Heart Health and Fitness

**Cherylynn HUNT**  
Crosslinks Incorporated

Canning Agricultural Horticultural  
& Recreational Inc

**Karoline JAMIESON**  
Nardine

**Scott JOHNSON**  
Assisting Your Life to  
Achieve AYLA Inc

**Rita KLEINFELD FOWELL**  
Midlas

**Evelyn McKAY**  
Be My Koorda

**Todd MEYN**  
Dismantle Inc

**Julian PACE**  
Happiness Co

**Mohammad (Rambo) RAMDIANE**  
Perth Volunteer Branch of  
Make-A-Wish Australia

**Kristy RODWELL**  
100 Women

**Jennifer SUTEY**  
WA Pet Project

**Gai WALKER**  
Southern Communities Legal and  
Education Service Inc (SCALES)

**Lisa WHITTLE**  
C3 Langford



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

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**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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