



Westfield

Local Heroes

2019

Westfield Local Heroes is a community recognition and grants program, designed to shine the spotlight on those people who connect and enrich their local communities across Australia and New Zealand.

Individuals are nominated by their local communities, with the outcome of a public vote determining the three successful 2019 nominees for every Westfield centre. In total, we are recognising 121 Westfield Local Heroes across Australia and New Zealand in 2019.

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Each of the affiliated organisations of the Westfield Local Heroes have received a grant to support their work. Westfield will award 121 grants across Australia and New Zealand – totalling \$1.2 million.

We congratulate all the 2019 nominees for being recognised by their communities and thank them for the important contribution they all make to improving social wellbeing in their local areas.

westfield.com.au/local-heroes westfield.co.nz/local-heroes

Westfield

Woden ACT

Champion runner unleashes Indigenous potential

Robert de Castella (AO) — The Indigenous Marathon Foundation
Passionate, Inspirational, Determined

Marathon great Robert de Castella AO MBE is proud of his sporting feats but says his greatest achievement has been helping Indigenous Australians.

The Commonwealth Games marathon champion and Olympian founded and directs the Indigenous Marathon Foundation.

Through its Indigenous Marathon Project (IMP) and five thousand-strong Deadly Running Groups, the foundation promotes a healthy lifestyle and trains young Indigenous men and women to lead the charge.

Each year, 12 Indigenous men and women aged 18 to 30 are selected for the IMP. They train for the New York City Marathon and are provided with mentoring and funding to help them with their careers and personal development and also to establish health and fitness groups in their communities.

Graduates of the program have gone on to set up their own businesses, study medicine and make an impact on health outcomes, with one young man raising enough funds for a dialysis machine in his remote community.

"Indigenous Australians are significantly disadvantaged compared with other Australians, highlighted by an approximate ten-year gap in life expectancy, lower education levels, unemployment and chronic disease," says Robert, who was Australian of the Year in 1983.

He is proud and humbled to be named a Westfield Local Hero. "It means the work of the foundation is being recognised, including showcasing the resilience and achievement and the beautiful, rich Indigenous culture we have in Australia."

Robert primarily sees himself as "a mouthpiece for a whole host of

amazing agents of change who are very passionate about providing a better future for their children and their community".

In 2014 Robert was named an Officer of the Order of Australia for distinguished service to the community through programs promoting children's health and fitness, as a supporter and mentor of young Indigenous men and women and for service to marathon running.

Westfield Local Heroes are nominated and voted for by their communities, with the three top finalists per Westfield centre each awarded a \$10,000 grant for their affiliated organisation.

The foundation will use its grant to host a three-day coaching and mental health workshop for IMP graduates.

It will help them unleash their inner potential, says Robert.

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Improving health one step at a time

Kristen Pratt — Capital Nordic Walking *Pioneer, Dynamic, Altruistic*

Occupational therapist Kristen Pratt is on a mission to encourage people of all ages to improve their health while having fun.

She founded Capital Nordic Walking to share her passion for the healthy activity, which involves using walking poles.

Kristen has taught Nordic walking to over one thousand Canberrans of all fitness levels, including those with mobility or health challenges and the frail elderly. She helps them to keep walking by linking them into free groups through an outreach program.

The comradery gives people the motivation to make exercise a habit. This helps them reduce stress and their risk of chronic conditions such as diabetes, Parkinson's, arthritis and heart disease, she says.

Kristen can't believe she has been voted a Westfield Local Hero. "Doing community work is like a gift that gives back," she says.

"I meet amazing people with incredible life experiences and seeing them smile and getting stronger is an amazing thing."

Kristen discovered Nordic walking eight years ago while in Switzerland working on disability and rehabilitation with the World Health Organisation. She was impressed when it aided her recovery from a frozen shoulder.

She completed an instructor course and has been making health professionals aware of the benefits, resulting in many referrals of patients to her growing program of free walking groups.

"People are amazed at how far they travel when walking and

talking together and enjoying the beautiful surrounds of Canberra. I am struggling to keep up with the demand," says Kristin, who is on the boards of Parkinson's ACT and the International Disability Rights Fund.

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Capital Nordic Walking will use its grant to fund the training of a much-needed volunteer network so it can expand across Canberra.

"We can't keep up with demand," says Kristen. "A lot of people can't join our walks as it's too expensive for them to travel to meet up with our current groups, so this grant will have a huge impact."

Teenage survivor tells his story to save lives

Thomas Campagna — PARTY Program

Strong, Brave, Resilient

After surviving a devastating car crash caused by a drug-affected driver, teenager Thomas TJ Campagna is volunteering his time to help keep others safe on our roads.

He shares his traumatic story with young people through the PARTY Program, a charity that helps school students understand the consequences of driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

His mum speaks on his behalf during student events at Canberra Hospital, where doctors, nurses and trauma patients help spread the safety message.

TJ survived severe internal injuries, muscle loss, fractures and mouth damage in the 2017 crash.

Apart from the talks, he has collected thousands of dollars

for the hospital and the PARTY Program through a fund-raising dinner.

He says his work with the PARTY program is a way of giving back and thanking the Canberra Hospital for saving his life.

TJ is proud and happy to be voted a Westfield Local Hero. "It means the work me and mum do with the hospital is obviously working."

TJ was thirteen at the time of the crash, which was caused by a woman who had used the drug ICE.

"Since the crash, I have had four hospital stays and five surgeries. It is likely I will have more surgeries in the future," he says.

TJ's extensive rehabilitation meant he missed a year of school and now has to catch up.

He is a keen football player and has been able to return to the sport this year. However, he has been told he won't be able to play at an elite level because of his injuries.

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The Party Program will use its grant to offer more education sessions.

"It means the message about risk-taking behaviour can be shared with more students," says TJ. "Hopefully this will avoid more car crashes from the big five: driving under the influence, driving tired, not wearing your seatbelt, distractions and speeding."

TJ is proud and happy to be voted a Westfield Local Hero. "It means the work me and mum do with the hospital is obviously working."

Your 2019 Finalists

Alexandra (Sandy) Van Der Toorn

Woden Community Service

Sandra Van Der Toorn goes above and beyond to help isolated, elderly people make new friends. She uses her own car to pick up people, so they don't miss out on activities she organises in her role as a social group coordinator for Woden Community Service. She utilizes resources that aren't covered by funding, and, often prepares treats, cakes and salads for clients and visits them in the nursing home with her beautiful therapy dog, Honey, by her side. "We see such lovely results with our group activities, people laughing and dancing and improving their fitness and mobility," Sandy says.

Kristine Hewett

Philanthropize Pty Ltd

Kristine Hewett is working to fill a gap in support for domestic violence and abuse (DVA) survivors. Aware there are many prevention and crisis support services but little in the way of ongoing support, she and her business partner set up. Adamas Nexus, a monthly self-help support group for women after they have passed the crisis period. "Now we want to expand to help more women throughout Canberra and Australia," Kristine says.

Carey Russell

Children's Tumour Foundation

Carey Russell jumped in to help people with neurofibromatosis after she was diagnosed with the genetic disorder that leads to disfiguring tumours. She has become the primary ACT representative for the Children's Tumour Foundation, which supports people with the condition and funds research into a cure. As a volunteer, Carey manages fundraising events, supports families online or by phone and has rallied businesses and politicians to increase awareness. "Tumours should never be anyone's normal," says Carey, who promotes inclusivity by showing the community how to celebrate difference and rise above one's circumstances.

Recognising all of our 2019 Nominees

Thomas CAMPAGNA
PARTY Program

Brett CANNING
United Taekwondo

Robert DE CASTELLA
Indigenous Marathon Foundation

Russell FORT
Woden Blues Australian
Football and Netball Club

Kristine HEWETT
Adamas as Nexus

Gabrielle LEEN
Make-A-Wish Australia

Rikki LLOYD
Canberra Police Community
Youth Club

Kate LUKE
Little Oak Sanctuary

Kristen PRATT
Capital Nordic Walking

Delia QUIGLEY
Diversity ACT Community Services

Jenna ROSS
Marathon Health

Carey RUSSELL
Children's Tumour Foundation

Michelle RUSSELL
Marathon Health

Morgane SMEE
Tayler Made – Ronald McDonald
House Canberra

Jane SMEE
Tayler Made – Ronald McDonald
House Canberra

Alexandra VAN DER TOORN
Woden Community Service

Coralie WOOD
CAT Awards

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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SCENTRE GROUP