



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.

Westfield
Local Heroes

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

Chatswood
NSW

Business executive helps men build resilience

Bryan Coleman — The Banksia Project

Passionate, Selfless, Dedicated

Business executive Bryan Coleman knows through experience that many men suffer mental illness in silence, not knowing how to speak about their anguish or how to seek help.

That's why he and other volunteers set up the Banksia Project, a preventative organisation that provides a free, safe and supportive peer environment in which men can speak about their stress, anxiety and depression before they hit a crisis point.

"We aim to educate and provide skills that will empower an individual to manage their mental health and build resilience, on a general day-to-day basis," says Bryan.

He says being voted as a Westfield Local Hero is a special experience. "It means so much to have the

community recognise how important making mental health a priority for men is."

The program operates in both metropolitan and rural areas and has reached thousands of men since it was launched. It offers two primary interventions: Garden Rooms and Growth Rooms.

Garden Rooms offer inspiring talks by business leaders and others who have overcome adversity. Growth Rooms provide a safe facilitator-led space for small groups of men to come together once a month to discuss their challenges and triumphs.

The project provides modules designed by clinical professionals which explain practical skills men can use to improve their health and wellness. This covers exercise, diet, hygiene, sleep, meditation, cognitive behavioural therapy and mindfulness.

Bryan and his colleagues chose the Banksia as a symbol because it is native to Australia, and Indigenous people used its sweet nectar for essential energy to survive. The Banksia has also withstood the ravages of bushfires, re-growing and thriving on scorched earth.

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 project will use its grant to train sixty additional facilitators, who will lead thirty Growth Rooms and support an additional three-hundred men a month.

"Our growth rooms are designed so they can safely run in perpetuity. Mates supporting mates is at the heart of what we do," says Bryan.

"We aim to educate and provide skills that will empower an individual to manage their mental health and build resilience, on a general day-to-day basis," says Bryan.



"I have had a passion to work with at-risk youth since finishing high school. I am extremely passionate about improving the chances that our young people have, and I hope to impact as many young lives as possible."

Young volunteer helps give girls a chance in life

Eliza Wilson — Streetwork

Devoted, Open-hearted, Energised

At twenty-four years old, Eliza Wilson has already devoted much of her life to helping others.

Eliza has worked on Streetwork's Kickstart program which supports up to fifteen vulnerable young women or girls at anytime.

Some are as young as eleven, and the oldest are eighteen. Eliza works one-on-one with each to achieve the goals they have chosen for themselves.

These could be to improve their mental health, improve school attendance or performance, overcome substance abuse, reduce their risk of homelessness or increase their engagement in social activities.

Eliza also acts as a support person at school or if one of the young women has to attend court.

She is excited to be voted a Westfield Local Hero. "It puts the

name of Streetwork out there into the community and shows appreciation for the work we do," she says.

"It also makes these kids proud and takes the shame away from getting help."

"Our program is completely voluntary, which means the young person chooses to meet with us," says Eliza, who has a Behavioural Science degree and is studying for a postgraduate diploma in Relationship and Family Therapy.

"I have had a passion to work with at-risk youth since finishing high school. I am extremely passionate about improving the chances that our young people have, and I hope to impact as many young lives as possible."

When Eliza is not working or studying, she spends much of her time volunteering at charities,

including working as a suicide crisis telephone counsellor at Lifeline or helping out at dog shelters.

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 grant will help Streetwork launch its long-planned eight-week PRIDE Empowerment program for at-risk young people. It will fund mentors, fitness instructors and food.

"We can go into schools around the Chatswood area and work with at-risk youth on a weekly activity, whether it be sports or other self-esteem activities," says Eliza. "The money means we can finally put this program in place."



She is "incredibly humbled" that her local community voted her a Westfield Local Hero. "It feels really rewarding as I have worked for a couple of years to provide this support for families. I'm really thankful and appreciate that so many people voted for me."

Giving food and comfort to parents of sick babies

Michelle Barry — Life's Little Treasures Foundation

Passionate, Empathetic, Tireless

Driven by a deep sense of caring, former nurse Michelle Barry has found a way to provide much-needed support to families with sick or premature babies at the Royal Northshore Hospital in Sydney.

These families can spend many months in hospital with their babies, with only bread and a vending machine available to them within the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

So Michelle created a donation-led breakfast and snack food table, the Brekkie Bar, at which families can help themselves to easily accessible nutritious and treat foods.

She is delighted that the Brekkie Bar has also become a comforting gathering place and facilitates peer support for exhausted and overwhelmed families. Many

visitors to the Brekkie Bar find comfort in simply sitting in silence together.

"Parents share their experiences, celebrate milestones and lend an ear," says Michelle.

She is "incredibly humbled" that her local community voted her a Westfield Local Hero. "It feels really rewarding as I have worked for a couple of years to provide this support for families. I'm really thankful and appreciate that so many people voted for me."

The Brekkie Bar is part of a program called NICU Food From The Heart run by the Life's Little Treasures Foundation, which is dedicated to supporting parents of premature and sick babies.

Despite a time-consuming job and a family of her own, Michelle spends numerous hours a week working on the program and

she collects food from various locations to stock the Brekkie Bar.

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 Life's Little Treasures Foundation will use its grant to fund the Brekkie Bar for a further six months, covering the cost of food, parking, a casual staff member, insurance and administration.

"One of the great aspects of the program is to create a social environment with food to bring people together. That's the unexpected benefit of the Brekkie Bar," says Michelle.

"The dream will be to open more breakfast bars in NICUs across Australia."

Your 2019 Finalists

Lisa Graham

Taldumande Youth Services

When Lisa Graham joined Taldumande Youth Services as CEO in 2012, it looked after 13 homeless young people and employed seven staff. Now, on any night, Taldumande has 65 people aged 12–21 in residence, employs dozens of staff and has a dedicated team of volunteers. It operates three fully supervised and two semi-independent accommodation programs as well as community housing programs that help young people move from homelessness and family breakdown to independence and stability. "The purpose is to accommodate and support young people and help them to reconnect with their families where appropriate," says Lisa.

Nikki Davis

Enlighten Education

Nikki Davis has made her mark as a dancer, dancing teacher, model and magazine editor, but it was her work as a Lifeline counsellor that inspired her to explore a new interest in counselling and psychotherapy. She is making a positive difference as a senior presenter for Enlighten Education's Walk the Talk program for Women's Community Shelters. Nikki is an outstanding role model and visits high schools to speak about respectful relationships, gender equality and being a community change-maker. Students are then encouraged to adopt their local Women's' Community Shelter as a year-long community project.

Kylie Macdonald

Ku-ring-gai Youth Development Service

Despite her high-pressure job as a leader of a stock broking firm, Kylie Macdonald makes time to give back to her community. One of the ways she achieves this is as an active board member of Ku-ring-gai Youth Development Service (KYDS), which provides free mental health counselling, education and support services to improve the wellbeing of young people across northern Sydney. Apart from her financial and ethical oversight duties as a board member, she generously shares her knowledge to support the staff, volunteers for challenging tasks and leads fundraising and event projects.

Recognising all of our 2019 Nominees

Helen BANU
Streetwork Australia

Michelle BARRY
Life's Little Treasures Foundation

Michele BEHATTIN
Giving Warmth

Rosa CHIRILLO
Make-A-Wish Australia

Bryan COLEMAN
The Banksia Project

Samantha CORNAY
UTS Football Club

Nikki DAVIS
Enlighten Education

Thomas DENT
StreetWork Australia

Roanne GONZALES
Enactus Macquarie

Lisa GRAHAM
Taldumande Youth Services

Louise GREIG
Integricare

Tom JOWETT
Reach Out Volunteers Charity

Kylie MACDONALD
KYDS Youth Development
Service Inc

Margie McCRAE
Marian St Theatre for Young People

Nirmal SINGH HANSRA
Children's Tumour Foundation

Christopher SUFFIELD
NSW Powerchair Football Association

Eliza WILSON
Streetwork

Sue WONG
Buddha's Light International
Association, Sydney Chapter

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

westfield.com.au/local-heroes

westfield.co.nz/local-heroes

Westfield

Local Heroes

2019

SCENTRE GROUP