



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

Miranda
NSW

Dance studio opens doors to music and movement

Shantelle Tagg — Shimmy Shakes Dance Studio

Strong, Generous, Amazing

Shantelle Tagg believes no one should be stopped from enjoying the magic of dance because of disabilities or a lack of money.

She operates Shimmy Shakes Dance Studio, which keeps its fees low and welcomes boys and girls who cannot join regular classes.

Her uniquely inclusive classes for under-fives feature teachers using sign language, a high staff-to-student ratio and a low-sensory environment designed for children who would be overwhelmed in conventional studios.

Shimmy Shakes also offers classes for school-aged children with severe to profound disabilities. These are run in a studio with wheelchair access and no ballet barres or distracting dance mirrors.

"We aim to break down barriers for children with challenges," says Shantelle, a former professional

dancer whose oldest daughter has disabilities.

Although the studio has had previous accolades and was named Sutherland Shire's Inclusive Business of the Year in 2017, Shantelle feels overwhelmed by the recognition of being voted a Westfield Local Hero. "It makes me realise that we are touching the lives of so many families in our local community, which makes me very happy.

"After seeing how much my daughter responded to music and movement, I started Shimmy Shakes to try to bring the love of dance to all children," says Shantelle.

Her classes use a lot of creative exercises to help the children develop gross motor skills in an enjoyable environment.

They have great fun being creative and doing something that many other kids take for granted.

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. Shimmy Shakes will use its grant to hire more teachers and provide accredited disability dance training to all staff.

The classes are not only for the children. Their parents appreciate the opportunity to relax, knowing their child is in good hands with staff who can care for all their needs.

"To see the response from parents is astounding," Shantelle says.

Seeing their children have access to these classes often becomes the highlight of their week."

"After seeing how much my daughter responded to music and movement, I started Shimmy Shakes to try to bring the love of dance to all children," says Shantelle.



Kim says it was just what they needed, and if it wasn't for Make-A-Wish, their world would have fallen apart. Happily, her son has overcome his cancer and is a healthy adult today.

Mum keeps paying back for son's healing wish

Kim Hiron — Make-A-Wish Australia

Compassionate, Understanding, Caring

Many years ago, Kim Hiron and her family experienced the healing power of Make-A-Wish Australia when her son was recovering from cancer treatment.

Since then, she has dedicated many hours to helping make other children's wishes come true and is the leader of the South Sydney branch of the organisation.

"My greatest joy is being able to help grant cherished wishes," says Kim, a teacher, mother and grandmother.

She loves working with children and builds personal connections with the families she helps. "Being able to help bring joy, strength, hope and happiness to these special children and their families is a wonderful heartfelt experience," she says.

Granting a sick child's wish does more than create a special

moment for them and their family; it can help them heal.

"There are studies that show there is a positive health benefit for children."

Kim is humbled and grateful to have been voted a Westfield Local Hero, but her biggest reward comes from seeing the impact of making wishes come true.

"The anticipation of a wish and having something fantastic to look forward to really helps in their recovery."

In her case, Kim's son was granted the wish of a family holiday to Fiji, which helped the family recover after his cancer treatment.

Kim says it was just what they needed, and if it wasn't for Make-A-Wish, their world would have fallen apart. Happily, her son has overcome his cancer and is a healthy adult today.

Kim knew from the start that when she was back on her feet, she would give back to Make-A-Wish and help make a difference to other families trying to cope with the illness of a child.

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"The grant will help ensure these special children have the joy, hope, strength and happiness that a wish can bring them," Kim says.



"Importantly, we provide an environment where patrons can interact with each other and with our volunteer group, providing them with connections and community."

Cooking up hot meals and human connection

Rob Cook — One Meal – It Makes a Difference

Humble, Genuine, Driven

Rob Cook is on a mission to provide healthy hot meals to people in need across the Sutherland Shire, but his work is about more than food.

In 2016, Rob became a founding member of the Sutherland Shire branch of One Meal – It Makes a Difference, and leads a group of volunteers who provide up to 150 meals a week to people who are homeless or struggling to make ends meet.

The volunteer-driven organisation is active in several areas of Sydney and collaborates with other not-for-profits to help people access other support services, such as emergency financial relief or counselling.

Rob has personally assisted in finding emergency housing for people and has arranged haircut vouchers from local hairdressers. He has also organised medical and dental treatment for patrons who

struggle to access these services themselves.

"Our ultimate aim is to assist and support our patrons to return to independence," says Rob.

"Importantly, we provide an environment where patrons can interact with each other and with our volunteer group, providing them with connections and community."

Social connection is of huge importance, Rob says, as many people with material needs are also isolated.

Rob is grateful to be voted a Westfield Local Hero and appreciates the community support. But he says the service is a team effort and everyone deserves recognition.

"I find that helping someone in such a direct way is hugely rewarding. It leaves you feeling good," he says.

Rob is also an energetic fundraiser and led a drive to replace the worn-out van previously used by the charity. This has enabled the volunteers to expand their service to Cronulla and Miranda.

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. One Meal is using its grant to cover the ever-increasing operating costs of its growing service and to buy a deep freezer and food handling equipment.

"I am very happy that One Meal Sutherland Shire has received this grant, and I thank our team of volunteers who make it all possible," Rob says.

Your 2019 Finalists

Andrew Barrs

Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation

Andrew Barrs makes a point of being there for children who might otherwise miss out because their mum or dad has a mental illness. As a volunteer camp leader at the Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation, Andrew has helped hundreds of vulnerable children. He has volunteered at over 50 of the foundation's camps over the past 12 years, providing participants with support and opportunities to form lasting connections. "When the young people return from our weekends, families report positive changes, deeper understanding and conversations about the mental illness in their families," Andrew says.

Keaton James

Top Blokes Foundation

Keaton James is a professional wrestler, but his moves outside the ring are having the most significant impact. By night, he is known as "Captain Keato" in the wrestling world, but he spends his days working as Top Blokes Foundation mentor for young people. Known for his authenticity, Keaton has helped over 250 young men over the past three years, encouraging them to develop their self-confidence. "I'm a passionate youth worker and a wrestler, and I feel it's a massive achievement to turn two of my passions into proper jobs," Keaton says.

Diane Manns

Sutherland Shire Family Services

Diane Manns is dedicated to eliminating domestic violence and assisting those who have lived through it. She is the CEO of Sutherland Shire Family Services and leads a team of 40 social workers, psychologists, mothercraft nurses, teachers, law specialists and others who help families recover from trauma. In the 17 years Diane has been at the service, she has taken its impact to a new level by becoming a vocal campaigner for reducing the causes of family violence. "We aim to provide safer outcomes for our children, young people and families," Diane says.

Recognising all of our 2019 Nominees

Andrew BARRS
Australian Kookaburra Kids
Foundation Ltd

Andrew BRODALA
Steve Waugh Foundation

Robert BULL
Miranda RSL Youth Club

Toni BURNHAM
WIRES

Avril CHANGEME
Kingsway Community Care

Rob COOK
One Meal – It Makes a Difference

Edward (Ted) CRAMSIE
Vision Australia Ltd

Michelle DRUERY
Police Citizens Youth Club NSW
(PCYC Sutherland)

Janice DUFFICY
Angel Gowns Australia Inc

Joy FRIEND
Gonyah Seaview RSL Day Club
(A subsidiary of Bundeena RSL
Sub-branch)

Sarah GRINHAM
Wombat Occasional Childcare Inc

Lee HESLEHURST
Sydney2CAMPerra

Kim HIRON
Make-A-Wish Australia

Bernadette HOY
Orana Inc

Kathryn HULL
Southern Power AFC

Keaton JAMES
Top Blokes Foundation

Joshua KANDELAS
Sutherland Titans Special Needs
Football Club

Robert LINDSAY
2Connect Youth & Community Inc

Daniella LUCHI
White Ribbon Australia

Diane MANNIS
Sutherland Shire Family Services

Ken MARSLEW
Enough is Enough Anti Violence
Movement Inc

Garry MORRIS
St George Children with
Disabilities Fund

Avril MUNDY
Southern Cross Kids Camp

Melinda PATERSON
Engadine Community Services (ECS)

Greg PIERCE
Wanda Surf Life Saving Clinic

Joan ROBB
BeConnected Community
Services Inc

Darlene ROYAL
Engadine Community Services (ECS)

Jessica RUSSELL
The Roving Artisan

Kristy SARGENT
Wombat Occasional Childcare Inc

Patricia SCHEETZ
The Sweetest Gift

Staci SMYTHE
Expanding Influences

Shantelle TAGG
Shimmy Shakes Dance Studio

Sophie TOWNSEND
Run MND Event Fundraiser for Motor
Neurone Disease Association of NSW

Moya TURNER
Community Palliative Care
Calvary Hospital

Anne VAN VUUREN
3 Bridges Community

Ken WARBURTON
Sylvanvale Foundation Ltd

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