



*Westfield*

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*Local Heroes*

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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](https://westfield.com.au/local-heroes) [westfield.co.nz/local-heroes](https://westfield.co.nz/local-heroes)

# *Westfield*

**Mt Druitt**  
NSW



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## Using lived experience to keep young people safe

### Ned Narouz — Rap 4 Change

*Caring, Dedicated, Selfless*

Ned Narouz felt lost when he was growing up and he knows from experience how vital a mentor can be for young people who are struggling through the juvenile justice system.

As the founder of Rap 4 Change, the volunteer uses music, creativity and sport to tackle substance abuse, self-harm, bullying and racism.

"I am able to build a good connection with the young people and help educate them on life skills and how to achieve success the right way," says Ned, who was released from juvenile detention at the age of seventeen and was lucky enough to find his own mentor.

Ned's mentor taught him the value of hard work and chasing big goals.

Now he is giving back with Rap 4 Change, which offers school-wellbeing programs, hip-hop lessons, mentoring, sporting activities and counselling to youth in juvenile detention – all on a shoestring budget.

He feels proud to be voted a Westfield Local Hero for his good work, and believes the community support reflects well on everyone at Rap 4 Change, which he established in 2016.

It's all about encouraging young people to make positive choices in their lives, and showing them how it can be done, says Ned.

"Growing up, I was lost," he says. "People were telling me to do things like go to school or get a job, but my mentor was the first person to explain why those things are worth doing."

In 2018, Ned was named Blacktown's Australia Day Citizen of The Year and he has completed a Community Services Certificate at Mt Druitt TAFE.

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Rap 4 Change will use its grant to fund a ten-week leadership program called Ready For Success. The aim is to create education, employment and life skills opportunities for up to twenty young people at a time.

"With the help of the grant, we will be helping people who are either at risk of going into juvenile detention or just coming out of it," Ned says.



**"Our goal is to run a safe haven for the community and give struggling parents the chance to allow their child to be a part of something amazing," says Rosie, who is in her final year of an education degree.**

## Giving all dancers a chance to shine and grow

### Rosie Surace — Shalvey Community Centre

*Amazing, Dedicated, Beautiful*

University student Rosie Surace believes everyone deserves to dance, no matter how much money they have.

That's why she volunteers her time to run Shalvey Community Dance for children from disadvantaged and migrant families around Mt Druitt.

"Our goal is to run a safe haven for the community and give struggling parents the chance to allow their child to be a part of something amazing," says Rosie, who is in her final year of an education degree.

"It is about offering families a place to bring their children, a place to seek advice and most importantly a place where support and guidance is given."

Rosie feels honoured and humbled to have been voted a Westfield Local Hero by her local

community, whose support she relies upon to run the centre.

But her greatest joy comes from knowing her vision is putting smiles on the faces of the dancers, who are aged two to eighteen and include those with disabilities.

"Our centre is a rarity in places like Shalvey," she says.

She took over the studio in 2016 when it had twenty-four students. Since then, the number of students has increased six-fold.

Rosie organises festivals and an exciting end-of-year concert at which the young dancers can show off their new moves to their families and friends.

"It's held in a professional theatre, so our students get to experience what it's like to perform on stage with proper lighting, sound and costumes," Rosie says.

She takes the time to get to know all the students and works with each one to build confidence and resilience, which is just as important as the dancing, keeping fit and being part of a team.

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Shalvey Community Centre will put the grant towards new safety gear, mirrors and a better sound system. It will also fund dance shoes, costumes and a great venue for the end-of-year concert.

"This grant couldn't have come at a better time," Rosie says.



**"When our beautiful daughter died, we received thousands of messages saying how kind and empathetic she was. We decided that Billie's legacy would become one of kindness," Danny says.**

## Building a legacy of love out of family tragedy

**Danny Mayson-Kinder — Flyhighbillie**

*Strong, Focused, Compassionate*

Danny Mayson-Kinder's world was shattered in 2016 when she lost her 12-year-old daughter, Billie, in a tragic horse accident.

But she has ensured Billie's legacy lives on with the charity Flyhighbillie, which is dedicated to promoting kindness, empathy and compassion in children.

"When our beautiful daughter died, we received thousands of messages saying how kind and empathetic she was. We decided that Billie's legacy would become one of kindness," Danny says.

Flyhighbillie publishes interactive B Kinder workbooks and other merchandise for children to promote kindness, empathy and compassion to prevent mental health issues, bullying and suicide.

Central to the charity's mission is spreading a message to "B Kinder" (be kinder), a

reference to Billie's name and her compassionate nature.

Danny says it is humbling to be voted a Westfield Local Hero. "Not only is it wonderful to be recognised by the local community, but it also means that people are recognising the need for our positive B Kinder message."

She is also excited about the opportunity to expand the charity's mission.

"Billie's dream was to write a book, so I compiled her poems, stories and artwork into a beautiful book called Hope," says Danny.

"Through Billie's amazing gift of empathy and insight, this book inspires and gives hope to others."

Sales of Hope and the workbooks have raised over \$130,000, which has been donated to charities

such as Bear Cottage children's palliative care home and Feel the Magic, which supports children's physical and mental health.

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Flyhighbillie will use its grant for marketing, printing, bookkeeping, and to commission a social impact report on the B Kinder workbooks to boost the evidence base for the project.

"The grant means so much to us," Danny says. "We really want to spread our B Kinder messages and our unique, positive and empowering resources for children."

# Your 2019 Finalists

## Mayor Chagai

### PCYC Blacktown

The Savannah Pride basketball and mentorship program is producing some of Australia's next champions, but its biggest achievement is off the court. Head coach Mayor Chagai has been running the program since 2007 with a mission to shape young lives through sport. Based at PCYC Blacktown, Mayor and his team of coaches and mentors put on basketball training and competitions for up to 200 young people a week. "It keeps young people away from engaging in antisocial behaviour, away from crime, and creates better education pathways for them," says Mayor.

## Gary Pontifex

### The Children's Hospital at Westmead

Family means everything to Gary Pontifex, which is the driving force behind his 25-year fundraising effort for The Children's Hospital at Westmead. Gary relentlessly goes about selling merchandise at shopping centres and train stations and organising fundraising BBQs. Last year was one of his "biggest and proudest", and he raised \$60,000. "I love fundraising for the hospital, and if it can make a difference, that makes me happy," says Gary, who believes no child deserves to be sick. The money Gary raises is used for research, equipment and to support families with sick children.

## Auntie Jenny Ebsworth

### Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation

When Aboriginal people in western Sydney need the advice, support and wisdom of an Elder, Auntie Jenny Ebsworth is always there to call on. Auntie Jenny is one of four Elders behind the Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation, a group that helps the local community in every aspect of their lives. She and her fellow Elders host weekly meals, turning no one away and seeking to build their people's pride in their identity. "I am very well known in the community and am often called upon to attend meetings and give cultural advice," Auntie Jenny says.

# Recognising all of our 2019 Nominees

**Daniel ANGUS**  
Headspace Mt Druitt

**Denise AUMAU MAZHEW**  
I Am Community

**Mayor CHAGAI**  
Police Citizens Youth Club NSW  
(PCYC Blacktown)

**Tania DAVIDSON**  
Greater Western Aboriginal Health  
Service

**Rosie SURACE**  
Shalvey Community Centre

**Alison EASTWOOD**  
Mount Druitt Seventh Day  
Adventist Church

**(Auntie) Jenny EBSWORTH**  
Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation

**John FERNANDES**  
Lions Club of Kings Langley Inc

**Emma GILLHAM**  
Make-A-Wish Australia

**Darryl HAMILTON**  
NSW Police – Mount Druitt  
Police Area Command

**Kim KING**  
Yenu Allowah Aboriginal  
Child & Family Centre

**Cheryl LYNCH-GARDNER**  
Budo Ryu Karate Academy

**Danny MAYSON-KINDER**  
Fly High Billie Limited

**Grisel MENDEZ**  
Set2Learn

**Gailsusan MOORE**  
Community Foundation of North  
Western Sydney

**Carol MURRAY**  
Carol Murray Productions

**Ned NAROUZ**  
Rap 4 Change

**Melinda PARKER**  
Made With Love – Murrumbidgee

**Gary PONTIFEX**  
The Sydney Children's  
Hospitals Foundation

**Rooby ROO**  
Blacktown Area Community  
Centres Inc (BACC)

**Jeffrey SMITH**  
Mount Druitt Neighbour Aid Inc

**Chris SUFFIELD**  
NSW Powerchair Football Association

**John SYOBODA**  
Western Sydney Suicide Prevention  
and Support Network

**Matt TAYLOR**  
Rooty Hill RSL Football Club

**Willia TONGIA**  
Security

**Law TUILAEP**  
Youth Off The Streets

**Rebecca VERRIER**  
DT Performing Arts

**Faye WEBB**  
Ratha's Place – help2help

**Teigan WISE**  
Coles Mt Druitt

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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**SCENTRE GROUP**