Westfield
Local Heroef
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 Heroef

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



### **Tuggerah**

NSW

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"To live and to give is my life's motto," says Dorf, who is pleased that parents and carers can have a well-deserved break while their children are being taken care of on camp.

# All-round good person helps people feel connected

#### **Bryan Dorfling** — Camp Breakaway

Exuberant, Patient, Caring

Guitar in hand and an enthusiastic smile on his face, Bryan Dorfling is the kind of role model you want on a youth camp.

The Camp Breakaway youth leader connects with people through his love of music; removing barriers and encouraging people with disabilities to socialise and join in activities.

Dorf, as he likes to be known, volunteers at every Breakaway camp and shares his love of life with children and adults with disabilities, children with high medical needs, young carers and disadvantaged youth.

"I love putting a smile on people's faces," says Dorf, whom a colleague describes as an allround people person.

He feels humbled to be voted a Westfield Local Hero but also feels

privileged to be part of Camp Breakaway. "What they're doing in our community is amazing. They're beautiful people doing beautiful work."

Dorf says one of his roles at Camp Breakaway is to be an adult male that people can trust, so they are able to re-engage socially and develop confidence.

"To live and to give is my life's motto," says Dorf, who is pleased that parents and carers can have a well-deserved break while their children are being taken care of on camp.

Dorf is a keen traveller and has visited more than 60 countries, and he usually finds a way to help others wherever he goes.

His next big adventure is a thousand-kilometre walk from Budgewoi to Brisbane to promote good mental health. "I have been struggling with and hiding my mental health issues for 36 years. Now that I'm talking about them and seeking help, I need to let other people know that they are not alone," he says.

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. Camp Breakaway will use its grant to fund a six-week Stepping Forward Program, which teaches children the interpersonal and cooperative skills they need to transition to training or employment.

"When Breakaway is able to fund more programs, it makes our kind of jobs much more meaningful," says Dorf.



"When I took on the role of treasurer in 2003 I had no bookkeeping or computing skills and was a one-fingered typist," says Rhonda. But she stepped up to the task and in 2015 won an award for being a top not-for-profit treasurer.

# Retiree's 'love job' helps with cancer travel costs

#### Rhonda Doyle — Central Coast Kids In Need

Selfless, Caring, Incredible

Retired hairdresser Rhonda Doyle volunteers for 30 hours a week at Central Coast Kids in Need, where she and 17 others help the families of seriously ill children who must travel to Sydney or Newcastle hospitals for treatment.

The need is high and growing, with the charity helping more than 2500 families since Rhonda joined 17 years ago.

"I call it my love job," says Rhonda, whose title is treasurer but is effectively the co-team leader with her sister Lorraine, the charity's secretary.

She is honoured to be voted a Westfield Local Hero. "The people that we help are just so grateful. In this financial year alone, we've helped 172 families and outlaid roughly \$96,000 worth of support."

The charity started out helping dozens of families a year but

has increased to more than three hundred.

Assistance includes accommodation and travel costs as well as funding for medication, specialist formula and quality-of-life equipment.

Rhonda says families often have to pay thousands of dollars for accommodation while their children receive treatment for leukaemia or other types of cancer.

"Many mums have to give up their jobs even though they have mortgages. Without our help, they could lose their homes."

Apart from her treasurer duties, Rhonda is the first point of contact for social workers and families and is actively involved in fundraising.

"When I took on the role of treasurer in 2003 I had no bookkeeping or computing skills and was a one-fingered typist," says Rhonda. But she stepped up to the task and in 2015 won an award for being a top not-for-profit treasurer.

Rhonda is the longest-serving active member of Central Coast in Need and has been awarded Life Membership for her dedication, commitment and hard work.

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. Central Coast Kids will use its grant to help cover the growing cost of accommodation and travel for families in need.

"It will go a long way to helping even more families," says Rhonda.

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She is humbled that her local community voted her a Westfield Local Hero. "It makes me feel that what we're doing is a good thing and that other people think that we're doing a good thing."

# Thoughtful food packs for people without a kitchen

#### **Rebecca Law** — Shoebox Revolution

Caring, Selfless, Committed

The plight of homeless people on the Central Coast touched Rebecca Law to such an extent that she founded a charity to help them.

Through the Shoebox Revolution, the part-time chef and full-time mum of two promotes social wellbeing by supplying care packs of food and other necessities to people who find themselves without a permanent home for even one evening.

The food is carefully selected to suit someone with no amenities and is intended to last 24 hours. Other items include feminine hygiene products, personal grooming products and comfort possessions such as socks.

"I'm just hoping to make a difference in our backyard while teaching our children empathy, kindness and compassion," says Rebecca, who has lived on the Central Coast for most of her life.

She is humbled that her local community voted her a Westfield Local Hero. "It makes me feel that what we're doing is a good thing and that other people think that we're doing a good thing."

Rebecca is the driving force behind the charity, which distributes 400 packs a month, either directly to recipients or via local services and other charities.

Despite a full work and home life, she manages to be available to assist at events that engage the homeless community she cares so much about.

She is always busy, picking up donations, packing essential items and delivering packs.

In addition to this, she spends many nights engaging socially

with homeless people and always has an ear for a good story.

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 Shoebox Revolution will use its grant to buy non-perishable food and other items for care packs and will be able to invest in better storage and packing facilities.

"The money will go a long way to helping us replenish our stocks of less-donated items such as deodorant and toothpaste," says Rebecca.

"Fundraising is hard work, and we'll be able to help more people with the money, especially over Christmas."

### **Your 2019 Finalists**

#### **Dylan Brassington**

#### Top Blokes Foundation

When Dylan Brassington walks into a local school, you can be sure many students will be running up to him to say hello. As a mentor with the Top Blokes Foundation, he has helped thousands of young people over the years. He embodies healthy masculinity and shows young men how he can be gentle and nurturing and still feel powerful and strong. People know he will give everything he has to make a difference. "I'm passionate about being a mentor to young men to help them to grow into top blokes," he says.

#### **Mike Harrison**

### Riding for the Disabled - Central Coast

Mike Harrison is retired and could be spending his time on any number of pursuits. Happily, he thrives on helping children with special needs experience the therapeutic benefits of horse riding. Mike first learned to ride bareback on retired circus horses in the UK and volunteers at Riding for the Disabled, where he helps care for the horses and assists children during their lesson. His payback for seven dedicated years of volunteer work is seeing the children's happy faces as they overcome their fears, increase their self-confidence and achieve their goals.

#### **Angela Thomas**

#### Musicians Making a Difference

Angela Thomas is a former international gymnast, a surfer, a youth mentor and all-round local legend. By day she is a teacher's aide, and in the evenings she runs the Musicians Making A Difference (MMAD) dance department. She coaches 100 at-risk, disadvantaged or marginalised youth at her popular hip-hop classes. This gives people aged eight to eighteen a creative and positive way to express themselves and feel believed in. Each class starts with a discussion in a peer-supported safe space, allowing the students to talk and know they are not alone.

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## Recognising all of our 2019 Nominees



**ADSSI Limited** 

#### **Brenda BOOTH**

Stroke Foundation

#### Jeffrey BRADFORD

Wyong Public School Community Centre

#### **Dylan BRASSINGTON**

Top Blokes Foundation

#### **Bryan DORFLING**

Camp Breakaway Inc

#### Rhonda DOYLE

Central Coast Kids In Need

#### Milly GRAINGER

batyr

#### Mike HARRISON

Riding for the Disabled (NSW)
Central Coast Centre

#### Racquel HASSETT

Police Citizens Youth Club NSW (PCYC Bateau Bay)

#### **Dawn HOOPER**

Iris Foundation

#### Rachel JAMIESON

Make-A-Wish Australia

#### **Betty JORDAN**

**NSW Police Legacy** 

#### **Melissa LAVER**

Tuggerah Public School P&C Canteen

#### Rebecca LAW

Shoebox Revolution

#### **Christine MASTELLO**

Southlakes Marketplace

#### **Christine MASTELLO**

Community Hair Project (CHP)

#### Joshua MAXWELL

Jopuka Productions

#### Marea O'KEEFE

Angel Gowns for Australian Angel Babies Inc

#### **Shane ORR**

Central Coast Junior Rugby Union

#### Madonna PETRIDIS

Angel Gowns Australia Inc

#### **Crystal RUSSOM**

CoastFM 96.3 Community Radio

#### Angela THOMAS

Musicians Making A Difference (MMAD)

#### Janet WALLACE

**Senior Smiles** 

#### 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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