



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

Riccarton

NZ

Child's hospital visit inspires ongoing acts of kindness

Christina Buckland — From One Mother To Another

Determined, Selfless, Kind

After experiencing fear and stress when her daughter was rushed to hospital, Christina Buckland set out to help other parents through the same experience.

The dispensary technician co-founded One Mother to Another (OMTA), a charitable trust that provides gift packs to mothers and carers of acutely sick children in hospital.

The packs contain practical items such as tea and coffee, something to eat, shampoo and lip balm; and luxuries such as hand cream as well as an empathetic hand-written note. Special packs are made up for Christmas and Mother's Day.

"We know what a gift bag full of practical, indulgent items and a letter of encouragement would have meant to us during such a vulnerable time," says Christina,

who teamed up with a friend, Joy Reid, to start the charity.

She feels humbled and honoured to be named a Westfield Local Hero.

"It's an amazing confidence boost to have my community vote for me, and to know they value what we are doing," says Christina.

"We identified a need and have watched One Mother to Another grow slowly into what it is today. I get so much fulfilment knowing that we are helping mums on what might be one of the scariest days of their lives."

Well-known and respected in the community, Christina spends hours asking businesses for donations, delivering bags and replying to emails.

OMTA delivers more than two thousand packs a year to mothers

with a child in neonatal ICU at Christchurch, Nelson or Invercargill hospitals.

Christina's dream is to reach more mothers and carers at other hospitals.

"Our aim is to relieve some of the stress others are facing and let them know other mothers are thinking of them during this time."

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OMTA will use its grant to double the number of gift bags it supplies.

"This is a game-changer," says Christina. "It will help us provide thousands more gift bags and ensure our charity continues for years to come."



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"The need for what we do and the support we provide is growing. Qtopia is a vital lifeline for the LGBTI+ community," says Alice.

'Professional Aunty' makes the world a kinder place

Alice Andersen — Qtopia

Passionate, Uplifting, Brilliant

For many young LGBTI+ people, group sessions at Qtopia are the only time they can be themselves.

Led by Executive Director and 'Professional Aunty' Alice Andersen, Qtopia offers young people a safe and welcoming place to meet in an environment where diversity is celebrated.

The Christchurch-based non-profit offers separate support groups for children under 12, teenagers and those over 18, as well as for parents and carers.

"I make a lot of cups of tea - I know all anyone really needs is a safe place where someone believes in them," says Alice.

Qtopia has five hundred active members, with new members joining up every month.

"The need for what we do and the support we provide is growing.

Qtopia is a vital lifeline for the LGBTI+ community," says Alice.

Alice is delighted to be named a Westfield Local Hero. "It's incredibly special to have the work that you are doing acknowledged by the community. Hopefully, it means we are heading in the right direction," she says. "We are so proud of the work we do, making the world a kinder place."

Thanks to Alice, Qtopia also encourages greater acceptance of LGBTI+ people in the community.

She has developed and delivers diversity and inclusion workshops and provides community outreach programmes to schools. She is also a key member of a new Rainbow Coalition forming in Christchurch and has developed alliances with other national LGBTI+ youth service providers.

"I work hard with good people to effect positive change," says Alice.

"We do that in a range of ways, whether it's support, education or, most importantly, celebration."

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Qtopia's grant will provide welcome relief for ongoing operational costs.

"It's going towards our event and venue costs for all our social support groups," says Alice. "For us, it's really important that we provide a safe and accessible inner-city space. Any resources that can be put towards that are hugely helpful."



"For us it's gold," says Jan. "It means we can provide these educational resources developed over many years and based on what we have learnt from the children."

Devoted therapist helps children reach their potential

Jan Murphy — Christchurch Early Intervention Trust (The Champion Centre)

Wise, Compassionate, Benevolent

Jan Murphy has devoted her working life to ensuring children with disabilities can achieve more than anyone thought possible.

In her forty years with the world-renowned Champion Centre, she has been instrumental in developing successful early intervention programmes that have supported more than two thousand children up to the age of six.

The centre helps children with complex disabilities such as Down syndrome, autism spectrum disorder, dyspraxia and global developmental delay.

Jan started at the centre as a speech and language therapist and is now the clinical practice manager. She and the team look beyond the disability of each child to find their untapped potential, with the outcomes often surprising the children and their families.

"We see a positive impact every day. Parents reflect that they feel better able to help their children develop and learn," says Jan.

She feels honoured to be named a Westfield Local Hero. "My work is about removing the barriers and allowing people to step through and belong. But I am part of a whole group of people, colleagues, families and amazing children, who are all heroes," Jan says.

"This recognition shows the community wants to honour these children and their families."

In her leadership role, Jan supports the team of health professionals, early intervention educators and support workers to coordinate their care and communication with families.

The results are impressive, with more than nine out of ten children successfully moving on to their local school.

"We believe that every child, regardless of disability, has the fundamental right to reach their full potential; physically, intellectually and socially," says Jan.

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The centre will use its grant to provide further support to the children as they move into their pre-school and school communities.

"For us it's gold," says Jan. "It means we can provide these educational resources developed over many years and based on what we have learnt from the children."

Your 2019 Finalists

Anna Manson Shocking Pink

Despite the demands of a full-time job, family and her own health challenges, Anna Mason has become the beating heart of breast cancer charity Shocking Pink. The organisation supports women aged 45 and under who have breast cancer, both during treatment and during the "fallout" after treatment is over. Anna, who was diagnosed with breast cancer at 31 amidst the Christchurch earthquakes, joined Shocking Pink as a volunteer in 2012 and now oversees more than 500 members. "The purpose of my work is to provide financial support and online and face-to-face emotional support," she says.

Alexandra Poetschke Recreate NZ

The timing was perfect when Alexandra Poetschke stumbled across Recreate NZ, which provides social and recreational activities for young people with disabilities. A speech-language therapist, she was eager to use outdoor adventure to help people develop their independence and communication. Alexandra spent two years volunteering before moving into a permanent role in Recreate NZ's Christchurch office. She coordinates half-day to five-day programs that also help build friendships and gives families some respite. "I've seen young people transform and blossom through participation in outdoor pursuits that challenge and delight them," she says.

Bridget Kelly Women's Centre

Bridget Kelly devotes hundreds of hours a year to supporting women in crisis at the Women's Centre Incorporated. The centre provides counselling, referral and access to resources for up to 10,000 women a year who are experiencing a crisis because of domestic violence, mental health issues or trauma. Bridget wears many hats as a volunteer, but her most significant role is being the welcoming person the women see and engage with they arrive at the centre. "My primary aim as the initial contact is to ensure women feel both safe and heard," she says.

Recognising all of our 2019 Nominees

Alice ANDERSEN

Qtopia

David BRITTEN

Dark Side Entertainers

Christina BUCKLAND

From One Mother To Another

Darral CAMPBELL

Dementia Canterbury Inc

Mary Jo CHASE

The Village Community Centre

Christina FREEMAN

North Avon Christchurch BMX Club

Hayley GUGLIETTA

Richmond Community Garden

Jennifer HEPARI

Mini Ha Ha Haven Charitable Trust

Bridget KELLY

Womens Centre Inc

Anna MANSON

Shocking Pink

Lizzy MINISH

CDN Trust

Jan MURPHY

Christchurch Early Intervention
Trust – The Champion Centre

Vicki-Anne PARKER

NZ Gifts of Love and Strength

Alexandra POETSCHKE

Recreate NZ

Nui RIRINUI

Rolleston Warriors
Rugby League Club

Bronwyn SIMONS

MND New Zealand

Paige SULLIVAN

Youth Voice Canterbury

Lucy VAN'T WOUT

Cat Rescue Christchurch
Charitable Trust

Judith WAKELIN

Heart Kids Canterbury

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