



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

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"I don't see myself as a hero but an advocate for those who don't have a voice. I think this says I am making a difference and that's important to me," he says.

Tenacious treasurer fights for sanctuary's rights

Trevor Eddy — Clota Cottage Neighbourhood House

Tenacious, Energetic, Selfless

Clota Cottage Neighbourhood House is a much-valued sanctuary wherein elderly, disabled and lonely people can socialise and learn new skills, and it makes an effort to embrace people who don't speak English as a first language.

However, a major commercial development next door was threatening its existence by keeping people away.

That's where volunteer treasurer Trevor Eddy came in.

He led a media and face-to-face campaign that secured compensation, returned Clota to a firm financial footing and brought the community back together.

Trevor is known for tenaciously fighting for the rights of others and feels exhilarated and humbled to have been voted a Westfield Local Hero.

"I don't see myself as a hero but an advocate for those who don't have a voice. I think this says I am making a difference and that's important to me," he says.

"I love trying to resolve injustice, inequity and the isolation."

Trevor secured a large cash and in-kind compensation payment from the construction company, which returned the house to profit.

He has also reviewed all house policies and procedures and engaged local councillors to support the sanctuary.

The house is just one of the many causes Trevor supports. He volunteers, consults and advocates for ten other organisations and was named Chisholm Volunteer of the Year in 2017 and Whitehorse Citizen of the Year in 2019.

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. Clota Cottage Neighbourhood House will use its grant to replace its ageing computers and to set up a hub to teach technology. The front of the house will be converted into a warm and welcoming place where people can have a cup of tea, play cards or watch a movie.

"It will change the face of the whole place," says Trevor.

"There will be new programs, new equipment and new people. What it will really do is give us an opportunity to fulfil the hopes and aspirations for the people who share their time with us."



Alice is often the public voice of families with neurofibromatosis in matters concerning their needs. She engages with the media and plays integral role in reducing social isolation and advocating for positive social attitudes.

Determined mum fights for wellbeing of kids with tumours

Alice Dell — Children's Tumour Foundation

Strong, Compassionate, Selfless

When Alice Dell's son Barney was two years old, she and her family received the devastating news that he has neurofibromatosis (NF), a genetic condition that causes tumours to grow on a person's nerves.

She was strong and determined to not let NF define Barney, who has brain tumours and is now in primary school.

Ever since the diagnosis, Alice has fought for Barney's wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. She has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars and is always ready to share her story with other parents to help them navigate the uncertainty of a diagnosis.

The primary school teacher channels her support through the Children's Tumour Foundation and has worked hard to further its goals of improving awareness,

celebrating difference, supporting families and funding research.

"NF is an incredibly variable condition with no way to tell how it will affect each individual," she says. "Barney has spent endless hours in hospital. He has had twenty-four MRIs under general anaesthetic and brain surgery."

Alice is often the public voice of families with NF in matters concerning their needs. She engages with the media and plays integral role in reducing social isolation and advocating for positive social attitudes.

Her family are also passionate about NF, and her parents have established the Barney Fellowship, which provides funding to the Murdoch Research Institute at the Royal Children's Hospital.

Despite the seriousness of the condition, Alice has not lost her

sense of humour. She is the leader of the Barney Army, a team of over sixty friends and family who have run in their undies at Cupid's Undie Run every Valentine's day to raise funds.

"We have raised over \$300,000 but, more importantly, have educated hundreds of people about NF," she says.

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The foundation will use its grant to engage a paediatrician for fortnightly clinics at the Royal Children's Hospital.

The aim is to prove there is enough demand from patients to sustain a service through Medicare billing.



Luke is grateful for his electric wheelchair. "I wouldn't be where I am without it. I don't think I would be working, have a partner or go travelling for the sports I play."

Changing lives through electric wheelchair sport

Luke David — Victorian Electric Wheelchair Sports Association

Proactive, Responsive, Resilient

Luke David has a disabling condition called Nemaline Myopathy and relies on an electric wheelchair.

Despite his challenges, he is committed to helping others and spends most of his time volunteering for organisations that support people with disabilities.

His main passion is sport, specifically electric wheelchair sport, which he took up when he was thirteen.

He's experienced the personal benefit and represented Australia at an international level.

"Growing up with a physical disability, I never thought I'd be able to play sport," says Luke, who is President of the Victorian Electric Wheelchair Sports Association.

He says he is proud to be voted a Westfield Local Hero. "This will do

a lot for us. Our players are very dedicated to their sport, and they spend a lot of time and money coming to events and don't really get the recognition or awareness they deserve."

He is forever coming up with new ways for people with disabilities to access and enjoy sport and believes participation helps build character through teamwork, communication, leadership, perseverance and good sportsmanship.

Luke is grateful for his electric wheelchair. "I wouldn't be where I am without it. I don't think I would be working, have a partner or go travelling for the sports I play."

He plays as much sport as he can, including powerchair hockey, football and rugby league. In 2018 he was the captain of a powerchair hockey team

that competed at the World Championships in Italy.

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The grant means the Victorian Wheelchair Sports Association will be able to purchase equipment and hire new venues across the state to make electric wheelchair sports accessible to more players.

"At the moment we have players all around the state, but we only play in the Eastern suburbs. We are the only organisation in Victoria specifically for electric wheelchair users, and transport can be challenging. This will make us more inclusive," says Luke.

Your 2019 Finalists

Todd MacDougall

Nexus

Todd MacDougall is a military veteran with nearly forty years of service to the Australian Defence Force. With the help of local RSL sub-branches, he has formed a group called Nexus to help veterans connect with their community and overcome post-traumatic stress disorder. Apart from get-togethers, outings and free tickets to sports matches, three Nexus volunteers also offer veterans a 24-hour number they can call to speak to someone or request welfare support. "The idea is to provide the veterans and their families with a soft landing point to reconnect with the community," says Todd

Trish Karedis

Giant Steps Melbourne

Trish Karedis took a leap of faith when she left her friends and family in Sydney to start Giant Steps Melbourne, an independent school for students with autism. She and a small team registered the school, raised funds, developed the curriculum, employed the staff, defined the culture and enrolled the students. That was in 2016, and Trish hasn't looked back. As principal, Trish leads 100 staff. "Helping children and adolescents living with autism has changed my life," she says. And the students are thriving in the specialist environment that combines education and therapy.

Caroline Eshak-Liuzzi

The Art Cabriolet

Caroline Eshak-Liuzzi has been waging a brave campaign to use art as an alternative therapy since 2009 when she started helping children who were traumatised by the Black Saturday bush fires. She founded The Art Cabriolet (AC) and ran it at Marysville Primary School for three years, where she helped children heal and thrive while she developed the organisation's ethos, ethics and methodologies. Caroline says the therapy helps address adverse childhood experiences such as substance abuse, autism, bullying, divorce, domestic violence, eating disorders, incarceration, learning disabilities and grief.

Recognising all of our 2019 Nominees

Jodie BURNS
Big Group Hug Ltd

Louisa CHIAM
Foster Dreamz

Erika CRAMER
The Queen of Confidence

Ana DARRAS
TLC For Kids

Luke DAVID
Victorian Electric Wheelchair
Sports Association Inc

Vickie DAVY
PetRescue Ltd

Alice DELL
Children's Tumour Foundation

Trevor EDDY
Clota Cottage Neighbourhood
House Inc

Caroline ESHAK-LIUZZI
The Art Cabriolet

Norman GALE
The Salvation Army Camberwell

Verity Julia GRAINGER
Crocmmedia

Helen GUNTHER
Nunawading Toy Library

Cassandra HARDING
Australian Legislative
Ethics Commission

Marguerida HOLMES
Macedon Blues United FC

Julie JONES
Doncaster and District
Netball Association

Trish KAREDIS
Giant Steps Melbourne

Eliza LI
Halad to Health

Todd MacDOUGALL
Nexus

Leon MOORE
LARFS

Heather RENTON
Syndromes Without a Name
(Australia)

Peter ROYCE
300 Blankets

Robbie SINGH
Gracie Jiu Jitsu Burwood

Doreen STOVES
Doncare Community Services

Annette SUBHANI
New Pathways Life Coaching

Guy TUYAU
Society for Aid to Children
Inoperable in Mauritius (SACIM)

Wendy UPASENA
Make-A-Wish Foundation Australia

Chris VARNEY
I CAN Network

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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