



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.

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 westfield.co.nz/local-heroes

Westfield

Marion
SA



"Some of the kids we work with haven't been to school for six months, and we get them back into education," says Neil. "Most of them won't thank you at the time, but you might meet them ten years later and they say, 'you know what, you changed my life'."

Brave dad prevents youth violence in honour of lost son

Neil Davis — Sammy D Foundation

Courageous, Dedicated, Passionate

After losing his son Sam to violence, Neil Davis dug deep to save other families from similar grief.

He founded the Sammy D Foundation in honour of Sam, who died from one unprovoked punch when he was seventeen.

Neil now tells his story through programs aimed at preventing violence and the harm caused by alcohol and illicit drugs.

"As difficult as it is for me to talk about Sam's story, the chance of saving just one life makes it all worthwhile," he says.

Neil is proud to be named a Westfield Local Hero because it recognises the passionate work of the whole Sammy D Foundation team.

"It's good to have the work that you are doing validated," he says. "Something so tragic that

happened to us has turned into something so positive for the community. In one school alone, acts of violence have dropped by eighty-two per cent in the five years since we started presenting our education sessions to the students."

Neil has completed a Diploma of Youth Work to ensure he has the best understanding of how to get his message across.

Since 2008, the Sammy D Foundation has reached over one hundred thousand children and teenagers aged from seven to seventeen and visited hundreds of schools. Neil has volunteered more than seven thousand hours of his time.

He is particularly proud of the one-on-one mentoring program the foundation has set up for at-risk youth.

"The mentor shares their life experience, skills and knowledge to assist the young person to reach their goals."

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 Sammy D Foundation will use its grant to fund mentoring for ten at-risk children.

"Some of the kids we work with haven't been to school for six months, and we get them back into education," says Neil.

"Most of them won't thank you at the time, but you might meet them ten years later and they say, 'you know what, you changed my life'."



"I founded the group in 2017 after dealing with my own mental health issues and seeing the gap in the system," says John, who feels humbled to be voted a Westfield Local Hero.

A safe place for men to find support

John Denholm — SA Brothers

Altruistic, Committed, Humble

John Denholm has founded an organisation that offers mateship and emotional support to more than twenty thousand men across South Australia.

His non-profit organisation, SA Brothers, uses social media to create a safe, non-judgmental space for men of all ages and walks of life to ask for advice and support.

There are also meetups during the week so men can have a chat if they are having a hard time at home or are dealing with mental health issues.

The aim is to reduce the stigma around men's mental health and help men move forward with a more positive outlook.

"I founded the group in 2017 after dealing with my own mental health issues and seeing the gap in the system," says John, who feels

humbled to be voted a Westfield Local Hero.

"It means a lot that the time and effort I am putting in is recognised. Our numbers have grown substantially in just 18 months without any backing, so we are obviously filling a massive void in the system," says John. "This will help us reach further into the community and more blokes."

Despite the demands of his full-time job, John has been the driving force behind SA Brothers' success and has personally funded much of its development.

The organisation also provides practical help, such as emergency food, shelter and clothing in certain circumstances.

John was the chief organiser of a Christmas event in Bonython Park, which provided men at risk and their families with a meal, activities

and a showbag for each child. The experience has been credited with reunifying several previously estranged families.

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.

SA Brothers will use its grant to provide mental health first aid and suicide prevention training to its administrative team.

"It's really important for us to better manage the people who come forward with mental health issues," says John.

"The grant will also help with social media management and practical help such as food vouchers and emergency clothing."



"Our work saves babies' lives. We want to end preventable stillbirth and reduce the number of broken-hearted families who leave the birthing suite without their babies."

Turning grief into a driving force to protect other families

Claire Foord — Still Aware

Resilient, Passionate, Inspiring

After learning her daughter's stillbirth could have been prevented, a devastated Claire Foord was determined to help protect others from grief.

Claire founded Still Aware in 2014 to raise awareness about stillbirth and prevent deaths. Now she travels the country, giving talks to parents and educating clinicians.

Her daughter Alfie's death could have been prevented with simple communication and education, she says.

"It's very simple advice, and most of it is around seven protective actions parents can do each day. Babies have a frequency and pattern of movements, and that's the best tool we have of measuring how they are going."

Still Aware is similar to overseas campaigns that have been shown to help decrease the number of

stillbirths, over half of which occur at full-term.

"Australia must catch up. Every year we could be saving more than a thousand babies' lives," says Claire, whose work also involves supporting grieving families.

She is humbled to be named a Westfield Local Hero and says the honour also belongs to the people who work with her.

"While I might be leading the organisation and starting the change, without this army of people we could never achieve what we want to do," she says.

"My daughter Alfie is why we started the charity, but it's for everybody else that we continue to exist."

Claire says stillbirth is the leading cause of death in children aged under fourteen, with the loss of babies in pregnancy devastating

to siblings, grandparents and other family members as well as parents.

"Our work saves babies' lives. We want to end preventable stillbirth and reduce the number of broken-hearted families who leave the birthing suite without their babies."

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.

Still Aware will use its grant to fund twenty education sessions for midwives, GPs, obstetricians and other health professionals on stillbirth prevention.

"The funding will aid us to dramatically move forward with what we are attempting to achieve with reduction of stillbirth in Australia," says Claire.

Your 2019 Finalists

Leigh Aitken

Operation Flinders Foundation

For many children on the wrong path, an outdoor adventure led by Leigh Aitken is the turning point in their lives. Leigh is a volunteer with Operation Flinders Foundation, which helps teenagers with challenging behaviours realise their potential through an eight-day, 100km remote outback trek. Leigh has helped many young people become more confident, more interested in school and determined to turn their lives around. "During the trip they learn basic bush craft, camp craft and survival skills and undertake a range of activities to develop self-confidence, teamwork and problem solving," says Leigh.

Melanie Tate

Puddle Jumpers

Social worker Melanie Tate founded Puddle Jumpers in 2012 to fill the gap in support for children living away from their parents with foster carers or relatives. She and her team of volunteers run camps at which children struggling with a range of issues get to enjoy activities aimed at giving them social skills, confidence and good self-esteem. Each child is teamed up with a mentor. "The impact of having the undivided attention of one adult who chooses to be with them because they care is often life-changing," says Melanie.

Leighton Boyd

MarionLife Community Services

Every day, Leighton Boyd gives it his all to help break the cycle of poverty. He is the director of MarionLife Community, which provides emergency relief to people and families, followed by support to move on to a better life. The people he helps are dealing with homelessness, domestic violence, unemployment, mental health issues and other struggles. Leighton and his team provide vouchers to the local Foodbank where their clients can buy discounted items and get free fruit and vegetables. "Where possible we also provide items like bus tickets, shoes vouchers and blankets," he says.

Recognising all of our 2019 Nominees

Leigh AITKEN
Operation Flinders Foundation Inc

Paul BARNDEN
Goodwood Saints Football Club

Leighton BOYD
MarionLIFE Community Services Inc

Kimberley CEPON
Shoe Boxes of Love Inc

Neil DAVIS
Sammy D Foundation

John DENHOLM
SA Brothers

Mathew D'ONOFRIO
Nightlife First Aid

Helen ERCEG
Adelaide Buggy Club Inc

Claire FOORD
Still Aware

Emily GANN
Connecting the Dots in Music

Michael HARRIS-WALKER
Sk8 Therapy

Don HARVY
431 Army Cadet Unit

Jennifer HOWARD
Safe Pets Safe Families

Lindy IRWIN
Make A Wish

Debbie JOHNSON
Clovelly Park Primary School

Emma KNIGHTS
Emma Knights Productions

Daniels LANGEBERG
EcoCaddy

Susan LEE
Angel Gowns for Australian
Angel Babies Inc

Alyson MENZIES
Angel Gowns for Australian
Angel Babies Inc

Natasha OLSEN
Healing Through Love

Caleb PATTINSON
The Mad Tea Co

Lynda STEWART
All Saints Seacliff Anglican Church

Melanie TATE
Puddle Jumpers Inc

Sarah TINNEY
Cancer Council SA

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

westfield.com.au/local-heroes

westfield.co.nz/local-heroes

Westfield

Local Heroes

2019

SCENTRE GROUP