



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

Carindale

Qld



“Swimming helps build self-esteem and promotes great lifelong friendships. We also improve family support networks and build relationships between like-minded families,” says Craig.

Making inclusive swimming fun and meaningful

Craig Tobin — Special Olympics Redlands
Caring, Dedicated, Understanding

Craig Tobin has been involved with swimming for forty years and touched the lives of thousands of people along the way.

For the past ten years, the much-loved former swimming champion has volunteered to coach inclusive squads of Special Olympic and Down syndrome swimmers at the Clem Jones Sports Complex in Carina.

“We teach swimming and water safety. We have athletes starting their swimming journey and we have many athletes that have completed at World Championships, says Craig, who makes the lessons both fun and meaningful.

He is an internationally respected coach, but his influence goes beyond the swimming pool.

“Swimming helps build self-esteem and promotes great lifelong friendships. We also improve family support networks

and build relationships between like-minded families,” says Craig.

He has found it a “sensational” experience to be voted a Westfield Local Hero, validating his years of work. He is also excited about the community recognition for the Special Olympics.

Many members of Craig’s squad have gone on to hold part-time jobs in the community, such as with the Lions AFL Club, modelling or working at the local gym or coffee shop.

They are also making impressive achievements in the pool and several won medals at this year’s Special Olympic World Games.

One of the swimmers he mentored is now a bronze-level coach and one of his assistants.

Craig recently volunteered to run a successful day for refugees at which he taught parents and children about water safety.

Previously, he introduced a program for refugees attending Milperra High School who had never seen a swimming pool and were afraid of the water. He also worked closely with the Muslim community, offering lessons that catered to their religious and cultural requirements.

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Special Olympics Redlands will use its grant to market itself and cover the costs of gear and pool entry for those who cannot afford it.

“These funds mean we can promote swimming to more athletes and turn them into better athletes,” says Craig.



"I have been influenced by my mother since I was a child to pay it forward," says Katherine. "Whether it was a school fete, local charity or church group, mum would encourage me to volunteer."

MaD team help out with top-quality backpacks

Katherine Hoyle — Making a Difference – Brisbane

Inspiring, Passionate, Bold

Katherine Hoyle and her mother, Denise, started Making a Difference – Brisbane after the 2011 floods.

Better known as The MaD Team, they and their group of volunteers have become an integral part of the local support network and their main role is to distribute backpacks with essential items to vulnerable people.

"I have been influenced by my mother since I was a child to pay it forward," says Katherine. "Whether it was a school fete, local charity or church group, mum would encourage me to volunteer."

She and her mum run the non-profit operation from their home in Manly West. They raise funds to buy the high-quality backpacks and have collection points

throughout Brisbane for toiletries, food and other essential items.

"I am passionate about our MaD Team," says Katherine. "Our motto is giving a hand up – not a hand out."

She is delighted by the community recognition of being voted a Westfield Local Hero, but her main focus is to stay grounded and continue working for the community.

The MaD team regularly attend street feeds to hand out the backpacks and the other items.

Over the years, they have also distributed more than six hundred backpacks to school children and more than a thousand pairs of pyjamas to children in foster care.

It's not only locals who benefit. They have sent fifty large boxes of shoes, clothing, school supplies, toiletries and T-shirts to Fiji and

twenty boxes of clothing to an Indigenous community in Katherine in the Northern Territory.

Thanks to their large following on social media and collection points all over Brisbane, they are able to collect a large number of items in a small amount of time.

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Making a Difference – Brisbane will use the grant to buy and make up more than a thousand backpacks.

"The backpacks have to be high quality to deal with various weather conditions. We want people to take pride in them," says Katherine.



"They talk about Emme, about her illness, and that their contribution is making a difference. That they are helping others, through the act of giving," says Lauren.

Shiny shoes spark conversations about compassion

Lauren Cahill — Children's Tumour Foundation

Empathetic, Generous, Trailblazer

Lauren Cahill had never heard of the genetic disorder neurofibromatosis (NF) until a brave girl with a tumour on her brain stem came into her shoe store.

Young Emme touched Lauren's heart and, in a spontaneous act of kindness, she decided to design a girl's shoe in her honour and name it after her.

All profits go to the Children's Tumour Foundation of Australia.

Now, thanks to the charitable small business owner, girls all over Brisbane are wearing the hand-made rose mocha glitter shoes, not only raising much-needed funds but also raising awareness and compassion about NF, which can be both debilitating and disfiguring.

The shoes are also available on the internet and have been bought for girls all over the world,

raising awareness about NF in other countries.

Being voted a Westfield Local Hero made Lauren cry with happiness. She is delighted by the community support, which she says is like "two gigantic arms wrapping themselves around Emme and her family". Of course, Emme is also a local hero in her own right, she says.

When trying on the shoes, mothers often take the opportunity to have a conversation with their daughters about compassion.

"They talk about Emme, about her illness, and that their contribution is making a difference. That they are helping others, through the act of giving," says Lauren.

She has also produced a video featuring Emme and her mother, which she not only uses to market

the shoes but also to tell the girl's brave story.

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The Children's Tumour Foundation of Australia will use its grant to cover the cost of employing an NF specialist nurse at the Queensland Children's Hospital to offer weekly support to up to twelve families.

Lauren says being voted a hero also raises awareness about Emme's shoes.

"The more we sell; the more conversations parents are having with their girls about neurofibromatosis."

Your 2019 Finalists

Carolyn Robinson

Beyond DV

Carolyn Robinson started Beyond DV to help domestic violence survivors through the vulnerable early days after leaving a shelter. Her registered charity has two programs; Bright Start and Time Out. Bright Start is run by teachers who work with families, the Education Department and schools to smooth the way for children who relocate after domestic violence. Time Out offers quarterly personal development workshops to help women rebuild lost self-worth, regenerate hope and develop critical support networks with other survivors. "We support survivors at the recovery stage when there are limited services available," says Carolyn.

Alison Layton

Caring for Carers Australia

Alison Layton launched Caring for Carers Australia because she knows firsthand how relentless it can be when a loved one needs 24-hour support. Now the charity has started an innovative One Day Off campaign, which gives people an opportunity to sponsor a short break for the almost half a million unpaid carers in Queensland and many more throughout Australia. "A carer's job is both rewarding and demanding," says Alison. "One Day Off acknowledges and honours unpaid carers by giving them a choice of either eight hours of respite, domestic cleaning or yard maintenance."

Jenny Walsh

HeartKids

The HeartKids team in Queensland can rely on Jenny Walsh. For six years since she retired, she has spent Mondays and Tuesdays volunteering at their office, keeping people with congenital heart disease connected with the care they need. Jenny's passion is tween children, those aged eight to twelve who are becoming too old for paediatric care. "It is important we maintain contact with these kids and their families as they transition into the adult health system. The systems are vastly different and one third of this group are lost to follow-up," she says.

Recognising all of our 2019 Nominees

Gerard Alchin
Willowburn

Brianna Anderson
Legacy Brisbane

Sarah Bayliss
Making Mama Village

Mary Berry
Stroke Foundation

Lauren Cahill
Children's Tumour Foundation

David Clune
DonateLife Queensland

Cherrie Dowling
Horses in Mind Inc

Sylvia Heterick
Yurara Art Society

Katherine Hoyle
Making a Difference – Brisbane

Catriona Kucks
Bayside Adolescent
Boarding Inc (BABI)

Tom Kyle
Sporting Wheelies and
Disabled Association

Alison Layton
Caring for Carers Australia

Andreas Leonakis
Mates4Mates

Norman McGillivray
BedDown

Julie Messenger
The Sunlight Centre

Carolyn Robinson
Beyond DV ITD

Julie Robinson
Priceless House

Ian Shaw
Make-A-Wish Australia

Kate Smith
Broken to Brilliant Ltd™

Deb Simms
Carina C&K Kindergarten

Sue Hansford
Carina C&K Kindergarten

Craig Tobin
Redlands Special Olympics

Cherylee Treloar
Footprints in Brisbane

Jenny Walsh
HeartKids Limited

Laurie Woods
RAAF 460 Squadron Veterans
and Friends

Narelle Wyvill-Anstey
Lions Club of Brisbane Macgregor, Inc

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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