

*Westfield*

*Local Heroes*

2020

Westfield Local Heroes is a recognition and awards program that discovers and celebrates people across Australia and New Zealand who make a positive impact to their local community and environment.

Individuals are nominated by their local communities and a public vote determines the successful 2020 nominees for every Westfield centre.

The successful heroes are each awarded \$10,000 for their affiliated organisations.

*Westfield*  
*Local Heroes*

Since the program began, we have awarded \$3.62 million to 363 community organisations.

Every year, we recognise more than 120 Westfield Local Heroes and provide more than \$1.2M in community grants to their affiliated organisations.

We congratulate all the 2020 nominees for being recognised by their communities and thank them for the important contribution they all make.

[westfield.com.au/local-heroes](https://westfield.com.au/local-heroes)

[westfield.co.nz/local-heroes](https://westfield.co.nz/local-heroes)

# Westfield

## Woden

### ACT

**Michelle Barclay is an empathetic, hands-on-lawyer who goes out of her way to support vulnerable people.**

She started at Canberra Community Law as a volunteer, but her charitable work has become her career.

Michelle has led Canberra Community Law's Women in Prison Legal Empowerment Sessions initiative at the Alexander Maconochie Centre. She offers legal information sessions to address problems women in prison face followed by one-on-one legal advice, and she does whatever she can to connect the women with services that can help them.

One of Michelle's wins is helping prevent women in prison from being evicted from their homes. "This has meant that these women have somewhere to be released to and ensures that their children can return to their family home," she says. "I also help reduce debts which removes an additional financial burden for the women upon their release and allows them to focus on re-establishing themselves back into the community."

Another area in which Michelle is making a difference is with people who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness.

She is passionate about providing information and advice in plain and accessible language that people in crisis can understand.

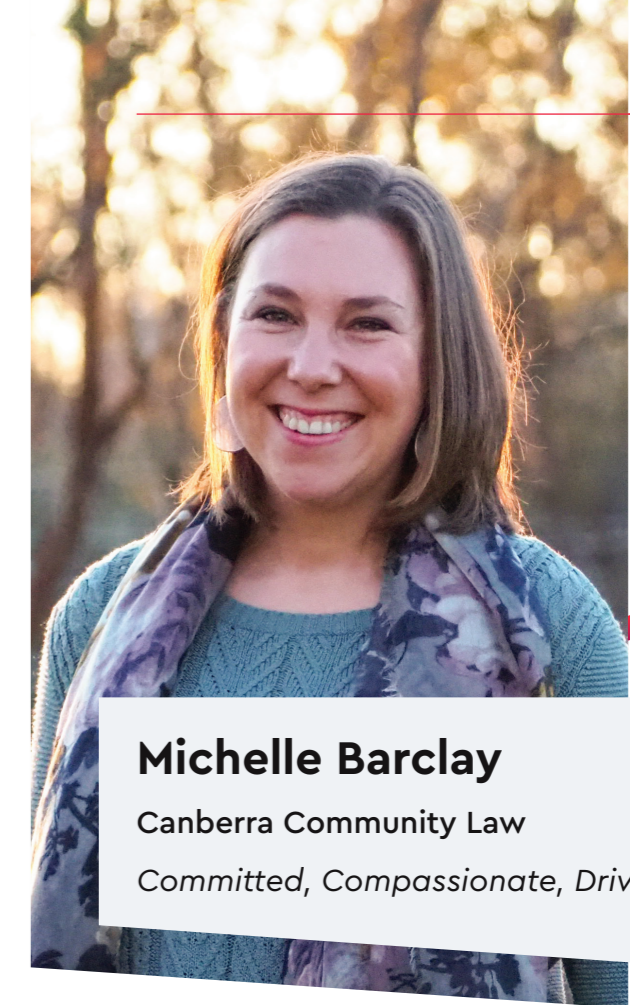
So far, Michelle has helped about 20 people get their birth certificate which can be hard to do when you are homeless and don't have ID. This then allowed them to get a tax file number so that they could work, claim support from Centrelink or access ACT public housing.

"The amazing thing about my work is that it often positively impacts my clients and, in some cases, can be life-changing," says Michelle.

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.

Canberra Community Law will use its grant to keep its prison program running for another three months.

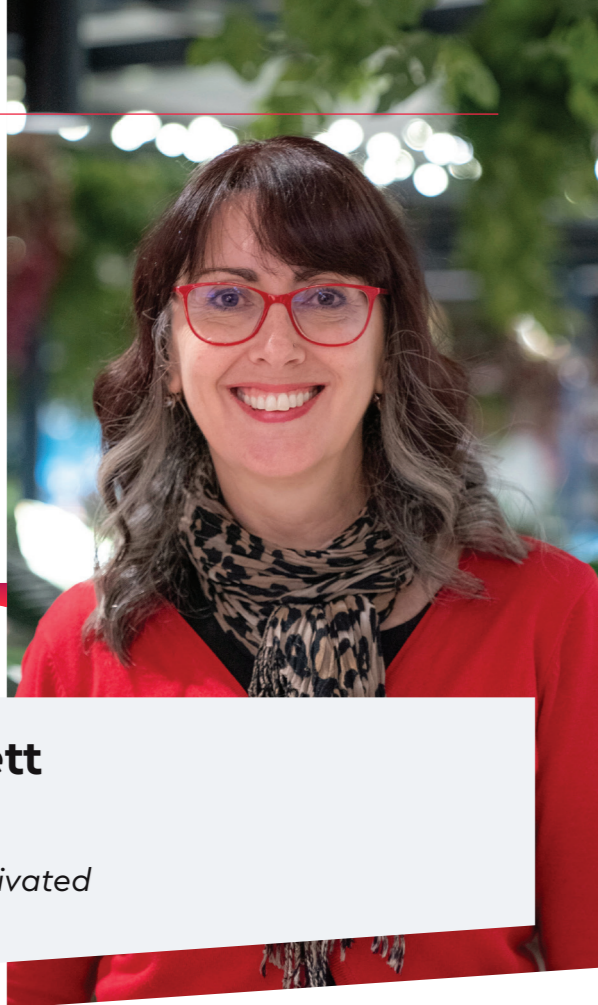
*Michelle's nominator says: "Michelle is a passionate, caring and down to earth lawyer, helping some of Canberra's most vulnerable people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with advice, advocacy, information and other support services."*



**Michelle Barclay**  
Canberra Community Law  
*Committed, Compassionate, Driven*

## Kind-hearted lawyer

**"The amazing thing about my work is that it often positively impacts my clients and, in some cases, can be life-changing."**



## Kristine Hewett

Adamas Nexus

*Kind, Tenacious, Motivated*

## Helping women heal

**"The group helps women to heal collectively by helping others and to reignite positive feelings, passion and power."**

**Kristine Hewett is known for her big heart and charitable nature.**

Despite working full-time, she co-founded the Adamas Nexus to provide long-term peer support for women survivors of domestic violence and abuse.

There are many crisis services in Canberra, but Kristine noticed a lack of support groups to complement the care provided by mental health professionals.

Adamas Nexus has been running for two years and offers two well-frequented groups a month in central and south Canberra.

The group helps women to heal collectively by helping others and to reignite positive feelings, passion and power, Kristine says.

"The aim is for the groups to become self-facilitated, with the group led by the participants for the participants."

Kristine has overcome her own childhood abuse and says the final stage of healing is using one's personal experience to help other people. She acknowledges that becoming open to sharing was the biggest challenge she had to overcome.

Kristine also volunteers for Orange Sky Australia, where she helps people in need to wash their belongings while everyone enjoys a good chin-wag.

It's a trial to find time for everything she needs to do, but Kristine plans to set up groups for men and people in the LGBTIQ+ community.

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Adamas Nexus will use its grant to provide an online facility for busy people and others who are not able to attend the group in person.

*Kristine's nominator says: "Kristine sees the best in people and wants to help them thrive, so they can pay it forward. She's a real treasure!"*

**Jessica (Jess) Kercher is a dedicated supporter and fundraiser for Camp Quality, a charity that gives kids facing cancer the chance to be kids again.**

After watching her 2-year-old daughter fight for her life against an aggressive cancer diagnosis, Jess knows firsthand the impact Camp Quality has. The children's cancer charity gave her the support she needed in hospital and after returning home and gave her daughter opportunities to laugh and smile again.

For the last 10 years, Jess has been dedicated to fundraising and sharing her own heartbreaking story to help more families just like hers get the support they so desperately need. Jess's bravery has raised enough funds to give hundreds of families facing cancer the opportunity to go on a Camp Quality program.

At this time, Camp Quality is facing severe financial difficulties, but supporters like Jess are determined to help the charity continue to provide its services and programs. These include in-hospital support with the Camp Quality Puppets and Child Life Therapists. Support outside the hospital includes Kids

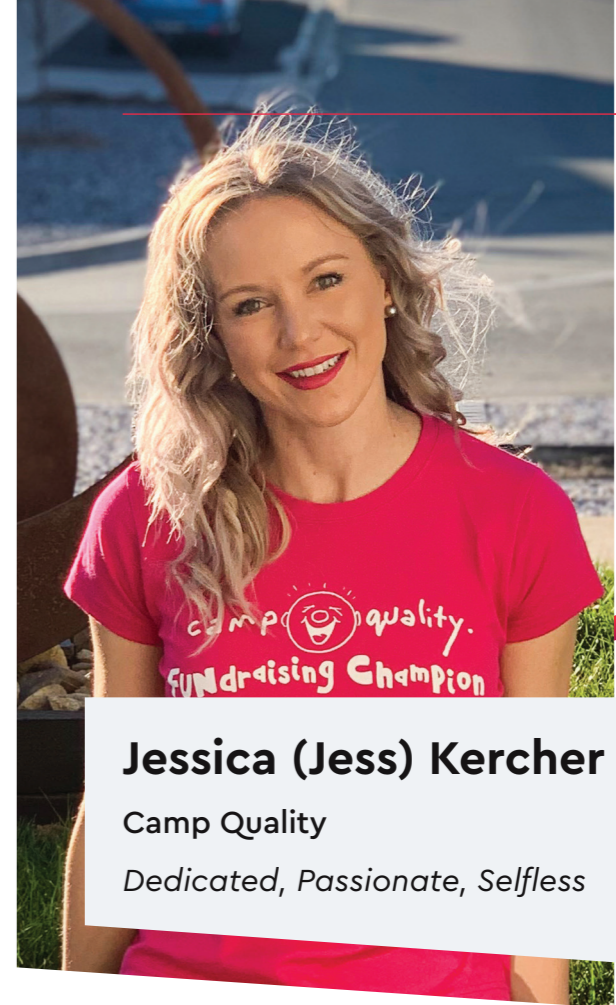
Camps, Family Camps and Family Fun days which give kids and their families a break from cancer and the opportunity to make friends and create new memories. Camp Quality also has a range of online services including the Kids Guide to Cancer app, the New Normal Navigator app, and Camp Quality's Happiness Hub.

"Camp Quality's main focus is creating laughter. We truly believe laughter is the best medicine," says Jess.

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Camp Quality will use its grant to give kids facing cancer opportunities to laugh again, on a Kids Camp, Family Camp or Family Fun Day.

*Jess's nominator says: "Jess has been instrumental in ensuring the success of the major fundraising events in Canberra. By advocating for Camp Quality, Jess has enabled Camp Quality to continue to offer kids camps, family camps and puppet shows in her local Canberra community."*



## Jessica (Jess) Kercher

Camp Quality

*Dedicated, Passionate, Selfless*

## Bravely sharing her cancer story

**"We truly believe laughter is the best medicine."**

## Your 2020 Finalists

### Lachlan Finlayson

#### St John Ambulance Australia (ACT) Inc

Registered Nurse Lachlan Finlayson is a single parent and still manages to volunteer to help the Canberra community with St John Ambulance Australia.

He is a natural leader and is always willing to take on extra tasks.

One of the most exhausting but satisfying experiences of his life was being deployed to Narooma and Bega during the recent bushfires.

He and his team were meant to be there for 24 hours but spent five days saving lives and treating injuries.

"I am grateful to St John for providing me with this opportunity to give back to my community," Lachlan says.

### Marcia Williams

#### Women's Centre for Health Matters Inc (WCHM)

Marcia Williams has been a steadfast and influential campaigner for women's rights for more than a decade.

As CEO of the Women's Centre for Health Matters (WCHM), Marcia is passionate about ensuring the ACT community hears the voices of women, particularly those who are vulnerable or marginalised.

Marcia has made many contributions that are fundamental to promoting women's health, wellbeing and inclusion and ensuring women have reliable health information.

"I have ensured that WCHM has developed a reputation for being the place to go to for evidence and data about women in the ACT and their needs and views," Marcia says.

## Recognising all of our 2020 nominees

**Marg Peachey**  
Act Wildlife

**Russell Fort**  
Woden Blues Football  
And Netball Club

**Mick George**  
Anti Bullying Programme

**James Rollo Brett**  
Farrer Residents' Association

**Leni Harris**  
Angel Gowns For Australian Angel  
Babies (AGFAAB)

**Nip Wijewickrema**  
Gg's Flowers & Hampers

**Linda Ellabban Berjaoui**  
Mum's Exercise Group Australia  
(MEGA)

**Nate Swift**  
Little Luxton - Coffee For  
Community

**Naomi Nye**  
Woden Valley Gymnastics Club

**Rob Regent**  
Everyday Champions

**Michael Bransgrove**  
Make-A-Wish Australia

**Nils Lantzke**  
Alpaca Therapy

**Laura Johnston**  
Valley FM Community Radio

**Shannon Narracott**  
Canberra Suicide Awareness  
Ball & Campaign

**Lachlan Finlayson**  
St John Ambulance Australia (ACT)  
Inc.

**Marcia Williams**  
Women's Centre For Health Matters  
Inc. (WCHM)

**Kristine Hewett**  
Adamas Nexus Support Group

**Michelle Barclay**  
Canberra Community Law

**Jessica Kercher**  
Camp Quality

**If you or anyone you know would like more information on what support is available:**

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**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  
Kidslines: 0800 54 37 54  
Depression Helpline: 0800 111 757  
Samaritans: 0800 726 666  
Family Violence Information Line: 0800 456 450

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