

WESTFIELD 2021 LOCAL HEROES

Westfield Local Heroes is a community recognition and awards program, designed to shine the spotlight on those people across Australia and New Zealand who make a positive impact to their local community and environment.

Individuals are nominated by their local communities, with the outcome of a public vote determining the three successful 2021 nominees for every Westfield centre.

Westfield Jocal Heroes

Now in its fourth year, we have awarded \$4.88 million to 489 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 2021 nominees for being recognised by their communities and thank them for the important contribution they all make.

Westfield Eastgardens NSW

Belinda Casselden's passion and drive to improve the lives of women and children affected by domestic violence has led to the launch of the Hope Believe Shine Foundation: a foundation raising funds for specialist frontline domestic violence services.

As a domestic violence survivor, Belinda understands the devastating impacts of domestic violence and the importance of these services in the recovery process. Belinda devotes her time to supporting local domestic violence organisations so they can focus on what they do best – helping their clients.

"Sustainability of these services is dependent on adequate funding. Sadly demand is increasing and funding is not increasing at the same rate. The first service we are supporting has been in the local community for over 40 years and sees approximately 1000 clients a year. They need funds to keep doing the wonderful work they do" says Belinda "I understand personally the value of being supported by specialist domestic violence frontline services. These services listen, understand, believe and respect women like myself. They are essential to the healing and recovery process."

Belinda feels honoured to be nominated as a Westfield Local Hero. "Being able to use my skills, insights and personal experience to improve the lives of others is rewarding. It drives me to want to do more."

Belinda's nominator says: "Belinda is a Westfield Local Hero because she puts it all on the line in her fight for specialist frontline services and women and children affected by domestic violence. Her dedication and passion are making a real difference." Funding domestic violence frontline services

Belinda Casselden

Hope Believe Shine Foundation

Brave, Dedicated, Determined

"I understand personally the value of being supported by specialist domestic violence frontline services."



Keith Donnelly

Keith's Closet

=OZ

Genuine, Dynamic, Fearless

"I'm completely stunned. I didn't realise that others see the work I do. Sometimes, I don't realise the effort that is required." Mental health nurse Keith Donnelly has a demanding job and a family to care for. Yet, he is also the founder of Keith's Closet, an innovative free boutique that provides dignity-restoring clothing, shoes, toiletries and household items to men and women with mental illness.

So far, Keith's Closet has supported 1600 people – both in-patients and those living in the community. Keith also offers a volunteer outreach service to support people transitioning to their homes after a hospital stay.

Keith's Closet is almost a second full-time job for the dedicated nurse, who has recruited an impressive array of sponsors and supporters, including the local MP, NSW Health and several businesses. He has collected thousands of donations of clothing and household items, including washing machines, beds, sofas, TVs, DVDs players.

One of the initial challenges was to find space for Keith's

Closet and a storage room but that was made possible through discussions with management at Prince of Wales Hospital and NSW Health.

People with mental illness are vulnerable to self-neglect, says Keith, who believes following a visit to Keith's Closest people look good and feel good.

He feels surprised and validated to be nominated as a Westfield Local Hero. "I'm completely stunned. I didn't realise that others see the work I do. Sometimes, I don't realise the effort that is required."

Keith's nominator says: "Keith is a Westfield Local Hero because he has restored dignity and self-esteem to 1600 people experiencing mental illness. In the words of a client: 'With nice clothes, I am once more equal to anyone. New clothes give me a lot of confidence. I can start organising a job interview and restart my life."

Rachael Smith sprang into action at the start of COVID-19 to provide local families in need with essential groceries.

She teamed up with Alt Saints General Store to launch Pantry4ThePeople, where people can help themselves to donated items as needed. Rachael's motto is: Take what you need, give what you can." Anyone from the community is welcome to use the pantry and can discreetly take items at night if they wish.

Rachael aims to ensure that people always have access to a meal and that school lunch boxes are never empty. People can also request items, which Rachael sources and hand delivers to their homes.

With the help of her family, Rachael has secured regular donations from local businesses and uses social media to encourage members of the community to participate.

Now Rachael has her eye on future sustainability and has

initiated community fruit and vegetable gardens to supply the pantry.

"We speak to many people at the pantry and feel proud when we hear how grateful they are," says Rachael.

She feels humbled and emotional about being nominated as a Westfield Local Hero. "In a very short time, the feeling of community and inclusivity has far exceeded any of our initial expectations."

Rachel's nominator says: "Rachel is a Westfield Local Hero because she took immediate action at the local level to impact her community for the better."



Rachael Smith

Pantry 4 The People

Caring, Tenacious, Innovative

"We speak to many people at the pantry and feel proud when we hear how grateful they are."

Your 2021 Finalists



Ben Folino

Purple Hearts

Ben Folino started the Purple Hearts club 10 years ago to give children and adults with disabilities an opportunity to play football. But his commitment goes much further. Purple Hearts has developed into a community that helps parents understand they are not alone and prepares the players for employment.



Anna-Jane Linke Seaside Scavenge

Anna Jane Linke has removed more than 15 tonnes of litter from waterways and educated more than 10,000 people about the value of waste as a resource. Not only that, but her unique 'cash'-for-trash Seaside Scavenge events provide participants with a fun way to connect with their community and have given a second life to 11 tonnes of clothing. AJ was a Westfield Local Hero finalist in 2020 and appreciates being nominated for a second time.



Henry Teofilo Beaches Outreach Project

Henry Teofilo goes above the call of duty in his work with the Beaches Outreach Project and is committed to supporting local young people as they explore their freedom. He leads several projects, including the trusted minibus that patrols the beachfronts, parks, malls and other areas to offer first aid and additional help.

Recognising all of our 2021 nominees

Rachel Brito & Melissa Bramich Randwick Barracks Family Centre

William Last Souths Cares

Jen Dugard Safe Return to Exercise, Body Beyond Baby

Jason Hyland Maroubra Junction Hotel

A.C.E.Sherlock's Taekwon-Do

Cameron Wilson Mood Active

Diane Briffa-Cochrane **Girl Guides Maroubra**

Tania Nand Coogee Dolphins Sports Club

Con Theocarides C and C Chicken

Sylvia Baynes Prince of Wales Hospital Randwick

Jp Gauntlett AAPES Parkour

Troy Saidi Vale Tudo Training Australia Matina Moutzouris Hunt 4 Hope Op Shop

Jason Williamson JWM + Bella Management

Kumar JHA Opportunities Australia

Kim Babbage
The Kids' Cancer Project

Samantha Payne The Pink Elephant Support Group

Lyn Telfer Bella Life Pty Ltd

Sandy Donohoe

Plates 4 mates

Michelle Weir The Kids' Cancer Project

Lorraine Sutton Wrap With Love

Nicola Powell Clovelly Community Bank

Tracy Williams Charity Bounce

Trevor Cochrane Sydney Military Brotherhood Military Motorcycle Club Ben Higgs Rise Foundation Australia

Kira-Lea Dargin Women's Footy Foundation

Ben Folino Purple Hearts

Henry Teofilo Beaches Outreach Project

Iveta Kohutova Eastern Suburbs Police Citizen Youth Club

Belinda Casselden Hope Believe Shine Foundation

Kevin Heath Dreamtime Academy

Keith Donnelly Keith's Closet

Anna-Jane Linke Seaside Scavenge

Rachael Smith Alt Saints 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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