

A vibrant red ribbon graphic that flows across the frame from the top left to the bottom right. The ribbon is three-dimensional, with shadows and highlights that give it a sense of depth and movement. In the center of the ribbon, the text "Westfield Local Heroes 2021" is printed in white. "Westfield" is in a serif font, "Local Heroes" is in a large, elegant script font, and "2021" is in a simple sans-serif font. The ribbon's path is dynamic, with several loops and turns, creating a sense of celebration and energy.

*Westfield*

*Local Heroes*

2021

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 Local 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*

**Mt Druitt**

NSW

**Emma Smith has smoothed the path for countless school-aged immigrants in her five years with the Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency (MECA).**

Emma is busy with full-time university studies but still finds time to volunteer with the non-profit's youth mentoring program for disadvantaged high school students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who are at risk of dropping out.

The students are matched with mentors who help them build their skills and confidence and reinforce the importance of education for a bright future.

Emma rose to the challenge after COVID-19 lockdowns brought a halt to the program last year. When schools reopened, she worked hard to get the mentoring program back on track for stressed students.

Emma has also changed young lives through the non-profit's homework support club. It's the flicker of understanding in students' eyes and their bright

smiles as they grasp a new concept that pushes her to do more and work harder for them.

Emma is humbled to be nominated as a Westfield Local Hero. "I choose to do this work because it brings me joy and because of the strong sense of community at MECA that makes it an exciting place to be," she says.

*Emma's nominator says: "Emma is a Westfield Local Hero because she is passionate about giving young people the best mentoring possible so they can choose a good career for their future and make Australia a better place."*



## Helping immigrant students

### Emma Smith

Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency

*Empathic, Dedicated, Passionate*

**"I choose to do this work because it brings me joy and because of the strong sense of community at MECA that makes it an exciting place to be."**



## Giving youth a chance

### Solomone Fotu

Rap 4 Change

*Passionate, Dedicated, Caring*

**"It is a great achievement for me knowing where I was in life and where I am now. It will definitely help motivate me to go for bigger things in the future."**

**Solomone Fotu has been giving back and helping smooth the bumps on the road for vulnerable young people ever since he was given a chance to overcome his own challenges.**

He grew up in a family that struggled with money and other issues. But his life took a turn for the better after joining the Rap 4 Change leadership program, which taught him vital life skills.

Solomone is now a volunteer leader with the group, which is a beacon of hope for Mount Druitt teenagers and young adults who are unemployed or struggling with substance abuse and self-harm.

He and his fellow volunteers show young people how to make positive choices through the Rap 4 Change school programs, hip-hop lessons, mentoring and sporting activities.

The team also provide counselling to people in juvenile detention.

They encourage young people to consider vocational training, and they help to prepare them for employment.

The charity also runs a baseball club where kids as young as five can have fun and learn teamwork and social skills that help them stay on track in school.

Solomone feels blessed to be nominated as a Westfield Local Hero. "It is a great achievement for me knowing where I was in life and where I am now. It will definitely help motivate me to go for bigger things in the future," he says.

*Solomone's nominator says:  
"Solomone is a Westfield Local Hero because he has a big heart and passion for helping other young people in the community no matter who they are or where they come from."*

**Dr Faryal Zehra is spreading love and kindness by reaching out to thousands of isolated and marginalised people with the assistance of a team of enthusiastic, pint-sized volunteers at Little Helpers on the Run.**

Faryal put her career on hold to set up the charity, engaging children to look after our vulnerable community members.

Together they have delivered over 4000 kindness projects, promoting improved physical and mental wellbeing in the community; reaching out to elderly residents in over 100 Aged Care Facilities; the homeless and people with disabilities.

"A giving person, a person who takes notice of others, will be a valuable asset to the community."

Faryal has organised and overseen hundreds of tea parties for the elderly to sustain their social connections and emotional wellbeing. She has raised funds to provide regular healthy breakfasts

to over 2500 children at 16 low socioeconomic schools.

The non-profit organisation also provides grocery hampers, fresh fruit and vegetables to families in need.

One of Faryal's most significant rewards is knowing that caring also benefits the volunteer children's mental health.

She feels very honoured to be nominated as a Westfield Local Hero. "It's also a nomination for every volunteer, and it will definitely motivate us to do more for the community. We are bridging the intergenerational gap and improving the quality of life of our elderly".

*Faryal's nominator says: "Faryal is a Westfield Local Hero because she has put aside her own career to make the world a better place. She is facilitating love, hope and light for the homeless and disadvantaged."*



**DR FARYAL ZEHRA**

## **Bridging the generation gap**

### **Dr Faryal Zehra**

Little Helpers on the Run

*Tireless, Determined, Unrelenting*

"A giving person, a person who takes notice of others, will be a valuable asset to the community."

# Your 2021 Finalists



**Darryl Hamilton**

**Mt Druitt Police Area Command**

Darryl Hamilton has helped young people in the Aboriginal and broader community towards a brighter future as a volunteer with the Mount Druitt Police Area's Breaking Barriers program. The early morning physical training sessions alongside police breaks down barriers and builds self-esteem. It has reduced the number of youth in contact with the justice system.



**Jay Tobin**

**Whitelion Youth Agency Ltd**

Jay Tobin has made an enormous difference in the lives of at-risk youth during his four years with the Whitelion Youth Agency, with many now in secure employment thanks to his help. Jay is a youth worker with the non-profit. He assists disengaged youth to complete a hospitality program at the organisation's work-experience café. With Jay's support, 93 participants have completed their Certificate III in Hospitality, and 45 have found a job.



**Donalee Rose**

**Hearing Australia**

Donalee Rose helps many Western Sydney people with hearing loss enjoy the sounds they love again through her work with Hearing Australia. She is usually the reassuring first point of contact for people attending a hearing test at the mobile hearing van and local pop-up care and education kiosks and is proud to start people on their hearing journey.



# Recognising all of our 2021 nominees

Rosemary Peri  
**Jesuit Social Services –  
Western Sydney**

Jane Attard-Taylor  
**WASH house Mt Druitt**

**Afford disability**

Marybeth Sheen  
**The Hive**

Lisa Hamilton  
**Riverstone Neighbourhood  
Centre and Community Aid  
Service Inc**

Gladys Panoncillo  
**Rooty Hill Multicultural Carers  
Support Group**

Argyro Ballas  
**Blacktown City Council**

Tula Clemont  
**Youth With A Mission**

Elaine Gordon  
**Baabayn Aboriginal  
Corporation**

Damoon Sheidai  
**Fred Murray Centre (Blackett)**

Kirra and Tuola  
**Ywam Mission**

Michelle Sheean  
**Bidwill Uniting**

Catherine White  
**The WASH House**

Cindy Ryan  
**The WASH House**

Solomone Fotu  
**Rap 4 Change**

Nathan Young  
Ivanka Pelikan  
**Graceades Community Cottage**

Harinder Kaur  
**Harman Foundation Limited**  
**NSW SES Blacktown Unit**

Rhonda Kraini  
**Rhonda's Health & Survival**  
**Your Community Needs**

Ned Narouz  
**Rap 4 Change**

Maryam Popal Zahid  
**Afgan Women on the Move**

Laila Alloush  
**VASS**

Rob Buckwell  
**Senior Health Program /  
English for Living**

Kiera Weldon  
**Rainbow Baby Shows**

Preetham Jalady  
**AUSCAP Australian Civil Air  
Patrol**

George Awad  
**Team Jesus Sydney**

Lindsay Round  
**RuffTRACK Limited**

Elaina Bohman  
**RuffTRACK Limited**

Rana Barham  
**Mt Druitt Police Area  
Command**

Darryl Hamilton  
**Mt Druitt Police Area  
Command**

Paul Sneesby  
**NSW Police**

Dr Faryal Zehra  
**Little Helpers on the Run**

Misty Riley  
**Mission Australia**

Jay Tobin  
**Whitellion Youth Agency Ltd**

Josephine Valenti  
**Soaring Eagles Youth LTD**

Emma Smith  
**Mount Druitt Ethnic  
Communities Agency**

Donalee Rose  
**Hearing Australia**

**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

Kidsline: 0800 54 37 54

Depression Helpline: 0800 111 757

Samaritans: 0800 726 666

Family Violence Information Line: 0800 456 450

The background features a large, abstract graphic composed of overlapping, rounded shapes in various shades of red and white. The shapes create a sense of depth and movement, with some areas appearing to be layered on top of others. The overall composition is clean and modern.

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

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

*Westfield*  

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*Local Heroes*  

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**2021**

SCENTRE GROUP