

Friday 6 May 2016

AWARDS RECOGNISE GREAT WORK OF VOLUNTEERS

In a night of celebration, nineteen individuals and eight groups nominated by their peers for the annual City of Ryde Volunteer Recognition Awards, were honoured at a Civic Hall ceremony to thank them for their outstanding service to the community.

The Mayor Cllr Jerome Laxale said the work of volunteers make our community better and stronger. "It is not an understatement to say that this army of volunteers are our unsung heroes. They are the lifeblood of many, connecting people, improving lives, extending a helping hand, or simply a warm smile.

"They give their time, skill and energy so generously to those in need, many the most vulnerable in our society, ensuring that services are delivered and that help is not far away.

"Volunteers improve the lives of countless fellow citizens, and strengthen the economic and social well-being of our entire community. It is an honour to be in their company."

The Mayor also paid tribute to those who nominated the volunteers for the Awards, as without their action the work of individuals and groups could go unrecognised.

In making the announcements, the Mayor said that choosing winners from such a distinguished and deserving group was an unenviable task.

CITY OF RYDE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2016 - WINNERS

2016 Volunteer of the Year - DAVID DUVAL

David has been volunteering with Easy Care Gardening for 12 years and gardens every Tuesday. He is an enthusiastic and committed volunteer. Since joining the organisation he has given 2,763 hours on 841 separate occasions.

David keenly embraces training opportunities and asks insightful questions. He is very helpful with new volunteers generously sharing his time and knowledge. He is an enthusiastic networker and contributes to promoting and recruiting for Easy Care Gardening.

Volunteering provides an outlet for David's interest and skill in gardening. David volunteers because he wants to make a contribution to clients. He likes to see how the clients are happy, friendly and appreciative of the work of Easy Care Gardening. He enjoys being part of a team and having a valued role in the community.

2016 Young Volunteer of the Year - KEVIN LUU

Kevin is a volunteer at Royal Rehab assisting with brain injury clients in weekly sessions with the High Mobility Group.

Kevin himself is recovering from a Traumatic Brain Injury, which he acquired in May 2012 when he fell off his bike after hitting a pothole. His one-on-one work assisting brain injury clients enables him to build a sense of community, through sharing his story and theirs. He is a source of inspiration and motivation for those he helps rehabilitate and finds it

rewarding to see the progressions and achievements of the clients he is assisting and especially finds it rewarding to share and their milestones.

In addition to his physio assistant role, Kevin is an Ambassador for both Royal Rehab and Fresh Tracks. Through these positions, Kevin has the opportunity to share his story, raise awareness of Traumatic Brain Injury and promote both organisations and the amazing work they do.

He shows further initiative through volunteering at events with Royal Rehab, Fresh Tracks and in South Australia at the Santos Tour Down Under when he was both a Tour Village Assistant and an Onsite Host.

2016 Volunteer Group of the Year - IVANHOE ESTATE TENANT GROUP

The Ivanhoe Estate Tenant Group was founded in 2012 to help the tenants collectively communicate with all tiers of government and departments when faced with the relocation from their homes. They felt that collectively they would be more effective in liaising with stakeholders.

Many of the tenants the group represents are elderly, from non-English speaking backgrounds and suffer physical and mental illness. The impending move for many residents was distressing however the establishment of this group has provided stability in times of uncertainty.

Among their achievements, the tenants group has secured the use of a community centre complete with communal equipment to help alleviate isolation, undertake discussions on safety and security issues, and help tenants fill out forms and learn English.

2016 Volunteer of the Year Special Commendation Award - KIM PHILLIPS

Kim has been a member of the Ryde District Historical Society. She is currently the Special Projects Coordinator for many years and has worked on The Spirits of Gallipoli Project for the past 16 years.

One of Kim's areas of expertise is in data and project management and she has created, collated and compiled databases for the Ryde District Historical Society's use. Over the past five years she has worked tirelessly on their WWI database and she is currently working on a new 'Mapping Ryde' project to create an interactive database from the Society's files linking maps, streets, photos, houses and people.

Kim has produced the Society's Journal/Newsletter "The Ryde Recorder" since 2012, and also formatted, for publication, the recent books "Women of Ryde" (2011) and "Ryde Goes to War" (2015). Kim is one of the Society's representatives on the City of Ryde Centenary of ANZAC and Commemoration of World War 1 Committee. All this has been done while researching, publishing and maintaining her own special WWI project, Spirits of Gallipoli.

Kim volunteers her time to help maintain the importance of Ryde's history and its relevance within the community today. Community involvement and access to information is very important to her and by volunteering with RDHS Special Projects she can help provide an interface between the Society's collection and the community.

To find out more about becoming a volunteer in your community go to www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/volunteering

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