

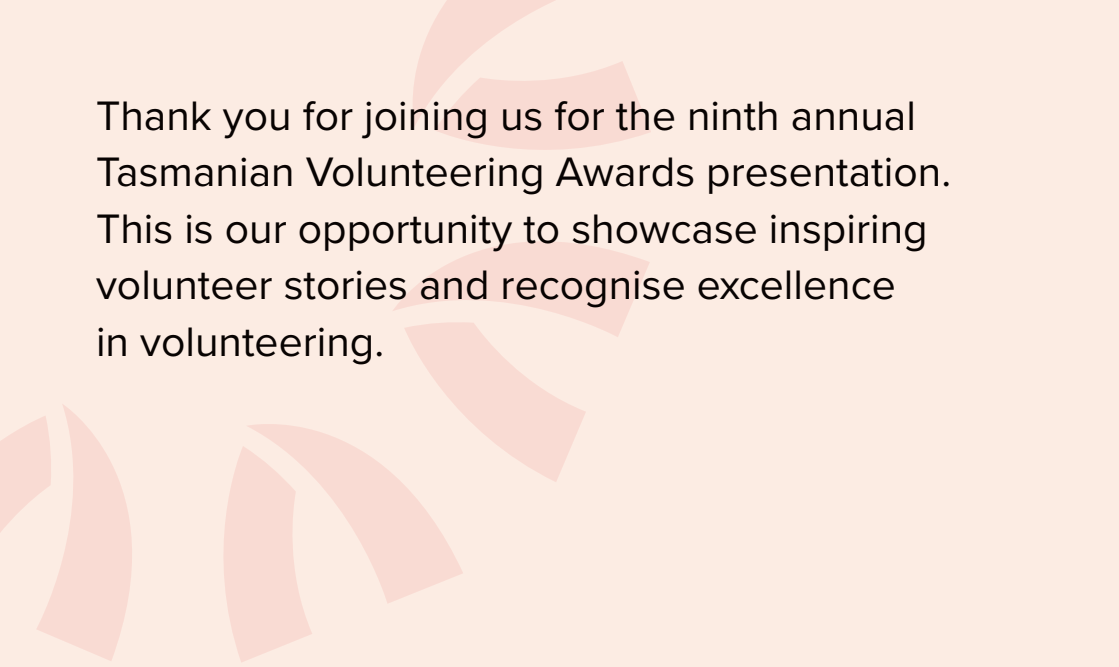


tasmanian
volunteering
awards 2024

Awards Presentation

13 November 2024
Government House,
Tasmania





Thank you for joining us for the ninth annual Tasmanian Volunteering Awards presentation. This is our opportunity to showcase inspiring volunteer stories and recognise excellence in volunteering.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY:

Volunteering Tasmania acknowledges the palawa people as traditional custodians of the lands, seas, skies, and waterways throughout lutruwita / Tasmania. We recognise their deep history and continuing connections with our shared country, culture, and community and pay respect to elders past and present.

COVER ART, CALEB NICHOLS-MANSELL 2023, ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

The artwork represents the coming together of communities to build safer and stronger communities that support and uplift each other. The circular motifs represent the nine nations that called Tasmania home prior to invasion and colonisation. © Caleb Nicholas-Mansell

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Message from Her Excellency



As Governor of Tasmania, I am delighted to acknowledge our 21 remarkable finalists and to recognise their dedication and hard work through the 2024 Tasmanian Volunteering Awards.

The annual Tasmanian Volunteering Awards are our only statewide program to formally recognise excellence in volunteering. Each year these Awards celebrate those Tasmanians who have made a significant contribution to our Tasmanian community through their volunteering efforts.

Our finalists have been selected from many worthy nominees from all over Tasmania. They are people who selflessly dedicate their time and effort for the benefit of others. They are committed to building stronger communities for the betterment of Tasmania and all Tasmanians.

Although only one finalist may receive the award in their category, I recognise and thank each of the 21 finalists for all their work, and for what they have done to support our community. I also thank all volunteers around our State for everything they do for our community.

**Her Excellency the
Honourable Barbara Baker AC**
Governor of Tasmania

Message from the Premier



Volunteers play such a pivotal role in our community, dedicating their time to supporting communities every day, during emergencies, in learning, sports, conservation and when people need help.

Volunteering can be life-changing both for volunteers and the recipient individuals, organisations and communities, with the skills, time and passion volunteers contribute making our society richer.

The Tasmanian Volunteering Awards 2024 is an opportunity to recognise the hard work and commitment of those who dedicate their time to our community.

Every nominee is an absolute champion and the Tasmanian Government thanks them for their devotion to the community.

I wholeheartedly acknowledge the more than 332,100 volunteers across Tasmania for supporting their community.

The Tasmanian Government is continuing its strong support of the volunteering community through the 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future.

We recognise that volunteering is changing, with more people choosing to volunteer in casual ways and fewer participating in more formalised, organisation-based activities. A strategic approach is required for the future of volunteering.


As strong supporters of Volunteering Tasmania and the Awards, we are very excited to work together to develop Tasmania's first Volunteering Strategy, alongside a five-year action plan.

Congratulations to all the Volunteering Award nominees and recipients.

On behalf of all Tasmanians I thank you for everything you do for our communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Rockliff'.

**The Honourable
Jeremy Rockliff MP**
Premier of Tasmania



Awards

Categories:

**Excellence in Volunteer Leadership
and Management Award**

Inclusive Volunteering Award

**Volunteer Impact Award
(Corporate/Partnerships)**

**Volunteer Impact Award
(Group or Program)**

**Volunteer Impact Award
(Individual)**

**Tasmanian Youth Volunteer
of the Year Award**

Lifetime Commitment Award

**The Premier's Volunteer of the
Year Award**

Excellence in Volunteer Leadership and Management Award

SUPPORTED BY:



FINALISTS

Carl Graham

ST JOHN AMBULANCE
TASMANIA

A registered nurse, Carl Graham has volunteered at St John Ambulance for over forty years. In his current role as Commissioner for Event Health Services, his focus is on continual improvement and clinical governance. With a passion for preparedness, Carl works tirelessly to ensure St John Ambulance members are trained to respond to community need, including mass casualty situations. He steers the organisation's participation in community events, through developing robust processes and strategic relationships. Carl honed his considerable skills through volunteering here in Tasmania and internationally, including in Papua New Guinea during the early years of the COVID pandemic. Earlier this year he assisted in a Timor Leste feasibility study exploring the viability of focused first aid training, a program with benefits for participants both overseas and in Tasmania. Carl continues to attend events himself – providing support, guidance and mentoring to the familiar volunteers in green.

Carolyn Whamond

CALVARY HEALTH CARE
TASMANIA

As Volunteer Services Manager for Calvary Health Care Tasmania, Carolyn oversees seventy volunteers across two Hobart hospitals. Digging into the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, she authored a Roadmap entitled 'Achieving our Mission through Volunteering' to guide Calvary into a sustainable volunteering future. Carolyn recognises that volunteers need training and support to ensure they are safe, informed and able to undertake roles of value, such as Patient Champions and Angels who support anxious or vulnerable patients on difficult journeys. Carolyn has championed the inclusion of people with lived experience of disability into the volunteer workforce. Their roles include membership of the Consumer Advisory Group and their valued contributions has led to implementation of changes both practically and culturally. Carolyn's leadership extends beyond southern Tasmania. She is regarded as a national volunteer management expert and is often consulted on key reform programs and policy changes. She works tirelessly to innovate and advocate for the volunteers of today.

Vanessa Henry

ST JOHN AMBULANCE
TASMANIA

Vanessa is the St John Ambulance Tasmania State Youth Manager. In 2022, Vanessa led a review of the organisation's Youth Program, where young people with an interest in health and emergency services sectors learn first aid and leadership skills. This review included wide-ranging consultation to create a sustainable model for the future. Guided by the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, Vanessa ensured the new model supported young volunteers, engaged them in the decision-making process, ensured their safety, and recognised and respected their participation. The new child safety guidelines were also incorporated into the revamped program model and Vanessa was tasked with the implementation of these guidelines across the organisation as a whole. The new Youth Program commenced earlier this year, and Vanessa has since supported its implementation across Tasmania and beyond. An Officer of the Order of St John, Vanessa's dedication to St John Ambulance and her community is recognised nationally.

Inclusive Volunteering Award

SUPPORTED BY:



FINALISTS

The Australian International Youth Association

The Australian International Youth Association (AIYA) demonstrates their commitment to inclusion by providing volunteer opportunities for migrants and international students who have recently arrived in Tasmania. They attract a large group of participants by selecting interesting and relevant volunteering activities and promoting these with enthusiasm and thoughtfulness to their diverse audience. They make volunteering accessible by providing language support to international volunteers through bilingual volunteer coordinators. People who are new to Tasmania find that volunteering with AIYA connects them to their new community and engenders a sense of belonging. They make friends, explore new places, and support the important work of organisations such as Conservation Volunteers Australia, Multicultural Council of Tasmania and Red Cross. Volunteers often return to AIYA to contribute multiple times, which underlines the value they place on the work of AIYA to themselves personally and to the wider community.

Calvary Health Care Tasmania

The Calvary Health Care Tasmania Volunteer Program is an inclusive space that embraces diversity and tailors the volunteer experience to an individual's needs and skills. A co-design approach has prompted changes such as presenting material in plain English and adapting induction and training environments. Volunteer supervisors are assisted to create adaptive work practices and support workers provide assistance where needed. Volunteers with disability are part of the Consumer Advisory Group (CAG) to ensure their voice leads to change, demonstrated by improvements to waiting room chairs and the addition of benches outside the hospital entrance. The inclusion of volunteers with disability in the Hospital departments has led to substantial cultural change. By embracing inclusion and recognising the valuable opportunities that diversity brings, they have gained an increasingly diverse workforce. Calvary's commitment to inclusion provides a space for everyone to serve others.

Volunteering for Change Risdon Prison Complex Medium

The Volunteering for Change group in Risdon Prison Complex Medium consists of men in custody who work weekly with Red Cross and Tasmania Prison Service staff to lead positive change and improved wellbeing in the men's prison. New volunteers complete training and join the group as 'Special Status' Red Cross volunteers, who create projects based on need and advocate with prison staff for these to be implemented. The group is inclusive, having members with different backgrounds, opinions and needs. Projects focus on young or first-time offenders, mental health and addiction. An example of their work has been the creation of "Lockdown Packs" to assist during these difficult periods. After surveying their community, the group created and distributed packs with fitness, nutrition, mental health and educational resources, including boardgames, playing cards, card-making kits, word searches, sudoku, and crosswords. The dedicated VFC group makes an invaluable contribution to their community, providing support through the immense challenges of imprisonment.

Volunteer Impact Award (Corporate/Partnerships)

SUPPORTED BY:

AON



Aurora Energy

By partnering with multiple volunteering-involving organisations, Aurora Energy has exceeded their corporate volunteering goals and achieved nearly two thousand volunteer hours in 2023-24. Collaborating with Aurora Disability Services (no affiliation) enabled Aurora Energy volunteers to engage in activities such as sorting fabrics, pricing donations, general tidying up and conducting light maintenance. The volunteers also contributed to an annual fundraising activity, the Aurora Anzac Biscuit Bake. More than fifty Aurora Energy volunteers worked alongside Aurora Disability's hospitality trainees to bake thirty-two thousand biscuits for sale, helping to raise funds for the important services Aurora Disability Services provide. For Aurora Energy employees unable to volunteer onsite, an initiative with St Vincent de Paul provided a solution. Staff volunteered in-house, packing kids 'snack packs', with over five hundred packs made for Tasmanian families. Corporate volunteering has enabled Aurora Energy to demonstrate the power of service.

FedEx

FedEx have extended a corporate volunteering opportunity previously only available to their mainland staff to their Tasmanian employees. In partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA), local FedEx staff volunteered to take part in a CVA Mental Health Week event in Hobart. The focus of this activity was on nurturing one's mental health by being in and working with nature. The volunteers looked after a significant wetland site in their work time and the benefits for both participants and the natural world were evident. This generous example of corporate volunteering also encourages other for-profit organisations to seek out partnership opportunities that promote positive change.

S. Group

S. Group has partnered with City Mission Launceston for many years, providing corporate volunteering opportunities for their workforce and supporting City Mission wherever they identify areas of greatest need. The impact of S. Group's volunteering with City Mission is significant because of the effect that a larger group can have when directed in a targeted way. One area where S. Group's efforts have made an impact were the garden makeovers they undertook at Missionsdale and Orana House, two City Mission properties that provide residential services for the community. S. Group staff also provided invaluable assistance at the City Mission Youngtown warehouse, when a large backlog of donations needed processing. Their volunteering is an ongoing commitment, providing regular team-building benefits as staff take time away from their corporate work to help others and make a difference in their community.

Volunteer Impact Award (Group or Program)

SUPPORTED BY:



FINALISTS

Bucaan Community House

The volunteers of Bucaan Community House in Hobart are the backbone of their organisation, dedicating thousands of hours of service annually across different programs. Their commitment is exemplified by the U Caan Drive Mentors, who sit beside each learner for around eighty hours, supporting them to gain their P plates. Each year between nine and twelve people graduate from the free program with life-changing results.

The line dancing group and Best Foot Forward walking group enable people to make friends while being active, gain health knowledge and share resources. The Chigwell Community Garden is an open, safe and welcoming space where people meet weekly to garden, socialise and share a meal. In addition, hundreds of kilos of food from the garden are distributed throughout the local community with an enormous boost in access to fresh produce. The tireless efforts of the Bucaan volunteers combine to make an outstanding impact within their community.

Toast For Kids Charity Inc.

Toast For Kids Charity Inc. partners with businesses and communities to provide opportunities for food relief, storytelling and improved educational attainment for the next generation, with the aim of creating a great start to life and learning. They do this in several ways, such as their Annual Charity Gala, which raises funds for school breakfast clubs to provide thousands of nutritious meals. Literacy development is supported through the Devonport Readers Cup, an annual primary school reading competition. The group has also taken an innovative approach to early learning in babies through linking with the "Read Aloud To Your Child Every Day" national campaign. This approach involved partnering with the Tasmanian Branch of the Children's Book Council of Australia to publish a Tasmanian children's book (including a braille/low vision companion version), which was provided free to Tasmanian newborn babies via Child & Family Learning Centres, Neighbourhood Houses and recognised bookstores.

Volunteering for Change Mary Hutchinson's Women's Prison

The Volunteering for Change group in Mary Hutchinson's Women's Prison is a passionate and growing group of volunteers in custody who work with a Red Cross facilitator to improve the wellbeing of fellow inmates. After completing training, members identify areas of need and implement services, supported by the facilitator and prison service staff. The group's innovations include a recovery addiction group which provides additional addiction support to help people feel more prepared post-release. Mental health folders in each unit provide resources and coping strategies for common mental health concerns. Group fitness sessions and gym equipment boost fitness, and an anti-bullying campaign called Kindness Week promotes caring and support of each other during the challenges of incarceration. Other services being implemented include nutritional education, which involves meal planning, preparation, budgeting and cooking classes, and a music group/choir. The commitment of the Volunteering for Change group to their community is inspirational and future focussed.

Volunteer Impact Award (Individual)

SUPPORTED BY:



FINALISTS

Sandra Schuurin

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY
(TASMANIA) INC.

Sandra's wonderful cooking nourishes members of the Circular Head community. As a much-valued volunteer of the St Vincent de Paul Society's Vinnie's Van, Sandra shops for and prepares food for the twice weekly van as well as participating in rostered shifts herself, supporting up to sixty people to receive a nutritious meal. She also provides treats for children who come along, bakes dozens of homemade biscuits and assists with the monthly summer BBQs that supplement the van's activities. Sandra is the popular cook behind the fortnightly Dining with Friends program, creating a three-course meal for nearly thirty people. This promotes both good nutrition and social contact for those who attend the fully subscribed lunches. If this was not enough, she also provides emergency relief in the Smithton area to community members who are struggling to make ends meet. Sandra's passion for serving others is highly valued by her community.

Simon Carter

MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE
TASMANIA (MRC TAS)

Simon's volunteering with Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania (MRC Tas) has had a profound effect on the lives of many migrants and refugees in Tasmania. Simon creates a warm first impression of our state, personally greeting new arrivals at the airport and escorting them to their accommodation. His support includes accompanying clients to GP appointments, walking children and parents to school enrolments, assisting with TAFE classes, and helping with house moves. Simon also manages the CarCafe program and volunteers as a driver mentor, ensuring many migrants and refugees gain the crucial knowledge, skills and confidence to drive safely in Tasmania. His patience and encouragement have empowered many individuals to gain a licence and access broader employment opportunities. This newfound independence enhances people's capacity to provide for their families and gain a sense of belonging and empowerment. Simon's volunteering is impactful and radiates out from the individual to the wider community.

Vanessa Henry

ST JOHN AMBULANCE TASMANIA

Vanessa has been involved with St John Ambulance for over 15 years, her most recent role being State Youth Manager for Tasmania. She manages the Youth Program, where young people aged 11-18 learn first aid, leadership, communication and resilience. Her dedication to the program has assisted participants to learn lifesaving skills, and her support has enabled some to pursue a career in the healthcare sector. Vanessa was asked to review the Youth Program in 2022, and create a new model for the future, which was approved and implemented earlier this year. She has supported the implementation of the new program, aligned with child safety guidelines, and provided leadership for youth members and adult leaders alike. This support has extended to two other states who are in the process of restarting their own youth programs. Vanessa's impact has a wide reach, and her contribution to young people and their acquisition of lifesaving skills, is inspirational.

Tasmanian Youth Volunteer of the Year Award

SUPPORTED BY:



CatholicCare
TASMANIA

 FINALISTS

Brighton Youth Action Group

Brighton Youth Action Group (BYAG) are champions for the voices of young people in their community. An example of their commitment is their coordination of the opening of a local park. Meeting regularly with Brighton Council staff and other stakeholders to organise the event program, their efforts were key to a successful opening, attracting a diverse group of families. They surveyed attendees to gain feedback on what people enjoy about living in the area as well as their wishes for the future. Collaboration with Council staff has extended to the group's participation in the recruitment of the Council's Youth Engagement Officer. BYAG has also participated in the UTAS/Quit Tasmania Youth Vaping Project, providing feedback towards a statewide campaign to reduce vaping harm. More broadly, the group advocates for food security and access to transport services. They mentor other young people and display innovation, leadership and compassion in promoting change in their community.

Dillon Monks

Dillon has shown incredible dedication and leadership through his volunteer work, devoting countless hours to two pivotal community organisations. As a member of the Risdon Vale Volunteer Fire Brigade, Dillon responds to emergencies at all hours, both locally and beyond, and his leadership and mentoring of junior members ensures the effectiveness and safety of his brigade. He also assists with the brigade's community, social and fundraising events. His efforts have earned him the respect and confidence of his community. His actions foster unity and connection. Dillon's commitment extends to the Royal Hobart Regatta Association, where he has volunteered as Water Safety Officer for the Royal Hobart Regatta for seven years. He plays a crucial role in the planning of the annual event, and on the Regatta weekend itself he drives the boat and runs on-water radio communications with enthusiasm and a commitment to safety. Dillon serves as a role model for young volunteers and is a shining example of the spirit of volunteering.

Emily Gamez

Emily has demonstrated exceptional service and initiative through her extensive and varied volunteering. She has assisted at events such as the Jobs Fair in Glenorchy, Relay for Life in Hobart, and the Edmund Rice Community Services Eddie Rice Camp. Her involvement showcases her commitment to supporting a range of community needs. Emily also volunteers in St Vincent de Paul youth and community programs. She has been a youth mentor to children in the Buddy Program since early 2022, providing a calm and encouraging presence for participants. Emily volunteers at the monthly Dining with Friends dinner at Mathers House in Hobart, where she serves food, ensures the cleanliness of the venue, and offers a warm and welcoming conversation to attendees who may be experiencing homelessness, hardship, or isolation. Her dedication has not only improved the lives of those with whom she interacts, but also sets a powerful example for her peers.

Lifetime Commitment Award

SUPPORTED BY:



FINALISTS

Allana Wilson

For nearly thirty years, Allana has dedicated thousands of hours to Make-A-Wish Hobart, bringing hope, strength, joy and magic into the lives of children diagnosed with a critical illness. She has been instrumental in fundraising three hundred thousand dollars for the Foundation. As Wish Granting Coordinator, a role that requires planning and management, attention to detail and persistent follow up, she has facilitated over two hundred wishes. Allana contacts every child's parents and quickly begins the Wish process. This has been a trademark of Allana's and a source of learning for our volunteers in the need to be urgent and deliberate when engaging with families. Looking forward to a Wish helps children respond better to treatment and is a distraction from the uncertainty and challenges they face. The effect Allana has on the Wish children and their families has been joyful and truly life-changing for her and for them.

Jenny Beverley

Jenny's example of a lifetime of commitment to volunteering is truly inspirational. She has been a volunteer for Lifeline, providing counselling and support for Tasmanians in need, as well as a volunteer at Calvary Hospital. She has extended her personal knowledge, skill and love as an experienced foster carer to become President of Foster and Kinship Carers Association Tasmania, a volunteering role where she provides support to other foster carers. She was the driving force behind a national foster carer conference in Tasmania in 2023 and helps shape the future of foster families and foster care. If that was not enough, earlier this year Jenny was pivotal in the setting up of the Lauderdale to Opossum Bay Neighbourhood Watch group, which brings together the local community and motivates people to watch out for, and support, each other. Jenny's volunteering is an example of the impact that radiates from a life dedicated to service.

Sajini Sumar

Over the last three decades, Sajini has supported many individuals and families who move to Tasmania from across the world. She has helped ensure that the refugee voice is heard, and that support is provided according to cultural need. Through the Multicultural Council of Tasmania Sajini has helped lobby government for better support services and organised education forums to improve knowledge on health-related topics such as diabetes management, quitting smoking, nursing home issues and family violence. She works towards a reduction in race hate crimes and engages with police and policy makers to improve data and reporting. Sajini also advocates for social inclusion and equal opportunities, especially for multicultural women. Sajini has been the Chair of the Disability Advisory Committee within the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), and a member of the Australian Human Rights Awards Committee. Over 30 years of exceptional volunteering, Sajini has demonstrated outstanding commitment to others, in Tasmania and nationally.



Who we are

As the peak body for volunteering in Tasmania, Volunteering Tasmania creates an inclusive, thriving and celebrated culture of community participation.



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