

Media Release



Embargoed until 3pm Tuesday 10 September 2024

Curran Public School cultural mentor named 2024 South Western Sydney Volunteer of the Year

Respected Wiradjuri man and Macquarie Fields resident, Uncle Eddie Burge has been named South Western Sydney and Macarthur Volunteer of the Year for his work to transform Curran Public School into a hub of cultural pride.

Uncle Eddie was recognised today at the Campbelltown Catholic Club as part of the 2024 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards. Recipients in other South Western Sydney and Macarthur regional award categories were also announced, including young, adult, senior and volunteer team of the year.

The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards celebrate the work of thousands of individuals and volunteer teams from a diverse range of organisations across the state.

The Awards are hosted by The Centre for Volunteering, whose mission it is to promote and support volunteering across NSW.

South Western Sydney/Macarthur Young Volunteer of the Year: Mikayla Harris from Grasmere

Mikayla is the unit leader for Camden Pre-Junior Girl Guides. She helped set up the unit and its program of activities, from messy science experiments to noisy games, craft activities and outdoor adventures.

South Western Sydney/Macarthur Adult Volunteer of the Year: Rebekkah Hagstrom from Bardia

Rebekkah is the President of the Bardia Public School P&C Association. She has given her time to raising funds, to reinvest in technology and outdoor equipment for the school. A proud Arrernte woman, Rebekkah shares her connection to culture and country with the school community at the weekly Yarning Circle.

South Western Sydney/Macarthur Senior Volunteer of the Year: Edward Burge from Macquarie Fields

Uncle Eddie Burge generously shares his knowledge to educate Curran Public School's students, staff, and the wider community about Aboriginal culture, history, and practices. With an indigenous school population of 23%, Eddie builds cultural understanding by teaching about land, language, and traditions.

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

Your local club



AWARD SUPPORTERS



REGIONAL AWARDS SPONSOR

Beyond Bank
AUSTRALIA

South Western Sydney/Macarthur Volunteer Team of the Year: Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living

The Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living Volunteer Team looks after a five hectare site, which was built to showcase and educate the community about sustainable and self-contained living environments. The team maintains green spaces, looks after the centre's animals and compost activities, and ensures that the education gardens, which are full of flowers and vegetables, continue to flourish.

The Centre for Volunteering CEO Gemma Rygate said:

"These awards recognise the exceptional effort of volunteers across the South Western Sydney and Macarthur area. Whether it's in the local sports club, in health care, education and cultural centres, legal support or emergency response, volunteers are essential for the ongoing health and viability of local communities.

"It's important for volunteers across the region to know that their commitment is recognised and valued."

The Awards are supported by Principal Partners the NSW Department of Communities and Justice and ClubsNSW.

The NSW Minister with responsibility for Volunteering, Jodie Harrison said:

"Congratulations to the recipients of the South Western Sydney and Macarthur Volunteer of the Year Awards. Thank you for the incredible contributions you make to NSW and your local community.

"Volunteers are the lifeblood of our communities, and the NSW Government is pleased to be partnering with the Centre for Volunteering to recognise volunteers and the valuable role they play in making NSW the best state to live and work in."

ClubsNSW CEO Rebecca Riant said:

"The awards are a tribute to the vital contributions made by volunteers across the state. Volunteers are the backbone of the NSW club industry, and their efforts are crucial in uplifting local communities.

"We're delighted to have a special Club Volunteer of the Year Award category, and I can't wait to see who takes home that honour."

South Western Sydney and Macarthur award recipients will be invited to represent their region at the Gala State Ceremony in Sydney at the end of the year, where the NSW Volunteer of the Year will be announced across each category.

More information at media@volunteering.com.au

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

Your local club



AWARD SUPPORTERS



REGIONAL AWARDS SPONSOR

Beyond Bank
AUSTRALIA

About the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards

2024 marks the 18th year of these high-profile Awards, which have honoured hundreds of thousands of volunteers for their community service, while highlighting the value and benefits of volunteering.

Anyone who volunteers in NSW can be nominated for an award.

The Award categories are:

- Young Volunteer of the Year
- Adult Volunteer of the Year
- Senior Volunteer of the Year
- Volunteer Team of the Year
- Employee Volunteer of the Year
- Club Volunteer of the Year
- Not-for-Profit Voluntary Governance Award
- Volunteer Leader of the Year

Twenty-five regional ceremonies are held in towns and suburbs throughout NSW from mid-August until November.

The regional finalists will be invited to a Gala State ceremony in December in Sydney where the NSW Volunteer of the Year is announced. Recipients for the NSW Volunteer of the Year are also announced across the eight categories.

The Awards are run by the Centre for Volunteering and proudly supported by our principal partners the NSW Department of Communities and Justice and ClubsNSW.

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

Your local club



AWARD SUPPORTERS



REGIONAL AWARDS SPONSOR

Beyond Bank
AUSTRALIA