



Greater Shepparton City Council

# Volunteer Recognition Awards

## Nominee Profile



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## **Volunteer Recognition Awards**

# **Categories**

**Adult Volunteer**

**Youth Volunteer (Under 25 years)**

**Volunteer Team**

**Long Serving Volunteer**

**Pandemic Response – Individual**

**Pandemic Response – Team**



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## Order of Ceremonies

- **Opening**
- **MC** – Ada Kolvani and Lillian Richardson
- **Welcome to Country & Smoking ceremony** – Damien Saunders
- **Didgeridoo Player** – Kyle Egan
- **Mayor Cr Kim O’Keeffe**
- **Keynote Speaker:** Jamie Lea
- **Entertainment: Malayalee (Chenda) Drummers** – Shepparton Malayalee Association
- **Award Ceremony**
  - Youth Volunteer (Under 25 years)
  - Adult Volunteer
  - Volunteer Team
  - Long Serving Volunteer
- **Video Presentation** – Greater Shepparton’s Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic
  - Pandemic Response - Individual
  - Pandemic Response - Team
- **Official close**

**Please note:** *Information in this booklet was correct at time of printing and wording was taken from the Volunteer Recognition Award nomination forms that were submitted.*



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## Youth Volunteer Award Nominees

### **Mr Jayden Armstrong:**

Jayden deserves this award for the outstanding contribution he has made to the Tatura Cricket and Football Clubs.

At the age of 22, he has already devoted 6 years of his life to youth sport while also playing the two games he loves.

Jayden is also involved with the committee, assisting with preparing wickets and the organisational tasks each week that fall to a coach and captain.

He has dedicated himself to the young members of both clubs. He has ensured that the youth of Tatura and surrounds have had a welcoming introduction to junior sport while providing an inspiring and dedicated example of a leader to follow.

### **Ms Denni Bathman:**

Denni is a young person that always puts her hand up and says "yep, I'll do that". Denni follows through and completes everything asked of her and all things she volunteers for to the very best of her ability.

Denni inspires those around her to be active in their communities and is a strong advocate for all the positive things that young people are.

Denni is a leader, Denni is a champion, Denni is a deserving winner of this award.

### **Miss Simrin Dhillon:**

Simrin devotes personal time (along with her brother, Harvey, who is slightly too young for nomination within this category) to assisting within the Kaizen Dojo's club, providing a long lasting positive impact to the lives, health and fitness of many young people and aspiring martial artists.



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### **Mr Alan Isac:**

Alan deserves this award because this will help to give him more confidence in volunteering in community groups.

Alan played a key role in making / editing a short Video produced by SHEMA to give an awareness of COVID and the importance of getting vaccinated. This award will help and motivate young people to volunteer in the community.

### **Noah Moore:**

Noah is a bright and bubbly young man who cares about people. He enjoys helping people, seeing them smile and he knows that it has just brightened someone's day.

Our community's youth need to be encourage with volunteering and I believe this is a great way to help encourage the young ones to get involved and volunteer.

Noah has been collecting food and donating to the Salvation Army for the homeless at Christmas time since he was seven years old, he is now 13.

## **Adult Volunteer Award Nominees**

### **Mrs Furaha (Francine) Baguma:**

Francine gives so much of herself to the community. She takes calls from community workers, GPs and families in need at all hours of the day to share her skills and expertise to ensure that those in the community who are vulnerable receive support and care. She does this while managing her own family's needs and balancing part time work and two full time courses. I cannot speak highly enough of Francine and the work that she has done for families in Shepparton. She is an asset to the community. Francine continues to strive towards better outcomes and opportunities for the African community and wants to see individuals and families thriving in Australia.



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**Ms Mychelle Cassidy:**

Mychelle deserves to be recognised for her past and on-going support to people in need in our community. Since 2013 Mychelle has supported the community of South Shepparton and beyond with empathy and compassion - giving her time freely to anyone whether it be with food assistance or other support they require. Mychelle has been invaluable to the South Shepparton Community Centre as she is willing to assist whenever called upon.

**Mrs Beverley Dowd:**

Beverley has been matched with a family through the Greater Shepparton Light House Project. Beverley deserves this award because she has supported this family, who is very isolated, in a way that is making a huge difference to the family. Beverley is changing their lives by demonstrating that someone cares and takes the time to be with them and check on them when no one else does. Beverley has gone above any expectations put forward for this program and has created a beautiful connection between the family and herself that will last forever.

**Mr Chris & Mrs Jenny Jolly:**

While out on their morning walk Chris & Jenny pick up rubbish without being asked and I think they set an amazing example to others. They have all of the safety gear at their own expense and dispose of the rubbish in their personal bin. They keep the streets and roads clean for our community and deserve to be recognised for their efforts.



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**Mr Troy McKindley:**

His tireless work is never too much trouble and in his words "that's easy, no problem" attitude is what makes him so admired and loved by all of us in STAG. His contribution to the performing Arts in the GV is immeasurable, always willing to help with nothing being too much trouble. If Troy is not on stage or behind it, he is in the audience supporting. We could not think of another more deserving of this award.

**Mrs Andrea Pogue:**

Andrea is an already busy mother of two and successful career woman, however still finds the time to dedicate to the Toolamba community through her many different roles.

I think it is important for Andrea to be recognised for these efforts, as they have truly made a positive impact on our town.

**Mr Corey Wilson:**

Corey has served as a long committed committee member & president of the Katandra Football / Netball Club, holding dual roles for over 10 years for the benefit of our little club.

Corey has lead the club through the pandemic and through the other side in good shape.

He is dedicated, compassionate, diplomatic, fair & hard working.



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## Team Volunteer Award Nominees

### **Shepparton Search and Rescue Squad:**

Shepparton Search & Rescue Squad has provided emergency response services to the Shepparton community at all hours of the day and night for 50 years. As a fully independent organisation that does not receive State or Federal Funding, this is an amazing achievement that should be recognised by the Shepparton Community.

With over 50 years of continuous service to the Shepparton Community, they go above and beyond any hour of the day or time of year to help the greater Shepparton community under some stressful situations. They always keep cool heads, and simply get their job done!

### **Goulburn Valley Pride:**

This team of volunteers are individually amazing, and although each had their personal challenges I am so proud of the way we banded together to support each other, to maintain and grow the profile of GV Pride and to support this vulnerable community through very rough times.

Such hard work, often without thanks to keep the community represented and at the table of decision making. They advocate tirelessly for the LGBTIQ+ community while still supporting individual community members with kindness and care.

Shepparton and the Goulburn Valley region are richer and more inclusive place to live because of their work.





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### **Greater Shepparton Visitor Centre:**

The nominees are dedicated, committed, reliable and passionate citizens keen to represent Greater Shepparton as ambassadors in delivering outstanding service in their volunteering roles. In addition to life skills they possess a range of skills from previous occupations ranging from engineers, teachers, nurses, caterers, administrators, tailors, proprietors, managers and public servants that complement the volunteer role. Their contribution delivers social and economic benefits to our community.

### **Friends of Mooroopna Library:**

The Friends of Mooroopna Library have consistently shown their support for library staff and the organisation in general and understand how that directly benefits our community. They are a pleasure to engage with as they work cohesively with each other and with library staff and no request is dismissed as too difficult.

This group exemplifies the word team, in practice and word. They are very individual, yet come together to find the best solutions to helping others in our community from a library perspective.

### **Awaken Dance Theatre Company – Committee:**

Awaken Dance Theatre Company is so very proud of our dancers and the hard work they do every season to bring their love of dance and art to the Shepparton community. We love and appreciate the parents and community members who have come along with us on this journey, and we absolutely could not create these performance opportunities without them. That is why we wish to honour them with this nomination. The Awaken Committee is more than just a regulatory body - they are the mums, dads, and students who help us BLOOM!



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### **Greater Valley Calisthenics Club:**

With time constraints, COVID lockdowns, limited prior knowledge and full-time work the club volunteers pulled off a miracle to enable the dancers to be in and dancing at the new venue with the time from start to finish being a short 90 odd days.

Since that time, homely tasks have been undertaken to tidy up, refurbish kitchens and plan on bathroom refurbishments to work at finalising the big picture of our building.

### **Kialla Golf Club Course Maintenance:**

These volunteers undertake the complete maintenance of Kialla Golf Club. Without the volunteer team at Kialla Golf Club, we would not be in a position to commence our 59th year of operation which will be celebrated at Opening Day in 2022.

These members of Kialla Golf Club give their time tirelessly and are very humble as they undertake their volunteering. These volunteers have been performing these tasks since 1 March 2015.

### **Tatura Fire Brigade:**

All our members work hard at all times of the day and night with no thanks or monetary rewards. This is a great opportunity to thank our volunteers for their work fighting fires, working with youth, working in our community and building our new station. Our volunteer team is crucial to ensure the survival of our brigade.



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## Long-serving Volunteer Award Nominee

### **Mr Sam Atukorala:**

Sam is a rare commodity in the community, being prepared to volunteer at all levels and across a diverse range of activities. Sam's work in sport with the Greater Shepparton community saw him nominated for a Victorian Community Achievement Award conducted by the Victorian Multicultural Commission in 2021. Significantly whilst Sam is from an ethnic community and proud of his Sri Lankan heritage his volunteer work is not confined to the multicultural sector and he is involved in activity and organisations across the Greater Shepparton area.

Sam would be a worthy recipient of the award and his recognition would be well received not only by those closely associated with him but also by the community in general.

### **Mr William (Bill) Brown:**

Bill Brown deserves this award in recognition of his selfless, consistent contribution to our local community with more than thirty years of volunteering at the Greater Shepparton Visitor Centre. Bill is the longest serving volunteer in our history. For more than twenty years of this time Bill actually volunteered with us twice a week, as well as pioneering tour guiding. Further, Bill volunteered at Mooroopna Football Club from 1991 to 2015, fundraising at the ground every Saturday and working in the canteen to support the club. Significantly, Bill was instrumental as President of the Greater Shepparton Botanic Gardens Association in campaigning for the establishment of an Australian Botanic Gardens in Shepparton, this original group worked to provide a solid base for the style and design of the gardens. The group then became the Friends of the Botanic Gardens committee which Bill served on for another 12 years.



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### **Dr Peter Leffler:**

Peter has continually promoted St John Ambulance and what it stands for. The time given by the volunteers is unmeasurable. Peter deserves this award when you consider the incredible amount of hours of volunteering he has given to the Shepparton Region over the years since 1973.

Members of St John Ambulance in Shepparton do not get any recognition for their volunteering. They work in the background with no promotion of their talents. They do intense study to be competent in first aid. This is a way to put St John Ambulance members to the fore and to be recognised as a necessary volunteering organisation. Many events can't go ahead without First Aid.

### **Mr Len Taylor:**

Len is one of the longest serving active members of the Goulburn Valley Woodworkers Club (since 1996). Without Len, we would struggle to function including all the little things that go unnoticed. Len is the glue that holds the club together. He always goes over and above for any member, any event and the club itself. He has been the coordinator of the annual woodshow for over 20 years. The show's success is down to Len and his coordination and manner in which he conducts himself. He is the friendly face and gentle advisor that new and current members look to. He is the holder of all knowledge and history about the club. Len endears himself to anyone he talks to. He is the face of the GV Woodworkers and deserves to be acknowledged for his unending dedication to the club.



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### **Mrs Patricia Warnett:**

Trish's involvement in the Tatura community spans many decades. Not only has she dedicated much of her time to committees but also is renowned for her quiet assistance of those in need.

Trish has provided support to the local community over many decades, including the individual support she has given to many.

Trish has made a difference to the many committees that she has been involved with. She has provided daily involvement and support to many in need which has included providing meals, bringing in newspapers and bins, arranging medical appointments, picking up medications, washing and ironing and house cleaning and just being available for a "listening ear".

## **Pandemic Response – Individual Nominees**

### **Mr Declo Bisimwa:**

Originally from DR Congo (Africa), Declo has been living in Australia for twelve years. He was a refugee for twelve years living in a refugee camp in Uganda before having the opportunity to move to Australia. He has a Masters in Social Work and works as a Men's Respondent Practitioner for Family Violence at The Orange Door Shepparton.

In his usual life, Declo is the Founder and Director of an Australian Youth Leadership Foundation – Masomo Mbele (School First) Foundation. They aim to inspire Australian-African communities to contribute in the meaningful way to improve the lives of those living without hope. He volunteers for the GV Congolese Association as a funeral coordinator, fundraising president and a community youth mentor.

During the COVID Shepparton outbreak, Declo worked significantly long hours sourcing, delivering and advocating around culturally appropriate food and emergency relief for local families who were seeking his support.



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### **Mrs Amy De Paola:**

Amy would have put in hundreds of volunteer hours as the main driver of the Food Link project. It has been a win-win both for the community generally and the business community. She started it from the ground up and was able to enlist the support of many other community members to help. She ensured people who needed help received the best, free meals, paid for by donors, meaning restaurants and cafes could keep their heads above water. Food Link has been an outstanding initiative that has been followed and revived when needed as the pandemic has waxed and waned. Amy has always been ready to jump in to action.

### **Ms Judi Hanlon:**

Judi is a volunteer with the Australian Red Cross; a key partner in the Victorian Emergency Management System. One of Red Cross's responsibilities is to coordinate and provide relief services to ensure communities are effectively supported in an emergency. However, the Shepparton Covid-19 outbreak in August/September 2021 presented a massive emergency relief challenge. Judi was able to coordinate teams of Red Cross volunteers and work collaboratively with community groups, volunteers and relief organisations and logistics, to ensure that affected households received the food and other supplies that they needed.

While the peak of that relief effort has passed, Covid-19 is still with us and Judi continues to coordinate and deliver emergency food relief across Greater Shepparton. Judi continues to demonstrate her dedication to supporting the community, going to great lengths to ensure that food relief deliveries are completed each weekend. Judi's unwavering commitment to this humanitarian voluntary service is outstanding.



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## **Pandemic Response – Team Nominees**

### **Shepparton Search and Rescue Squad:**

Because they are awesome!!

As a fully independent organisation reliant on volunteers, supported financially through community fundraising, and the occasional limited grants from State and Federal funding, SSRS has provided continuous, uninterrupted Emergency Response services 24 hours 7 day a week for 50 years, this is an amazing achievement which should be recognised and celebrated by the Greater Shepparton are community.

SSRS pride themselves in their swift response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Tatura Community House - Helping Hands Volunteers:**

This group deserve this award as the food relief project was really a culmination of two years' work in assisting people who live and work in the community and who were experiencing, sometimes severe hardship and isolation. The generosity of time and hard work, sometimes under pressure was amazing. The Food Relief team assisted 392 individuals by cooking and delivering over 600 meals, as well as delivering food hampers and Christmas hampers to a further 200 households - all from the goodness of their heart. The group delivered on our statement that "your community cares".

### **GV Cares, a Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project initiative:**

Volunteers offered their assistance out of a genuine desire to help our community. Collectively they were eager, resourceful, and generous with their time and demonstrated an excellent sense of teamwork. With time-critical need, volunteers went above and beyond to ensure those in isolation were cared for as soon as possible.



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### **Shepparton Family & Financial Services Emergency Relief Team:**

These individuals made management easy throughout the pandemic and their eagerness to assist where ever possible, adapting to regular changing government regulations but still making sure they were safe, and their families safe, caring for the Shepparton Community at large, and caring for all workers at Shepparton Family and Financial Services was incredible. They have become a very close knit team, bringing out each other's strengths and working on their weaknesses together for the betterment of themselves and our agency. This pandemic brought to light what a huge difference working in a team can achieve rather than as individuals.

### **Settlement Hub Team at Uniting led by Sara Noori:**

Government messages and regular updates were promptly simplified and translated into different languages, and developed as timestamped audio resources and delivered to clients. The team assisted in the COVID19 Mobile information units also at multiple locations. An emergency relief system was set up for asylum-seekers referred by Services Australia who were in financial hardship. Referral pathways and material aid from donors benefited more than 40 non-client individuals. Team interpreters explained complicated housing issues to clients by phone, while housing support workers liaised with local Real Estate agencies to avoid any risk of homelessness. Settlement support continued delivery of a critical program through multilingual team members working overtime with about 30 clients to set up digital platforms. Team members escorted clients in small groups to COVID19 testing centres. In collaboration with Greater Shepparton Foundation and local agencies, volunteers and members of the team delivered nearly 500 meals to vulnerable clients.





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### **Well Wise Women Program:**

The ability of the WWW Community Health Educators to adapt their program to the needs of the community and do so in a way that provided immediate and essential supplies to vulnerable community members deserves recognition and the appreciation of the wider community. These women contributed exceptionally long hours in voluntary work and put their own money towards fuel for deliveries and food.

### **Point of Difference Studio:**

During the COVID-19 Shepparton outbreak, Betul, Melissa and their team at the POD worked exceptionally long hours and utilised their own financial resources to ensure CALD families were provided with food relief and essentials to remain isolated and treat their COVID infections.

They identified community members in need through their existing relationships with young people and their families. They sourced culturally appropriate food and personal supplies and delivered them to those in need. They advocated at multiple local and regional meetings on the gaps in current emergency relief arrangements.



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### **Greater Shepparton Unites in Voice:**

Greater Shepparton Unites in Voice was an online live streamed event held on Friday 8th October between 7.00pm – 9.00pm. A number of passionate locals from Greater Shepparton acknowledged the impact and response of the strength of community spirit during the lockdown/quarantine residents faced in August 2021. The group wanted to celebrate and acknowledge the community.

All individuals involved already work full time, but as the event started to develop momentum and public interest everyone understood and supported the vision of giving our community a great big hug and help make a small idea come to life.

Without this group of individuals the idea that started as 'just an idea' would still be that - an idea.

Their support, enthusiasm, belief and dedication to the project will always be something I'm thankful for.



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**Thank you**



**Nominee Videographers:**

Trinity Crumpen – Winmar & Tinesha Depalma

*Tom Nethersole  
Productions*

**Pandemic Response Video:**

Tom Nethersole

**Emcee's:**

Ada Kolvani & Lillian Richardson



**Keynote Speaker:**

Jamie Lea

**Greater Shepparton City Council  
acknowledges, recognises and thanks  
all volunteers that give their time  
throughout the municipality.**



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