

MEDIA RELEASE

19 April 2021

Recognising the stars of community services at a magical event

The last 18 months have been extremely stressful, especially for not for profit community service providers in the Illawarra and southern NSW who have continued to operate in the face of drought, fire, flood and a pandemic.

Community Industry Group, the peak body for community services in the Illawarra & Southern NSW, will be highlighting the resilience and ingenuity of community service workers at the first ever *We Do Magic* Community Service Awards.

‘The dedicated leaders, staff and volunteers from community services have been forced to continue working in extremely challenging circumstances following the 2019/20 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic,’ said Nicky Sloan, CEO of Community Industry Group. ‘While other sectors faced downturns, the demand for community support dramatically increased as need and disadvantage escalated in areas such as homelessness, mental health support, and domestic and family violence.’

‘Many providers including those in disability, aged care, and family support organisations were extremely creative in coming up with new COVID-safe ways to ensure their participants were not left isolated during the pandemic. It is this ingenuity that needs to be recognised and celebrated,’ Eleonore Johansson, Chair of the Community Industry Group Board explained. ‘It’s time that the hard work of the community services workforce in the Illawarra and Southern NSW is publicly appreciated and rewarded.’

Community service organisations are encouraged to consider nominating themselves, their team, and individual or partner organisation for the *We Do Magic* Community Service Awards. The nomination process is quick and simple. Categories include ‘A Brilliant Idea’, ‘Team Effort’, ‘Collaboration’, ‘Transformation’ and ‘Above & Beyond’.

Community Industry Group is tremendously grateful to BlueScope Steel, who have come on board as our Platinum Sponsor for the awards. We are seeking expressions of interest from other organisations who wish to support this worthwhile event and give their own thanks to the stars of the community services industry. There are a variety of sponsorship options available from Gold Sponsor, down to a small contribution to sponsor tickets for a not for profit worker from the Far South Coast to attend the awards night.

The *We Do Magic* Community Service Awards and Gala Dinner will be held on Friday 4 June 2021 at Novotel Wollongong Northbeach and features entertainer and magician Scott Radburn, of the Four Kinsmen. Tickets are \$80 for members or \$120 for non members and include entry and a three course meal.

For more information about the We Do Magic Community Service Awards see:

<https://communityindustrygroup.org.au/we-do-magic/>.

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About the Community Industry Group

Community Industry (formerly known as Illawarra Forum) is the peak body working for community services and organisations in the South East of NSW. It supports community organisations, promotes expertise and innovation in community development, fosters industry development and provides advocacy for social justice.

Community Industry Group represents the non-government community services industry in the South East of NSW, and works closely with numerous organisations which provide support to vulnerable people across the region.