

2024

NORTHERN TERRITORY
VOLUNTEER OF THE
YEAR AWARDS

Top End
Double Tree by Hilton Esplanade
10 October 2024



Volunteering NT acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we live and work. We recognise the importance of their connection to place and community on these lands and pay our respects to Elders, past and present.





A message from the NT Administrator

It is a great pleasure to take part in the Northern Territory Volunteer of the Year Awards and I am proud to be Patron of Volunteering NT.

What would the world – and the Northern Territory – be without volunteers?

It would be a place with less kindness, more self-centred and a lot less would get done! Today more than ever, we need the spirit of volunteers: those who act in service for good causes, for organisations that are doing crucial work to make the world a better place and for other community members.

This program profiles some very special volunteers and teams who are the finalists for this year's awards. There is also a list of the names of all the nominees for the awards and those who are receiving certificates of appreciation for volunteering activity and commitment. I think all of you are amazing.

I thank you on behalf of the Northern Territory for your wonderful contributions to our community. I also commend the organisers and judges of the awards for such a significant achievement, to be able to honour some tremendous individuals and organisations, as well as celebrate volunteering itself.

**His Honour Professor the Honourable
Hugh Heggie AO PSM
Administrator of the Northern Territory**



A message from the Chief Minister

Volunteers make a phenomenal contribution to our community.

Our Government is proud to work alongside Volunteering NT to both support and strengthen our volunteer sector.

Volunteering is broad and impactful, and can include volunteering on a committee to washing your child's team uniforms each weekend. The Territory is better because of the countless hours given by selfless individuals who continue to put others above themselves.

Tonight is an opportunity to recognise exemplary Territorians who have made an outstanding contribution to our community. We also thank them for their tireless efforts, some who have dedicated decades of their life to different causes for no personal gain.

We know many events and organisations would not exist without countless individuals coming together in their own time. We also know volunteering is a way to connect with others, find a sense of belonging in our communities and develop and use new and existing skills.

Volunteering has a wide impact on the physical, social and mental wellbeing of our communities.

I congratulate all finalists and winners tonight and thank you for making the Territory a better place.

The Hon Lia Finocchiaro
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory
Minister for Police
Minister for Fire and Emergency Service
Minister for Defence
Minister for Territory Coordinator



About the awards



The Northern Territory Volunteer of the Year Awards recognise the outstanding contribution of the many Northern Territory volunteers, volunteer involving organisations, corporate volunteering programs and volunteer managers at work in our community.

Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. These prestigious Awards promote the important contribution of volunteering to the social, cultural, economic and environmental well-being of the Northern Territory, paying tribute to those who inspire and promote the spirit of volunteerism through exemplary endeavours.

The Awards, established in 2014, are an initiative of Volunteering NT, supported by the Northern Territory Government. Nominations are assessed by an independent Judging Panel chaired by Volunteering NT.

Share your pictures using #NTVolunteerAwards.

Program

Thursday 10th October 2024

Double Tree Hilton - Esplanade

116 Esplanade

Darwin City

5:30pm Guest arrive, canapes and drinks

6:00pm Formalities commence

7:30pm Formalities conclude

Awards

- Certificates of Appreciation
- NTSESVA Youth Emergency Services Volunteer of the Year
- Excellence in Volunteer Management
- INPEX Emergency Services Volunteer of the Year
- Chief Minister's Community Volunteer Organisation/Team of the Year Award
- Chief Minister's Youth Volunteer of the Year Award
- Chief Minister's Volunteer of the Year Award

NTSESVA Emergency Services Youth Volunteer of the Year Award



Presented in celebration of an individual aged 14–27 years who has made an outstanding voluntary commitment through an Emergency Service and who through their volunteering has positively impacted on the lives of others.

Finalists

Asheton Bayard-Hewitt

For his work with Surf Lifesaving Club and his commitment to expanding his skills in lifesaving, water safety, and emergency response.

Fletcher Austin

For his work with the Marrakai Volunteer Bushfire Brigade. He successfully raised \$25,000 for an ATV, which has increased the brigade's ability to conduct larger and more effective mitigation burns.

Lewis Smythe

For his extraordinary commitment to the Gove Peninsula Surf Life Saving Club and the wider community.

Excellence in Volunteer Management Award

Presented in acknowledgment of a salaried or non-salaried individual, group or volunteer management program that has demonstrated good practice in the management of volunteers and the delivery of volunteer programs by those volunteers.

Finalists

James Woods

James has been a cornerstone of volunteer management for Northern Territory Emergency Services since 2011, coordinating Road Crash Rescues as well as land and marine search and rescues.

Joanna Killmister

Affectionately known as Killa, has been a dedicated member of the Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) since 2000. Her involvement spans across various areas of volunteering management including, Cyclone Recovery Efforts, Emergency Response, Community Engagement and Emergency Planning.

Sarani Muthunayake

For her work with Australian Red Cross Migration Support Programs in particular the Connected Women program. "Sarani is a very friendly person. She makes my volunteer experience valuable."

INPEX Emergency Services Volunteer of the Year Award



Presented in recognition of exceptional volunteer achievement, which may include considerable contributions over an extended period of time within Emergency Services.

Finalists

Christopher Trotter

Chris Trotter has been a volunteer with St John Ambulance for over 3 decades and keeps Territorians safe at motorsports, races, and festivals. He is a Member of the St John Order.

Therese Balanzategui

Therese has been a volunteer with Labasheeda Park Volunteer Bushfire Brigade since 2008 supporting the local community to prepare for and actively manage bushfires. In 2019 she formed a small community group 'Protect Our Patch' to manage Gamba Grass.

Valma Eaton

Val has been an exemplary Red Cross Emergency Services Volunteer since January 2022. Her primary focus has been on managing evacuation centres and providing Psychological First Aid to individuals impacted by disasters. Val's work has been crucial in aiding remote communities ravaged by life-threatening floods, where residents have often lost their homes, possessions, and connections with loved ones

Chief Minister's Community Volunteer Organisation/ Team of the Year Award



Presented in celebration of a volunteer involving community organisation that provides innovative leadership, and through good practice in volunteering brings about positive and enduring change to their community.

Finalists

Jabiru Golf Club

The Jabiru Golf Club makes significant contributions to the community through its active volunteer efforts. With around 380 members, the club acts as a critical social hub for locals, families, and tourists, especially during the town's post-mining transition. Jabiru Golf Club is the only social sports club venue in the Jabiru township

Northern Territory Emergency Service – Nhulunbuy Volunteer Unit

The unit is responsible for the Nhulunbuy district, which includes the Gove Peninsula, part of Arnhem Land. Over the past two years, the team has grown from 2 to 12 members, allowing them to expand their scope of contribution. The unit has collaborated with other emergency services, such as St Johns and the NT Police, for sea rescue operations, and with NT Fire and Rescue Service highlighting the unit's broad scope of contribution across multiple areas of volunteering

Transport To Treatment, Cancer Council NT

A team of volunteers who transport cancer patients to and from their treatment. Their contribution extends beyond transportation. They also provide crucial emotional and social support to patients, addressing a significant need in Darwin, where many patients lack a local support network. This added layer of care helps ease the emotional burden of the patient's treatment.

Chief Minister's Youth Volunteer of the Year Award



Presented in celebration of an individual aged 14–27 years who has made an outstanding voluntary commitment and who through their volunteering has positively impacted on the lives of others.

Finalists

Eva Susanto

Since the age of 6, Eva and her brother Peter have raised funds by selling their grandmother's traditional Indonesian snacks along the Nightcliff Foreshore every Sunday evening and Cullen Bay on Saturday evenings. They donate the funds to a different charity every year, including Dawn House, Fred Hollows Foundation, Queensland Eye Institute, Kangaroo Island Men's Shed and the Matahari Terbit orphanage in their mother's hometown of Surabaya. This year, they are fundraising for Cancer Council, after losing their Great Aunt, who used to help make the snacks, to breast cancer.

Hajrah Kamran

Hajrah, a medical scientist and Islamic scholar is a pivotal figure in the Northern Territory community. While completing 2 Bachelor degrees simultaneously since 2021, Hajrah has also recently completed a diploma of mental health to complement her community engagement projects in mental health. She has been involved in over a dozen initiatives through her roles as the President of Charles Darwin University (CDU) Student's Council, Youth Coordinator at the United Muslims of Northern Territory, President of the CDU Women's Collective for Innovation and Change, Secretary of the NT Youth Round Table 2022, and Vice-Chair at TWO TWO ONE Mental Health Charity. Her contributions range from organising large-scale community events, such as youth sessions, cultural celebrations and art workshops (Arabic calligraphy), to leading educational workshops on mental and physical health, family and domestic violence, substance use and social inclusion. Her efforts have not only reached the communities within the wider NT but have also influenced broader multicultural and health networks, fostering inclusion and advocacy for underrepresented groups across the NT and Australia

Hriday Nayyar

Hriday has shown remarkable dedication and a diverse skill set through his involvement in multiple impactful volunteering projects including the CDU Indian Student Forum, the Kindness Festival, Kindness Shake's Skill Up2Scale Up program, volunteering expos, Variety NT events and Young Professionals Rotaract NT. His widespread involvement and exceptional contributions to the Darwin community, reflect his capacity to drive positive change.

Chief Minister's Volunteer of the Year Award



Presented in celebration of an individual who has made an outstanding voluntary commitment and who through their volunteering has positively impacted on the lives of others.

Finalists

Ashish Jamarkattel

Ashish has made a significant and wide-reaching contribution to the Nepalese community and the wider Northern Territory. As President of the Nepalese Association of Northern Territory (2022-24), Ashish has led over 300 volunteers in 16 projects annually to support students and community members. These include multicultural events in both Darwin and Palmerston. Through his involvement as an Advisor in the Minister of Multicultural Affairs' Advisory Council he advocates for the community, positively impacting cultural preservation and social support for vulnerable members.

Paul Pokorny

Paul's contribution to the Elizabeth Valley Bushfire Brigade spans an impressive 25yrs, which includes 9yrs as Deputy Captain and Fire Warden. His scope of contribution is extensive, attending up to 90% of call outs for his Brigade, responding to thousands of incidents, he also supports other Brigades when needed. Beyond firefighting, Paul has aided during floods, cyclones, and traffic incidents. Paul trains and mentors' new recruits strengthening community resilience through training and improved fire preparedness. Paul's dedication has inspired others, including his two sons who have joined the Brigade, extending his impact to future generations.

Tania Lesneuck

As President of the Riding for the Disabled Australia Top End, Tania transformed the Centre which now supports five staff members, 25 private clients, 10 horses, and up to 40 volunteers each year. She has secured over \$300,000 in project funding to improve facilities and obtained a 3-year funding agreement for the 'Saddle Up' program, benefiting 94 students from specialist schools annually. Tania's work not only revitalised the centre but also created a positive, wide-reaching impact on the local community

Certificate of Appreciation

In recognition of their volunteering activity and commitment over the last year.

Angela James - Cancer Council NT

Bede Skewes - Bushfires NT

Caroline Gehlert

Cathie Allen - Bushfires NT

Craig Bould - NT Emergency Service Darwin Volunteer Unit

Deborah Kakoschke - Bushfires NT

Doug Chalmers - Bushfires NT

Doug Sharpe - Marrakai Volunteer Bushfire Brigade

Dr Felix Ho - St John Ambulance NT

Evan Johns - Howard Springs Scout Group

Gerard Toreresi - Howard Springs Volunteer Bushfire Brigade

Grant (Clancy) Austin - Marrakai Volunteer Bushfire Brigade

Hari Prasad Sharma - Nepalese Association of Northern Territory

Helen Leach - NT Emergency Service Palmerston Volunteer Unit

Hilmi Suryani - Australian Red Cross

Jan Murphy - Bushfires NT

Jayne Winter - Rossiter Street Playgroup

Jinx Smith - Freds Pass Rural Show

Joanne Atkins - Bushfires NT

John Haywood

Jonathan Polke - Australian Red Cross

Karl Kratcshmer - Northern Territory Emergency Service Katherine Volunteer Unit

Lachlan Nicolson - Northern Territory Emergency Service Maningrida Volunteer Unit

Lee Webb - Northern Territory Emergency Service - Nhulunbuy Volunteer Unit

Matthew Hunter - Bushfires NT

Mazz Riley - Virginia Bees Creek Volunteer Fire Brigade

Muskaan Dhirani

Nabina Rana - Australian Red Cross

Noorun Salma - Bangladesh Association of Northern Territory

Paulina Mercado - Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory

Ray Nicholls - Bushfires NT

Rina Yulia - Australian Red Cross

Roger (Pom) Bryant - Marrakai Volunteer Bushfire Brigade

Ron Roberts - Northern Territory Legacy

Thu Mai (Miley) Vu - Kindness Shake Inc.

Tim Cleary - Crocodylus Park

Yvie Varatharajan - Ronald McDonald House Charities

All Nominees

A heartfelt congratulations to all individuals and organisations nominated for this year's awards, your invaluable contributions make a real difference to the NT community.

NTSESVA Youth Emergency Service Volunteer of the Year

Asheton Bayard-Hewitt - Surf Lifesaving NT

Fletcher Austin - Bushfires NT

Lewis Smythe - Surf Lifesaving NT

Excellence in Volunteer Management

Caroline Thompson - Charles Darwin University

Cassandra (Cassie) Brown - NTES Palmerston Volunteer Unit

James Woods - Northern Territory Emergency Service

Jeremy Hemphill - Friends of Fogg Dam

Joanna Killmister - Northern Territory Emergency Service

Maria Shore - Billeroy House

Mathilde Mercadier - Darwin Festival

Sarani Muthunayake - Australian Red Cross

INPEX Emergency Service Volunteer of the Year

Alwin Corporaal - NT State Emergency Services: Palmerston Volunteer Unit

Belinda Kolstad - Virginia Bees Creek Volunteer Fire Brigade

Christopher Trotter - St John Ambulance Australia (NT)

Graeme Steer – Palmerston Volunteer Bushfire Unit

Hamish Burslem - Howard Springs Volunteer Bushfire Brigade

Kyle Seville - Northern Territory Emergency Service

Rebecca Vale – Northern Territory Emergency Services Darwin Unit

Therese Balanzategui - Bushfires NT, Protect Our Patch, 34 Mile Choir, Gamba Grass Roots.

Valma Eaton - Australian Red Cross

All Nominees - continued

A heartfelt congratulations to all individuals and organisations nominated for this year's awards, your invaluable contributions make a real difference to the NT community.

Chief Ministers Community Organisation/Team

Darwin Wildlife Sanctuary

Nepalese Association of Northern Territory

Australian Vietnamese Family Association Inc

Darwin Social Chess Club

CareFlight Top End

Rapid Creek Landcare Group and Casuarina Coastal Reserve Landcare Group

Adopt a Spot Group

Charles Darwin University

Jabiru Golf Club Inc

Friends of Fogg Dam

Northern Territory Emergency Service - Nhulunbuy Volunteer Unit

Darwin Community Legal Service

Nightcliff Parkrun

Lankan Dance Academy Incorporation

Aunty's Free Feeds

St Vincent de Paul Society NT

Cancer Council NT

Chief Ministers Youth Volunteer of the Year

Amreen Hasan - Charles Darwin University (Alumni)

Anup Kadariya - Kindness Shake Inc

Birendra Kunwar - Kindness Shake Inc

Blake Steven Wilson

Deepak Chhetry - Young Professionals Rotaract Northern Territory

Eva Susanto

Gilbertofer Tanoto - Charles Darwin University (student)

Hajrah Kamran - Charles Darwin University (student)

Hriday Nayyar

Mitchell Brown - Riding for the Disabled Association Top End Inc

All Nominees - continued

A heartfelt congratulations to all individuals and organisations nominated for this year's awards, your invaluable contributions make a real difference to the NT community.

Chief Ministers Youth Volunteer of the Year - continued

Naomi Endo - RSPCA Northern Territory Inc

Nithya Yamasinghe

Preeti Rathi - Charles Darwin University (Student)

Sabrina Doha - Kindness Shake

Yuqing (Crystal) Zhao - Kindness Shake Inc.

Chief Minister's Volunteer of the Year

Angela Twine - Northern Territory SES - Darwin Volunteer Unit

Ashish Raj Jamarkattel - Northern Territory Emergency Service

Ben Kolstad - Virginia Bees Creek Volunteer Fire Brigade

Billy Chepkemoi - Africa Australia Friendships Association

Chowdhury Sadaruddin

Christopher Trotter

Cong Do Le - Charles Darwin University

Dan Tellam - Billeroy House, Darwin RSL Sub Branch

Debra McColl - Australian Red Cross

Dot McHugh

Elisa Fong - St Vincent de Paul Society NT

Farzana Akhter - Charles Darwin University (Student)

Hajrah Kamran - Charles Darwin University (Student)

Helen Currie - St Vincent de Paul Society NT

Imran Ahmed Shajib - Islamic Society of Darwin, Bangladeshi Alumni Association

CDU

Iris Ma - Victims of Crime NT

All Nominees - continued

A heartfelt congratulations to all individuals and organisations nominated for this year's awards, your invaluable contributions make a real difference to the NT community.

Chief Minister's Volunteer of the Year - continued

Ivy Yeh - Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia

Joanna Killmister - Riding for the Disabled Association Top End Inc

Justin Groves - Port Darwin Football Club

Katrina Chambers

Kemuel Lam Paktsun - St John Ambulance NT

Liam Vidler - Nhulunbuy Playgroup

Maged Esmat - Charles Darwin University (Student)

Margaret Rudwick - Northern Territory Legacy

Maria Haralambis

My Ngoc (Jade) Doan

Nithya Yamasinghe - CDU Women's Collective for Innovation and Change

Omar Faruk

Paul Pokorny

Sandesh Poudel - Nepalese Association of Northern Territory

Sharon Stewart - Surf Lifesaving NT

Sharyn Winders - Darwin Festival

Shirley Preston - Freds Pass Rural Show

Shishtata Bhandari - Alawa Scout Group

Sue Thackray - RSPCA Northern Territory Inc

Talosaga (Tyrone) Lelea - St John Ambulance NT

Tania Lesneuck - Nepalese Association of Northern Territory

Tejinder Pal Singh - Sikh Family Food Van

Wendy Portlouis

Wieslawa Rusin-Wlodarczyk - Kindness Shake Inc



The **2024 NT Volunteer of the Year Awards** are presented by



Volunteering SA&NT is a not for profit organisation and the peak body for volunteering in South Australia and the Northern Territory.

Learn more at vsant.org.au

Proudly supported by the



The Northern Territory Government supports the volunteer sector through volunteer recognition, policy advice and a cooperative partnership with the volunteer sector.

Learn more at nt.gov.au/community/grants-and-volunteers/volunteering

Thank you to our award sponsors



INPEX is committed to contributing to the sustainability of the communities in which it operates by providing members of the community with opportunities to come together, connect and collaborate.



The NT SES Volunteers Association works closely with NT Emergency Service to provide the best support and opportunities for volunteers through out the NT.

Thank you to our event sponsors



Thank you to our event partners

