

Local community groups recognised at 2019 Healthy Towns Awards

A faerie-themed sustainability festival, two community gardens, and a medical transport service are among nine community groups to share in more than \$15,000 in grants at the 2019 Healthy Towns Awards announced in Peregian on Thursday.

Proudly funded by Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN, and supported by the University of the Sunshine Coast, Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Noosa Council and Gympie Regional Council, Healthy Towns helps support rural and regional community groups run projects to improve local people's health and happiness.

The PHN's Senior Manager Robb Major said the impact groups like those nominated for the awards have on the community could not be underestimated.

"These awards recognise that community groups make an enormous contribution to the health and wellbeing of residents," Mr Major said.

"We know that in this modern world our interactions with our friends and families, communities and even the space around us is diminishing as our lives become more complex and rushed.

"These groups tackle that head on, championing resilience and happiness by providing a place or a service for people to strengthen local connections with each other, with their community, and with their environment."

Held annually, the Awards are split into three categories each with their own unique criteria, Connections Between People, Connections With Place, Connections With Greenspace, along with a major Health and Happiness Award for the application best representing all three.

While the Health and Happiness Award comes with a \$7,500 bursary, each successful award recipient in their category receives \$1,500, with runners up taking home \$750.

The QWCA Palmwoods Branch were the recipients of the 2019 Healthy Towns Health and Happiness Award, which Branch President Yvonne Dalziel said would go towards supporting the ongoing success of their many projects.

"We're absolutely thrilled to win this award - we asked our town what they wanted us to do (if we won), and they would like us to improve and increase the programs we run during the year," Ms Dalziel said.

"We run healthy eating programs, 'belonging' programs where people can turn up to an event we're running, we support bespoke businesses with skill building, a healthy kids program, a cooking program for adults, sewing program for adults, and a variety of others.

"Four years ago we had five members, now we have 30, but we have the support of the entire town – it helps bring the town together.

"This award will help us to continue on and grow into what the community needs."

Full list of this year's award winners below.

Applications for the next Healthy Towns Awards will open in mid-2020.

For more details visit: healthytowns.org.au

**For more information contact: Jasmin Midgley, Senior Media and Communications Officer,
Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN on 5456 8100**

MEDIA RELEASE

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2019 HEALTHY TOWNS AWARD WINNERS

HEALTH AND HAPPINESS AWARD: QCWA Branch Palmwoods

PEOPLE AWARD WINNER: Sunny Street

PEOPLE AWARD RUNNER UP: Pomona & District Community House

PLACE AWARD WINNER: Katie Rose Cottage Hospice

PLACE AWARD RUNNER UP: Maleny Neighbourhood Centre

GREENSPACE AWARD WINNER (joint winner): Gympie Community Garden

GREENSPACE AWARD WINNER (joint winner): Palmwoods Community Garden

OUTSTANDING APPLICATION AWARD: Cooloola Coast Medical Transport

OUTSTANDING APPLICATION AWARD: Faerie Festival

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