

The Daily Telegraph

Meet the 2019 Parramatta Citizens of the Year

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Parramatta Citizen of the Year Diana Mahony (centre) celebrates her award. Picture: Jason Nichols

Oatlands cancer research advocate Diana Mahony has been named Parramatta City's 2019 Citizen of the Year.

She has been involved with The Judith Hyam Memorial Trust Fund for Cancer Research for 30 years when she has been the president, secretary and trustee of the organisation.



Parramatta Citizen of the Year Diana Mahony (sitting) with her award. Picture: Jason Nichols

She has helped raise more than \$1.2 million to support the Children's Medical Research Institute to purchase essential research equipment.

In her spare time, she also volunteers at St John's Anglican Cathedral Parramatta and the institute.

YOUNG CITIZEN

A strong sense of social justice has led Pariselle Hughes to be named Parramatta's Young Citizen of the Year.

The driven 17-year-old, who will study her HSC at Redeemer Baptist School, North Parramatta, this year spearheaded a fundraising campaign to amass \$15,000 for the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation.

After hosting breakfasts and car washes, funds were directed to the organisation's rehabilitation and treatment programs.

The issue is close to her heart after her aunt was diagnosed with MS in 2012.

No stranger to accolades, Pariselle was named the Western Sydney Region Vocational Education in Schools Student of the Year last year.



Young Citizen of the Year Pariselle Hughes.

Over the past two years she travelled with her peers to Boggabilla and Kempsey to assist the Aboriginal community with charitable youth projects.

Not surprisingly, she is eyeing a career in human rights.

“I want to become a police officer and then a detective,” Pariselle said.

“I just have this thing for justice and compassion for other people. When you’re seeing people taken advantage of because of their age or appearance, it impacts me.”

Miss Hughes, who lives at Yagoona, is bound to achieve.

She sat her HSC business studies exam early and landed on the high achievers’ list.

Parramatta Lord Mayor Andrew Wilson and Parramatta’s Australia Day awards ambassador, filmmaker, public speaker and author Anupam Sharma, presented the awards at a ceremony at Rydges Parramatta last week.

Other recipients were:

Annette Douglass: The Senior Citizen of the Year is a dedicated member of the 1st Parramatta Scout Group for 28 years.

Volunteer of the Year

Kellie Darley: The Volunteer of the Year is the main contributor and driving force behind ParraParents, a website offering community information for families about the Parramatta area.

Yuting Zhu: Art and cultural award. The recipient is a retired university professor and music enthusiast who migrated to Australia from China five years ago. He has

brought more than 25 instruments with him and his was to share his passion for music, donating several of these instruments to students, elders and institutions.

Summer Giddings: Summer Giddings has cerebral palsy and studies at Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta. Last February, she completed the Crazy Kosciusko Climb which raised \$7500 for the Cerebral Palsy Alliance. Throughout the year, Summer competed in a number of athletics competitions, including the World Cerebral Palsy Games in Spain where she won a silver medal in the 200m event, and two gold medals in the 400m and F35 long jump events, setting a world record for the latter.

Lions Club of Parramatta: The Community Group Award recipients have donated \$3.5 million to initiatives, groups, individuals and organisations over the past 61 years.

Kevin Hession: The Lord Mayor Community Service Award recipient is a founding and life member of the Parramatta Memorial Swimming Club. At 87 years of age, Kevin continues to volunteer as a swimming coach, providing free lessons to children every Saturday morning. Two of his great-grandchildren are part of his training squad and the club boasts four generations of Hessians.

Fritz Berchtold: The Lord Mayor Humanity Award recipient has been the president at Epping Senior Citizens Club since 2008. Fritz co-ordinates many activities including singing, yoga, gentle exercise, cards and social lunches. A former cook, Fritz prepares nutritional meals for Epping Community Centre and the local church, and goes so far as to ride his bike to collect all of the produce himself.