



Citizenship Ceremony and Auspire Community Citizen of the Year Awards

26 January 2026

A wide-angle photograph of a rugged landscape at sunset. The sky is filled with horizontal bands of orange, yellow, and light blue. In the foreground, there are dark, rocky hills with sparse green vegetation. The terrain slopes down towards the right, leading to a valley and more distant, lower hills under the colorful sky.

Acknowledgements

The City of Karratha acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work and recognises their continuing connection to country, waterways and community. We pay respect to all Elders; past, present and emerging.

Program

Leiani Fenner

Welcome Music

Citizenship Ceremony

MC Virginia Miltrup

Presiding Officer Mayor Daniel Scott

All new citizens to go to the stage at the end of proceedings for a group photo.

Community Awards Presentation

Welcome Address

Mayor Daniel Scott

Young Community Citizen of the Year

Presented by Rio Tinto

Senior Community Citizen of the Year

Presented by Rio Tinto

Active Citizenship

Presented by Mayor Daniel Scott

Community Citizen of the Year 2025

Carl Wangemann

Community Citizen of the Year

Presented by Carl Wangemann

All nominees and winners to go to the stage at the end of proceedings for a group photo.

Australian National Anthem

Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are one and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;
Our home is girt by sea;
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare;
In history's page, let every stage
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross
We'll toil with hearts and hands;
To make this Commonwealth of ours
Renowned of all the lands;
For those who've come across the seas
We've boundless plains to share;
With courage let us all combine
To Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

Citizenship Ceremony

Today we welcome the
City of Karratha's newest Australian Citizens:

Darrel Alves	Leo Homann
Graeme Chai Alves	Darren Homann
Louanna Chai-Alves	Leeviy Laban
Isabelle Chai-Alves	Ju-Chiu Lee
Michele Tiffany Boniel	Elizabeth Mutangiri
Erica Buccella	Innocent Mutangiri
Mark Castano	Innocent Jr Mutangiri
Sin-Tsz Chen	Iaine Mutangiri
Mikolaj Cherrington	Aiden Mutangiri
Kera Thelma Cherrington	Neil Newburn
Jyue-Han Dai	Clinton Northe
Marie Fabro	Bhanu Partap
Ahmed Filali	Siddhiben Patel
Karri Frisken	Laura Pearce-Wilson
Jordan Gray	Laura Peardon
Wayne Haenga	Nathan Poole
Jacob Hohua	Sheena Tacadao
Jacinta Homann	Wiebke Treptow
Jett Homann	Vidhya Nidhi
Tai Homann	

Past Citizens of the Year

1989	Nan Williams (Presented 1990)	2007	Stuart Robertson
1990	Hilda Rooney (Presented 1991)	2008	Maree Pont
1991	Major George Palmer (Presented 1992)	2009	Jim Farnworth
1992	Kelvin Lemke (Presented 1993)	2010	Sue Hedley
1994	Betty Ramsay	2011	Anita Cheeseman
1995	Kevin Richards	2012	Arran McOscar
1996	Richard & Sue Baldwin	2013	Grant Cucel
1997	Gwen McCoy	2014	Michael Booth
1998	William John Case	2015	Donna Stace
1999	Adrian Griffiths	2016	John Lally
2000	Dave & Bev Catto	2017	Joanne Waterstrom Muller
2001	Bev Horton	2018	Tammy Tennant
2002	John Macgowan	2019	Sandra Spadanuda
2003	Marshall Smith	2020	Damien Muller
2004	Anna Vitenbergs	2021	Ross Humphries
2005	Pastor Dave Stevens	2022	Luke Whatley
2006	Dr Scott Teasdale	2023	Robert Graham
		2024	Rhian Ambrosius
		2025	Carl Wangemann

A message from City of Karratha

Mayor Daniel Scott

We celebrate Australia Day by taking a moment to reflect, respect, and celebrate our future as a community, and remembering that we are all part of the story. We are given the opportunity to stand together as a nation and be proud of all that makes us Australian.

During this day, we welcome new citizens, and recognise those individuals who support others selflessly. Those who volunteer first, who raise others up – these people form the backbones of our community who continue to give their time, energy, and expertise selflessly.

Our Community Citizen of the Year Awards feature four award categories to recognise these dedicated people: Community Citizen of the Year, Young Community Citizen of the Year, Senior Community Citizen of the Year, and Active Citizenship (for a group or event).

Every person or group nominated for one of these categories should be incredibly proud, knowing that their community recognises and appreciates their commitment. I want to thank everyone who put in nominations for these Community Awards, it is important to acknowledge the people in our community who are going above and beyond. Without your support this simply would not happen.

I must also thank our generous sponsor, Rio Tinto, it is a true pleasure to have them on board.

I would like to congratulate all our nominees and winners for the City of Karratha Community Citizen of the Year Awards, as well as our new citizens. I am very excited to see so many outstanding residents living here in Karratha, ready to lead our community into the future.

I also encourage everyone to come down to our Australia Day Celebration tonight, kicking off in Dampier at Hampton Oval from 6pm and featuring free family fun, live entertainment, market stalls, food trucks and fireworks from 8.15pm.

Daniel Scott
Mayor City of Karratha



A note from City of Karratha Community Citizen of the Year 2025

Carl Wangemann

I'd like to begin by sincerely thanking the City of Karratha for the honour of being named Karratha Citizen of the Year. Being involved in the selection panel for 2026 showed me just how many people are working quietly in our community, with the vision to make a difference, and that makes this award especially meaningful to me.

Being part of that process reinforced why nominating matters. Many people give their time and energy without recognition, and nomination simply acknowledges that effort and reminds them that what they do truly matters.

Being a good citizen is important because strong communities don't happen by chance. They are built by people who choose to show up, support others, and contribute in ways both big and small.

This year has been significant for Karratha Shotokan Karate. We opened a third dojo in Dampier alongside Wickham and Karratha, grew our membership from around 50 students to over 100, and hosted our first combined club championships focused on effort, respect, resilience, and connection.

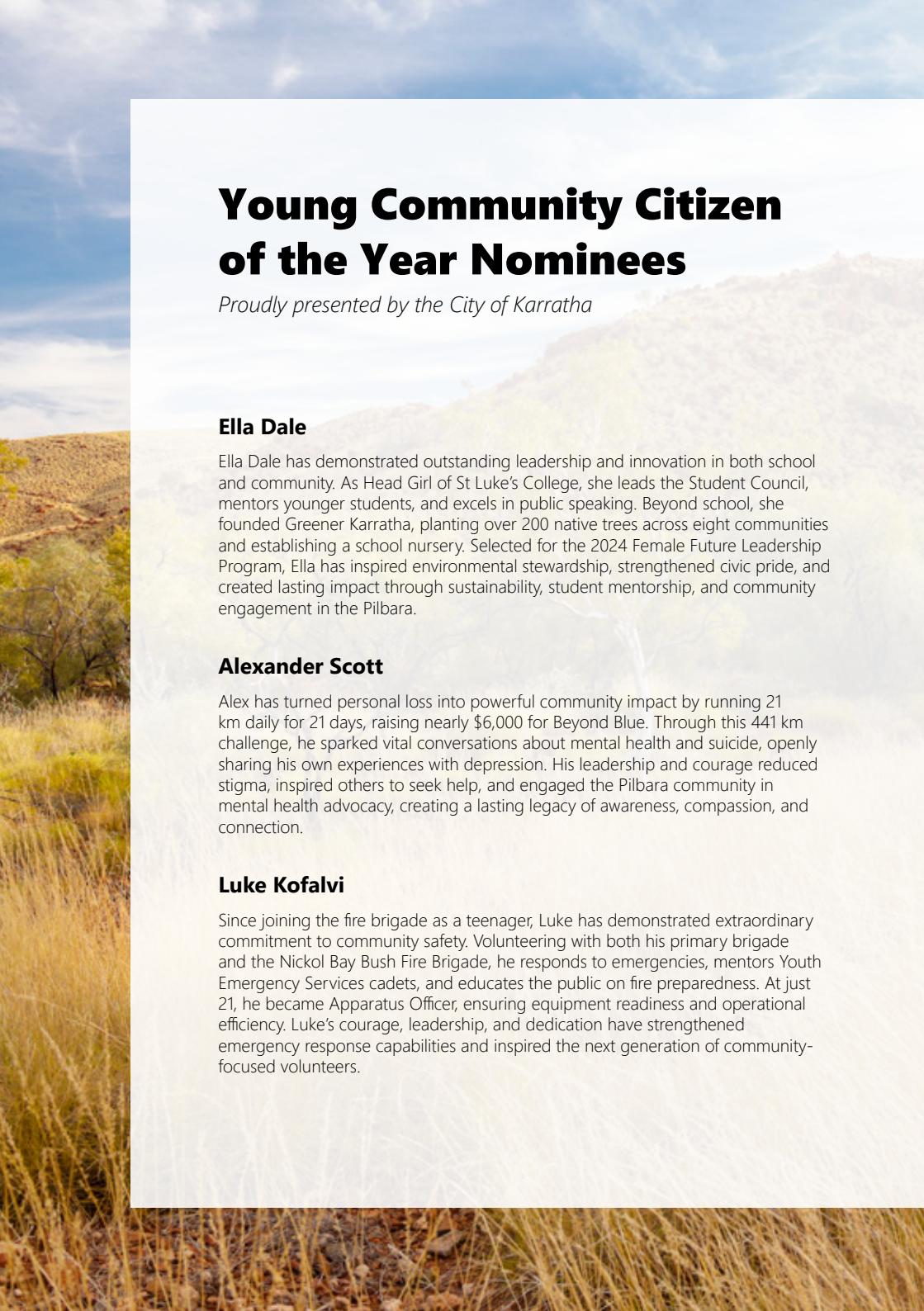
Karate offers more than physical training. It builds confidence, discipline, and emotional control, encourages inclusion, and supports people of all abilities in an environment where everyone belongs.

Through karate, we bring generations together and encourage people to be the best version of themselves. The lessons learned in the dojo carry into everyday life and strengthen our wider community.

Thank you again for this recognition and for celebrating the importance of service, community, and being a good citizen.

Carl Wangemann





Young Community Citizen of the Year Nominees

Proudly presented by the City of Karratha

Ella Dale

Ella Dale has demonstrated outstanding leadership and innovation in both school and community. As Head Girl of St Luke's College, she leads the Student Council, mentors younger students, and excels in public speaking. Beyond school, she founded Greener Karratha, planting over 200 native trees across eight communities and establishing a school nursery. Selected for the 2024 Female Future Leadership Program, Ella has inspired environmental stewardship, strengthened civic pride, and created lasting impact through sustainability, student mentorship, and community engagement in the Pilbara.

Alexander Scott

Alex has turned personal loss into powerful community impact by running 21 km daily for 21 days, raising nearly \$6,000 for Beyond Blue. Through this 441 km challenge, he sparked vital conversations about mental health and suicide, openly sharing his own experiences with depression. His leadership and courage reduced stigma, inspired others to seek help, and engaged the Pilbara community in mental health advocacy, creating a lasting legacy of awareness, compassion, and connection.

Luke Kofalvi

Since joining the fire brigade as a teenager, Luke has demonstrated extraordinary commitment to community safety. Volunteering with both his primary brigade and the Nickol Bay Bush Fire Brigade, he responds to emergencies, mentors Youth Emergency Services cadets, and educates the public on fire preparedness. At just 21, he became Apparatus Officer, ensuring equipment readiness and operational efficiency. Luke's courage, leadership, and dedication have strengthened emergency response capabilities and inspired the next generation of community-focused volunteers.

Senior Community Citizen of the Year Nominee

Proudly presented by the City of Karratha

Elizabeth Smith

Beth Smith has dedicated her life to strengthening the Roebourne community. Co-founding the Mingullatharndo dry community in 1990, she created a safe, culturally supportive space for people seeking change. Beth also established a community garden nursery, nurtures children through church programs, and runs the annual Elders' Birthday Celebration. Through decades of volunteering, mentoring, and leadership, she has fostered connection, cultural pride, and healthier living, leaving a lasting impact on Elders, families, and the wider community.





Active Citizenship Nominees (Group or Event)

Proudly presented by Rio Tinto

The Innovators' Tea Party

Since 2016, The Innovators' Tea Party (TITP) has empowered regional students in Karratha and across WA by providing STEM career exposure, mentorship, and hands-on experiences. Through initiatives like Speed Networking events, students connect with professionals, explore career pathways, and gain internships or leadership opportunities. TITP challenges gender stereotypes, inspires confidence, and equips students to pursue STEM careers regardless of location. Partnering with schools, businesses, and mentors, the program fosters long-term social impact, transforming students into future STEM leaders who often return as mentors themselves.

Karratha Scout Group / Fiona Woolley "Emu" - Karratha Scout Group.

Fiona has put in many, many hours of volunteer work to put together a program for our local youth, Scouts aged 11-14. She organises, facilitates and leads the program including all of the behind the scene administration so that members receive their badges and can obtain peak awards. Her efforts have seen an increase of numbers in the Scout section as well as an increase in parent volunteers. Her contribution to the Youth within the Karratha Community is greatly appreciated.

Karratha Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service

The Karratha Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service is a wholly volunteer-run brigade dedicated to emergency response and community wellbeing. In 2025, they raised over \$12,500 for local and national charities through fundraisers, open days, and awareness campaigns. Their Santa Lolly Run delights hundreds of families, and school visits educate future volunteers. By combining rigorous training with year-round community engagement, fire safety education, and charitable initiatives, the brigade demonstrates courage, compassion, and lasting commitment to Karratha and the wider Pilbara region.

The Happy Hub

The Happy Hub is a welcoming community space designed for children and teens of all abilities to come together, connect, and grow. Its vision is to create an inclusive environment where families feel supported and young people can build friendships through shared interests. At its heart, The Happy Hub fosters natural circles of support by encouraging informal peer mentoring and offering safe, social settings for children to interact and learn from one another. It is more than just a meeting place—it's a hub of connection, learning, and belonging for the whole community.

Val and Kathy's Crafty Kitchen

Val and Kathy's Crafty Kitchen is a hub of connection, healing, and empowerment in leramugadu/Roebourne. They provide a culturally safe space that combats isolation, fosters companionship, and celebrates community through shared meals, creative activities, and intergenerational projects. Beyond weekly sessions, they promote wellbeing, skill-building, resilience, and healthy lifestyles. Their grassroots leadership extends to supporting the community during COVID and other crises by safely distributing food, blankets, and essentials, demonstrating dedication, care, and lasting positive impact.

Dust and Adversity

Dust and Adversity is a grassroots mental health movement in Karratha, founded to Shatter the Silence. Built on resilience, compassion, and courage, it channels 100% of profits into education programs in local schools and sporting clubs, empowering young people and fostering open conversations about wellbeing. Through community engagement, bold messaging, and a deep understanding of local challenges, Dust and Adversity breaks stigma, strengthens connections, and transforms lives—making the Pilbara a stronger, healthier, and more resilient community.

Cheer 6714 Community Easter Hunt

The event had a turnout of over 300 community members attending from all ages and cultural/economic backgrounds. Participants hunted for paper eggs that were traded for real easter eggs. All participants were involved in the activities, older participants sharing and assisting younger participants regardless of whether they knew each other. Families were able to enjoy the local park, many sitting down to picnic while the children all laughed and played.



Active Citizenship Nominees (Group or Event) continued

Proudly presented by Rio Tinto

Karratha Basketball Association

The Karratha Basketball Association (KBA) engages over 3,000 participants weekly, offering competitions, youth employment, and referee and coach development. Through mobile 3x3 courts, regional outreach, mental health workshops, and inclusive programs like Harmony Round, KBA strengthens community connection, wellbeing, and opportunity. Supported by passionate volunteers and committees, KBA makes basketball accessible, develops life skills, and fosters resilience. Its leadership, innovation, and commitment to the Pilbara community make KBA a deserving nominee for Community Group of the Year.

Pilbara Trailblazers

Pilbara Trailblazers is a volunteer-led running club bringing the Pilbara community together through inclusive events and programs. From weekly parkruns to the Red Dirt Backyard Ultra, the club fosters connection, resilience, and wellbeing while supporting youth participation, mental health initiatives, and adventure tourism. With over 200 members, 40 volunteers, and strong local partnerships, Pilbara Trailblazers creates accessible, family-friendly opportunities for outdoor activity and leaves a lasting positive impact on Karratha and the wider region.

Karratha Women's Place

Karratha Women's Place (KWP) provides a safe, welcoming space empowering women of all ages and backgrounds. Since 2019, KWP has reduced social isolation, improved mental health, and delivered programs such as the "My Story of Being a Mum" book, the Healing from the Heart therapeutic program, and the annual Women's Health Expo. Through support, education, and community connection, KWP transforms lives, helping women thrive, build networks, and feel valued in Karratha and the wider Pilbara region.



Community Citizen of the Year Nominees

Proudly presented by the City of Karratha

Atanas Dimitrov

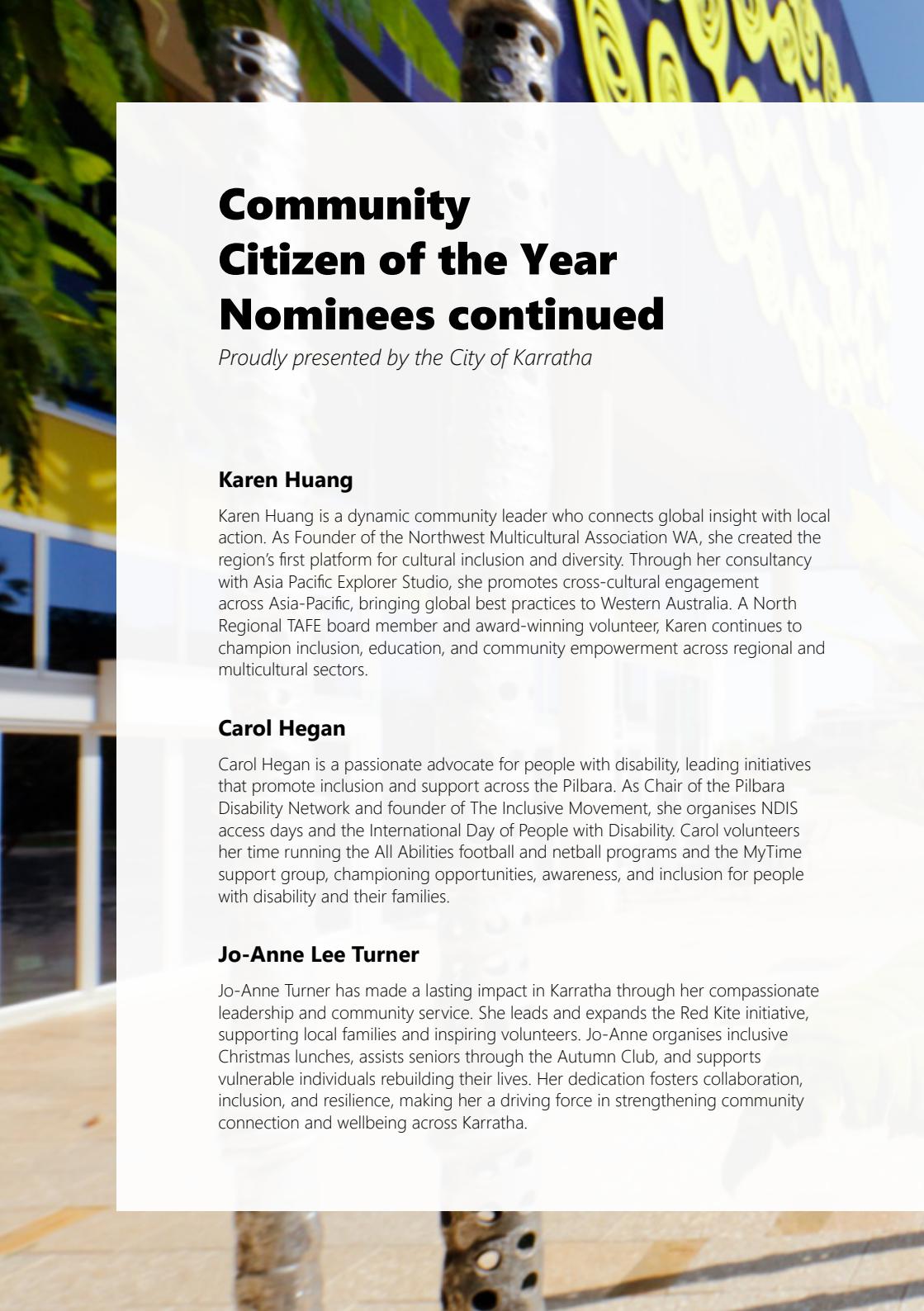
Atanas Dimitrov has made an extraordinary and lasting contribution to the Roebourne community through his unwavering commitment to supporting young people both in and out of school. As the Deputy Principal at Roebourne District High School and a driving force behind the Magpies Basketball Club, Atanas dedicates countless hours of his own time to ensuring local children are engaged, supported, and given every opportunity to thrive.

Katie Marinko

Katie has led major community health initiatives, including free skin checks, men's health nights, and menopause education. As Vice-Chair of St John Wickham/Roebourne, she secured a new 4WD ambulance, expanded defibrillator access, and mentors new volunteers. Dedicated to improving local emergency care, Katie donates countless hours supporting health, safety, and community wellbeing.

Michael Whittaker

Michael is a dedicated community leader whose volunteer work spans emergency services, youth development, and local governance. As Training Coordinator for Marine Rescue Port Walcott, he founded the Cadets program and organises community events in Point Samson. He supports youth sport, serves on multiple community boards, and provides humanitarian aid in Bali. With over 18 years in the Fire Service, Michael's leadership, compassion, and commitment have strengthened community safety, connection, and wellbeing across the Pilbara region.



Community Citizen of the Year Nominees continued

Proudly presented by the City of Karratha

Karen Huang

Karen Huang is a dynamic community leader who connects global insight with local action. As Founder of the Northwest Multicultural Association WA, she created the region's first platform for cultural inclusion and diversity. Through her consultancy with Asia Pacific Explorer Studio, she promotes cross-cultural engagement across Asia-Pacific, bringing global best practices to Western Australia. A North Regional TAFE board member and award-winning volunteer, Karen continues to champion inclusion, education, and community empowerment across regional and multicultural sectors.

Carol Hegan

Carol Hegan is a passionate advocate for people with disability, leading initiatives that promote inclusion and support across the Pilbara. As Chair of the Pilbara Disability Network and founder of The Inclusive Movement, she organises NDIS access days and the International Day of People with Disability. Carol volunteers her time running the All Abilities football and netball programs and the MyTime support group, championing opportunities, awareness, and inclusion for people with disability and their families.

Jo-Anne Lee Turner

Jo-Anne Turner has made a lasting impact in Karratha through her compassionate leadership and community service. She leads and expands the Red Kite initiative, supporting local families and inspiring volunteers. Jo-Anne organises inclusive Christmas lunches, assists seniors through the Autumn Club, and supports vulnerable individuals rebuilding their lives. Her dedication fosters collaboration, inclusion, and resilience, making her a driving force in strengthening community connection and wellbeing across Karratha.

Jason Bravington

Jason is tackling Karratha's mental health challenges through his initiative Dust and Adversity, which encourages people to "shatter the silence" around mental health. He raises funds through merchandise sales to deliver awareness courses for local sporting groups, schools, and clubs. Jason's work breaks down stigma, promotes open conversation, and empowers the community to support one another through mental health struggles.

Cody Panettiere

Cody, owner of Fusion Kitchen Dampier, is dedicated to supporting local youth by employing 15-20 junior staff and offering apprenticeships in hospitality. He personally funds their hospitality and kitchen training courses, ensuring valuable skills for their future. As a mentor and role model, Cody treats his team like family, sponsors community events, and hosts kids' raffles, making a lasting impact through youth development and community generosity.

Dereka (Dee) Van Beek

Dereka (Dee) Van Beek has over 20 years' experience in community services and is the Founder and driving force behind the Karratha Women's Place, creating vital programs to support women's social connection, wellbeing, and empowerment. Dee personally dedicated thousands of volunteer hours, funded programs, and developed initiatives including therapeutic support, community expos, and the "My Story of Being a Mum" book. Through her vision, resilience, and leadership, Dee has transformed women's services in Karratha, fostering inclusion, support, and opportunity across the region.

David Heathwood

David Heathwood has dedicated over 20 years to youth and community services across regional and remote Western Australia. As co-founder and former CEO of Blue Beanie Projects, and now Manager of Community Impact at RRKAC, he has delivered trauma-informed programs, mentoring, and advocacy for young people and families. Known for hands-on service, humility, and empowering leadership, David also volunteers extensively, coaches youth sports, and mobilises community support, strengthening social connection, mental health, and opportunities for growth across the Pilbara.







Australia Day Community Celebration

Fireworks at 8.15pm

Kids Activities | Food Trucks
Live Music | Entertainment

Monday 26 January

6pm to 8.30pm
Dampier Foreshore

karratha.wa.gov.au/australia-day

BYO picnic and chairs. Smoke and alcohol-free.



RioTinto



Australia Day
Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.



Community
Citizen of the
year Awards



Rio Tinto

Presented by:



Principal Partner:



Government of Western Australia
Department of Communities

Media Partners:



6PR
6PR Perth

WAtoday
WAtoday
News you need to know today