

Volunteering Waikato to recognise volunteers at the 2016 Volunteer Excellence Awards

Our community is heavily reliant on volunteers and voluntary effort, and often this effort goes unnoticed. Yet, there is an increasing need for volunteers in our community, as government programmes are being cut, while demand is increasing.

Volunteers make a huge difference in day-to-day life. In New Zealand, a 2008 study of the NZ non-profit sector estimated that volunteers make up 67% of non-profit workforce. NZ volunteers contribute more than 270 million unpaid hours of work valued at over \$3.3 billion to non-profit organisations. There are a number of benefits to volunteering, ranging from making a valuable contribution to your community, to developing skills, gaining work experience, networking, and having fun. Many community organisations are reliant on volunteers to deliver their service.

Volunteering Waikato is a Hamilton based charity that recruits and refers volunteers throughout the Waikato Region.

General Manager, Heather Moore says that Volunteering Waikato has two main objectives – to ensure community groups get the volunteers they need, and to ensure that volunteers get the most out of their decision to give their time, energy and passion.

“We do this by matching volunteers with the organisations where they will have the greatest impact, enjoyment and sense of contribution,” says Heather.

Each year, Volunteering Waikato hosts the Volunteer Excellence Awards. These awards highlight the volunteer effort that goes into helping not-for-profit groups achieve their potential. It recognises individual and team achievement, while publicly acknowledging all voluntary effort. These awards are also an opportunity for all community organisations to publicly express their thanks to the volunteers.

Any community organisation in the region can make nominations - you do not need to be a member of Volunteering Waikato. Organisations can nominate an individual volunteer, including a separate category for Youth volunteers, and also a volunteer team, such as project teams, your board of trustees, or a group of volunteers who carry out a vital function in your group.

Nominations for the 2016 Volunteer Excellence Awards opened 1 March, and close 22 April. The awards are held on Friday, 24 June, at the Atrium at Wintec.

To make nominations, or if you are considering volunteering, visit www.volunteeringwaikato.org.nz