

EXAMPLE STORY

Heart of the Community
Club Taree Community Team
Club Taree



WINNER 2018

Outline your unique story/project/program

The Club Taree Community Team was introduced as a means for our Staff, Management and Directors to offer genuine, authentic, humanistic and tangible support to the people of our local and regional community.

Governed by the mission statement of “to use our collective awesomeness to make a positive difference to our community through raising funds, creating awareness, offering support and providing welfare to our community” our Team consistently and consciously works to seek and implement ways to make a positive and long term grass roots style impact.

In total, to date the Club Taree Community Team has raised \$231,436.45 and contributed a total of 5239 volunteer hours for our local and regional communities. It is estimated that this total will reach to the excess of \$300,000 by the end of 2018 thanks to activities, projects and fundraisers which are currently in operation.

The Club Taree Community Team operates under a series of values, which were developed to align with the needs of our community. These values are; Community, Welfare, Teamwork, Positivity and Engagement.

There are four main ‘groups’ of people involved in the Club Taree Community Team:

1. The Coordinators. Lead by our Brand and Communication Manager, Paul Allan and supported by Courtney Berry, our Brand and Marketing Officer. Paul and Courtney, who are both our lead volunteers, each with 500 plus hours contributed each, coordinate projects and initiatives, lead community engagement, and provide creative advice and tangible assistance. They are responsible for the day to day operation and coordination of the entire team, however rely heavily on each of the other ‘groups’ for support and achievement.
2. The Team. Our Team is made up of Management, Staff and Directors. At any one stage we consistently have 60 Team members ready, eager and available to participate. Our Team is amazing. We introduced the title of #teamawesome not long after the initiative was launched as we were simply blown away by the consistent and passionate participation by all members.
3. The Official Helpers. This is a title which was introduced in growth, and is given to the family members of our managers and staff once it became evident that the social responsibility factor has spread beyond the workplace and into the homes of our Team members.
4. The Supporters. Our supporters come in many forms, primarily however they our members and community folks who support us financially through donations and humanistically through encouragement, and conversations. Our supporters have made a tremendous impact in the team’s ability to make a positive
5. difference to our local and regional communities. Our members genuinely appreciate their role in the bigger picture of the Club Taree Community Team.

Each 'group' is just as important as the other, and combine intrinsically to form a sincere community minded force.

The Club Taree Community Team operates a number of events and initiatives throughout the year.

Why was this story/project/program addressed as a priority?

This project was the suggestion of our Brand and Communication Manager, Paul Allan. Seeing a void in our local community in the provision of non-specialised, unchartered, and independent support, Paul decided to pursue the project of building an outlet for staff to assist in building the concept of community mindedness among not only our team, but with our membership base and community as a whole.

Creating culture is often a phrase which is bandied about in reference to community projects. In the case of the Club Taree Community Team our culture of social responsibility was already evolved (as is the nature of our business), what lacked however was an outlet to nurture this culture.

It would be remiss of us to say that we knew how successful the concept would be. In conception, we hoped to have an immediate impact, we didn't comprehend that our team would run as energetically as they have with the initiative, we never knew in concept how our members would embrace the project or how our community would receive our presence.

When the program was introduced Club Taree Management agreed to pay all team members four hours each year to volunteer in our community under the banner of the Club Taree Community Team. To date, 5239 volunteer hours later not one team member has asked to be paid for their volunteer hours.

Each activity that the Team undertakes, commits to, or aligns with is referenced to the Teams mission statement and set of values. This process adds to the authenticity of our genuineness in making the most maximum positive impact as possible.

The Team continues to provide a sense of worth to our employees, members and supporters which is important for the long jeopardy of any initiative. Without a sense of worth a project becomes a series of tasks and things, rather than a collection of impacts (positive) and achievements.

As we launched the Team in 2015 we also felt it necessary to hold a "Signature" self-managed event which embodied our values, and provided us with the opportunity to raise funds for and create awareness of a charity which aligned with our staff, membership and community. We wanted to choose an organisation which was known, however was lacking a profile in our specific community.

The event we conceived was the le Tour de Taree, in concept it mirrors the le Tour de France in time and distance. The difference being that we would ride the distance collectively as a team, each July we get on our spin bikes in the Club Taree members lounge and ride in excess of 3300km. We do this to raise funds for Ronald McDonald House Charities Northern NSW (RMHCNNSW). This event is now widely recognised throughout our community as one of the primary fundraising events. Our membership continues to support the event through donations, support, conversations and engagement. We educate our team on all aspects of RMHCNNSW, from their facilities to their programs, and quantitative impact on our direct community.

Tell us what was contributed toward this story/project/program?

Keeping the concept simple in process allows for easy management and coordination of the Team. The main contributing resources are standard, volunteer hours supplied by our team, passion provided by the individual members of our team, and an ever-embracing community who supports our concept practically through donations and requests for help, or personally through support and encouragement.

Aligning our team with the values of the Club Taree Community Team, and including them in projects from start to finish, creating personal and collective 'ownership' has proven to be more engaging. The Club Taree Community Team has changed the way in which our Team interact with each other by creative substantial positive outcomes to celebrate.

Club Taree Directors and Management provide continual support to the Club Taree community Team by providing access to media resources, advertising, marketing material, and branding tools. It has been important from the beginning to ensure that the concept remains well branded and professional. All team members are issued with an official uniform, supplied by Club Taree to ensure our team are instantly recognised. Club Taree also provides branding for the Team so that we can leave long standing reminders to those we assist, these include merchandise such as handballs, frisbees, drink bottles, bottled water, footballs, caps, hats and much more. No matter what the task we are undertaking we ensure that we have Team members assigned to engagement, ensuring that practically the job is completed, while personally leaving an impact through engagement and storytelling.

We have developed great relationship with local media outlets, and key community organisations allowing for great coverage of our events and impact. Social media content for Club Taree is heavily swayed towards the Club Taree Community Team. Posts involving the activities of our Team remain the most liked, most shared, most engaging and most celebrated content across our 3600 followers.

Club Taree also offers support in the teams fundraising and engagement programs, enabling these through se of the Club itself, whether this be through roster changes to enable community service, or access to members and guests to fundraise or advertising support, theming, donations and encouragement.

Club Taree would not be able to practically assist organisations within our community without the financial support of our members. Their support as highlighted previously has enabled the team to raise \$231,436.45. Our seasonal Club magazine CT Connect continues to focus on community as this is what our members have indicated they enjoy reading about most thanks to the inception of the Community Team. Members enjoy reading of our joint or individual community projects, our upcoming initiatives, where we have visited and how we have assisted in the months prior. It is always rewarded for members to engage with our team on the stories they have read of or the upcoming events they have noted in the magazine. Many members have also noted they have purely become members because of the work our Team does in the community.

What was the measureable difference that the support made?

The key measurable include the financial benefits to our supported organisations, the increased engagement between Club Taree and our community.

The provision of funds through our fundraising initiatives has provided practical support to many organisations. We partner with a number of key organisations throughout the year. To date the Team has raised a total of \$79,711.05 for RMHCNSW, \$60,966.55 of this was through the le Tour de Taree initiative alone. This in turn has provided first hand support for the people of Taree and encompassing Manning Valley in the collective 301 nights' accommodation that residents of Taree have used at Ronald McDonald House in Newcastle during 2017. It has also continued to provide continual access to the Family Retreat in

Forster, the Family Rooms at John Hunter Hospital and the Learning Program. In practice we have provided 1549 volunteer hours to RMHCNSW.

The "Club Taree turns Pink" initiative has raised \$45,653.12 for the Cancer Council. Combined with \$2930 raised at our Biggest Morning Tea events, and the \$12,756.40 we raised during the Manning Valley Relay for Life our total financial contribution to the Cancer Council is \$61,341.52. Practically our Brand and Communication Manager Paul sits on the Committee for the Manning Valley Relay for Life.

Other examples of achievements include marshalling at community events, manning registration tables for other community organisations, removing fences for the local historical society, we have gardened, helped at community events, provided people power, sold raffle tickets, offered organisational support, hosted morning teas, operated gates at community events, bumped in and bumped out community events. We have visited nursing homes and delivered cakes to other community volunteers to say thanks. We have delivered bottled water to our essential services, helped people move house, provided transport, cooked bbq's, played games and made lunches. We have wrapped gifts, ridden bikes, kept time, directed, cleaned up, collected rubbish, our official helpers help tell our story, they add authenticity to the values of the as they have chosen to come along on the journey with the Team. It is truly humbling to see so many children of our Team come along to each event (in their own specially designed official helper uniforms) to cheer, participate and offer help. As one member recently made comment "It is truly special that your children have been blessed with hands to help, hearts to want to help and heads to know why they need to help.

In venue conversations between staff and members have changed from being typically small talk about the price of beer and weather, into conversations about community, what the next project is or how much money has been raised. Our supporters and members place value on our collective contribution to the community and often note their pride in association of everything that the Team has achieved.

In 2017 the Club Taree Community Team was honoured to be announced as the Myall Lakes Community Group of the Year by NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian

Do you have long-term plans/goals for this story/project/program?

The Team is proud of our achievements to date. We are however far from finished. Our ultimate goal is to continue to harbour a sense community spirit and social responsibility among our membership and wider community. Sharing our stories with our members and community has helped create curiosity and interest in individuals, groups and organisations, which we aim to cycle this curiosity into 'we can do this too' or 'how can we help' attitudes throughout our community.

Educating our team enables them to engage and converse with our members and community confidently and continually, which creates awareness and support for the organisation beyond the realms of the Club walls. Our aim is to filter this awareness throughout the community building financial and practical support for this organisation which has proven to have a place in the hearts of our team and membership base. We will continue to ensure that our Team is well educated in all aspects of our Community.

We have received and followed through on numerous community groups and charities to provide advice and run 'workshops' on community engagement and successful fundraising. We feel that is important to share our success with other organisations which also support our members and community. Practically we cannot support every event or every charity, however providing advice and direction is a valuable way we can assist.

Representatives of our Team have also held positions on organising committees for local community and charity events. There have been instances where event committees have changed the dates of their events to allow the Community Team members to be involved, such is the value that we bring. Many of our Team have also taken on roles outside the realms of the Club Taree Community Team aligns with causes or organisations that they are passionate about thanks to the inspiration of the Club Taree Community Team.

Our Team is currently working on a number of initiatives, with a primary focus on the 4th Annual le Tour de Taree which takes off on the 7th July. Our financial goal for the 2018 le Tour de Taree is to raise \$40,000 for Ronald McDonald House Charities Northern NSW. We have already had 40 Team members officially sign up to contribute to the 3329km we need to undertake to complete the Tour this year.

To have our community openly create and drive the occurrence of quantified social responsibility through the ongoing support, engagement and growth.

We would love the Club Taree Community Team to be the inspiration for other workplaces, social groups, friendship circles and neighbourhoods in our community to want to make a positive difference.

The Club Taree Community Team will continue to work hard to capture the Heart of the Community through qualitative and genuine assistance, financial support and as an outlet for awareness and conversation.