

Friday, 17 June 2022

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **The Gratitude Project recognised with major state award**

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A joint initiative between Bland Shire Council and Evolution Mining to boost community spirits during the Covid-19 pandemic has been recognised with a major state award.

At a gala awards ceremony in Sydney recently, Bland Shire Council was announced as the winner of the Local Government Professionals New South Wales Community Partnerships award for "The Gratitude Project".

As the Bland Shire navigated the challenges presented by COVID-19, the Gratitude Project was developed and delivered by Council and Evolution Mining in September last year to acknowledge the essential workers who helped keep the Bland Shire community going throughout one of the most challenging times in our history.

Using a simple online form, members of the public were encouraged to nominate an essential worker, community volunteer or Good Samaritan to say thank you for their commitment to ensuring the local community remained safe and operational throughout the pandemic.

Winners were randomly drawn each week throughout September last year with a total of 40 nominees awarded with a \$100 Why Leave Town card that could be spent at a local participating business.

As well as boosting local spirits and providing due recognition to local community members, the initiative also provided a boost to local business which had also been heavily impacted by the impacts of Covid-19.

Bland Shire Council was among eight finalists for the Telstra sponsored Community Partnerships award alongside Cumberland City Council, Inner West Council, Northern Beaches Council, Penrith City Council, Randwick City Council, Shoalhaven City Council and Wollondilly Shire Council.

The announcement was met with loud applause from the packed Fullerton Hotel ballroom as retiring long serving Bland Shire Council General Manager, Ray Smith PSM, took the stage to accept the prestigious trophy.

"Council was delighted to be able to work in partnership with Evolution Mining to develop an initiative which recognises the unsung heroes of our community, boosts local business and community spirit," Mr Smith said.



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Ray Smith  
GENERAL MANAGER

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The award continues a run of success at the LG Professionals awards for Bland Shire Council in recent years which has also included two prestigious Creative Communities awards for the Weethalle Silo Project and Bland but not Boring Public Art Trail and the Special Project award for the Bring Flavour to Bland campaign.

For more information contact:

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