



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Foundation for Youth Development Southland – inspiring young Kiwis

The team behind Foundation for Youth Development (FYD), Southland has been recognised for its achievements and contributions, with a nomination for the Community of the Year category in the inaugural New Zealander of the Year Awards.

The Foundation for Youth Development (FYD) was founded in 1995 by mountaineer Graeme Dingle and lawyer, Jo-anne Wilkinson. Since this time it has grown to include four programmes – Kiwi Can, Stars, Project K and youth offender programmes with 20 regional licensees running a mix of these across New Zealand. FYD, Southland was formed in 2006 and runs two major programmes - Kiwi Can for 5-12 year olds and Project K for teens aged 14 - 15 years.

The non-profit group works to inspire and mentor the young people in New Zealand's southern heartland of Invercargill, Bluff and Stewart Island, teaching them to be the best they can be as well as how to give back to their community.

In nominating the group, Marie-Jo Wilson says "Foundation for Youth Development, Southland is doing such fantastic work with the young people of the region and achieving amazing results. They really deserve recognition for all their hard work."

Anne Walker, Principal at Invercargill's Fernworth Primary, describes the programme as essential to help children learn positive social skills.

“Kiwi Can is essential to our school’s continuing positive environment,” she says.

Kath Johnson, Principal at Halfmoon Bay School, Stewart Island, agrees and praises the Kiwi Can Leaders who deliver the programme at her school.

“Kiwi Can Leaders are awesome, positive role models, they make an effort to take part in all aspects of school life.

“We will definitely continue on with this awesome programme,” she says.

FYD, Southland was one of the very first nominations submitted for the awards.

Grant McCabe, the National Coordinator of the New Zealander of the Year Awards, says this group is the exact sort of nomination the award committee is looking for.

“There can never be enough thanks and appreciation for those individuals and community groups who are making a valuable contribution to our great nation.”

Nominations can now be made for the following category awards:

- The Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year Award
- The Ryman Healthcare Senior New Zealander of the Year Award
- The Coca-Cola Amatil Young New Zealander of the Year Award
- The Mitre 10 Community of the Year Award
- The Kiwibank Local Heroes Awards

Winners of each of the five categories will receive \$5,000 courtesy of Kiwibank and all nominees will receive a certificate of appreciation of their achievements.

Nomination close on 20<sup>th</sup> November and application forms are available from Kiwibank and Mitre 10 branches or free phone 0508 692 927. You can also nominate online at [www.nzawards.org.nz](http://www.nzawards.org.nz)

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