



## MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Les Harkness is a Hero to his Daughter

Kerrill Harkness says her dad Les Harkness is her greatest hero, and now she wants to make it official.

The 41 year old Wellingtonian has nominated her father Les, who lives in Waikanae, for a Local Hero Award in the inaugural New Zealander of the Year Awards.

Kerrill suffered a stroke at the age of 13 months which left her with some disabilities, but she says with her father's love and support she has learnt to look on the bright side of life.

"It was very hard for me to cope with for a number of years. But no matter how I was, he took me and loved me as I was, and treated me as a normal person," she says.

Kerrill is an award winning tenpin bowler, and travels frequently around New Zealand and Australia for her sport.

She credits her success to her father.

"Dad would never let me give up. He made me keep at it no matter how I felt. And all because of that, today I have 69 medals," she says

"My Dad means the world to me. He deserves the best for everything he has done for me."

The national coordinator of the New Zealander of the Year Awards, Grant McCabe says Les Harkness is one of the first Kiwis to be nominated.

“The committee is looking for nominations for people who are making a difference in our communities. There can never be enough thanks and appreciation for those individuals or community groups who are making a valuable contribution to our great nation and its people.”

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 nomination forms are available from Kiwibank and Mitre 10 branches or via free phone 0508 692 927. You can also nominate online at [www.nzawards.org.nz](http://www.nzawards.org.nz)

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