



**For immediate release
15 October 2015**

School Mentor program bringing generations together thanks to boost from Wallarah 2

Wallarrah 2 is pleased to announce that for the second year running it will support Plan-it Youth, a local school program dedicated to mentoring local Year 10 and 11 students. As part of the 2015 Community Foundation Grants Program the \$2,000 grant will go toward costs associated with hosting a development day for local mentors.

Plan-It Youth is a worthy recipient of grant funding, delivering value to the Central Coast community through its innovative mentoring program that works to support local youth who are at risk of leaving school or disengaging from the education system, potentially limiting their employment and future career prospects.

Plan-it Youth, run their school mentor program in collaboration with the not-for-profit organisation, Active Retirees and Mentors Inc in NSW (ARM NSW), with the program providing senior mentors in the community with the opportunity to connect and engage in valuable ways with the younger generation.

In 2014 the Wallarah 2 Community Foundation supported the project with a grant to recruit and professionally train new volunteer mentors, enabling the program to continue to grow and support more students. The results of last year's funding saw 60 new mentors come on board throughout the year, which means that the Plan-it Youth program can now assist approximately 150 at risk students across six Central Coast high schools each year.

Ken Bate, President of the Central Coast NSW Active Retirees and Mentors said, "This funding is vital to the ongoing success of our program as it enables us to continue to deliver simple, yet vital support to local young people.

"Development days are essential to provide a platform for our mentors to up skill their techniques and inform them of changes in legislation. The development day will be run by ARM NSW and will not only allow our mentors to learn new skills, but also share their knowledge with each other and strategies for best engagement with the students they encounter.

"We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to realise their full potential and we thank Wallarah 2 for their generosity in assisting us to continue our work in the local area. We believe in these young people and want to continue to see them flourish," continued Ken.

Plan-It Youth is committed to improving the lives of both mentors and youth with the program enabling them to share life experiences as well as engage, connect and promote a mutual understanding of cross-generational values. This is delivered via one-on-one mentoring sessions with the dedicated and professionally trained mentors spending up to two hours a week per student, over an entire school term.

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Peter Smith, Community Manager of the Wallarah 2 Coal Project said, "Plan-It Youth supports the foundation of our community and the future of our region through supporting our young people. What they offer is hugely valuable as they engage with students directly to consider their choices.

"We are honoured to be able to provide the funds to ensure the volunteer mentors are armed with the skills they need to continue to talk to, support and mentor young people right here on the Central Coast."

The Wallarah 2 Community Foundation grant application process is now closed, with 14 grants presented to support organisations that benefit the Wyong local government area. For further information please visit www.wallarrah.com.au.

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Photo attached:

Left to right at back - *Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College representatives, Sam Lindsay, Blake Bailey, Oke Gardiner, Gwen Farris, Cassie White, Sylvia Day, President of the Central Coast NSW Active Retirees Ken Bate, Leanne Rose, Lily Goodenough.*

In front - *Community Manager of the Wallarah 2 Coal Project Peter Smith and Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College Relief Principal Samantha Thomas.*

For more information, interviews or photos:

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