

Newcastle Racecourse IWD event raises \$45,000 for local charities

Adorned in purple, the official colour of International Women's Day (IWD), Newcastle Racecourse Trackside Marquee became the vibrant and inspiring host of local women, corporate representatives, and sponsors on Friday 7 March.

Coinciding with the Group 3 Horsepower Stakes Race Meeting, the IWD event aimed to raise vital funds for two local charities; Jenny's Place and Grow a Star.

"Grow a Star is a Youth Mentoring and Scholarship Program for young people who are experiencing disadvantage," explained Michelle Faithful, Home in Place Grow a Star Event and Partnership Manager.

"We raise funds to provide financial scholarships for young people, and this year the proceeds from the IWD event will be dedicated towards a round of Grow a Star scholarships specifically for young women," she said.

Jenny's Place Chief Executive Officer, Dawn Walker, also explained the imperative role their organisation plays in the Newcastle and Hunter region.

"We're a small, but legendary organisation that helps women and children to escape from domestic violence," said Dawn.

In addition to enjoying the races, attendees donated generously to the two charities by bidding on auction items and purchasing raffle tickets for prizes provided by local businesses totaling more than \$25,000.

Attendees were also enthralled by a powerful and inspirational message delivered by special guest speaker, Sam Bloom, who captivated them with her personal story of courage, hope and determination following an accident in Thailand in 2013 which saw her become an SCI survivor.

Sam's story (which inspired the movie *Penguin Bloom*) explains how she overcame adversity, adapted to change, and has since become a 4 x World Para Surfing Champion and Bestselling Author.

An appropriate message given 2025 IWD theme #AccelerateAction which aims to foster a world where every woman is equipped and able to address the barriers and biases they face, both personally and professionally.

Towards the end of the event, Newcastle Racecourse CEO, Duane Dowell was delighted to announce the tally of the funds raised for the two charities.

“We have raised a whopping \$45,000 for our two local charities, Grow a Star and Jenny’s Place. An incredible effort and no doubt those funds will go to great use,” said Duane.

“We would like to thank all who attended and make special mention to all our corporate sponsors; Hall & Wilcox, Prosperity Advisers, Matthews Jewellers, Newcastle BMW, LJ Hooker Dudley, Peoplefusion, NAB Newcastle and SV Partners for helping Newcastle Racecourse to create another successful IWD event,” he said.

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About the Charities:

Grow a Star: Created by Home in Place, Grow a Star is a pioneering youth mentoring and scholarship program dedicated to empowering young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. By providing financial and generational support, Grow a Star enables youth to pursue academic, sporting, or artistic aspirations, fostering self-confidence and lifelong skills.

Jenny’s Place: Founded in 1977, Jenny’s Place has been helping women and children in the Newcastle area to find safety and help victim survivors of domestic and family violence and those facing homelessness. The Jenny’s Place team is committed to keeping women and children in our community safe, housed, and free from violence.

For further details, or to arrange an interview please contact CEO Duane Dowell

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Media Release

