

MEDIA RELEASE
10 December 2024



‘Brilliant’ Saints thank you lunch for volunteers

‘It wouldn’t be Christmas in St Marys or Penrith without these people in this room’, certainly rang true today [Tuesday], when Deputy Premier, the Hon Prue Car, joined with community leaders and local organisations to celebrate volunteers at the Saints Signatures Community Christmas Luncheon.

This annual ‘thank you’ event saw 124 local care and volunteer workers, supported by Saints through ClubGRANTS, acknowledged at the event, with guests including Penrith City Mayor, Todd Carney; Saints vice-president John Burns and Michael Lau, owner Signatures Buffet.

More than \$800,000 has been distributed by Saints, through ClubGrants, to assist groups, schools and organisations within the district last financial year.

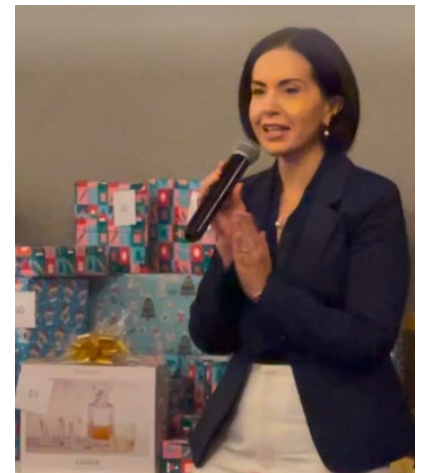
Ms Car said it was “brilliant” Saints and Signatures created this event, and “right we gather” approaching Christmas, when people really need it most, to celebrate and thank volunteers.

“I would hazard a guess that many of you [in this room] probably won’t have the chance to have Christmas lunch on Christmas Day, because you’ll be serving people in the community on that day - that’s who you are,” Ms Car said.

“Saints is so embedded in our community, I see it every day as the local member all those club grants all they do for local kids and giving back to the local community, schools and events like today.”

Saints Marketing Manager Giulia Barron welcomed all attendees and acknowledged Michael Lau of Signatures Catering and his donation of more than 100 prizes:

“I would like to thank Michael and the team from Signatures Catering, for his generosity today not only for his incredible contribution to our raffle, but also for providing this wonderful lunch,” Ms Barron said.



Deputy Premier Prue Car above and below (l-r): Olivia Susino, Giulia Barron, John Burns and Mayor Todd Carney.



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The luncheon was developed by St Marys Rugby League Club over 4 years ago and Michael Lau, owner of Signatures Catering Group. Santa Claus also made a guest cameo appearance, putting smiles on faces.

Saints Community Engagement Coordinator, Olivia Susino, said the club was responsive to present-day pleas for funding, while being committed to long-term associations.

“We are proud of our longstanding relationships with North St Marys Childrens Centre, Variety the Children Charity, Tregear Public School, where we fund the breakfast program, Your Community Needs, Mama Lana’s Community Kitchen, NADO, PCYC Penrith, Our Community Cares, Penrith Community Kitchen and Northcott Society to name a few,” Ms Susino said.



Pictured (l-r): Olivia Susino, Michael Lau and Giulia Barron.

Below and following page: Volunteers meet up with Santa at the luncheon.

Ms Susino also mentioned:

- \$36,000 donated towards North St Marys Childrens Centre to cover the cost of speech pathologist for children at the center.
- \$30,000 donated to Cerebral Palsy Alliance (Kingswood Centre) for therapy with babies aged 0-2. This therapy offers the best chance for these babies before they receive NDIS funding.
- \$30,000 donated to NextSense, also known also Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, which provided them funding for early intervention therapy sessions.

Organisations in attendance included:

- Your Community Needs
- Cerebral Palsy Alliance
- Mama Lana's
- Our Community Cares
- Penrith Community Kitchen
- The Haven Women's Shelter
- PCYC Penrith
- Westcare
- NADO Disability Services
- The Northcott Society
- Christ Mission Possible
- NextSense
- Tresillian Family Care Centre Nepean
- Westmead Children’s Hospital





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