



GATS

in the Community

ANNUAL REPORT · 2017

Cats In The Community

The Geelong Cats acknowledges the contribution of the following partners:

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Message from **Brian Cook**

Making a difference in our community is at the heart of what we do in our aim to be 'more than just a club'. In fact, 'make a difference in our community' is one of our four strategic aims and this is emphasised with community being embedded into our mission statement.

Geelong Cats have 10 flagship programs that together make up Cats in the Community. All our programs have one central purpose - to build a better and healthier community with a special focus on youth.

We have a unique opportunity to give back to the community that has given so much to us for 158 years; to contribute to the circle of community wellbeing. An AFL club is often in a unique position to 'make things happen' in the community – we can open doors, create networks, lead change initiatives, advocate for progress and leverage partnerships across industries and agencies. It is our vision to be world class in our community strategy as a sports organisation. As highly visible members of the community, the Geelong players, coaches and staff understand their unique public role and aspire to make a positive contribution to the community

Congratulations to Scott Selwood, who was named our 2017 Club Community Champion award. Scott joins a prestige list of recipients.

We are proud of what we achieved in 2017, and hope you are too.



Brian Cook
Chief Executive
Geelong Cats

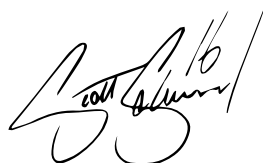


Message from Scott Selwood

2017 Community Champion

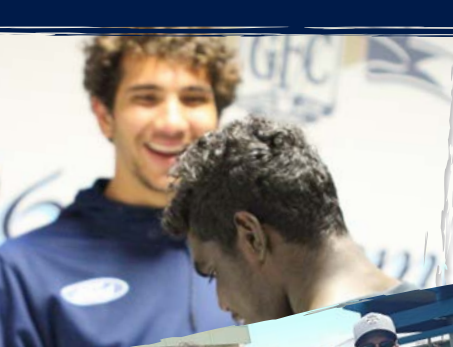
As players, we live a very fortunate life! We are able to play the game we love and are able to have a positive influence on people's lives both on and off the field. As a player and a football club, we don't take either lightly. Being role models and giving back to a community that gives us as players and the Club so much is extremely important. I was fortunate enough to be involved in Cats Care through ward walks, wishes and my ambassador role at the Barwon Health Foundation, Read the Play, Healthy Heroes and Footy Cats programs

The Community team create these great programs and organise players to work in areas that they are passionate in which makes it easy for the players to give back all they can.



Scott Selwood







"I want to tell you about the great day I had at BioCATS to use a GPS monitor for exercise. I also learnt how to about what the players eat to give them strength and energy"



THE SCIENCE AND MATHS OF FOOTBALL
with a HEALTHY EDGE!

2017 has been another big year for the BioCATS program with 66 programs being delivered to grade 5 & 6 students from schools across Victoria, from Geelong to Warrnambool to Bendigo and the Grampians. This has seen over 1,600 students engaged in science, maths, technology and health, and the way it shapes the game of football. Our annual Koori BioCATS session was delivered to over 40 students from nine different schools from the western districts, including Geelong and Bendigo regions.

"BioCATS is highly engaging for both teachers and students, through the use of technology and well planned/designed activities. Very inspiring and relevant to the Victorian curriculum" – Teacher, Invermay PS

Bisinella
the key to your community

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*Geelong. I learnt how
handball properly and
– Student, Merrivale PS*







EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE



Partner

Cyber Cats is a full day activity based program at the Deakin Community Cats Centre that empowers year 7 students to educate and support their peers regarding online bullying and general safety.

2017 saw over 430 students explore the isolating nature of digital media use and students are asked to consider the landscape of on-line relationships, what is cyber bullying and how healthy relationships can be supported. Students examine their own on-line security and the sort of information they may share with friends and beyond.

A product of the program is a short film that is shared peer to peer and with parents.



86% of students will be more careful when accepting a friend request on-line after attending Cyber Cats



- * 61.26% of students who attended the program indicated that the content delivered on the day will make them stop and think about alcohol use
- * 100% of students indicate they would know what to do if they found someone collapsed at a party



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Partner

Schools Program

In 2017, over 400 students took part in the Just Think schools program. The main take away from the program was for students to consider not drinking alcohol until at least eighteen years of age.

In partnering with Barwon Child Youth and Family, the Just Think program was delivered to year 9 students across the Geelong region. In addition, schools participating in Deakin University's Communities that Care program were delivered the Just Think program to their year 8 and year 10 students.



Just Think

Campaign

In round 14 of the 2017 season, over 29,000 supporters helped celebrate the tenth year of the Just Think campaign. Our stadium was a sea of orange as we raised awareness about the impact of alcohol on society. This message was replicated across our three local leagues. Mitch Duncan, Zac Smith and Cameron Guthrie lent their time and their brand to the campaign and are committed ambassadors to the Just Think schools program.





Wada Nyooroo

As part of the clubs commitment to Close the Gap, our five week program enabled 17 young Aboriginal people to explore and celebrate their connection to culture. The focus of the program was story telling through art work on wooden bollards. Corrina Eccles and renowned artist Nathan Patterson facilitated the program along with involvement from our Aboriginal players; Steven Motlop, Nakia Cockatoo, Brandon Parfitt, Quinton Narkle and Jamaine Jones. These young Aboriginal artists held their bollards to proudly form the guard of honour

in the Sir Doug Nicholls Indigenous Round, held in Round 10 in the 2017 season. The launch of the Djilang Indigenous Garden in July 2017, located at the entrance to the Brownlow Stand, displays these magnificent bollards.

Wada Nyooroo is in proud partnership with Barwon Water and with the support of Deakin University's Institute of Koori Education (IKE).

Wada Nyooroo, meaning "Come to Paint" in local Wathaurong language, was a cultural connection program for young Aboriginal people from the Barwon region.

 Barwon Water



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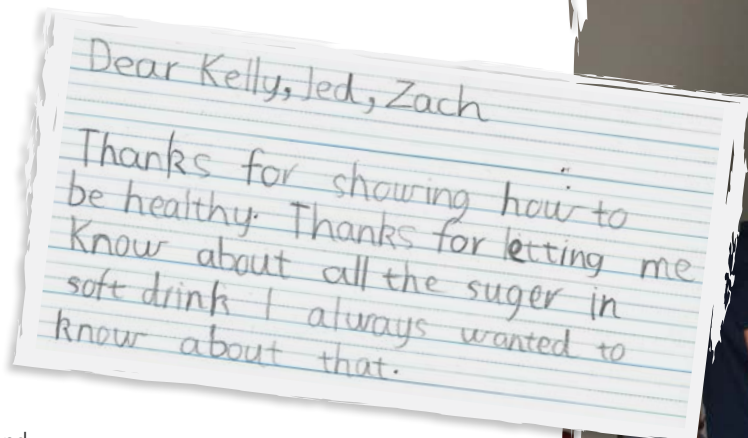




Healthy Heroes, presented by Geelong Cats and GMHBA, visited over 4,200 grade 3 & 4 students at 46 schools in the G21 region in 2017. Delivered by Geelong Cats players and staff, the school based program encourages positive behaviour change through increasing student knowledge around physical activity, healthy eating, hydration and screen time.

Deakin University assisted in the evaluation of the Healthy Heroes program with 3,279 surveys completed by students and staff following the program delivery. This highlighted an increase in knowledge in all four focus areas of the program and assisted in the future development of the program.

The Geelong Cats and GMHBA are thrilled to be a finalist in the 2017 VicHealth Awards under the 'Promoting Healthy Eating' category.



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"When you exercise, your brain releases a chemical called endorphins that make you happy" – Student, Nazareth Primary School





SUPPORTS



Partners

Geelong Cats and KEMPE Read the Play have been in partnership for 11 years, with Mark Blicavs coming on board as the Read the Play Ambassador in 2017.

Targeting junior level sporting clubs, the Read the Play program engages young people using fun and interactive games to educate messages about mental illness, remove stigma about mental health and increase help seeking behaviour. This year, Geelong Cats players attended multiple Read the Play sessions in local clubs to highlight their commitment to this important health message and handed out co-branded "Speak Up, Speak Out and Protect" sweat towels.

The Geelong Cats also got behind the Read the Play #1in4 campaign. Each year, one in four people aged 15-24 experience a mental health problem.

"This year, Geelong Cats have supported Read the Play in a number of ways including player ambassadors, player appearances at Read the Play sessions, program content and giveaways. This support has enabled us to reach more young people than ever before with the aim to improve the health and wellbeing of young people in our region. Read the Play is proud to have been partners with Geelong Cats for the last 11 years and look forward to strengthening the partnership even further in the years to come." – Michael Parker, General Manager, Read the Play Inc.

Auskick Super Clinic

In 2017, Footy Cats focussed on key game development opportunities within the AFL. The Geelong Cats supported numerous activations around junior girl's football as well as Next Generation Academies, which encourages participation of young people from multicultural and indigenous backgrounds.

The annual Auskick Super Clinic was a highlight with over 1,000 participants taking part in games, skills and drills with our players' on-field at Simonds Stadium. Local Auskick Centres and Junior Clubs all around the region received player visits to assist with their training.





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Community Camp and Country Day

The annual Australia Post Community Camp was another highlight of 2017 which was held in Geelong and Warrnambool. Players facilitated clinics at schools, visited hospitals, assisted with junior football training and spent a day out at Diversitat, a not-for-profit community service organisation who supports culturally and linguistically diverse communities and the disadvantaged in the Barwon region, where they took part in English lessons and a range of other activities.

Once a year, each AFL Club selects a country town or region to facilitate 'Country Day' a day to spend facilitating AFL promotions which are coordinated by the country development management and supported by all the local clubs and schools.

The Geelong Cats have a long standing commitment to the Barwon South West Region and a close working relationship with AFL Hampden regions and ran action packed clinics to promote the game of AFL.





The Cats opened their doors to families new to Australia for the third annual 'Welcome to Geelong' day.

This program supports and encourages Geelong's newest Australians to enjoy our game and provides an opportunity to connect with other Australians through belonging to a club.

Over 100 residents from Afghan, Syrian, Iraqi, Karen and Karenni communities were given the opportunity to participate in a football clinic, ran by SEDA Geelong on-field at Simonds Stadium. Young players, Mark O'Connor and Jamaine Jones joined in the fun, participating in a variety of football activities, followed by a handmade Iraqi lunch along with a classic

Australian BBQ cooked by our very own cheer squad.

The day was also made up with activities such as face painting, chants with our cheer squad, a reading and craft area, hosted by Reading out of Poverty, the Barwon Child Family & Youth Street Surfer Bus, plus a visit from crowd favourite Half Cat.



Sponsor

Partners

"Our clients love the opportunity to attend the Welcome to Geelong event difference/nuances of the game. The Welcome Day has also often been and a means of connecting to the broader community." – Suzanne



and be introduced to Aussie rules and to try to sort out the
the catalyst for immersing themselves in a new sporting culture
Cooper, Multicultural Mental Health & Wellbeing Officer, Diversitat



"Deakin Cats Community Centre provides a great range of free meeting community based organisations. It's easy to book and staff are terrific. Deakin Cats Community Centre is a great, flexible space to the team there." – Helen Boulton, Administration Coordinator

Deakin Cats Community Centre

During its four years in operation the Deakin Cats Community Centre has welcomed over 80,000 people through the doors. The Deakin Cats Community Centre is the hub for delivery of the club's flagship programs, including as BioCATS, Just Think, Cyber Cats, and Wada Nyooroo. It is home to the Past Players and Officials Association and houses the clubs memorabilia in the Gartland Heritage Centre. To date there have been over 117 different community organisations that have utilised the centre to achieve health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.

In proud partnership with Deakin University, this purpose-built facility contributes to the club's community vision for greater engagement with the broader Geelong community by providing a free, state of the art facility.

The Gartland Heritage Centre is an exhibition space within the Deakin Cats Community Centre that allows its visitors to experience the long and proud history of the Geelong Cats. It features a series of rotating displays, acknowledging the events and people that have made the club great since 1859.



spaces and that's really important to not-for-profit and other really helpful with set up and IT support. The facilities there are hold both formal and informal events. We really love working with - Geelong Region Local Learning & Employment Network (GRLLEN)



All Abilities Clinic

Our annual All Abilities Clinic was another highlight of the year with over 60 participants from Gateways Support Services taking part in a fun filled afternoon with Harry Taylor, Ryan Gardner, Tom Stewart, Lincoln McCarthy, Sam Simpson and James Parsons on hand to run football drills and activities.

"Gateways would like to pass onto the Geelong Football Club the great appreciation expressed by families to all those involved in the annual footy clinics.

The clinics provide a wonderful couple of hours and are an annual highlight for children and their families. The way the players interact with the children is a credit not only to them but to the Club. Parents who have attended said that it was a pleasure to feel included and to see pure joy on so many faces."

— Gateways Support Services



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Cats Match

2017 also saw the beginning of a new program, Cats Match. This program, developed in partnership with Karingal Match Works, saw 23 young people focusing on employability skills along with health and wellbeing sessions with all 23 graduating from the program. Jed Bews, Jordan Cunico and Daniel Menzel frequently offered up their time running fitness sessions along with VFLW coach Paul Hood providing sessions around leadership and goal setting. The program had support from GMHBA, Bendigo Bank, Kempe Read the Play and Headspace. An amazing outcome from the program was that over half of the participants gained employment upon graduating.



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Cats Ticketing

2017 was an exciting year for our Cats Care program, with the implementation of the Target Community Seating Bay at Simonds Stadium. The 100 seat bay was allocated to various community groups who may not otherwise have the opportunity to attend a game of AFL football. 20 seats each game out of the 100 was allocated to our Cats Wishes program.

With thanks to our major partner Ford, 40 additional seats each week were given out to community groups in the Geelong region along with a show bag full of goodies!





The Geelong Cats conducted eight Ward Walks at the Barwon Health University Hospital, where players visited the Children's Ward and also the Andrew Love Cancer Centre Day Ward. These visits are a highlight for both the players and the patients of the hospital.

In 2017, our players were able to deliver flowers to the volunteers and staff at hospitals around Geelong to say thank you for all the work they put in, thanks to First State Super.

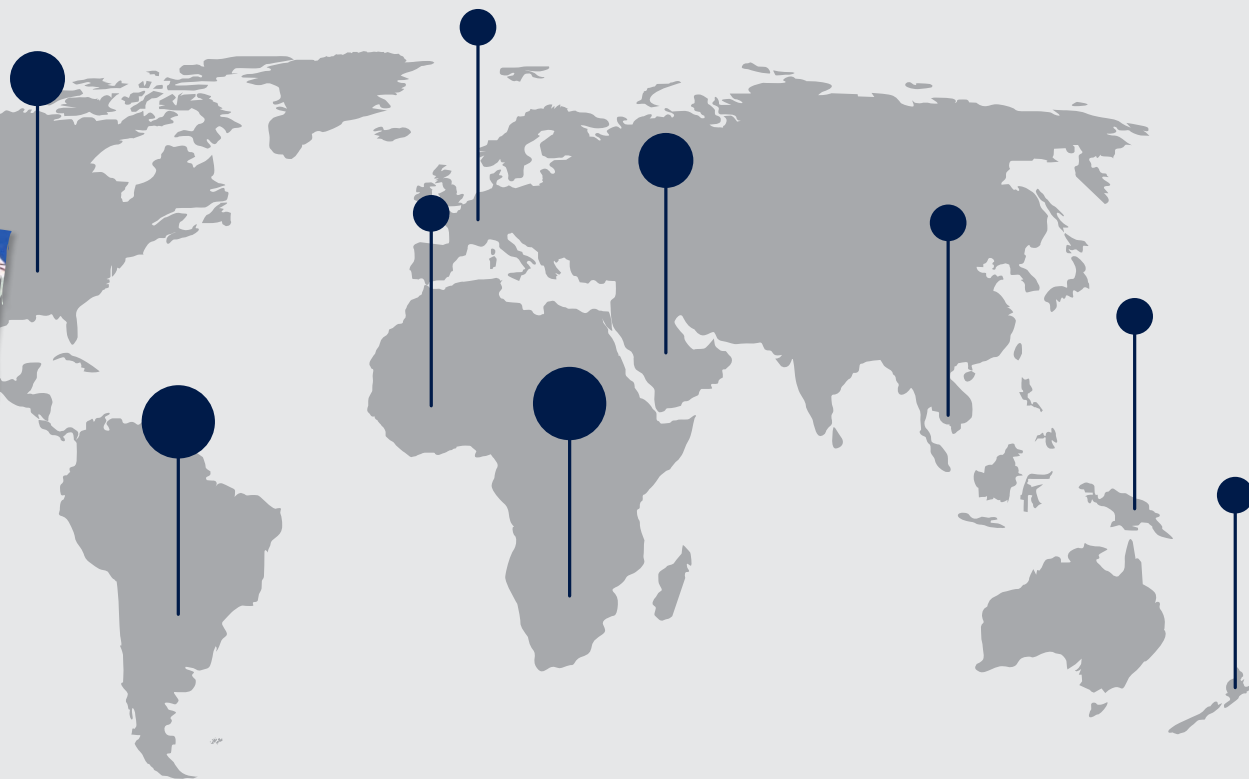
The Brook Point Cook

As part of our support to the Wyndham community, the Geelong Cats has formed The Brook Point Cook Community Partnerships Program, to assist local not-for-profit organisations and support the local community.

Annually, \$100,000 is invested back into the community. This year we celebrated with a cheque presentation night, where grants were given out to each community group by Jordan Murdoch and Zac Smith. Players also assisted in delivering footy training sessions to the local football clubs in the Wyndham area.

"Today my daughter was visited by Dan Menzel, Zac Smith, Ryan Gardner and Kate Darby at Geelong Hospital. She doesn't really follow the footy as we do but knew who they were. I just wanted to say it was such a boost for her. She has chronic asthma and is regularly in hospital and to have something that made her feel special was fantastic. She feels left out of many things because of her asthma but feels as though she has something special, something all her own. I realise it must be tough sometimes for players to have to visit sick people but it really does make a difference to them" - Anne Hesketh, mother of patient at the Barwon Health Foundation University Hospital, Kids Ward





Cats Assist

In 2017, more than 10,000 items were again donated all around the world. Items included giveaways for not-for-profit organisations and to those who may not have the opportunity to purchase items, signed memorabilia donated to fundraising groups to assist with raising much needed funds for various initiatives and ticketing to groups and individuals.

Cats Wishes

In 2017, the Cats in the Community team conducted over 100 special wishes for those going through times of hardship. Experiences ranged from pre-game inner sanctum experiences, on field opportunities, VIP training experiences, meet and greets or sending out messages of well wishes.



"What a thrill to meet Tom and to be watching such an awesome game.

The boys and I will be talking about it forever more. I can't thank you enough"

- Jarrod Kanizay, father of Sam (pictured)

"To our family The Geelong Football club was a place of joy. A place to forget, if only for a short while, just how sick our beautiful Bryce was. Joel Selwood and so many players gave Bryce a reason to smile, a strength when he was tired and just so much fun. Everyone saw past the feeding tubes and oxygen tubes and just saw the happy, amazing little boy who loved his Cats. Thank you for every beautiful memory you all gave to our family"
— Stacey Mekiernan, mother of Bryce (pictured)









CATS IN THE COMMUNITY



@geelongcatscommunity