

**MEDIA RELEASE
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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD PRESENTED TO BRIAN DUNHAM

When Trevallyn man Brian Dunham was invited to a meeting of the St Michael's School more than three decades ago he probably was not expecting to find himself filling a vacancy on the organisation's board.

But since then Brian has volunteered at many important events of the Association, been part of the Executive Committee on numerous sub-committees and was Treasurer for ten years during an unbroken 32 years as a board member of the organisation, which provides support for people with disabilities in the North and North-West of the State.

Brian's commitment was rewarded on Friday night with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2021 Tasmanian Disability Festival Awards, in Launceston.

The award recognises exceptional individuals who have made a significant contribution over the past 20 years and demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the rights, participation and inclusion of people with disability.

Brian first became involved with St Michael's when his son became part of the St Michael's family and he has played a pivotal role in the growth of the organisation including being a key driver and supporter of the purchase of group homes within the Launceston community and the development of on-site residential accommodation tailored to people with a disability.

He also actively advocated for St Michael's to purchase a campus in Devonport to support people with a disability who live on the North-West and has helped increase St Michael's networking opportunities with community organisations, particularly the Riverside Lions Club.

Brian's former professional experience in real estate was invaluable in the purchase of properties in Launceston which were converted into group homes and continue to provide housing for participants.

The knowledge that Brian, as a volunteer Treasurer, gleaned - coupled with his building skills - drove the organisation's development of on-site independent living units at its Newstead campus. This culminated in the completion of Assistive Technology Smart Homes in November 2020, which we hope will soon be replicated at St Michaels' Devonport site.

A former president of Riverside Lions, Brian has facilitated a relationship between the two not-for-profit organisations to raise funds for the purchase of equipment and facilities for participant usage as well as working bees which are regularly undertaken on the Newstead site by club members.

St Michael's Chief Executive Officer Mike Thomas praised Brian's commitment to the Association, and more particularly those living with disabilities.

"Brian has dedicated his life to assisting people with a disability to live independently and to achieve their goals," he said.

"His unbiased opinions have always looked to influence the maximum number of participants at St Michael's, rather than a few."

"He is forward-thinking and knowledgeable with a kind heart and a generosity of spirit."

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