



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

**ORANGE SKY LAUNDRY ADDS WOLLONGONG VAN TO GROWING NATIONAL FLEET**

Orange Sky Laundry has officially launched its 11th van in Wollongong, on the NSW South Coast. The Good Guys, as the National Doing Good partner of Orange Sky Laundry, is delighted to see the service expanding to include regional areas, where, just as it is in capital cities, homelessness continues to be a growing problem.

A long-time Wollongong family has donated the Illawarra's first Orange Sky Laundry van. The van has been christened 'Daisy'.

Impressed by the work of Brisbane mates and 2016 Young Australians of the Year, Lucas Patchett and Nicholas Marchesi, who founded the venture in 2014 as a way of providing the homeless with dignity and respect, Bruce and Val McDiarmid were quick to champion the cause.

With the blessing of their four children, the couple contacted Wollongong surgeon Dr Bruce Ashford, who has been the driving force behind setting up the service in the Illawarra along with Wollongong Private Hospital CEO David Crowe, and pledged to meet the cost implementing this vital service.

The McDiarmids said the donation was a personal choice in response to a situation and opportunity that struck a chord the minute they heard about it.

"Once we heard about this fantastic initiative and realised its potential benefit to the Illawarra region, we wanted to help," Bruce said.

"We thought, this is a charity we want to support and our children agreed."



Thanks to the donation, the 11th van in the Orange Sky Laundry national fleet is now in operation on the streets of Wollongong, providing clean clothes and conversation at various locations across the region.

Dr Ashford said the realisation of the Orange Sky Laundry service in the Illawarra is amazing and praised the generosity of the McDiarmid family in making the dream a reality.

“Bruce and Val have long been quiet achievers in the Illawarra but, in this instance, they are being open about their gift in the hope that others in the community will step up and donate their time to ensure the service is a success.”

“I know from the response I have already received that the Illawarra is keen to embrace Orange Sky Laundry and help others within the community. It’s enriching to see how much people care about the society around them.”

The world-first service has proven so successful it has grown from the original van on the streets of Brisbane in 2014 to 10 operations across the country. Wollongong is be number 11.

A spokesperson from The Good Guys Warrawong Store commented that Daisy will be a very welcome addition to the region.

“The Good Guys is passionate about strengthening local communities and supporting Australia’s most vulnerable.”

“We are proud to support Orange Sky Laundry in every location around Australia, and myself and my team are really looking forward to seeing the van out and about across the Illawarra”, they said.

Co-founder Lucas Patchett said the duo were impressed with the fast and passionate response of the Illawarra community to the appeal to bring a van to the region.



“It was only in July that we visited Wollongong while transporting one of our vans to Tasmania and got to talk to some of the community in Warrawong and Wollongong and introduced them to the service,” he said.

“In just under two years we have been running Orange Sky, we have been continually blown away by the support we have received and how well the vans have been integrated into a range of communities.”

“Everyday people understand what we are aiming to do and embrace it and, ultimately, the people who are homeless in the community. The donation by the McDiarmid family is wonderful and we have no doubt that the Wollongong community will back that generosity with their own support for the service.”

A spokesperson from Ramsay Health Care said the company will continue to support the service as it has done from the start.

“Orange Sky Laundry has proven to be a valuable resource to many communities around the country and Wollongong will be no different,” they said.

“It takes all kinds of people, businesses and organisations to make a service work in the long-term and we will continue to be a part of that process. This is a worthy cause with real outcomes for disadvantaged people and we will help in any way we can.”

Orange Sky Laundry is delivering the service to Wollongong with the help of their National “Doing Good” Partners – The Good Guys, National Training Partner – The Australian Academy of Business and National Servicing Partner – Richard Jay Laundry.

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