

Media Release

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AGE NO BARRIER FOR YOUNG VOLUNTEER

Lower Hutt teenager Tamara Stratton may well be Save the Children's (SCNZ) youngest volunteer but that doesn't stop her playing an active role amongst volunteers 60 or more years older than her.

Tamara, 18, who obviously has volunteering in her blood, became involved with SCNZ last year after she discovered that SCNZ had a youth ambassador programme.

"I decided to join SCNZ as I really admire all the work that they do as an organisation and wanted to do something to help those who are less fortunate. I remember having previously watched some very moving ads on TV that showed some of the children Save the Children were helping with their programmes worldwide and felt that I wanted to help with the significant impact they make in improving children's lives. I also found everyone was very welcoming as I became a part of the programme.

She says, "In the past I've done voluntary work and first aiding with St John youth, organised and facilitated many community events with the Whanganui District Council Youth committee, and been a cabin leader for El Rancho kids camp. I am currently volunteering as a gallery minder at the Enjoy art gallery in Wellington, I have assisted at the breakfast club at Epuni school and hoping to become involved with Youthline and the great services they offer in the near future.

Save the Children NZ Chief Executive, Heidi Coetzee said, "We want to say a big thank you to all our volunteers during National Volunteer Week. We really value the contribution our volunteers make which enables us to improve the lives of children around the world."

National Volunteer Week runs from 17-23 June and celebrates the 1.2 million Kiwis who volunteer their time and skills to our communities every year. The theme this year is Volunteers - Heart of our Community, which captures the essence of what volunteering is about; how their efforts, compassion and time provide a significant contribution, enriching communities.

Tamara is in her first year at Victoria University and began studying Design for Social Innovation but has now changed to a BA in Development Studies.

"I hope to continue my involvement with NGO's and work somewhere in that field or possibly something relating to public policy, or international relations. Alternatively, possibly heading into art curatorship or similar.

"I really enjoy getting involved with the community and meeting new people. I feel as though my involvement means I have a wider perspective on the world and I feel more grateful and positive for what I have and I feel privileged to can play a part in helping those who are less fortunate.

ENDS

Caption: Tamara Stratton, Save the Children's youngest volunteer.

About Save the Children

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In New Zealand and around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach. We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

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