

Hawaiian Ride for Youth

Rider Profile



Dominique Mecoy

Losing her Father-in-Law to suicide after his long struggle with mental health challenges showed Dominique Mecoy the importance of seeking help in difficult times - and developing a variety of support mechanisms.

“The experience taught me a lot about acceptance, support and openness when it comes to mental health. I resolved that I would be a better and more mindful person in the future and if I can create support for others, I would,” Ms Mecoy says.

The CEO of Leadership WA is taking part in the Hawaiian Ride for Youth, a 700km ride from Albany to Perth which spreads the message of positive mental health to young people in the regional areas they visit.

This year’s Hawaiian Ride for Youth is particularly special, it’s the 20th anniversary of the Ride which supports and raises much-needed funds for Youth Focus to help young West Australians struggling with mental health issues including suicidal thoughts, depression, anxiety, self-harm and more.

“Mental health is one of the major concerns affecting our community and increasingly so,” Ms Mecoy says. “It’s brilliant that more people are willing to talk about mental health, which then creates opportunities to reach out for help. There are incredible organisations, such as Youth Focus, which seek to create positive change.

“But systemic change takes not only expertise, passion and drive....it takes funding. Funding to support research, counselling, support services and more – all the large and small things, any of which has the capacity to change a life for the better. Hawaiian has been supporting this Ride for 20 years now and its long-term funding commitments like this which help create long-term support.”

Despite the grueling 6-month training schedule for the Ride (including waking up at 4.30am for training sessions), Ms Mecoy reflects that the experience has “been a good way to gain new perspectives on what is hard, or what is not...”.

“I’m a firm believer in using whatever I can to enable others to succeed and as mental health can create challenges for so many people in our community, this was an excellent opportunity to raise funds and awareness to support Youth Focus to in turn, help young people be the best that they can be.”

Sharing mental health experiences with the people they visit and within the pelotons will also be powerful.

“De-stigmatising – and asking for help is critical. Indeed, I think it’s far more courageous to ask for help than to ‘soldier on’. And the benefits are far greater,” Ms Mecoy says.

Her message to anyone struggling with mental health issues is: You are not alone. Help is there.

“And whether you are experiencing mental health challenges or someone you know or care about is - it’s OK to ask for help. I’ve done it and it’s worth it.”

Asked why she is riding in the Hawaiian Ride for Youth, Ms Mecoy says:

“I have the capacity, so I have the responsibility.”

“What I mean by this is that every single person has the ability to help someone else. It might be as simple as a smile to a stranger in the street to lift their spirits; to just sitting down together to listen; to making a donation of whatever you can manage (it all helps).

“It doesn’t matter if you are a CEO or a school student, everyone has it in them to have a positive impact on someone else. Give it a try.”



Dominique Mecoy

CEO of Leadership WA