

THE Manly Daily

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Potential winners in touch

23 July 2008

ENTREPRENEUR Lara Solomon, who featured in Portfolio two weeks ago with her story about turning her mobile phone socks Mocks into an internationally successful product, will be one of two business operators flying the flag for the peninsula in the Telstra Business Awards.

The founder of Brookvale company LaRoo was announced yesterday as one of the six finalists in the micro-business category of the Telstra Business Awards.

Cromer catering equipment provider Sydney Commercial Kitchens is also in contention for the social responsibility award, which recognises businesses leadership in assisting the environment, people, education or the community.

Owner Neil Willis, who set up the internet-based hospitality supplies business 10 years ago, said his company directed \$3 from every sale to the Fred Hollows Foundation and also supported the Street Mission Cafe in Manly.

He said he donated catering equipment to the charity after reading a story about it in The Manly Daily and had turned that into an ongoing relationship.

"I don't have the time to do what they do but I really appreciate the effort and time they put in," he said.

"They do an amazing job."

Mr Willis said he had a personal philosophy that individuals and businesses should do what they could to support the community.

"As my business grew I realised that I could do more through that than personally," he said. "The Fred Hollows Foundation does fantastic work so now, the more sales we get, the better the business does, the more they get."

Winners among the 21 finalists in the five award categories will be announced in September.

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