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MEDIA RELEASE

**CHANGE-MAKING RECYCLERS AWARDED FOR THEIR
INSPIRING COMMUNITY WORK**

INSPIRATIONAL people creating a difference in their communities by recycling through the Containers for Change scheme have been honoured at the annual Change Maker Awards in Brisbane tonight.

In the third instalment of the awards, William Brown was named the Change Maker of the Year for his outstanding work in the community.

Brown was joined in winning a major award by 11-year-old Caboolture boy Reegan Pellowe, Gold Coast charity entrepreneur '10 Cent Tom' Pirie and the Thursday Island Animal Support Group.

The Change Maker Awards are designed to recognise those in the community who interact with the Containers for Change scheme as well the operators, processors and logistic providers who are the backbone of the scheme itself.

The awards presentation was held at the Brisbane Pullman Hotel with fourteen different honours handed out.

Operators within the scheme were honoured in categories including Customer Focus, Safety, Sustainability, Innovation and Community Engagement.

Brown was named Change Maker of the Year for the mission he pursues to help others through the Containers for Change scheme.

The young man with profound disabilities and his carers collects containers from hundreds of clients in Brisbane's western suburbs.

Brown then donates the proceeds to charities such as the Red Hill Special School which have been of great assistance to him through his school life.

Reegan Pellowe was named the first ever Young Change Maker of the Year award recipient for raising tens of thousands of dollars for charity by collecting containers in the Moreton Bay region.

He has been returning containers through the scheme for almost three years and donates the funds to boost many different charities and causes that assist young people.

'10 Cent Tom' Pirie received the Chairman's Award for his continued drive towards wanting to expand his container collection charitable business to employ other workers with a disability.

The Gold Coast teen had earlier presented the Young Change Maker of the Year award because of the inspiration he has provided the junior recyclers of Queensland.



The Thursday Island Animal Support Group won the award for Charity or Community Group of the year for their initiative that not only provided recycling on the island off the coast of Far North Queensland, but also raised funds to care for more than 80 sick animals.

Small to medium business award winners were operators from all over the state – from Normanton in far North-West Queensland to Ingham, Townsville, Mackay as well as businesses in South-East Queensland.

Major operators Return-It, Envirobank and RDT Engineering all took out awards in the large business categories.

Ken Noye is the chief executive of Container Exchange, the not-for-profit organisation that administers the Containers for Change scheme.

He said the scheme's community connection continues to build and was visible at the awards ceremony on the night.

"The list of award recipients tonight underlines just what a profound effect the Containers for Change scheme is having on the communities of Queensland," said Mr Noye.

"People understand that there is a genuine social impact that can be made by collecting and returning eligible containers through the scheme.

"It is a win-win for everyone – the funds generated by individuals, charities and community groups can make a huge difference in their communities, and the effort of collecting containers is helping clean up the local environment.

"The operators in our scheme also play a huge part in this process, and I want to congratulate not only the winners tonight, but also every business that was nominated as a finalist for the Change Maker Awards."

2021 CHANGE MAKER AWARDS – HONOUR ROLL

Change Maker of the Year – William Brown

Chairman's Award – '10 Cent Tom' Pirie

People's Choice Award – Anything Environmental, Paget

Charity or Community Group of the Year – Thursday Island Animal Support Group

Young Change Maker of the Year – Reegan Pellowe

SAFETY AWARDS

Small to Medium Businesses – MAMS Group Ingham

Large Business – Return-It Emerald

CUSTOMER FOCUS AWARDS

Small to Medium Businesses – Reef Recycling & Logistics, Townsville

Large Businesses – Envirobank



SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

Small to Medium Businesses – Browns Plains Bottles and Cans, Brisbane

Large Business – Envirobank

INNOVATION AWARDS

Small to Medium Businesses – Sandgate Bottle and Can Exchange, Brisbane

Large Businesses - RDT Engineering

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD

Small to Medium Businesses – Gulf C4C, Normanton

For more information on Containers for Change, visit www.containersforchange.com.au/qld

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Cleaning up our state since November 2018, Containers for Change aims to increase recycling rates and reduce litter by allowing Queenslanders to exchange eligible drink containers to either earn a 10 cent refund for each container returned, or donate the proceeds of those refunds to their nominated community group.

COEX is the non-profit organisation that implements the Containers for Change scheme.