**The Franchisee Going Above and Beyond to Support Others**

North Shore McDonald’s Franchisee, Brent Wilson was recently awarded the Ronald Award at the McDonald’s Annual Franchisee Gala Awards.

Awarded by Kylie Freeland, Managing Director of McDonald’s NZ & Pacific Islands, the Ronald Award recognises a Franchisee who operates an excellent restaurant or organisation, also taking this to the community and embedding the McDonald’s values. The chosen Franchisee is a leading brand ambassador, demonstrating this through marketing initiatives, communications, and a strong alliance to the charity.

Brent’s journey with McDonald’s began in 2015, when he and his wife, Janie, decided to move from Hamilton to the Bay of Plenty to take over the Whakatane McDonald’s franchise. A few years later, they took the opportunity to move to Auckland and run a group of North Shore restaurants.

Several years on, they now have a total of six restaurants, and with the Birkenhead restaurant opening last November, the Wilson’s business profile continues to grow, and so does their community and charity support.

“It’s really important for us to give back to the community, and finding connections to charities or sports close to our hearts is even more rewarding,” said Brent.

The Wilsons help to support the Westpac helicopters, food donations, and have helped beach-dig fundraisers while based in Whakatane. Additionally, they provide sporting sponsorships for North Harbour, Netball, Rugby NPC, and Hockey teams and utilise these sporting spaces to help advertise Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) New Zealand, on the North Harbour Netball centre court signage, and on both female and male sponsored Rugby Senior Team jerseys.

In 2021, the Wilsons raised an impressive $16,000 across their restaurants for RMHC’s Share the Love Campaign and have fundraising goals to donate upwards of $100,000 in the years to come.

“We know it is a high number to aim for, but Janie and I love a challenge, so bring it on,” says Brent.

Recently, the Wilsons have gone above and beyond to support RMHC, by creating their own unique event, the first ever ‘Champagne on the Shore’ fundraiser.

The event took place in March last year, offering a range of food and beverages, live entertainment plus live and silent auctions. The night was a success in raising $85,000 for RMHC and with that the Wilson’s intend to continue the event annually. This year “Champagne on The Shore” will be on the 13th June.

“We had a lot of fun at Champagne on the Shore, seeing an event through from years of planning, to a success in turn outs and in donations was satisfying. We are really proud”, shares Brent.

Brent and Janie’s efforts in supporting local community groups, charities, and sports teams is admirable to say the least.

McDonald’s recognises Brent as a well-deserving franchisee to be awarded the Ronald Award, and hopes this recognition encourages other franchisee’s to give back and support those in need.