

# The Sun-Herald CITY2SURF

PRESENTED BY



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*The Sun-Herald* City2Surf presented by Westpac is far more than a fun run.

To Sami, who was living on the streets until Mission Australia helped him find permanent accommodation, the City2Surf radiates joy and laughter.

“Last year when I walked with people [in the City2Surf} everyone was laughing, happy and had smiling faces; you know, the City2Surf is not about running, or winning, it is about happiness,” the 27-year-old said.

Sami received the opportunity to participate in the 2009 City2Surf through Mission Australia, which for the last three years has invited homeless people to join in the fun and community spirit of Sydney’s favourite sporting event.

For those struggling without jobs and beds of their own and stigmatised by their homelessness, the City2Surf offers the ultimate in both social inclusion and personal achievement.

Keen runner Daniel Petsalis, Mission Australia’s Service Manager for Homeless Support Services, devised the City2Surf initiative for his clients.

On Sunday August 8, during Homeless Persons Week, he will lead a team of eight men and four women, plus Mission Australia staff and community supporters, on the 14km journey from the city to Bondi Beach.

Sami, who has impaired use of his right side due to a stroke he suffered in 2006, will be one of those coming back for another “fantastic” City2Surf experience.

“It is great to see the smiles on their faces, as well as the nervous tension at the start and then at the end, some of them are completely exhausted, but they are still keen to say ‘I’m coming back to do that again’,” Mr Petsalis said.

“For these people the City2Surf means they are not being labelled as homeless that day, they can just blend in and be part of the crowd.

“They benefit from the training, the physical wellbeing and an improved level of mental health.

“The City2Surf is another tool in our toolbox to helping these people get back into society.”

This year the Mission Australia City2Surf runners are receiving help from several Sydney Roosters players, who are providing a training plan, advice and some sessions in the club's gym.

Every team member is also being given a new pair of running shoes by race sponsor New Balance.

Participants and supporters in the City2Surf can donate to Mission Australia or a charity of choice by simply visiting the event website [city2surf.com.au](http://city2surf.com.au) and clicking on the Give Gauge.

Enter the race online and create your own personalised fundraising webpage that can be emailed to friends, family or corporate supporters.

If you are the highest individual or team fundraiser for the 2010 City2Surf Charity Challenge you will win \$10,000, donated by *The Sun-Herald* to the charity of your choice! See [city2surf.com.au](http://city2surf.com.au) for full Terms and Conditions.

The 2010 *Sun-Herald* City2Surf is proudly presented by Westpac and supported by New Balance, Rebel Sport, Gatorade, Jockey, Berlei, RSVP, Nova 969, One HD, 2UE, Fitness First, Sheraton on the Park Sydney, NSW Government, Events NSW, City of Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra Councils.



Follow the leader ... CEOs Gail Kelly and Brian McCarthy in training. Photo: Ben Rushton