

Empowering women to shine

Kylie Knight

Passion for helping others is driving Michelle Feuerriegel to assist people doing it tough financially and emotionally, while also ensuring the women's football program at Peninsula Power Football Club thrives.

Michelle is the founder of the EMM Power Foundation and Shop of Opportunity at Clontarf.

The foundation was created to honour the memories of three young women – Emma, Moi and Mary – and provide support to other women struggling with mental health issues or needing practical support.

The op shop, which opened in 2022, raises money to support the foundation's programs while also supporting women's football and providing low-cost or free items for people in need.

"I wanted to open an op shop that was independent, that would support the community, that we could have nice things in the shop and people can get dressed from top to toe for \$10," Michelle says.

The desire to help people doing it tough comes from memories of struggling as a young mother and about 21 years working for organisations at the coal face.

"I knew what Struggle Street felt like and I just always wanted to be able to connect back with this community," she says.

The shop provides free school uniforms, as well as five clothing items for \$10, books, and a community pantry with non-perishable grocery items and personal hygiene products.

"We're like a little hub trying to support people in any way we can," Michelle explains.

"If you know someone who needs help or support in any way, reach out to us.

We'll see what we can do."

The shop has raised about \$50,000 for the foundation.

"For me, it was always something I wanted to do as a social enterprise. I wanted to set something up and if it failed, it was all on me," Michelle says.

Sport is a proven way to bring people together, develop healthy eating and fitness habits and create opportunities. It's something Michelle wanted for male and female footballers.

"What drove me to do it was ... I started the women's football program up in 1994, played 25 years there. We always paid to play football, it was just what we did. Now, all these girls get paid to play football. To be competitive, you have to have a \$60,000-70,000 budget.

"I thought how is that going to happen?"

EMM Power Foundation helps bridge the gap, while providing practical and emotional support for players and the community.

It also runs a Give a Kid a Chance to Advance program, giving young people retail skills.

VISIT THE SHOP

184A Hornbrook Esp, Clontarf

To find out more visit the EMM Power Shop of Opportunity Facebook page

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