

## Alex's Story

Alex Matthews enjoys a personal challenge! Especially one where his efforts help support others in the WA community. First participating in Step Up for MSWA in 2017, he keeps coming back.

Alex, 35, has enjoyed a diverse and lucky life. He joined the Navy straight out of High School, to train as a pilot. Alex said "I learned my first hard life lesson then, when I failed. I then headed overseas to 'find myself'. What was to be a one year stint, ended up a near 7-year absence from Australia, working in England, Scotland, Malta, Austria and Sweden in a variety of jobs including bar work, teaching diving and ski guiding.

Alex believes he must have 'found himself' in 2012, as the call to return home was strong. He returned with his Swedish partner to settle in Perth, where he secured his dream job as an Aviation Fire Fighter at Perth Airport. "Mine is a job I value, and I thank my lucky stars for getting into it every day" said Alex. Recently he has also taken on a second job as a landscape gardener. Alex said, "Aside from working 2 jobs, I try to manage the somewhat obsessive addiction I have to physical exercise and endeavours which put me outside my comfort zone, both physically and mentally. I've been involved in Australian Ninja Warrior, seasons 1,2,3 which has been a very eye-opening experience."

Alex had been a big supporter of the MSWA Home Lotteries for years, when his attention turned to the annual Step Up For MSWA. Alex said "I'm a big fan of putting my body and mind into situations which test their resilience and ability to go past what is normally expected of them. I had heard good stories from fellow fire fighters about the toughness of the event and couldn't resist the urge to experience it for myself."

Alex is set to Step Up For MSWA for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time in 2019. He says there are 3 things which keep him coming back.

"Firstly, after my first Step Up, I was hooked and knew it would be something I would attempt as long as my body allowed!

Secondly, I am always looking to better myself, so trying to maintain or beat my time from the previous year is a good challenge.

Thirdly, after experiencing Step Up, which is so well run by MSWA, I would be upset if I couldn't continue to be a part of it and contribute to their cause."

Alex has two main goals for 2019. "To work even harder on my fundraising efforts. I feel honoured to contribute to MSWA continuing to provide such great support in the WA community. And, secretly, I want to beat young Patty Upton-Davis up to the top. He's got me by mere seconds two years in a row now and I won't let the fact he's 10 years young than me deter me from trying to beat him across the line!"

