

COMMUNITY

THIS IS WHO WE ARE

The Hills District is brimming with creative talent. Here are just a few of the people who are lucky enough to turn what they love into what they do.

OLIVIA ZARANTONELLO

This 25-year-old started out as a casual sales assistant and now she's Director and Buyer of Designer Forum.

“One of my favourite childhood memories is the shopping trips my mum and I took to Melbourne. On one occasion, I bought a pair of the famous leopard print Major Rays Lover jeans from Sass & Bide and wore them until I had to cut them into shorts. When I was in school I wanted to be a hairdresser like my mum. Then, after interning at a Myer fashion show, I decided I wanted to work in fashion events, so I studied at FBI Fashion College. After my course, I started working at Designer Forum in Castle Towers as a casual sales assistant and fell in love with the store, the company, the culture, and of course, the brands. I absolutely loved coming to work and worked super hard, which paid off because after six months I was moved to a full-time role as Operations Manager. After four years, I was given

the opportunity to run 90 per cent of the company for six months as the owner had to take care of some personal matters. Then the business came up for sale and I took over the reins. Of the four stores I have [Castle Hill, St Ives, Terrigal and Robina in Queensland], I spend the most time at my Castle Towers boutique because I live in The Hills District and I have done since I was born. My family is there and so are all my friends. Every weekend we catch up for breakfast at The Baron and at night I am usually out with my boyfriend at Sushi Bay or Enigma. I love our area and plan to be here for a long time.”

Shop the latest range of top Australian and international designers at Designer Forum on Level 3.



NIKOLINA BORG

The fashion stylist and founder of Mamas Fashion Plate is one of the reasons Hills District mums look so fabulous.

“What I love most about my job is seeing a smiling face after I've dressed someone who's been struggling to find what to wear. Building confidence and motivating people to look and feel amazing is what I do best. When I was a young teen, my grandfather bought me my first sewing machine and taught me to sew. I tried to design but I was hopeless – I was

too impatient. So I went the easy way and bought vintage clothing pieces from op shops and cut into them to re-create styles. It was like a gift; I always had an eye for spotting that perfect garment and creating something amazing out of it. I got married a few years ago and moved to the Hills from Melbourne. Being surrounded by beautiful people and families makes

me so happy. Getting to know my community and them getting to know me makes it such an amazing place. When I fell pregnant with my daughter, I went on maternity leave and that's when I decided to start my own business doing something I love and something I'm good at. I did my research, created a business plan and started my own website, Mamas Fashion Plate. It went live

when my daughter was born in 2013 and it took a good year to get on its feet. I feel as if my career has just begun! My business is booming and I see so many exciting endeavours ahead. One thing I've learnt is that it's never too late to achieve your dreams – just keep pushing and they'll arrive.”

To find out more, visit mamasfashionplate.com.au