

9 March 2007

Launch of the NSW Women Lawyers Achievement Awards

On Thursday, 29 March 2007, from 6-8pm, at the Law Society Building, 170 Phillip Street, Sydney, the Women Lawyers' Association of New South Wales (WLANSW) will be re-launching its Achievement Awards for women lawyers in NSW. In attendance and supporting the Awards will be a host of distinguished guests including: Anna McPhee, Director, Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency; Ian Knight, Crown Solicitor, for the Attorney General's Department of NSW; Geoff Dunlevy, President, Law Society of NSW; and Michael Slattery QC, President Bar Association of NSW.

The Launch will mark the opening of a three month period ending 30 June 2007, in which the legal community will be able to nominate outstanding women lawyer candidates for the Awards.

"In 2002 WLA NSW hosted an awards night celebrating the then 50 years of WLA NSW. It is some 5 years now, and we feel it is again time to celebrate and draw attention to what our organisation stands for and to the women in our profession," says Lee-May Saw, President, WLA NSW.

"Our society is governed by the rule of law and women are now integral to that process. With currently more than 50% of law students being women, it is predicated that in the not too distant future the influence of women in society will only increase," says Ms Saw.

Former Justice Mary Gaudron, the guest speaker at WLA NSW's 2002 awards night said these words that embody the spirit of the NSW Women Lawyers Achievement Awards:

Nothing that I have said would matter a fig were it not for the fact that the profession needs and the interests of justice demand the greater involvement of women in the law. The law is indispensable to a well-ordered society and, indeed, to the commercial and economic life of the nation. The wellbeing of those individuals who together constitute our society and the security of the nation's commercial and economic life both depend on just and equal outcomes. In times of rapid social and economic change, such as we have seen in the past decades, just legal outcomes depend on the law being kept in good serviceable order. That in turn requires lawyers to understand the nature and extent of the commercial and human issues that are being driven by change, to articulate the nature of the issues which have thus emerged and to effectively advocate the interests of those they represent.

It seems to me that the failures of the law and legal profession cannot be blamed on women. By a process of elimination and with only a slight leap of faith and logic, I am driven to the conclusion that women lawyers are the laws only real hope for the future.

Please contact Kathryn McKenzie, Executive Officer, on (02) 4392 1185, or at executive@womenlawyersnsw.org.au, for further information and enquiries.

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