



**NSW Women Lawyers
Achievement Awards 2011
Gala Dinner**

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**THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES**



The New South Wales Bar Association



**Attorney General
& Justice**



EOWA

**Friday 23rd September 2011
WatersEdge, Sydney**

Dear Members & Colleagues

The Women Lawyers Association of NSW (WLANSW) supported by the Law Society of NSW, the NSW Bar Association, the Attorney General & Justice Department of NSW, the Australian Corporate Lawyers Association and the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, thank you for joining us in recognising outstanding women lawyers who have achieved excellence in their area of practice, while advancing opportunities for women in the law. We congratulate all our nominees for this year's NSW Women Lawyers Achievement Awards who we profile below.

The 2011 Judging Panel for the Awards comprised representatives from the Attorney General & Justice Department of NSW, the Bar Association of NSW, the Law Society of NSW, the Australian Corporate Lawyers Association and WLANSW.

Our Judging Panel considered a very strong field of nominees to determine the recipients of awards in the 5 categories, and resulted in a recommendation from the Judging Panel for an additional "Highly Commended" recognition of a further nominee. The Executive Committee will also present a Lifetime Achievement Award.

- Woman Lawyer of the Year in Private Practice;
- "In House" Woman Lawyer of the Year *sponsored by Blake Dawson*;
- Woman Lawyer of the Year in a Community Organisation *includes a Passeport Beaute Deluxe Package compliments of Franck Provost Paris Hair*;
- Woman Lawyer Advocate of the Year;
- "Up And Coming" Woman Lawyer of the Year *sponsored by Middletons and includes an MGSM Leadership Course*.

In their respective award category, each Candidate was required to meet at least 3 of the following criteria:

- The individual achievement of professional excellence;
- An outstanding contribution to the advancement of women within the practice and development of law;
- Encouragement and influence on other women to pursue a legal career;
- Commitment to the support, encouragement and promotion of the careers of women within the legal profession including mentoring of women within the legal profession and/or advocacy for and the establishment of flexible work practices, and/or balancing children and work commitments;
- Understanding of and support for the legal rights of all women including a commitment to either the promotion of justice and equality for all women, and/or the identification, exposure and eradication of all forms of discrimination against women in the legal system and in the community generally.

Yours faithfully



Rebecca Barry
President

Guest Speaker:



The Honourable Justice Margaret Beazley AO

Her Honour attended the Sydney Law School graduating with Honours in Law in 1974 and was admitted to the New South Wales Bar on 14 March 1975. She was appointed a Queens Counsel in 1989. In 1993, her Honour was appointed as a judge of the Federal Court of Australia. In 1996 she was the first woman appointed to the New South Wales Court of Appeal, where she currently sits and is one of the most senior women judges in Australia. She is Chairperson of the NSW Chapter of the Australian Institute of Administrative Law, Patron of the Toongabbie Legal Centre and President of the Arts Law Centre of Australia. Her Honour was made an Officer in the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours List on 12 June 2006 for service to the judiciary and the law, particularly through contributions to professional and ethical standards and to the advancement of women in the legal profession and the community. In May 2008, her Honour was awarded Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* (Hon LLD) by the University of Sydney.

Performance by the NSW Bar Association Choir

Woman Lawyer of the Year in Private Practice



Katie Malyon set up boutique immigration law firm Katie Malyon & Associates, Lawyers in July 2005. In just 6 years, her firm has grown to become the second largest immigration law firm in Australia, an achievement recognised by the BRW in its *Fast Starters 2010*. More recently, she started a second law firm Malyon Andronicos Lawyers and tendered successfully to provide immigration advice and assistance to asylum seekers under the Commonwealth Government's IAAAS scheme. Katie has been recognised by her peers and named by the Australian Financial Review as one of the *Best Lawyers - Immigration 2010* and

2011. Amongst other activities, she is a Director of the Migration Institute of Australia and mentors young lawyers as well as business women starting their own practices. Katie also lectures to the profession, both in Australia and overseas, on aspects of immigration law and practice management. A mother of 3 grown children, Katie is committed to achieving work and out-of-work life balance for herself and staff, the majority of whom work part-time or job share.



Vanessa McNeilly is Principal Lawyer of McNeilly Lawyers established in 2008. Vanessa practices predominately in Family Law and in the area of Care and Protection. Her firm, McNeilly Lawyers, is committed to providing quality advice to those who are disadvantaged, particularly women who may have experienced abuse and/or discrimination. Vanessa dedicates her time to supporting the local community, providing advice and assistance to community organisations, minority groups and to sufferers of

family violence. Vanessa has also been appointed Regional Outreach Clinic Provider (ROCP) by the Legal Aid Commission of NSW to provide advice and assistance to some of the most socio-economically disadvantaged regions in NSW. Having two small children of her own, Vanessa encourages the work-life balance within her own practice and provides flexible working arrangements for her staff. Vanessa has recently encouraged the career of other women through employment and support. Vanessa is a Committee member of the Mid North Coast Law Society and has recently been nominated for the role of Director with Coastline Credit Union.



Snezana Vojvodic has been practising since 1996 in commercial litigation. Snezana has acted for a broad range of clients in matters ranging from corporate and joint ventures disputes to cases involving trade practice issues, shareholders' disputes and breaches of director's duties. Snezana is a strong supporter of initiatives to support the progress of women across all levels in the legal profession. Earlier this year, Snezana was instrumental in launching a mentoring program between the Westpac Group and Gadens Lawyers which provides women with the opportunity to be

mentored by female lawyers from outside their own organisation. Snezana is a founding member of the Gaden's Womens Forum which aims to promote and support women in business, with a particular focus on providing functions and networking opportunities that are sensitive to women's needs. Snezana was also involved in instigating the sponsorship by Gadens Lawyers of the Inaugural Gadens

Intervarsity Women's Mooting Competition which will commence in September 2011.



Anna Walsh is a Director and Principal of Maurice Blackburn Lawyers and heads up the Medical Negligence department in New South Wales. Anna has honours degrees in both Nursing and Law, is currently completing a Masters of Law by research and lectures in the School of Law at the University of Notre Dame, Sydney. Specialising in medical negligence litigation for plaintiffs for 12 years, Anna works on a wide variety of matters and has a special interest in birth trauma and cases involving children, as well as representing families at Coronial Inquests where the deceased has died following medical treatment. She has published a variety of articles on medical law topics and is a regular speaker at legal and medical conferences. Anna is an Accredited Specialist in Personal Injury Law, is on the Law Society's Specialist Accreditation Committee for personal injury law and is the plaintiff's representative on the Professional Negligence List User Group in the Supreme Court of New South Wales.

'In House' Woman Lawyer of the Year



Louise Blazejowska is Acting Manager, Policy, Justice Branch at the Department of Premier and Cabinet. Louise graduated in 1984 and since then has worked as a community and government lawyer for the Aboriginal Legal Service, various community legal centres, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the NSW Attorney General's Department and Legal Aid NSW. Louise's interests are in the human rights area advocating for improved justice system responds to women, Aboriginal people and young people. A major focus of her work has been improving legal and social welfare services to women and children experiencing domestic violence through the establishment of consultative bodies and services such as the Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Service, the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program and the Specialist Domestic Violence Practitioner Panel. In 1996 Louise was awarded NSW Government Lawyer of the Year Award and in 2010 was awarded the NSW Premier's Award for Leading Change.



Prue Milne is the Executive Legal Counsel at AMP Capital Investors Limited. She joined AMP on 15 June 1998, the day that it became a publicly listed company. Prue became Executive Legal Counsel at AMP Capital Investors in July 2005, ceasing her three-year role as board executive and company secretary of AMP Limited. Prior to that, Prue was Executive Legal Counsel, Group Office, providing advice to senior executives in AMP's corporate office in Sydney on wide ranging legal issues including acquisitions, integrations, ASX Listing Rules and Corporations Law obligations. The AMP Group is committed to diversity in thought in the workplace, with a particular focus in AMP Capital on gender diversity in investment management. As part of that commitment, Prue has formally and

informally mentored and supported female colleagues in their career development and, as a mother of 3 teenagers, is a strong supporter of family friendly flexible workplace policies. Before joining AMP in 1998, Prue spent seven years with Blake Dawson Waldron in Sydney as an associate in their corporate and commercial group specialising in managed investments, trusts, public listings and mergers and acquisitions.



Kate Perumal is General Counsel for Abigroup Limited. She began her career at Minter Ellison in 1998 and joined Abigroup in 2003. As General Counsel, Kate is the sole woman on Abigroup's management board and is responsible for a team of 10 lawyers managing all legal issues for Abigroup and its subsidiaries. As the mother of two children under 5, Kate is passionate about work-life balance. Kate was a driving force behind Abigroup adopting a Flexible Work Policy and Paid Parental Leave Policy in December 2009. Kate has also chaired the 'Women@Abigroup' forum since its inception in 2010, being an initiative to discuss and promote gender diversity within Abigroup. Kate has supported the establishment of regional 'women@abigroup' groups in Victoria, NSW and Queensland, the engagement of a diversity manager, the initiation of a pay equity gap analysis as well as the establishment of diversity leadership initiatives.



Victoria Poole is Corporate Counsel at Westpac Banking Corporation, leading a team of around 80 lawyers and paralegals. Victoria is also a director on the board of Hastings Funds Management Limited, a subsidiary of Westpac. Before joining Westpac in May 2010, she was a partner at Allens Arthur Robinson, practising in mergers & acquisitions, capital markets and funds management. Victoria came to law late in life, commencing her law degree at the age of 32 and beginning her legal career in private practice with Mallesons. Victoria made the transition to in-house as she wanted to move away from a transactional practice and build something tangible in terms of teams and businesses. Victoria participates in many of the diversity and flexibility initiatives underway within Westpac designed to address gender equity issues, and acts as mentor for both men and women within Westpac and Allens. This year, Victoria sponsored the first fundraising event held by the Westpac Legal Team for International Women's Day, and sponsored the Gadens Lawyers and Westpac cross-industry women's mentoring program designed to enable women lawyers to share experiences arising in two different legal job contexts.

Woman Lawyer of the Year in a Community Organisation



Emma Golledge is the Principal Solicitor of Kingsford Legal Centre where she works primarily in discrimination law. Her role also includes teaching law students practical skills and undertaking law reform and policy work with a human rights focus. Prior to this role she worked in the United Kingdom in a community legal centre and for the Government. She has a passion for social justice and has worked extensively in community legal centres for the past 10 years. Her work has

particularly focused on advocating for people marginalised and disadvantaged by legal processes, both on an individual and systemic level.



Beatrice Gray lectures in the subject of “Australian Constitutional Law”, University of Sydney, Law Extension Committee and Examiners in the subject for the Legal Profession Admission Board. Each is a renewable appointment from 1976 and 1993. She is Assistant Editor, appointed by the Council of Law Reporting NSW, of the New South Wales Law Reports. Beatrice graduated from the University of Sydney with a BA in 1964, an LLB in 1968 and an LLM in 1981. Admitted to private practice at the NSW Bar in 1968, Beatrice has had an extensive career in legal publishing including the “Australian Digest” 3rd ed (Thomson Reuters), where as a

Legal Editor she contributed for 24 years. She was the 16th woman to commence practice at the Bar where 10 were practising. She was the first woman appointed as a lecturer by the University of Sydney, Law Extension Committee. She has taught approx. 10,000 students. When so few women were qualified Beatrice saw it as important to mentor others and encourage others by continuing her own commitment to her professional life.



Dianne Hamey has extensive experience in the private and community legal sectors, most recently at Women’s Legal Services NSW (WLS) in their Domestic Violence Advocacy Service, general women’s service, and as the Supervising Solicitor of the Indigenous Women’s Program from June 2007 until 30 June 2011. Dianne has had substantial expertise in family law, domestic violence, discrimination, victims compensation and care and protection law. Dianne was part of a delegation from the Australian Human Rights Commission to China in April 2011; a consultant on the Department

of Corrective Services Women’s Advisory Council, and was Co-Convenor of WLS Australia. In her leadership role at WLS, Dianne has been responsible for developing and implementing training, supervising and mentoring. She has advocated extensively for reforms to laws and legal processes to improve access to justice for disadvantaged women. Dianne is currently undertaking a Masters of Business in Management and has been invited to apply for a PhD candidature.



Dr Natalie Klein was appointed Professor and Dean at Macquarie Law School, Macquarie University in January 2011, after joining Macquarie in 2004 as a Lecturer. Dr Klein’s passion is international law, particularly law of the sea and international dispute settlement, and she is committed to engaging with students, junior researchers, and colleagues through all her teaching, research and outreach activities. Dr Klein has a history of advising and advocating human rights and humanitarian causes, such as acting for Mexico at the International Court of

Justice protecting consular rights of Mexican nationals on death row in the United States; documenting human rights abuses in the mass expulsion of Eritreans; and as a member of the Sydney Panel advising the International Fund for Animal Welfare on Japan’s Antarctic whaling program. Dr Klein practiced in the international litigation and arbitration practice of Debevoise & Plimpton LLP in New York, served as counsel to the Government of Eritrea and was a consultant in the

Office of Legal Affairs at the United Nations. She is a graduate of Yale Law School and Adelaide University.



Karen Mifsud was admitted as a solicitor in 1984. While in private practice in Western Sydney, Karen was a volunteer solicitor with Women's Legal Services NSW. In 2003 Karen began employment with Women's Legal Services NSW and from 2005 to 2011 was the supervising solicitor of the Domestic Violence Advocacy Service at Women's Legal Services NSW. She assisted many women escaping domestic violence in Apprehended Domestic Violence Order and family law proceedings, as well as victims of sexual assault to protect their counselling records.

Karen also provided Community Legal Education and advocated for legislative and systemic change for the benefit of victims of domestic violence. She sat on the Apprehended Violence Legal Issues Coordinating Committee convened by the Department of the Attorney General and was part of the Senior Officers Group guiding the implementation of the Domestic Violence Intervention Court Model. Karen also enjoyed mentoring other women lawyers at Women's Legal Services NSW and seeing them gain knowledge and confidence in the law.



Susan Smith is deeply committed to protecting the rights of women victims of domestic violence. As the Coordinator of the Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (Sydney WDV CAS) at Redfern Legal Centre, Susan works to ensure that women attending court in domestic violence related matters at the Downing Centre, Newtown, Balmain and Waverley courts are provided with legal advice, advocacy and access to support services. During the past twelve months, the service has provided this assistance to 1,450 women. Susan

has worked at Redfern Legal Centre since 2002 and in that time has mentored and encouraged countless female law student volunteers, students on university placements and students undertaking their Practical Legal Training. Susan's commitment to victims of domestic violence extends to her law reform work, which has included submissions and recommendations to NSW Police, the Ombudsman and government. Susan is also a member of the NSW Victims Advisory Board and the Apprehended Violence Legal Issues Coordinating Committee at the Department of Attorney General and Justice.



Dr Chandrika Subramaniyan commenced working in the law industry in 2006 after a previous career as journalist and IT professional. She then decided to establish her own practice in 2008. Chandrika has been an advocate for migrants and refugees ever since her migration to Australia in 1997. In 2008 she started to give free legal consultation for Sydwest Multicultural Services in Blacktown, for migrants and refugees and continues to do so. In her practice, she has assisted numerous women through Sydwest multicultural services with

their legal needs. In recognition of her services to the Western suburbs community, in 2009 Chandrika was nominated for the prestigious Justice Medal. As a teacher in TAFE and University of Western Sydney, Chandrika has mentored and encouraged women, and migrants in particular to pursue a career in the legal

profession. Chandrika also conducts workshops and information sessions to migrant communities to educate and update their knowledge on Australian legal systems.

Woman Lawyer Advocate of the Year



Julia Baird SC was admitted to the Bar in 1992 and appointed Senior Counsel in 2008. Julia has appeared in the High Court in trade mark and copyright cases and in many significant Intellectual Property cases in the Federal Court and IP Australia. Julia publishes regularly including commentary in *Lahore's Patents, Trade Marks and Related Rights* and in *NSW Court Forms, Precedents and Pleadings*. For many years Julia has participated in advocacy training in the Bar Practice Course and as a faculty

member of the Australian Bar Association annual trial advocacy residential courses. In 2009 she coached at the English Bar's advocacy residential course at Keble College, Oxford. A leading role model for women advocates, Julia is Chair of the Women Barristers Forum and is instrumental in the Women Barristers Oral History Project. She is deeply committed to encouraging women at the Bar, organising the Bar's women's mentoring programme and for many years she also co-ordinated the Bar's Open Days for women law students.



Sandra Duggan SC commenced practice as a solicitor in 1988. From the start she was interested in advocacy, undertaking the presentation of many matters as a solicitor advocate. It was this experience that fuelled her desire to go to the NSW private Bar in 1995. Sandra was appointed Senior Counsel in 2010. Sandra practices primarily in the areas of: Local Government, Administrative Law and Environmental Law. She regularly represents State and Local Government Authorities; developers; and community interest groups. As a Land and Environment

Court specialist, she has appeared in almost every Courthouse in NSW, and often starts a hearing with a site inspection of the premises in a brothel, down a mine, at a church, in a school or on a boat. In addition to her experience as an advocate Sandra has been a strong supporter of women at the Bar both through her association with various NSW Bar Association committees and mentoring of women Barristers and students.



Anne Healey commenced practice as a barrister in Sydney in 1994. She has been a member of the NSW Bar Council since 2006 and has been appointed to a number of committees including the Professional Conduct Committee, Legal Aid Committee, Human Rights Committee, Finance and Investment Committee, and the Legal Aid Review Committee. Anne has a diverse practice, reflecting her long standing interest in social justice for women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the socially and economically disadvantaged. This includes a significant criminal trial practice, and personal injury practice. She appears regularly in inquests, child protection matters, Succession Act cases, and various matters involving discrimination and human rights issues. Anne mentors women lawyers formally and informally, and has been a regular judge of university senior mootings and trial advocacy competitions. She

has been a member of WLA since 1986 and was a member of the WLA Executive Committee as a solicitor.



Dr Melissa Perry QC has practiced at the bar since 1992 and was appointed silk in 2004. Her expertise includes appellate advocacy, public law, federal environmental law and native title on which she co-authored a major textbook. She has appeared in over 40 matters in the High Court (excluding special leave) and in the challenge to the legality of the military government in Fiji. She holds an Honours degree in Law from Adelaide University, and an LLM and prizewinning doctorate in international law from Cambridge. Among other positions, she is a foundation fellow and director, Australian Academy of Law,

and a member of the Administrative Review Council, the Rule of Law Institute of Australia Governing Council, the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law Advisory Committee and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Committees, NSW Bar Association. She is passionate about promoting the rule of law, the value of education, and encouraging and supporting young people in the law.

'Up and Coming' Woman Lawyer of the Year



Claire Hammerton is currently Acting Senior Legal Officer at the NSW Aboriginal Land Council. Prior to this, she worked as an associate to a Federal Court Judge and in commercial dispute resolution at Norton Rose. Immediately after being admitted, Claire joined the NSW Young Lawyers Human Rights Committee and held positions of Vice Chair, Chair and NSW Young Lawyers Representative to the Law Society Human Rights Committee. Claire has completed internships with organisations including Cape York Land Council and the Australian Human Rights Centre. In 2008, she was selected to participate in a 2-month

internship with a community-based organisation in India. Claire is currently a Coordinator and Evidence-Gatherer with the International Commission of Jurists Sri Lanka Evidence Project and Chair of the NSW Young Lawyers Justice Education Team. She is also a mentor with the Law Society's Mentoring Program and a volunteer solicitor at Redfern Legal Centre.



Brenda Tronson is a barrister at Sixth Floor Selborne Wentworth Chambers, practising in commercial law and public law. Brenda commenced practice as a barrister in October 2008, and before that, completed the BCL and MPhil in Law at Oxford University, and has worked as associate to Justice Crennan in the High Court of Australia and as a graduate at Freehills in Sydney. While engaging in a diverse practice with some significant successes (including appearing as junior counsel for the plaintiff in *Wainohu v State of New South Wales* in the High Court), Brenda also finds time to get involved in a wide variety of other activities. She occupies a number of roles within several New South Wales Young Lawyers

committees, adjudicates competitions at several universities, coaches moot teams (including a team in the inaugural Gadens Intervarsity Women's Mooting Tournament) and acts as a mentor to a number of young women.

Life Achievement Award



The Honourable Elizabeth Evatt AC graduated in law at Sydney University in 1955, later taking a Masters degree at Harvard Law School. She practised law in Australia and in England.

In 1973, she was appointed as a Deputy President of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. She chaired the Royal Commission on Human Relationships from 1974 to 1977 and was Chief Judge of the Family Court of Australia from 1976 to 1988. In 1988 she became President of the Australian

Law Reform Commission until 1993. She was Chancellor of the University of Newcastle from 1988 to 1994.

From 1984 to 1992, she was a member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and chaired that Committee from 1989 - 1991. From 1993 to 2000 she was a member of the UN Human Rights Committee. From 1998 to 2006, she was a Judge of the World Bank Administrative Tribunal.

Currently she is a Commissioner of the International Commission of Jurists, based in Geneva.

**Award Sponsor for 'In House'
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Blake Dawson

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