



Welcome to the first issue of VWLlist for 2020 and happy International Women's Day!

We are very excited to resume our activities and bring you a year of events and projects which seek to achieve equality for women in the law.

This year our focus will be on promoting healthy workplaces and diversity and inclusion within the legal profession.

Along with our staple events and projects, such as the Warren Moot, Law Student Mentoring Program, Members & Guests Evening and Dame Roma Mitchell Memorial Lunch, we will also bring you some fresh and exciting content throughout the legal year.

We have an active Instagram page and we encourage you to hashtag #victorianwomenlawyers on social media when you attend our events.

NEWS



WELCOME TO OUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE!

VWL held its Annual General Meeting on 26 November 2019 and members elected our new Executive Committee for 2020.

We congratulate the following women lawyers and look forward to them leading VWL in the new year:

- President: Deborah Kliger;
- Vice President: Vanessa Shambrook;
- Immediate Past President: Ella van der Schans;
- Secretary: Emma Sestito;
- Treasurer: Hannah Fitzpatrick;
- General Members: Sophie Lefebvre, Bonnie Phillips, Marquita Nolan, Eleanor Weir, Erin Meeking and Stephanie Pasharis.

We farewell our 2019 Executive Committee and thank them for their contributions. VWL also extends its thanks and gratitude to long term Treasurer, Elizabeth Cooper who has stepped down after 7 years in the role.

RESPECT@WORK - SEXUAL HARASSMENT NATIONAL INQUIRY REPORT LAUNCH

This #IWD2020 women deserve real change.

The Australian Human Rights Commission's roadmap for sexual harassment-free workplaces was released on Thursday and lays out a pathway for making our workplaces truly safe and respectful.

VWL calls for urgent action to be taken to make this a reality.

Click [here](#) to read the full report.

SPONSORS



SPOTLIGHT

VWL greatly values the support we receive from each of our sponsors to help us achieve our objectives.

This month, we would like to highlight the work of Jessica Choong, who is a Partner at sponsor firm Allens.

Jessica is a highly experienced corporate lawyer, specialising in mergers and acquisitions, who spent three years on secondment in Singapore.

Click [here](#) to read more about Jessica!

EVENTS



DAME ROMA - A BIG HIT!

VWL and Women Barristers' Association were proud to present the 2020 Dame Roma Mitchell Memorial Lunch in celebration of International Women's Day.

We were delighted to welcome this year's keynote speaker Antoinette Braybrook, CEO of Djirra, an organisation which provides holistic and culturally safe legal and other support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children experiencing family violence.

As usual, tickets to this flagship event sold out quickly. We were pleased to host 230 guests including members of the judiciary, sponsors, our members and those from the broader legal community. We are thrilled with the positive feedback we have received on the event.

LEGAL LANEWAY BREAKFAST - WRAP UP

The 17th Annual Legal Laneway breakfast took place on 5 February at Hardware Lane in the heart of Melbourne's CBD.

This popular event marks the opening of the legal year. With VWL volunteers and others selling raffle tickets, the event successfully raised funds which will be donated to The Torch.

The Torch provides support to Indigenous offenders and ex-offenders in Victoria through art, cultural and vocational programs. Find out more about [The Torch](#).

VWL members in attendance certainly had a fantastic time and thank Victoria Law Foundation for putting on yet another successful event.

THE WORLD POST-MARRIAGE EQUALITY - REGISTRATIONS CLOSED

We are beginning to see the effects of marriage equality since it was legalised in Australia. On 11 March VWL will be holding the first event in its 2020 Diversity Series on the world post-marriage equality.

A first-of-its-kind event, the discussion will be centred around issues affecting rainbow families and the LGBTQIA+ community in Australia since the law was passed. We are pleased to have the following esteemed speakers on our panel:

- Anna Brown OAM, lawyer, activist and CEO of Equality Australia;
- Michelle Sheppard, presenter, advocate and trainer in the gender equality space;
- Dr Judy Tang, Neuropsychologist and President of the Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council; and
- Jac Tomlins, writer, trainer, speaker and advocate.

Registrations for this event have now closed, but we look forward to the next instalment in our Diversity Series 2020.

VWL thanks Nicholes Family Lawyers for sponsoring this event.

PROJECTS



FUNDRAISING

Following our Annual General Meeting we held an end of year celebration for members to catch up over drinks and canapés and collect their edition of *Portia*.

VWL was thrilled to once again support not-for-profit, SisterWorks, to raise funds for women with migrant, asylum seeker and refugee backgrounds.

Thank you to members who purchased items at the stall as they have directly supported this very important initiative.

Click [here](#) to find out more about SisterWorks.

PUBLICATIONS



PORTIA 2019

Portia 2019 was launched at our recent AGM and end of year celebration.

The theme for last year's edition of *Portia* was 'ideas and identity'. The theme draws upon a paradox in recent times, that as technology has enhanced our capacity to communicate and created a more interconnected world, we are witnessing fractures in people clutched to identity.

Click [here](#) to view.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2020

This year the theme for International Women's Day is 'An equal world is an enabled world'. The Day is celebrated annually on 8 March.

The IWD 2020 campaign theme is drawn from a notion of 'Collective Individualism. We are all parts of a whole. Our individual actions, conversations, behaviours and mindsets can have an impact on our larger society.

Collectively, we can make change happen.

Together, we can each help to create a truly equal legal profession beyond identity, gender, cultural background, disability or sexual orientation or identification.

We can all choose to be #EachforEqual.

VWL Executive Committee Member and Communications Officer, Eleanor Weir and Vice President, Vanessa Shambrook discuss how greater diversity in the legal profession means turning our minds to gender and equality in all forms in the March edition of the *Law Institute Journal*. Click [here](#) to read the full article.



Victorian Women Lawyers acknowledges the traditional Aboriginal owners of country, recognises their continuing connection to land, water and community and pays respect to Elders past and present.



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