



# vwl<sub>ist</sub>

Welcome to the final issue of VWList for 2020.

VWL thanks each of you, including all of our members and sponsors for continuing to support and engage with VWL for what has been a very challenging year for us all. By renewing your membership, attending our events and participating in our projects, you have kept our VWL community connected to continue to assist women within, and outside of, the legal profession.

In a time where similar bodies have suspended activities, VWL has embraced technology, delivering a host of events and projects online and our numbers have grown throughout this digital era.

We wish our members and sponsors a happy holidays and look forward to bringing you fresh events and projects in 2021.

Keep up to date with our activities via our [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) page.

## NEWS



### AGM RECAP & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2021 ANNOUNCEMENT

On 26 November 2020, members voted on VWL's Executive Committee during our first virtual AGM.

This year's keynote was delivered by Mariam Issa, author of *A Resilient Life* and Co-Founder of RAW (Resilient Aspiring Women).

You can watch a video of the event [here](#). Please enter

## PROJECTS



### VOLUNTEERING FOR IMPACT FOR WOMEN

On Sunday, 6 December 2020, Victorian Women Lawyers Executive Committee volunteered for Impact for Women by sorting and packing bags of essential items ('Bags of Love') for women experiencing, and fleeing domestic violence. Impact for

## PUBLICATIONS



### PORTIA 2020

VWL is proud to announce the launch of the 2020 edition of *Portia*!

When we selected the theme of 'courage' for this year's edition back in January, we had no idea how apt it would become.

password *VWLAGM20!*

VWL is excited to announce its following Executive Committee leading us in 2021:

- Vanessa Shambrook (President);
- Stephanie Pasharis (Vice President);
- Deborah Kliger (Immediate Past President);
- Elizabeth Cooper (Treasurer);
- Chanphyna Bou (Secretary);
- Bronwyn Montgomery (General Executive Member);
- Erin Meeking (General Executive Member);
- Emma Sestito (General Executive Member);
- Sophie Lefebvre (General Executive Member);
- Eleanor Weir (General Executive Member);
- Oriana Torcasio (General Executive Member); and
- Our Sub Committee Co-Chairs.

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**Maddocks**



### **VWL WARREN MOOT GRAND FINAL**

On 10 November 2020, VWL's final Moot teams competed in a virtual Moot Grand Final adjudicated by VWL's Program Patron,

Women is a volunteer run not-for-profit organisation committed to making a difference to Victorian women and children fleeing extreme violence at home.

VWL looks forward to working with Impact for Women on various other projects in 2021. You can become involved by contacting the VWL Justice Committee [vwl@vwl.asn.au](mailto:vwl@vwl.asn.au)



### **LAW STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAM - UPDATE**

On 27 July 2020, VWL formally launched VWL and WBA's Law Student Mentoring Program for 2020! In 2020 the Program entered its 13th year. A recording of the digital launch is now available to members to watch [here](#). The Program included a new feature this year, with sponsor firm K & L Gates' Clare Monger providing an opportunity for the Program's mentors to upskill through her Power Mentoring Techniques session.

Despite limitations arising from the pandemic, VWL was able to match over 125 female and female-identifying law students with mentors from across the legal profession.

VWL thanks sponsor firm K & L Gates for sponsoring the Program.

2020 has called on so many of us to be courageous. As our Patron the former Chief Justice Honourable Marilyn Warren AC QC writes in her message to VWL members: "*The courage of women lawyers should be celebrated with immense sisterly pride. To work and study in the law in 2020 has taken courage both in the workplace and professionally*".

The pages of *Portia* 2020 are dotted with stunning works of portraiture submitted by women artists as entries to the 2020 Portia Geach Memorial Award, including the winning piece by Caroline Zilinsky, a portrait of dancer Anthea Pilko titled '*Anthea May or May Not*'.

We take this opportunity to thank VWL's sponsors, members and supporters, and to those who contributed to *Portia* 2020 for what has been an enriching year of events and projects.

Members will shortly receive their copy in the post. In the meantime, an [electronic version](#) is available on our website.

We hope you enjoy this years' edition!

### **ARTICLES**

#### **ACCORDING TO MERIT: INDIGENOUS INITIATIVES HIT HARD**

In the November edition of the Law Institute Journal, Coco Watanabe, member of the VWL Diversity & Inclusion Committee writes that "*perhaps now, more than*

the Honourable former Chief Justice Marilyn Warren AC QC.

VWL congratulates this year's winners, Amelia French, Amelia Hunter, Olivia Smedley and Sarah Tucker, Law Graduates at Maddocks.

VWL also congratulates, this year's runners-up, Veronica Belot, Emma Lee and Stephanie Moussa - a fantastic effort by both teams!

All 16 teams participated in the initial practice trial round adjudicated by practising barristers, who provided teams with constructive feedback and valuable tips before the first competitive, knock-out round. Each competitive round was adjudicated by women Judges of the County Court and Federal Court and Justices of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal.

VWL extends our thanks to all participants of the Moot and a special thank you to Maddocks for sponsoring the competition.

## **SUBMISSIONS**

### **SUBMISSION TO REVIEW SEXUAL HARRASSMENT IN VICTORIAN COURTS**

VWL's Law Reform Committee recently made a submission on the review of sexual harassments in Victorian Courts, a widespread issues that overwhelmingly effect female-identifying lawyers.

The submission covered the prevention of sexual

## **PROFESSIONAL MENTORING PROGRAM**

Expressions of interest for mentors for the VWL Professional Mentoring Program will remain open until early 2021.

VWL invites you to apply to participate as a mentor in the inaugural Professional Mentoring Program.

The VWL Professional Mentoring Program will provide a wonderful opportunity for female lawyers to develop their personal and professional skills by engaging with a more senior and established practitioner. VWL envisions that this program will provide an opportunity for female lawyers to engage in a formal mentoring program, especially when not all practitioners have access to a mentoring program through their employer.

Register [here](#)

## **ALTERNATIVE LEGAL PATHWAYS**

From 16 September 2020 until 14 October 2020, VWL's Networking Committee held a 5 week Instagram Live Series on Alternative Legal Career Pathways each Wednesday at 8am. VWL interviewed successful female-identifying lawyers who have pursued non-traditional pathways in the law.

All interviews are now available to watch or listen to

*ever, Australia needs to engage in a conversation about reconciliation; one that encourages more accountability, self-reflection and critical thinking". Read the full article [here](#).*

## **ACCORDING TO MERIT: NOT SO SUPER - WHY SUPERANNUATION FOR WOMEN IS RIPE FOR REFORM**

In the December edition of the Law Institute Journal, Eleanor Weir VWL Communications Officer and Rose hunt, family lawyer and member of VWL write that the conversation about the gender pay gap needs to be extended to a wider discussion about the long-term effects of pay inequity on women. The superannuation system, being the final frontier for restoring equity, needs to better account for the many different factors that leave women retiring with less superannuation than men. Read the full article [here](#).

## **SUMMER MATERIAL**

### **The Stella Price 2020 Shortlist**

- *See What You Made Me Do* by Jess Hill (2020 Stella Prize Winner);
- *The Weekend* by Charlotte Wood;
- *Diving Into Glass* by Caro Llewellyn;
- *There Was Still Love* by Favel Parrett;
- *Here Until August* by Josephine Rowe; and

harassment within and outside of the legal profession, the role of the courts in preventing this behaviour and improvement for reporting and support. VWL implores the Victorian Courts to take urgent action to disrupt the culture contributing to the proliferation of sexual harassment in the legal profession, including gender discrimination and other workplace practices which endanger female practitioners.

While VWL welcomes the Review as a first step in this process, the profession can no longer afford slow and piecemeal activity that does not affect real change. Women in the legal profession have come forward and bravely shared their stories of sexual harassment. Our leaders must now respond with strength and determination, drawing on contemporary learnings from other sectors.

You can read the full submission [here](#).

over the summer break on our Instagram

@victorianwomenlawyers (link [here](#)) or website [here](#)

VWL thanks our special guest speakers for participating in this excellent series.

### **LEGAL LANEWAY BREAKFAST 2021**

VWL invites you to attend Victoria Law Foundation's Legal Laneway Breakfast on 3 February 2021 from 8am to 8:45am, to digitally celebrate the opening of the legal year.

VWL's Executive Committee has supported this breakfast in previous years by volunteering with activities on the day.

The annual Legal Laneway Breakfast brings together Victoria's diverse legal sector to celebrate the start of the legal year. For the first time ever the Legal Laneway Breakfast will be held online, moving from Hardware Lane to Zoom.

The breakfast is open to all members of Victoria's legal community and you can register for free [here](#)

- *The Yield* by Tara June Winch

### **Podcasts**

- The Guilty Feminist;
- Feminist Current Podcasts;
- Tiddas 4 Tiddas;
- Women's Media Center Live with Robin Morgan;
- Pretty for an Aboriginal;
- She Who Persisted | The Nasty Podcast; and
- Secret Feminist Agenda.

### **Mental Health Support**

- *Smiling Mind* meditation app;
- *Mind-spot* online free mental health clinic - 1800 614 434 ; and
- *Beyond Blue Coronavirus Mental Health Support Service* - 1800512348.

### **Comprehensive Support - including for Children**

- Below you'll find some advice on the following topics:
- [School holiday activities for kids](#)
- [Looking after your Mental Wellbeing during COVID-19](#)
- [Kid-friendly workouts](#)
- [Movement and mindfulness videos created by child development experts](#)
- [Yoga and mindfulness for kids](#)
- [A reasonable standard: wellbeing for law students](#)



helping women in law and through law

*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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