



Welcome to the May 2021 issue of VWList.

VWL remains committed to keeping members connected and supported. This month we wish all the wonderful mothers, carers and important female-identifying people in our lives a very Happy Mothers' Day.

This year our events and projects are focused on the resilience and re-emergence of women in the legal profession as we adapt to a new COVID-19 'normal'.

We will continue to advocate for healthy workplaces for women, exploring what measures workplaces are implementing to support staff mental health, improve culture, prevent sexual harassment, achieve equal pay and equitable briefing and advance careers.

We will also run workshops focused on self-care, leadership, challenging conversations around pay and promotion and building your personal brand.

Keep up to date with our activities via our [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) page. Don't forget to tag your posts with [#victorianwomenlawyers!](#)

EVENTS

NEWS

PUBLICATIONS



WELCOME TO OUR NEW SPONSOR

THE COLLEGE OF LAW!

Victorian Women Lawyers is pleased to announce that the

**ACCORDING TO MERIT:
ADDRESSING DISABILITY
AND JUSTICE**

This month Samantha Gonzales, a VWL Diversity and Inclusion Committee member, has written a wonderful piece for the Law Institute Journal on why practitioners should have a

Join us for an evening of networking and entertainment at our 2021 Members & Guests evening on Thursday, 3 June 2021 at Garden State Hotel.

We are thrilled to present Jess Jones as our guest speaker. Jess is a serial entrepreneur who has come face-to face with burnout several times. As Founder of *The Burnout Club*, she's on a mission to save people from themselves, by helping them navigate their own burnout journey and apply the tools and techniques required to avoid it returning.

\$10 for members (includes one free guest). \$15 for non-members. Guests will also receive an electronic copy of *The Burnout Kit* by Jess Jones. Register before tickets sell out [here](#).

This event is proudly sponsored by Gatehouse Legal Recruitment.



MAY PUBLIC SECTOR NETWORKING SERIES: ONLINE CONVERSATIONS

Current and aspiring public/government lawyers attended our first online networking event for 2021 on Tuesday, 11 May.

The event featured an introductory Q&A with Miriam Holmes, and breakout rooms where guests discussed working in the public

College of Law have joined us as a sponsor organisation.

The College of Law has supported and advanced women in law, and VWL members, through education, training and resources throughout the years.

This year, the College of Law will sponsor and partner with VWL, on our re-launch of the Professional Mentoring Program, which began in 2018 after a successful pilot program, alongside initiatives focused on regional and suburban lawyers, and female entrepreneurs and founders.

A warm welcome to the COL team!



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE NEW COVID NORMAL: OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE AND REFORM PANEL DISCUSSION

As part of Law Week 2021, on Tuesday, 18 May, Nicholes Family Lawyers along with co-hosts Victorian Women Lawyers, Women's Information and Referral Exchange, Domestic Violence Victoria, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health and Women's Legal Service Victoria, hosted a panel discussion about opportunities for prevention, support, law reform and increased community

good understanding of the accessibility resources provided by the courts.

The article features practice insights from Rania Saab, a solicitor with Legal Aid NSW, as well as further information on accessibility resources available during court hearings, and examples of hurdles experienced by clients who have a disability.

You can access the article [here](#).

LAW REFORM

SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE ON THE JUDGES' PENSIONS AMENDMENT (PENSION NOT PAYABLE FOR MISCONDUCT) BILL 2020

Vanessa Shambrook (VWL President) and Claire Rapson (Co-Chair of the Law Reform Committee) recently appeared on behalf of VWL before the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee to give evidence in relation to our submission into the proposed Judges' Pensions Amendment (Pension Not Payable for Misconduct) Bill 2020.

They discussed VWL's views on the the federal Judges' Pension Amendment Bill which seeks to remove judges pensions following a finding of serious misconduct (notably, sexual harassment).

While VWL supports this amendment, Vanessa and Claire advocated for further clarity on the Bill on behalf of VWL, and for further reforms, including training and

sector Miriam Holmes is currently the Executive Director and Deputy General Counsel within the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Office of the General Counsel.

Thank you to guests who attended who remarked that the event was "well hosted and enjoyable" and that the questions put to Miriam were "well considered." One attendee remarked that they "found the networking component to be quite personal and warm."

All in all, a very successful event! For those who may be interested in attending the next networking event, please keep an eye out for an email from VWL inviting you to register.



MINDFULNESS SERIES: YOGA AND MEDITATION

VWL was pleased to host a yoga and meditation series with Emily Rose, Owner and Yoga Teacher at Emily Rose Yoga in the Mindfulness Series.

This series was proudly sponsored by Svenson Barristers.

If you missed out on any of the live events, you can access the recordings [here](#). Simply login to your VWL account and select the 'video' tab to access the recordings.

understanding of family violence.

VWL hopes that further law reform will continue to be focused on prevention and support of victim-survivors.



GATEHOUSE LEGAL RECRUITMENT

DAME ROMA MITCHELL MEMORIAL LUNCH - A SELL OUT

This Thursday, 27 May at the Myer Mural Hall, VWL and Women Barristers' Association are hosting the 2021 Dame Roma Mitchell Memorial Lunch to commemorate Dame Roma Flinders Mitchell; the first Australian woman to be appointed Queen's Counsel, judge, chancellor of an Australian university and State Governor.

The lunch will feature keynote speaker the Hon Mary Delahunty GAICD. Mary has a strong and respected voice in public affairs, media and the women's movement. Mary is known for leading ABC TV News and current affairs programs, the 7.30 Report and Four Corners.

Thank you to our members and sponsors for purchasing tickets. We are pleased to advise that this event is now **sold out** and will be our largest Dame Roma Lunch yet!

This event is proudly sponsored by Gatehouse Legal Recruitment.

education, support for victim survivors, a national body to deal with concerns of the judiciary and a national code of conduct.

They highlighted the concerning rates at which women report sexual harassment and advocated over all measures of reform, primary prevention and gender equality to eradicate harassment.

The Committee sought further information about the proposals for reform on notice. We recommended a federal Code of Conduct and establishment of a Judicial Commission.

The hearing took place on Friday 23rd April at 10am. A recording of the hearing is available [here](#).

You can access a full version of the submission [here](#).

JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (SYSTEM ENHANCEMENT AND OTHER MATTERS) ACT (2021) (VIC)

The *Justice Legislation Amendment (System Enhancements and Other Matters) Act 2021 (Vic)* received royal assent in March 2021.

The purpose of this act is to allow for the continuation of legal processes and procedures implemented during COVID-19.

Information about what this change means for legal practice has been concisely summarized by our fantastic sponsor Coulter Roache, and can be found [here](#).

These exercises are suitable to complete with children and are for people of all levels of experience and fitness.



WOMEN LEGALPRENEURS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP LAUNCH - THINKING LIKE A FOUNDER - NATURE OR NURTURE?

VWL is proud to be a supporter of the College of Law and Centre for Legal Innovation's (CLI), Women Legalpreneurs Special Interest Group (WLSIG) Launch - as a part of of CLI's Legalpreneurs Lab.

The launch will take place on Tuesday, 25 May 2021 from 1pm until 2pm. Register [here](#)

The WLSIG is all about experience sharing, collaboration, partnerships, networks and most importantly, friendships! We want to focus on what's important to you so send ideas for topics here.

If you are a female-identifying founder in business, you will not want to miss this event! But, if you do miss it, you can watch it online for free here CLI-collaborate (CLIC) free resource hub. If you would prefer to listen, you will also find it as a podcast in The Legalpreneurs Sandbox podcast series



2020 MULTICULTURAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

VWL would like to congratulate Joanna Abraham, the co-chair of our diversity and inclusion committee, for receiving a high commendation from the Victorian Government for the Justice Award at the 2020 Multicultural Awards for Excellence.

Joanna Abraham is a Refugee and Migration Lawyer at Victoria Legal Aid and a Board Member of the Victorian Immigration and Refugee Women's Coalition. Joanna has been a member of the VWL's Diversity & Inclusion Committee for over 3 years and has contributed to several impact projects and events.

Joanna has also done an amazing job at advocating for the reform of systemic barriers within the legal system that impact on fairness and legal rights.

Further information about Joanna, and the Multicultural Awards for Excellence, can be found [here](#).

SPONSORS

Allens > < Linklaters

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

VWL thanks our sponsors for their ongoing support.

The legislation itself can be sourced [here](#).



REGIONAL AND SUBURBAN TIP OF THE MONTH

VWL and the College of Law have partnered to bring you tips and advice each month from leading female-identifying regional and suburban lawyers.

This month's tip comes from Mikarla Perisic, principal lawyer at Perisic Lawyers based in Geelong.

"I recommend joining your local law association and making the most of the events and support that they have to offer. Knowing other practitioners both in your area of practice and other areas will allow you to reach out for support and advice. Sometimes it is as simple as having someone else to talk to about the pressure that others outside the law may not understand." – Mikarla Perisic, Principal Perisic Lawyers

AUTUMN MATERIAL

Autumn Reads

- *The Beauty of Living Twice* by Sharon Stone
- *The Bass Rock* by Evie Wyld
- *Black and Blue* by Veronica Gorrie
- *The Mirror and the Palette* by Jennifer Higgle

Podcasts

- *Peace Lab 2020 - Legal Mind Unwired episode 27*



VWL RUN CLUB

To promote health and wellbeing, the VWL Networking Committee invites you to join our Run Club!

It's a great way to meet other VWL members and get fit at the same time.

So grab your running gear and join us every Monday at 6:00pm at Federation Square, just outside the Transport Hotel.

All levels of running are welcome!

Sign up on our website [here](#).

Each month we celebrate the achievements and people of our sponsor firms by spotlighting their leading female lawyers.

This month we spotlight Lisa Zhou, Managing Associate at Allens. Read Lisa's spotlight [here](#).

FINAL REPORT INTO THE REVIEW OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN VICTORIAN COURTS

VWL welcomes the publication of the final report into the Review of Sexual Harassment in Victorian Courts.

Led by Dr Helen Szoke AO, there were a total of 20 recommendations put forward, including consistently and visibly emphasising the importance of healthy, workplace culture and strategies to prevent sexual harassment, and implementing a new educational program for newly appointed and existing judicial officers and VCAT members that will cover a range of issues in relation to preventing sexual harassment.

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

with VWL President

Vanessa

Shambrook, and founder of Peace Lab, maritime lawyer and former Co Chair Diversity & Inclusion Committee, Elva Zhang

- *Bowraville* by The Australian
- *Doing Law Differently* by Lucky Dickens
- *Just the Gist* with Rosie Waterland & Jacob Stanley
- *Counsel* by Mel Scott
- *The Happy Lawyer Happy Life Podcast* by Clarissa J Rayward

Mental Health Support

- *Smiling Mind* meditation app
- *Mind-spot* online free mental health clinic - 1800 614 434
- *Beyond Blue Coronavirus Mental Health Support Service* - 1800 512 348



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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