Welcome to the 2006 Justice Awards

The Law and Justice Foundation’s annual Justice Awards recognise the contributions of individuals and organisations to improving access to justice in NSW, particularly for socially and economically disadvantaged people.

The Awards presentation is becoming an established fixture on the law and justice ‘calendar’ in NSW and is a unique opportunity for the Foundation to highlight the achievements of so many, and for our guests to celebrate and congratulate them.

Hosted by:

The Hon Paul Stein QC AM
Chair, Board of Governors
Law and Justice Foundation of NSW
South-East Asia/Pacific region.

Judicial officers in Australia and the has participated in the training of Environmental Law (CEL) and of the IUCN Commission on Board of the Australian Centre.

He is a member of the Advisory Council (1987 - 1993).

the National Consumer Affairs the Council of the Community Leave Review Committee, of

Chair of the Juvenile Offenders Persons Review Tribunal, Intellectually Handicapped

He has been President of the Internationally Handicapped Persons Review Tribunal, Chair of the Juvenile Offenders Leave Review Committee, of the Council of the Community Justice Centre (1987 - 1993) and the National Consumer Affairs Advisory Council (1987 - 1993). He is a member of the Advisory Board of the Australian Centre for Environmental Law (ACEL), of the IJC Commission on Environmental Law (CEL) and has participated in the training of judicial officers in Australia and the South-East Asia/Pacific region.

The Hon Malcolm Fraser AC CH
Malcolm Fraser first entered federal parliament in 1955 and was a Minister from 1966 – 1972. He became Prime Minister of Australia in 1975, following the dismissal of the Labor Prime Minister and was subsequently re-elected in the two succeeding elections, in 1977 and 1980. He became Australia’s second longest serving Prime Minister on 23 February 1983, and resigned from the federal Parliament in April 1983 after almost 28 years as the Member for Wannon (Vic.).

Mr Fraser has been Chair of CARE Australia (1987 – 2001), and Vice President (1990-1995) then President of CARE International (1995 – 1999).

Mr Fraser was awarded the Australian Human Rights Medal in 2000 by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

The 2006 Law and Justice Address

MC this evening

Ms Maxine McKew
Walkley and Logie Award winning journalist Maxine McKew established herself as a political/social affairs interviewer on ABC Television’s Lameline and continues her association with the national broadcaster as alternative anchor for the 7.30 Report. With a 20 year background in television reporting, Maxine has worked in many parts of the world, including as ABC’s political correspondent in Washington DC in the 1980s. A member of the Women’s Advisory Group to the National Breast Cancer Centre, Maxine is also the National Patron for Osteoporosis Australia. In 1999 she was appointed Chair of the Industry Working Group advising the University of Sydney’s four-year Media Communications course.

2006 LIAC CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Sponsored by the Legal Information Access Centre (LIA) LIA is a state-wide service providing free community access to legal information. LIA is an initiative of the State Library of NSW and the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW jointly funded by the Public Purpose Fund and the library. Based in the State Library, LIA operates through the public library network across NSW (362 locations).

The Centre of Excellence Awards recognise innovative and creative projects which increase community awareness of, and access to, the LIA service.

www.lia.s.nsw.gov.au

Presented by: Ms Regina Sutton, State Librarian and CEO of the State Library of NSW

The winners of the 2006 LIAC Centre of Excellence Award are:
Richmond-Upper Clarence Regional Library

for its monthly free legal advice service at the Casino Library which has increased the community’s awareness and use of the law@your library service. A solicitor from the Northern Rivers Legal Centre visits the library on the first Thursday of the month for client consultations. At the end of an appointment, the client is given a Library information pack which includes details of LIAC resources.

Port Stephens Library

for National Law Week 2006, the library planned, organised and presented three functions integral to the success of raising awareness of the law@your library service and its resources. Two information events were directed at the local council and attended by staff and Councillors. The third was for local community groups and included a lunch followed by discussion and questions.

About the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW

This section of the program provides an overview of the Foundation – an independent, statutory body seeking to improve access to justice, especially for disadvantaged people.

The Foundation uses rigorous, evidence based research to:
• identify legal and access to justice needs particularly of socially and economically disadvantaged people
• identify effective legal system reforms and access to justice initiatives and we
• improve access to justice by
  » supporting and conducting projects
  » contributing to the availability of understandable legal information
  » disseminating information about relevant reforms and programs

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These reports have provided substantial new data and insight in this series to date. For more information, visit [www.nswic.org.au](http://www.nswic.org.au).

Presented by: Ms Michelle Jones, Chair, CLCNSW

The nominees for the 2006 Combined Community Legal Centres Group Award are:

**Mr Paul Boers**
Nominated by Inner City Legal Centre
Paul has been a committed volunteer at the Inner City Legal Centre, where he has been a volunteer solicitor on the evening advice roster for more than six years. He has provided legal advice, contributed to the development of community legal education materials, and assisted with the research and preparation of information submissions. Paul recently became a member of the centre’s board. He has provided substantial advice in family law - especially pertaining to gay and lesbian relationships and parenting - and makes significant contributions to the improvement of the rights of gay and lesbian people.

**Ms Kristy Faida**
Nominated by Macarthur Legal Centre
Kristy has been an enthusiastic volunteer at Macarthur Legal Centre since 2003. Her initial involvement began when she was a student, and her volunteer commitment has continued after being admitted as a solicitor. She has been a reliable and dedicated volunteer and is someone the centre has been able to call upon at the ‘eleventh hour’ to assist clients with various legal issues and problems. Her work at the centre greatly assists people in the Macarthur region, a great many of whom are socially and economically disadvantaged.

**Mr John Gooley**
Nominated by Marrickville Legal Centre
John has been a volunteer solicitor at Marrickville Legal Centre’s evening advice service since 2002. Earlier this year, the centre’s funding for a specialist employment law advice clinic ceased, and John has voluntarily provided employment advice twice a week. This includes information, referral and advice, and representing clients in the State and Federal Industrial Relations Commissions. John also worked with other CLC workers to prepare submissions and submit information to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Impact of WorkChoices in NSW. John’s work has enabled economically and socially disadvantaged people to access assistance on employment law matters, at a time where there is some uncertainty about the law.

**Ms Kathryn Rafton**
Nominated by Hawkesbury / Nepean Legal Centre
Kate has been a volunteer with Hawkesbury / Nepean Community Legal Centre for six years as both a student volunteer, and, once admitted, as a solicitor on the evening service roster. Recently, she became a member of the centre’s management committee. Kate particularly assists women in domestic violence situations, and carvan park residents. Kate's enthusiasm and reliability is regarded as a real asset to the centre.

**Mr Matthew Varley**
Nominated by Hawkesbury / Nepean Legal Centre
Matthew has been a student volunteer on the evening roster at the Hawkesbury / Nepean Community Legal Centre for the past 18 months. He assists solicitors in filing services, legal research and in taking initial instructions for clients, which include clients from the Aboriginal community, women experiencing domestic violence, and carvan park residents. Matthew, with his enthusiasm and reliability, is regarded as a real asset to the centre.

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The nominees for the 2006 Law Society President’s Award are:

**Mr Michael Corbin**
Michael, of Corbin Legal Services, was admitted in December 2000 as a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of NSW. Michael began working with the Blackburn-based Traffic Offenders Program in September 2001 and continues to be involved on the board, offering assistance with legal framework matters. Michael started his own practice in April 2006 in Quakers Hill and devotes his time to pro bono work, Aboriginal Legal Service work and local clients. Despite various commitments and the challenge of setting up and building his practice, he has supported clients from the Pro Bono Scheme in a variety of matters including, Civil, Criminal and Family.

**Ms Salina Sadiq**
Salina is a solicitor at Lloyd Irman Sadiq Solicitors and is aware from personal experience of the difficulties faced by people going through financial hardship. She is committed to helping those who can’t afford legal representation and has accepted matters from a variety of legal areas including Criminal, Civil and Immigration. The majority of the criminal matters she has undertaken include assault and Centrelink fraud and she achieved excellent outcomes for the clients, many of whom faced prison or would experience further difficulties. Salina also assists with migration matters referred from her local church on a pro bono basis.
The nominees for the 2006 Law and Justice Volunteer Award are:

Ms Rhonda Burton
Nominated by: Ms Donna Evans, Park and Village Service
Rhonda is a resident of, and activist for, the Casula Paloma Caravan Park in south-west Sydney. Rhonda has lived at the park for 10 years, and has emerged as an advisor and spokesperson for other residents, assisting them with enquiries and issues such as rent arrears, termination and repairs. She is the central liaison point on behalf of the residents dealing with organisations including Centrelink, Department of Housing, Tenants’ Union, Park and Village Service, South West Sydney Tenancy Service as well as various media outlets. Currently, the Park residents are threatened with eviction if a proposed redevelopment goes ahead. Rhonda has successfully organised residents to fight this proposal, and her advocacy has involved organisations which are assisting them in their action.

Ms Lana Forbes
Nominated by: Mr Dennis Bryant, Macarthur Legal Centre
Lana has been a Volunteer in Policing (VIP) for six years at Macquarie Fields Police station, assisting victims of domestic violence — predominantly women, but also including children and young people — to access legal support services. She is a very committed advocate for women experiencing domestic violence and her work helps women to better understand, deal with and negotiate the court system during crisis. Lana ensures that women are referred to the Macarthur Women’s Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme and the Victims’ Advocate Program. She attends Campbelltown Court each Tuesday, having liaised with all domestic victims (usually 30 – 40) waiting for their matter to be heard. She identifies underlying or other problems, pre-existing or caused by their domestic violence experiences — which can include housing and financial issues, child support etc, she also assists by referring them to other agencies.

Mrs Fran Jobberns
Nominated by: Ms Norma Jobberns
Fran has been a Volunteer in Policing (VIP) at the Wollongong Detention Centre for over ten years. She has been a JP since 1971, and also provides JP services at the Federal Magistrates Court and the Sydney Registry of the Family Court to provide information to clients of JPs to volunteer to trial the Justice of the Peace service to clients of the court, which frees up court staff from time spent witnessing documents. She has been a JP since 1971, and also provides JP services at the Federal Magistrates Court and to members of the public. Fran has provided her volunteer services for three years at the Downing Centre, where she has a front-of-house role in a complex, busy environment and where she and the team of volunteers which she co-leads can assist non-court clients who require JP services, again reducing time demands on other court staff, and assisting the community by offering essential services on-site.

Mrs Marnorma Smith
Nominated by: Ms Gladys Smith, VIP Peer Support Group
Norma is a Justice of the Peace, active member of the Justice of Peace Association of NSW, and currently 2006 President of the organisation’s Canterbury Branch. Canterbury Council refer local people directly to her when they need the service of a JP, and she has built a strong relationship with local groups for people with disabilities, particularly people with visual impairment who need additional assistance with completing and signing legal papers. Her branch also runs a mobile helpdesk going to community venues such as shopping malls and the local Family Court to provide information to the public and be available to sign documents. Norma is particularly interested in helping to establish a regular helpdesk at the Rosebud Shopping Mall, and is working towards this by year’s end.

Mr Nathan Tyson
Nominated by: Ms Tracey Cooley
Nathan has advocated for many Aboriginal people whilst employed at the NSW Ombudsman’s Office, NSW ICAC, NSW Anti-Discrimination Board and now at the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. He has committed to voluntarily assisting a number of individuals in their campaigns for justice, most notably his nominator who for several years attempted to have her housing needs adequately met in a dispute over conditions with the Department of Housing. Nathan advocated on her behalf, and assisted her — as he has others — negotiate with statutory and other bodies to a very successful and satisfactory outcome. His volunteer efforts have seen him travel to remote areas of NSW to advise and assist disadvantaged individuals.

Improving Access to Justice

As well as using research to identify legal need and effective programs, the Foundation also seeks to make grassroots improvements by supporting and conducting projects, developing and distributing legal information and education and disseminating information about effective reforms and programs. Our Grants program takes a rigorous, outcomes-focused approach by providing an avenue to support the development of essential legal information and education resources and for innovative ideas to be developed, trialled and evaluated.

Examples of Grant projects recently launched:

Know Your Rights

The Community Broadcasting Association of Australia

The Community Broadcasting Association of Australia identified that a professionally-produced audio product for radio stations in rural, regional and remote areas of NSW could be used to promote access to justice and legal services at a local level. Funding was provided for 68-second and five-minute radio segments, accompanied by scripted information. This was distributed to 80 community radio stations across NSW whose listeners now have improved access to legal information about issues including debt, divorce and separation, victim’s compensation, neighbour disputes, domestic violence, and where to get further help and legal advice.
2006 PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Sponsored by the National Pro Bono Resource Centre

This Award is presented to private law firms, community organisations and/or community legal centres in NSW which have developed an outstanding pro bono legal assistance relationship, resulting in improved access to justice for disadvantaged people in the community.

The National Pro Bono Resource Centre is an Australian independent, non-profit organisation that encourages pro bono legal services, supports lawyers and law firms to make it easier for them to provide high quality pro bono legal services and works with the profession and the community sector to match services with the clients and groups most in need of assistance.

www.nationalprobono.org.au

Presented by NV John Conley, Director, National Pro Bono Resource Centre

The nominees for the 2006 Pro Bono Partnership Award are:

Freehills and the Arts Law Centre of Australia

Freehills provides assistance in a number of ways to Arts Law, from pro bono advice to clients at legal advice sessions, working on the development and updating of publications, making venues available for training and other events and exploring secondments to extend the service provided.

Since 2003, Freehills has been involved with the Arts Law’s Black program, providing advice and representation to Aboriginal clients through Arts Law’s Aboriginal lawyer who has direct casework contact, and who is mentored by senior partners. This helps deliver a culturally appropriate legal service to Aboriginal artists, and recent successes include

Indigenous clients taking action against government departments and having a voice in arts law/cultural matters.

Gilbert + Tobin and Wyong Neighbourhood Centre

Gilbert + Tobin began conducting a monthly legal advice clinic at the Wyong Neighbourhood Centre in 2003. This operates as a ‘shop-in’ facility for local residents in an area of high socio-economic disadvantage, with poor transport links — private and public — to the limited other local sources of advice/information. Clients attend the monthly clinic with a whole range of socio-economic and legal issues and lawyers meet them face to face to identify their problems and steer them in the direction of resolving their issues. This can include referrals to other services, writing letters, and making approaches to Legal Aid and government departments. Housing/tenancy issues and family law are a major source of people’s problems. As well as the monthly in-situ advice clinic, the Centre Manager also has 24/7 telephone access to Gilbert + Tobin for advice and information in emergency situations.

Otto Stichter & Associates and The Exodus Foundation

Otto Stichter, a sole practitioner, has been advising and supporting the work of the Exodus Foundation since 1986. Exodus assists homeless and abandoned youth and other people in need; its clients have many problems and can find themselves in difficult and acute circumstances that need solutions quickly. Otto provides legal advice/information — including court representation — to clients, and is available 24/7 for consultations on the Foundation’s premises. He also contributes pro bono professional legal services to the Foundation, which enables it to run at lower overheads and direct its resources to its core services. The Foundation estimates that the pro bono advice Otto delivers is a major source of people’s problems. As well as the monthly in-situ advice clinic, the Centre Manager also has 24/7 telephone access to Gilbert + Tobin for advice and information in emergency situations.

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Homeless Persons’ Legal Service (HPLS) was established by the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC), and the Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH), and links private lawyers with community welfare organisations and their clients. A legal needs analysis and feasibility study highlighted the fact that addressing legal problems may help reduce homelessness for people at risk of becoming homeless, and may help break the cycle of homelessness for those already without secure housing. Seven PILCH member law firms, through volunteer lawyers, provide legal services on a pro bono basis at the premises of five welfare agencies at a fixed time each week. At least two lawyers will attend at each welfare agency (i.e. 10 lawyers over five welfare agencies) weekly, and are drawn from a pool of approximately 80 volunteers from the participating firms. HPLS is managed by a full-time co-ordinator and overseen by a reference group, which includes representatives of the homeless community and the community legal sector.
The Access to Justice and Legal Needs (A2JLN) research program is a rigorous and ongoing assessment of the legal and access to justice needs of the NSW community - especially socially and economically disadvantaged people – and we are committed to making this information easily accessible. The Foundation has developed a comprehensive methodology to examine specific issues and specific groups through separate, tailored research projects connected by the overall program objectives. Data collected and compiled by the Foundation can assist government, community and other interested organisations in developing policy and planning legal service delivery.

The following projects are currently underway:

- examining the participation of disadvantaged people in law reform processes
- examining the legal needs of prisoners and newly released prisoners
- Phase 2 of the Data Digest, adding up-to-date data into an online version as well as the development of interactive data cube and mapping applications and planning is underway for
- a subsequent state-wide survey of legal needs
- a study of the legal needs of another disadvantaged group.

The Access to Justice and Legal Needs Program


We collated and analysed data from the enquiries handled by major NSW legal assistance and complaint handling bodies.

The following projects are:

- a study of the legal needs of another disadvantaged group.
- a subsequent state-wide survey of legal needs.
- a legal needs study of prisoners and newly released prisoners.
- Phase 2 of the Data Digest, adding up-to-date data into an online version as well as the development of interactive data cube and mapping applications.
- planning is underway for
- an examination of the participation of disadvantaged people in law reform processes.

Public Consultations (2003)

A summary of responses and input received during the consultation process of the A2JLN program.

Qualitative studies of the particular needs of specific disadvantaged groups published to date are:

- People with a Mental Illness in NSW (2006)

"...the clients have no problem telling me about their criminal history, they have no problem telling me about their drug and alcohol issues but the thing they find most shameful, and they will barely whisper it to me, is the fact that they can't read and write. They will do anything to cover up the fact and even ignore things that lead them to jail rather than ask for assistance, because of that shame factor."

- Disability awareness trainer

"They think I'm a threat or I'm not worthy. Their mental illness is seen as the problem rather than their legitimate complaint. And so the barrier is people's perception."

- Community legal centre worker


"I am sick of turning up to places run down and filthy dirty, sick from not eating, I just don't have the energy to do it. I want to help myself but I don't have the energy to help myself. I need somewhere I can settle in for a week and put my affairs in order."

- Homelessness worker

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- Homelessness worker


A consultation workshop undertaken as part of the first stage of the A2JLN project.


A pilot survey of legal need (in the Bega local government area) before embarking on the major quantitative survey reported in Justice Made to Measure

Justice Made to Measure : NSW legal needs Survey in disadvantaged areas (2006)

This study considered legal need in six local government areas (selected on the basis of an index for disadvantage). It examined

- the incidence of legal needs
- people’s responses to their legal needs
- the barriers they face in accessing services
- the outcomes they achieve
- their satisfaction with those outcomes.

Key findings indicate a relatively high incidence of legal problems, a substantial rate of inaction in response to these problems, significant barriers to accessing assistance and the widespread consultation of non-legal professionals as well as friends and family for advice. Traditional legal advisers such as private lawyers, local courts and legal service agencies were rarely consulted.

The Legal Needs of Older People in NSW (2004)

"I was going to be denied contact with my only grandchild… I knew in my heart that I had to do something about it … for this child’s identity, his right to his heritage, the right to his intended family."

- Focus group participant

"I have applied to both employment agencies and employers directly through the newspaper. The agencies have said point blank “your age is against you”. When I said they were discriminating on the basis of age they said “We are entitled to match the qualities of the employers with prospective employers”. You know, to get a job by force (making a discrimination complaint) it doesn’t work. It gets you satisfaction but not a good job."

- Individual telephone submission

Access to Justice and Legal Needs Program

The Access to Justice and Legal Needs (A2JLN) assessment of the legal and access to justice Foundation has developed a comprehensive research program is a rigorous and ongoing tailored research projects connected by the people – and we are committed to making overall program objectives. Data collected policy and planning legal service delivery.
The nominees for the 2006 Aboriginal Justice Award are:

Mr Lester Bostock
Nominated by: Alastair McEwin, People With Disability Australia
Lester is a founder and current chairperson for the Aboriginal Disability Network (ADN) of NSW, a lead agency in advocacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people with a disability. (A recent report by the Productivity Commission, Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage, Key Indicators 2005, quantified the prevalence of disability in Indigenous communities as 37% of the Indigenous population.) The ADN provides a structure for Indigenous people with disability to tell their stories and share their experiences as well as advocating against individual and collective discrimination. Lester has been instrumental in raising the profile of the unmet legal needs of ATSI people with a disability, much of it in NSW where, as a result of his effective advocacy, issues unique to ATSI people with a disability are gaining greater focus. As a result the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care has developed a strategic process for engaging with Aboriginal communities around disability. Lester works at all levels of the community – locally, nationally and internationally - and has recently been a leading participant in the development of a national voice for ATSI people with a disability.

Mr Ted Lancaster
Nominated by: Mrs Daniella Chedzey, Hunter Home-Start
Ted is an Aboriginal Child Protection Officer with the Department of Community Services in the Hunter region of NSW. He is committed to protecting children, and ensuring they are physically and emotionally safe. Ted has developed an Aboriginal perspective on child protection training and delivers this to Aboriginal community groups, enabling them to understand that child protection is everyone’s business. There is still major distrust of the Department in the Indigenous community and Ted’s work brings him into direct contact with many individuals and their extended families with whom he needs to develop trust and confidence. His work also extends to speaking and conducting forums and cultural training in local schools, as well as assisting non-Aboriginal Caseworkers understand the links between abuse, violence and despair. In all his work he promotes the United Nations Rights of a Child, and advocates for breaking the silence that surround child sexual abuse.

Ms Vera Loveclock
Nominated by: Ms Joanie Sted, Department of Aboriginal Affairs
Vera is an Indigenous elder from the Armidale area who, at age 74, continues a remarkable contribution to her community through her work with – amongst others – Armidale Police and Armidale Courts. She is consulted by local police and magistrate’s on issues affecting Aboriginal people, and helps Aboriginal people understand and access their rights on issues such as domestic violence. Vera is an activist for plain language law, and forces the system to recognise the communication needs faced by an Aboriginal clientele, and to understand and work with their cultural differences. “She has been a bridge to a system that is quite foreign to Aboriginal people”. Vera is also a member of the Armidale Foot Patrol and volunteers at the local women’s shelter.

Ms Susan Pinckham
Nominated by: Ms Harriet Grahame, Frederick Jordan Chambers
Sue has worked in a variety of sectors to improve access to justice for Aboriginal people, and is currently involved in Indigenous community development programs with a metropolitan Sydney council. She was a founding member, and then coordinator from 1995-2000, of the Wentwo Bayu Aboriginal Women’s Legal Centre – the first independent community legal centre managed by Aboriginal women – who also leadership engineered a cohesive and united approach to justice and equity issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children who are victims of violence. The centre developed a gender-specific service which is sensitive to culturally diverse needs and provides Indigenous women who are victims of violence with access to appropriate legal representation, advice and referral. Sue’s work with the Indigenous Social Justice Association at the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court established a tailored service, more accessible and appropriate for Aboriginal young people.

Mr Peter Townsend
Nominated by: Mr Terry Halloran, Department of Corrective Services
Peter is an advocate for the rights and conditions of Indigenous prison inmates and their families. He was involved in establishing specific programs for Indigenous inmates at Berrinba, Ivanhoe and Tabulam jails and liaising with the Department of Corrective Services on behalf of the individual needs of Indigenous inmates. He provides advice on custodial issues affecting Indigenous inmates to individuals, their families, professional services, judicial members and legal professionals, and liaises with legal service providers, the OIP and the judiciary in sentencing matters in relation to both general and specific Aboriginal circumstances. Peter is a regular visitor to all NSW jails meeting inmates, community elders and families and staff, ensuring legal and management issues are addressed and Royal Commission recommendations are understood and complied with.

An integrated approach: Getting off the Referral Roundabout
Kingsford Legal Centre
Foundation research identified the various pathways to assistance people experiencing legal problems take. We subsequently convened the NSW Legal and Information Referral Forum to determine ways to improve client referrals. Making an effective referral requires not only strong interpersonal skill, but also an up-to-date knowledge of a wide range of service providers to whom appropriate referrals can be made. A Grant was given to Kingsford Community Legal Centre to create a DVD training resource in accordance with referral competences developed by the Legal and Information Referral Forum. The DVD and companion training kit are for use by legal information and service providers as a teaching and induction tool for law students, volunteer lawyers, staff and community workers regarding the principles and practicables of referrals.

Closing dates for Grants applications 2007 will be:
Friday 30 March 2007
Tuesday 31 July 2007
Wednesday 31 October 2007
The Foundation has developed an Aid and CLCs. The trial period ended with a user-friendly system that will allow legal service agencies to examine NSW legal inquiries data. The program includes topics such as driving behavior, the court system, victims’ rights, employment rights and debt and credit issues. Kate has managed to engage an audience dealing with extreme situations of their own, and help them acquire the knowledge and ability to understand the notion of justice and how legal decisions are made.

Ms Mirelle Curtis
Nominated by: Ms Donna Meehan, Department of Community Services

Mirelle is a legal advisor to the Department of Community Services in the Hunter region. Through advocacy she provides families and individuals – many with multiple high needs – with the assistance and support they require to enable them to work towards functional outcomes. Many matters occur in urgent time frames, and can be distressing for all involved. Mirelle recognises the value of negotiated outcomes, especially in cases involving children, and explores all options and tries to avoid matters without a court decision. She acknowledges the impact that past and present policies have had on Aboriginal families, and families with children and young people. Mirelle ensures that her clients understand what is happening, what processes/procedures are required and what the expected outcomes are. She volunteers to speak to Aboriginal women and young mothers on various legal/jurisdiction issues, and makes herself available to this community outside of her paid work.

Ms Kate Cvetanovski
Nominated by: Mrs Barbara Shorthouse, Links to Learning

Kate is a youth worker with Nepean Inter/Youth which provides services to young people (15–24) in the Penrith area. Having assisted individuals who needed legal advice and support, Kate has developed a ten-week legal issues program directed at homeless and at-risk young people. The program is held four times a year, and brings solicitors, police, community legal centre and court staff as well as representatives from agencies such as Centrelink and Legal Aid into direct contact with young people. The program discusses topics such as driving behavior, the court system, victims’ rights, employment rights and debt and credit issues. Kate has managed to engage an audience dealing with extreme situations of their own, and help them acquire the knowledge and ability to understand the notion of justice and how legal decisions are made.

Ms Rebecca Giliesen
Nominated by: Ms Kim Parker, Maurice Blackburn Cashman

Rebecca is a solicitor and partner with Maurice Blackburn Cashman and has a broad caseload. Her nomination is for the case she ran for Shayan Badraie in particular and other cases for people in detention centres. Shayan was an Iranian refugee held in detention in Woomera and then Villawood for two years, as a five and six year old. Rebecca ran the case at trial for 14 weeks until she reached a settlement in the Supreme Court of NSW, having claimed compensation for the significant psychiatric injuries he sustained whilst in detention. This case was a first – the Commonwealth of Australia was held to account for the conditions existing in refugee centres, and the exposure of minors to such conditions. With the support of public lobbying, the government has reversed its policy and children are no longer held in detention centres but instead kept in ‘safe houses’. Rebecca undertook this case as a priority, absorbing a huge workload in a case which had no precedent and required commitment and resourcefulness and resolve on her part.

Ms Emma Golledge
Nominated by: Ms Anne Swinarski, Vendor Support, The Big Issue

Emma is committed to the problem faced by homeless people and those at risk of being homeless. She was a volunteer advocate for people in boarding houses before she became the inaugural – until September – Co-ordinator of the Homeless Persons’ Legal Service (HPLS). Emma’s work was in both the head office and at the welfare agencies, and included attendance at courts and tribunals. She assisted individuals and supported the clinics with their clients, and provided them with expertise and support for case work. In implementing the HPLS she restructured and liaised with all the law firms that provide legal services, and with the welfare agencies where the in-situ service she established has helped their clients with civil matters, property disputes, debts, family and child access, victim’s compensation and victims’ assault.
Ms Prue Gregory
Nominated by: Ms Jenny Brownley, Claymore Neighbourhood Centre
Prue is the founder and principal solicitor of the Legal Counselling and Referral Centre located in Claymore and Macquarie Fields, suburbs of high social and economic disadvantage in south-western Sydney. She holds twice-weekly clinics, and has arranged for legal information workshops for community members who are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and other violent crime prevalent in the area. “She has opened up a door to a legal system that was once closed.” Prue has also coordinated the St John’s Darlinghurst Legal Counselling and Referral Centre since its formation in 1995. At both locations, her role is pivotal to creating a sustainable resource which provides legal advice and information, recruiting, training and mentoring volunteer solicitors, and working collaboratively with the other social and government agencies her clients have contact with.

Mr William Hutchins
Nominated by: Ms Mary Perkins, Tenants Union of NSW
Will is the Senior Solicitor, Prisoners Legal Service (PLS), a specialist section of the Legal Aid Commission of NSW. He has been with Legal Aid for over 20 years, and with PLS since 1992. Will leads a team of seven solicitors which provides a visiting advice service for Sydney metropolitan jails, and representation to inmates requesting legal aid for parole hearings, and other matters involving incarceration. Will has contributed to law reform and policy debates, and is committed to addressing systemic issues affecting the rights of inmates, ensuring they have access to their legal rights particularly in relation to parole. Many inmates have a number of legal and social problems—many are not prepared for incarceration, and then equally unprepared for release. “Will leads a small team in the Legal Aid Commission who take up where most lawyers leave their clients — when the cell door clangs shut.”

Mr Peter McGhee
Nominated by: Ms Prue Gregory, Disability and Home Care
Peter is the Principal Solicitor for the NSW Intellectual Disability Rights Service, (IDRS), and an advocate for people with intellectual disability. While his official role is to provide Court representation to those with an intellectual disability, he also helps clients navigate all areas of the criminal justice system. He also assists them to navigate society in order to help prevent their re-entry into the criminal justice system, by liaising with government and non-government services in his own time in order to secure services for clients or by directly supporting clients interacting with these services. Peter also supports clients at the systemic level through involvement in the executive of the NSW Law Reform Society and the Australian and New Zealand Association of Psychiatry, Psychology and Law (ANZAPP).

Ms Mary Perkins
Nominated by: Mr Chris Martin, Tenants Union of NSW
For over thirty years, Mary has been involved in access to justice issues pertaining to housing, and is currently Executive Officer of Shelter NSW. She has held senior roles at the Tenants Union, NSW Department of Housing, NCOSS, Redfern Legal Centre and Shelter NSW, contributing to policy and practice in relation to residential tenancy, homelessness, public housing and community and cooperative housing. She has an excellent understanding of the inter-relationship between housing, health, social welfare, economics and legal issues. She has been involved in some key legal battles, galvanising community, legal and other support for the campaign for security of tenure during a Supreme Court action against the Department of Housing in 1990 which was attempting to evict tenants without providing a reason. She has continued to campaign for people’s rights in her work at Shelter, defending the rights of tenants in public housing stock.

The Legal Information and Referral Forum
Brings together key service providers to improve the quality of information and referral to clients with legal problems by drawing together and disseminating existing knowledge and experience, and identifying common concerns and potential areas of cooperation.

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Mrs Brigid Corcoran The House of Welcome

Ms Tracey Cooley Randwick Council

Mr Terry Chenery Aboriginal Justice Advisory Council

Ms Fiona Burgess Penrith City Council

Mr Danny Gilbert AM Gilbert + Tobin

Mrs Tricia Fogarty The Fields

Mr Mervyn Wilson

Ms Tanya Whitehouse

Mr Robert Weeks NSW Attorney General's Department

Mr Hugh Van Dugteren Legal Aid Community Legal Centre

Mr Brendan Thomas Crime Attorney

Mrs Barbara Shorthouse Links To Learning

Mr John Scantleton Magistrates' Commission of NSW

Ms Felicity Reynolds Sydney City Council

Mr Bill Sproule The Administrative Law Reform Association Inc (LRA)

Mr Matt Frize Department of Education & Training

Mr Samatha Joseph Arts Law

Mr Terry Halloran Department of Community Services

Mrs Donna Meehan Volunteering NSW

Mr Anton Hermann Minter Ellison

Mr Tad Kiemski Department of Community Services

Ms Donna Kremmer Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Mr Alastair McEwin People with Disability Australia

Ms Ann Swiniarski The Big Issue Australia

Mr Korina England NSW Department of Native Title

Ms Elsie Gordon Dubbo

Mr Andrew Haesler Carl Shannon Chambers

Mr Damian Griffis BeyondBlue

Ms Joanna Stilwell Equal Opportunity Commissioner

Mr Laurie Glanfield AM Attorney General's Department (NSW)

Mr Mekonen Lemma The Station

Mr James McDougall National Centre for Ageing, Disability & Home Care

Ms Dianne Evans Parks and Village Service

Mrs Donna McPhie The Law Society of New South Wales

Mrs Cristina Pettenon Water Ombudsman NSW

Ms Tanya Whitehouse

Mr Terry Baldwin Department of Community Services
and in matters in the wide public
the organisations which assist them
disadvantaged and marginalised and
bono program assists people who are
the resources of the firm. The pro
organisations through in-house work,
work, assisting individuals and
significant commitment to pro bono
the community, the firm has a
Australia's leading international law
Blake Dawson Waldron
Blake Dawson Waldron is one of
Australia's leading international law
firms. In line with its professional
responsibility as lawyers and a
desire to give something back to
the community, the firm has a
significant commitment to pro bono
work, assisting individuals and
organisations through in-house work,
secondments and making available
the resources of the firm. The pro
bono program assists people who are
disadvantaged and marginalised and
the organisations which assist them
and in matters in the wide public
interest. The program focuses on legal
issues for indigenous people, people
with a mental illness or intellectual
disability, and in NSW, western Sydney
and central and far western NSW.
www.bdw.com.au
Chalk & Fitzgerald
Chalk & Fitzgerald Lawyers is a
Sydney-based law firm which
specialises in administrative
(government) law, environmental
and planning law and native title
law. The partners and solicitors of
Chalk & Fitzgerald have many years
experience in providing legal services
to Aboriginal communities and
organisations in Queensland, New
South Wales, Victoria, and Western
Australia particularly in relation to
environmental, land and resource
management and litigation.
Clayton Utz
Clayton Utz recognises that providing
pro bono help to people and
organisations who cannot afford
legal assistance is the inherent
professional responsibility of
every lawyer. All Clayton Utz lawyers,
regardless of their seniority or area of
law, are expected to conduct pro bono
work as an everyday part of their legal
practice. We assist more than 400 pro
bono clients each year, most of them
referred to us by a community legal
organisation. www.claytonutz.com
Freehills
Freehills’ pro bono program provides
legal services for matters that are
in the public interest. It accepts
transactional and litigious matters,
offers pro bono solicitor secondments
to community legal centres, presents
legal workshops and supports the
work of the Public Interest Law
Clearinghouse. For over a decade
Freehills has operated Sydney’s
inner-city Shopfront Youth Legal
Centre, with Mission Australia and the
Salvation Army, offering legal
services to homeless people aged
25 and under. Freehills has also
established a Pro Bono Business
Law Clinic for participants in Mission
Australia’s employment program,
the New Enterprise Incentive
Scheme. www.freehills.com
Gilbert + Tobin
Gilbert + Tobin’s pro bono work is an
important part of the legal profession’s
contribution to the betterment of our
community. We share a responsibility
to ensure that our legal system is just
and equitable, and that everyone
in our society has access to legal
representation and advice. Law firms
are in the privileged position of having
the resources to assist people who
cannot afford legal services. We are
committed to working with all lawyers
to build a successful and sustainable
pro bono culture throughout Australia
that improves access to our legal
system. www.gtlaw.com.au
Mallesons Stephen Jaques
Mallesons Stephen Jaques is a leading
commercial law firm with a focus on
Asia Pacific; we are recognised for
our ability to combine consistently
rigorous analysis with astute
judgment. Our vision for community
involvement is to provide support in
diverse, complementary ways.
The depth of the Mallesons in the
Community Program is reflected in
its three key components: pro
bono advice and representation,
workplace giving, and volunteering.
The program is underpinned by a
number of significant partnerships
including the National Children’s
& Youth Law Centre, Barnardos
Australia and the Ted Noffs
Foundation. www.mallesons.com
Minter Ellison
Minter Ellison has a long-standing
commitment to pro bono legal
services — the cornerstone of our
Community Investment program.
We are proud of our leadership
role in establishing the Homeless
Persons Legal Service in partnership
with the Public Interest Advocacy
Centre. Our staff derives enormous
satisfaction from our weekly legal
clinics at Claymore and Macquarie
Fields in Sydney’s outer south-west.
Our aim is to target our assistance to
communities in greatest need — with
a focus on breaking the cycles of
homelessness and disadvantage.
www.minterellison.com
Seven Wentworth
Seven Wentworth was established
as barristers’ chambers in 1957
in the Wentworth Chambers
building in Phillip Street, Sydney. Its
members have consistently been
the leaders of the Australian Bar,
and it is one of the most eminent
sets of barristers’ chambers with
a history of judicial appointments
second to none in Australia. The
members of Seven Wentworth
are sole practitioners carrying out
separate practices and appear in
courts at all levels, and in international
tribunals and arbitrations.