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Law
School



Obiter Dicta Newsletter

June 2024

Dear ,

It is an incredible honour to return to the UWA Law School as the Dean and Head of School after many years in Canada. I was last a member of the academic staff at UWA in 2011. For those alumni who, like me, have not visited the Law School for a long time, the exterior of the school looks very much the same.

Yet, a great deal has changed within. Most visibly, a series of artworks in the courtyard and the Beasley Law Library, including a painting called Noongar Seasons by Dr Richard Walley OAM CitWA of the Whadjuk Noongar people. The artwork acknowledges that the Law School inhabits space already occupied by an Indigenous legal system through which the Whadjuk Noongar people have cared for their land for tens of thousands of years. It is an outward reflection of important work within the Law School, in partnership with the School of Indigenous Studies, to meaningfully incorporate Indigenous cultures, knowledges and legal systems into the curriculum.



Most (but not all) the people in the Law School have also changed. But what has not changed is the fact that the Law School community is filled with remarkable staff and wonderful students, and that we receive incredible support from our alumni, volunteers and casual staff to deliver our programs. The items that follow in this newsletter give a snapshot of the vibrancy of the Law School community.

There is a great deal to look forward to, including the Law School Prize Ceremony in August, which celebrates the academic achievements of our student cohort. Longer term, we are preparing for our 100th anniversary, and thinking strategically about building on the Law School's many successes to ensure we continue to deliver high-impact research and excellent teaching programs. I have already heard from many alumni who want to contribute to this important work.

I am looking forward to opportunities to continue to meet with you, as we embark on this next stage in the UWA Law School journey.

Sharon Mascher

Dean and Professor of Law

The University of Western Australia

News



Ciara Glennon Memorial Law Scholarship awarded

A third-year law student with a passion for advocating and supporting society's most vulnerable has been [awarded this year's Ciara Glennon Memorial Law Scholarship](#) at The University of Western Australia.

Lucy Greenfield BSc '21 grew up in the South West town of Busselton, where she attended St Mary MacKillop

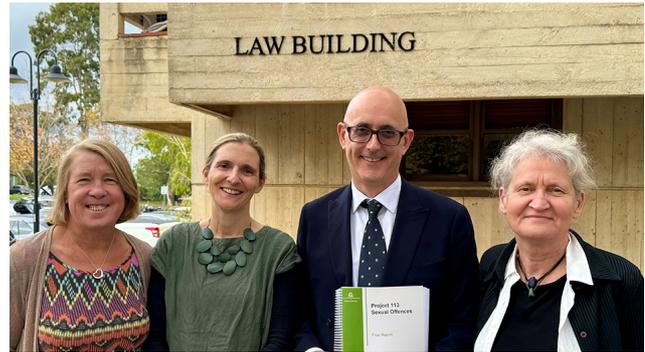
Lucy Greenfield (middle) poses for photos with Denis and Una Glennon.

College before moving to Perth to study at UWA.

Leading the charge for legal reform on sexual offences

The recent tabling in Parliament of the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia's Final Report on Project 113: Sexual Offences marks a significant milestone in the modernising of Western Australia's legal framework to better address sexual violence.

Academics from the UWA Law School have contributed their expertise to this pivotal report, which is expected to drive significant improvements to laws dealing with sexual violence in Western Australia.



Professor Meredith Blake, Professor Sarah Murray, Dr Jamie Walvisch and Associate Professor Stella Tarrant with a copy of the landmark report.



Professor Murray (pictured) was one of a number of expert witnesses who spoke to the Commission.

Productivity Commission: Philanthropy inquiry hearings at UWA

In response to its very broad terms of reference, the Productivity Commission released a draft report proposing major reforms to Australia's deductible gift recipient system, such as rolling out donation concessions to most – but not all – charities.

The Institute of Advanced Studies, in conjunction with UWA Law School's Professor Ian Murray, hosted a workshop in late 2023 for Western Australian experts to provide evidence to the Productivity Commission.

2024 Winterton Memorial Lecture

The Winterton Memorial Lecture is held each year in Sydney or Perth and honours the distinguished career and outstanding contribution to constitutional law by Professor George Winterton. This year Professor Rosalind Dixon spoke eloquently and irreverently about the need for proportionality, purpose and process-theory in constitutional law. The lecture was well-attended by members of the judiciary, practitioners, barristers and academics. Thank you to Chief Justice Peter Quinlan for kindly making the Old Supreme Court available for the evening.



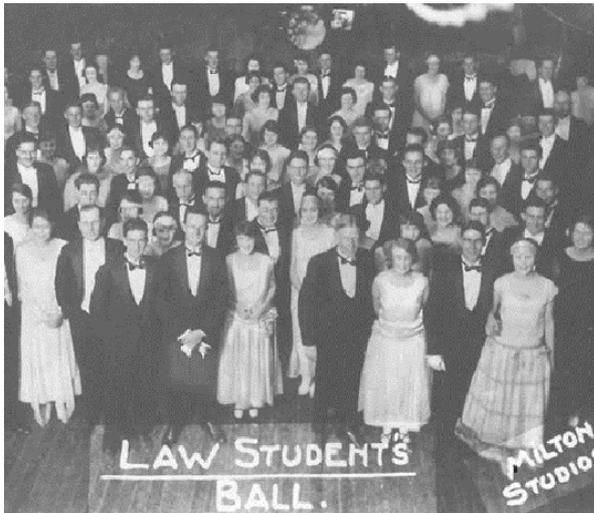
UWA Chancellor The Hon Robert French AC CitWA, Professor Rosalind Dixon and Law Dean, Sharon Mascher.



UWA Chancellor The Hon Robert French AC CitWA, Dean Sharon Mascher and Law School staff Meredith Blake, Marco Rizzi and Amy Thomasson.

Law Access - Walk for Justice

As part of National Law Week, UWA Chancellor The Hon Robert French AC CitWA, Dean Sharon Mascher and Law School staff Meredith Blake, Marco Rizzi and Amy Thomasson, along with Law students from Blackstone, helped support Law Access in its annual fundraising Walk for Justice from Barrack Square to Point Fraser and back. The UWA Law School student and staff Team raised more than \$2,100 for Law Access – well done!



Law School Centenary

The Law School is rapidly approaching its centenary. Emeritus Professor Frank Beasley LLB '57, LLD '74, the Foundation Professor, arrived at the Law School in November 1927, and classes began in March 1928. As part of the centenary celebrations, [Emeritus Professor Peter Handford is writing a History of the Law School](#), to be launched in early 2028. Now is your opportunity to be involved: if you have photographs that you would like to be considered for inclusion, you are invited to send them to Peter using [this online form](#).



Upcoming Events

The French Dialogues 2024

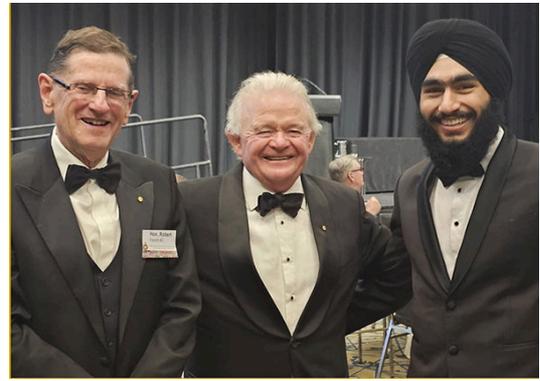
Named after UWA Chancellor, The Hon Robert French AC CitWA, The French Dialogues is a biannual event consisting of a cross disciplinary discussion by a panel of experts on a significant contemporary issue. In 2024, the dialogues will focus on the issue of free speech on campus and will be held in the second half of the year. For more information, please contact alumnirelations@uwa.edu.au.



Law School Review

Order of Australia Foundation Scholarship

Congratulations to Hakum Kohli (Law/Commerce) on being awarded a prestigious Order of Australia Foundation Scholarship. The [Order of Australia Foundation](#) supports the next generation of leaders by helping promising young Australians to achieve their potential for the benefit of future generations of Australians. The scholarship was donated by the McCusker Foundation and involves mentorship by UWA Chancellor, The Hon Robert French AC CitWA.



UWA Open Day

UWA Open Day saw a huge surge in interest in studying Law and Criminology. The new [Bachelor of Criminology and Criminal Justice](#) was so popular that the queue filled the entire Law courtyard. Thanks to the many volunteers and welcome to all the keen students and parents who visited us. A highlight of the Law School's program was the mock trial, with our judge in residence Andrew Beech presiding, and featuring a number of talented Juris Doctor students as witnesses and counsel.

Singapore study tour

The pilot run of a new unit, LAWS5242 - Law Study Tour (Singapore), was successfully conducted in early December 2023. Designed by Professor Meredith Blake BJuris '90, BA '91, LLB '91 and Dr Kenny Yang SJD '22, a UWA alumnus, the unit provides an opportunity for students to learn about the Singaporean legal system and draw comparisons to what they have learned about the Australian legal system. Its first batch of students attended lectures by Singaporean academics and practitioners on various aspects of Singaporean law and history. The study tour was capped off with a guided tour of the State Courts of Singapore. Following its successful run, the unit will be offered again in December 2024.



The Dean's Circle

The Dean's Circle is a philanthropic giving circle that generously supports the Law School and its students. In 2023, the Dean's Circle assisted students experiencing financial hardship and hired a Wellbeing Advisor, Ms Sally Stott. Her invaluable counselling service was incredibly successful, so much so that the program has now been expanded across the UWA campus. Find out more on [the Dean's Circle website](#).

New law academics

We were delighted to welcome three new scholars to UWA Law School – [Michelle De Souza](#), [Phoebe Galbally](#), and [Amy Thomasson](#).

Congratulations to alumni

Alumnus in Australian Senate

Congratulations to Senator Varun Ghosh LLB, BA '09, BA(Hons) '09, who was chosen by

the Parliament of Western Australia to represent WA in the Federal Senate following the retirement of Senator Patrick Dodson.

Alumni appointments to the Bench

Congratulations to the following UWA Law School alumni appointed to the Bench in WA:

- District Court Judge The Hon. Justice Kathleen Glancy BA, LLB '93, appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of WA and also State Administrative Tribunal Supplementary President.
- The Hon. Justice Gary Cobby BJuris '88, LLB '89, formerly a barrister at Francis Burt Chambers, appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of WA.
- Magistrate Genevieve Cleary MLPG '20, appointed a judge of the District Court of Western Australia.
- William Yoo LLB, BA '06, appointed to the Magistrates Court of Western Australia.
- Kyle Martin LLB, BA '08, appointed Magistrate of the Children's Court of Western Australia, as well as to the Magistrates Court of Western Australia.

2024 WA Bar Association President and Vice-President

Congratulations to alumni Brahma Dharmananda SC BJuris '86, LLB '87 and Julie Taylor SC LLB, BA(AsSt) '03, for appointment to, respectively, the positions of President and Vice-President of the Western Australian Bar Association.



alumni.uwa.edu.au

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The University of Western Australia acknowledges that its campus is situated on Noongar land, and that Noongar people remain the spiritual and cultural custodians of their land, and continue to practise their values, languages, beliefs and knowledge.
[Indigenous commitment](#)