

## **Outstanding young lawyers recognised at 2014 Australian Young Lawyer of the Year Award**

The Law Council of Australia has announced the winners of its annual Australian Young Lawyer of the Year Award.

The individual category was won by Queensland Solicitor, Ms Kara Cook, and the organisation award was presented to the New South Wales Young Lawyers' Workplace and Safety Committee.

Law Council of Australia Secretary-General, Mr Martyn Hagan, said the award demonstrated the commitment and high calibre of work young lawyers across the Australian legal profession undertake on a daily basis.

"The Law Council of Australia's Australian Young Lawyer Award highlights the important contribution young lawyers make in the Australian community at both an individual and organisational level.

"I congratulate Ms Cook and the New South Wales Young Lawyers' Workplace and Safety Committee for their outstanding achievements," Mr Hagan said.

First presented in 1999, the Australian Young Lawyer of the Year Award aims to encourage and foster Young Lawyer organisations to establish programs for the benefit of the profession and the community, and to recognise and reward the achievements and contributions of individual lawyers.

Ms Cook was bestowed with the individual award for her significant contribution to the profession as a volunteer in community legal centres providing legal advice to disadvantaged people with a particular focus on women and victims of domestic violence and raising community awareness about domestic violence.

"Ms Cook is a dedicated legal practitioner who is recognised for her services to the legal community being named as YWCA's 125 Leading Queensland Women in 2013 and in 2012 being named as Women Lawyers' Association of Queensland Emergent Woman Lawyer of the Year," Mr Hagan said.

The New South Wales Young Lawyers' Workplace and Safety Committee received the organisation award for establishing a pro bono scheme at the Fair Work Commission in Sydney.

The scheme is voluntary and assists parties in jurisdictional hearings before the Commission who are unrepresented, educationally disadvantaged or have language barriers.

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“The New South Wales Young Lawyers’ Workplace and Safety Committee arranges for two young lawyers each week to provide information to unrepresented litigants and assists them to present their applications to the Commission.

“This scheme reduces the time spent in hearings at the Commission and results in a fairer outcome for litigants,” Mr Hagan said.

Chair of the Law Council’s Australian Young Lawyers Committee, Mr Mitchell Strachan, said the recipients of the Australian Young Lawyer Awards demonstrate the great work that lawyers do in their communities by volunteering their time, skill and effort.

“As individuals involved in community groups and as organisations supporting community projects and their young lawyer colleagues, the recipients stand as an example to all young lawyers to continue their volunteer contribution,” Mr Strachan said.

Further information on the Australian Young Lawyer of the Year Award is available [online](#).

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