

Monash announces first human rights LLM degree in Australia

Monash Law School has announced that it will introduce the first masters degree in Australia dedicated to the study of human rights law in 2006. The Master of Laws (Human Rights) will bring Monash Law's postgraduate program in line with leading human rights universities in Europe and North America.

The announcement is the culmination of a large amount of work by the Castan Centre and Monash Law School staff to develop the program and extends the already strong presence of human rights subjects in both the undergraduate and postgraduate curric-

ula at Monash.

Professor Arie Freiberg, Dean of Monash Law School, said that the program was a logical development of the Centre's extensive research activities and will provide the opportunity for a wider range of students to gain access to the work of the Castan Centre and its staff.

Subjects to be taught during the first year of the course will be available on the Castan Centre website in October 2005.

The introduction of a specialised LLM at Monash has long been a goal of the

Castan Centre. A dedicated human rights course is vital for producing academics and professionals capable of advancing human rights scholarship, awareness and advocacy in Australia and throughout the world.

The LLM (Human Rights) will be launched, together with the LLM (Regulatory Studies), at an information session on 26 October 2005 at 5.30 pm. The launch will be at Monash University Law Chambers, 472 Bourke St. For more information, please email graduate@law.monash.edu.au or phone (03) 9641 6206.

New Internship Program Introduced for Monash Law Students

After many years of supporting outstanding students to work overseas on an ad hoc basis, the Castan Centre has announced the establishment of its Global Internship Program.

The Program will assist four of the finest Monash Law School students to work with some of the world's leading human rights institutions in Europe, Asia and North America during 2005-06. Each intern will receive a grant from the Law Faculty Student Travel Fund to help cover their costs.

Two students will be placed with Human Rights First, in New York City, for 12 weeks. Until 2003, HRF was known as the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights. It was established in 1978 and has long been an advocate of human rights issues, and especially of the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers. The organization has broadened its areas of focus over the decades and is now a forceful advocate for a wide range of human rights issues. It has operated a robust internship program for many years and provides interns with excellent research, advocacy and case work opportunities.

A third intern will work for six months with the Asian Commission for Human Rights, based in Hong Kong. The Commission has an ambitious goal to

improve human rights in the Asian region. Not only does it undertake research and advocacy, but it also investigates individual complaints of abuse and lobbies for international law reform. Its current focuses include child rights, torture, disappearances, the right to food and religious tolerance.

The final intern will serve with the Australian delegation to the annual UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, as Monash law students have done since 2002. The Commission has primary responsibility in the UN for matters concerning human rights. Australia is currently a member of the

Commission, meaning that interns are directly involved in the intricate negotiations and consultations which take place. Should the current UN reform process result in the replacement of the Commission, the centre will support an internship at the new body.

An important part of the Castan Centre's mandate is to improve the level of human rights discourse in Australia. By giving interns the opportunity to undertake practical human rights work overseas, the centre hopes to equip Australia's next generation of human rights leaders with the skills to contribute to this process.



Monash intern, Simone Cusack, at the UN Human Rights Commission with Australian Ambassador Mike Smith