

National Indigenous Legal Conference 2019

This year the 14th National Indigenous Legal Conference and the 1st Indigenous Health Justice Conference was held in Darwin on 13 & 14 August.

The Indigenous Barristers Trust the Mum Shirl Fund again sponsored indigenous law students from across NSW to attend the conference. This year the trust had the pleasure of sponsoring 22 students, as well as 4 who were sponsored by their individual university trusts, which meant the NSW Bar Association were able to send 26 students to Darwin.

This year a number of members of the NSW Bar were either speakers or panel members. Those members were Phillip Boulten SC, Tony McAvoy SC, Chris Ronalds SC and Arthur Moses SC.

Again the students who attended were incredibly grateful for the opportunity and sent some lovely messages of thanks, included below:-

I was one of the students at the NILC 2019 and wanted to say thank you for the opportunity

My background is pharmacy prior to starting my law journey and the amalgam of health and law that was portrayed at the conference showed me another area that I would love to be involved in.

From an indigenous perspective it was great to go to Darwin because it felt like home and the land spoke to my soul.

I am also talking to some contacts up there, particularly Adam Drake, you see how we can work together to grow and reach more indigenous youth with his program.

Thank you again for the opportunity and can you please pass on my thanks to everyone involved.

Daniel Cahill
Southern Cross University

I just wanted to email you to formally thank you for giving me the opportunity to attend the National Indigenous Legal Conference in Darwin just over a week ago.

I wanted to let you know of the incredible impact this conference and opportunity, given to me by the NSW Bar association, has had on me. Not only has this inspired me to pursue a career in law and finish my studies but also emphasised the importance of having an Indigenous voice in our legal system and society as a whole. It also gave me the inspiration to know that I can succeed and help make this world a better place. Darwin itself was beautiful and I met many lifelong friends and hopefully, the future changemakers of society.

I will leave you with a quote that has stuck with me since the conference said by the very inspiring Linda Ryle, "If we as Aboriginal people do not hold ourselves above the label and standard given to us, then we are not only intellectually but also culturally lazy."

Thank you again for this amazing opportunity, I will cherish the memories made and the ability to mingle with the most inspiring Indigenous lawyers, commissioners and students.

Ky Stewart, Macquarie University

I just wanted to sincerely thank you and the NSW Bar Association for the opportunity to attend the 2019 National Indigenous Legal Conference. It was truly an invaluable experience that deeply inspired me and allowed me to gain a great deal of clarity about what I would like to do with my Law degree in the future. Meeting and hearing the notable speakers, other law students and Chris Ronalds SC herself, was such an honour and is something that I will be truly grateful for the rest of my life.

Laura Montague, UNSW

Just thought I'd let you know I had a student tell me how appreciative he was of the conference. It was his second time but it was great meeting up with those students he made friends previously, and to be able to exchange stories about their studies and the plights they have had since they last caught up.

It has helped him build good support mechanisms outside of his general circle and learn many things. He also expressed the importance of having the conference in different locations as he also got to hear first hand the issues that our people are having around the country. Hearing first hand and speaking with people from the territory really put things into place from all he has read and heard. Coming from Tassie he felt far removed from such issues. He also mentioned that meeting the ilk of people like yourselves has driven him to really try harder with his studies.

Thank you both for your vision.

Eddie Cubillo
Senior Indigenous Fellow
Melbourne Law School

I wanted to reach out with a personal thank you for your support of our students at the National Indigenous Legal Conference in Darwin. Rhiannon and Thomeissa had a fabulous time, and speak so very highly of you. They feel as if you made their attendance not only possible, but a highlight of their lives. They have agreed to share their experience in our next School of Law and Faculty newsletter. If you like, I can add you to the email list for this newsletter. We'll also submit the story for inclusion in the UOW publication, Universe. If accepted, I'll forward you a copy of that also. Many thanks and warmest wishes,

Dr Kylie Lingard
Lecturer | School of Law,
University of Wollongong



Students attend National Indigenous Legal conference

The NSW Bar Association's Mum Shirl Fund recently sponsored two UOW law students, Rhiannon Auld and Thomeissa Mason, to attend the National Indigenous Legal Conference in Darwin. Here is their recap on their journey and experience:

"Our time in Darwin began with a cultural tour led by two Larrakia and Warumungu men, Richard Fejo and James Parfitt (Fejo). On the tour, we explored Darwin city, participated in a Welcome to Country ceremony on the beach, and engaged in an exercise on skin names and kinship laws. The tour ended with a sunset networking event on Mindil Beach. We then attended the National Indigenous Legal Conference from 13-14 August 2019. One of our key take-aways from the Conference was the need for an established framework of genuine participation and involvement of First Nations peoples in the decision-making processes that impact First Nations people.

The Conference concluded with a gala dinner at PeeWee's at the Point. This event showcased local talent, presented prestigious awards and was an opportunity for attendees to form connections and partnerships. We would like to thank the NSW Bar Association and the Mum Shirl Fund for the valuable opportunity to form many connections and learn from advocates in the fields of health and justice. We would also like to thank the Larrakia people for welcoming us on their land and hosting this event".