

Women in law – this year’s winners



Thynne + Macartney partner Margaret McNamara is the winner of the 2016 Queensland Law Society Agnes McWhinney Award, which recognises the contributions of outstanding women in the legal profession.

Margaret leads the firm’s wills and estates team and has been a QLS accredited specialist (succession law) since 2002.

The Agnes McWhinney Award was presented by QLS president Bill Potts on 21 October at the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland (WLAQ) 38th annual awards dinner.

Michelle has been a principal in her own practice since 2007 and has made significant contributions to the legal profession as an author, presenter and a volunteer mentor.

She believes that lawyers do their best work outside of the profession by working with community groups and is grateful for the strong women mentors she has had throughout her career.

“I started my career as a legal secretary and was persuaded to study law by a mentor,” she said. “I was a single mother and continued to work full-time as a secretary while studying law part-time – a six-year slog.

“As a legal secretary at South & Geldard in Rockhampton I worked with Vicky Jackson, now the senior partner of that firm, and who has also been a recipient of this award.

“I would like to acknowledge the Women’s Lawyers Association of Queensland, who encourage, support and mentor young women entering the profession as well as lobbying for the interests of women in the profession generally.

“Agnes McWhinney would have had a much easier start to her career and enjoyed more of the fruits of her labour if WLAQ had been around back then, but without Agnes none of us would have the careers we have today.”

Also recognised were Michelle Lember of Lember and Williams Lawyers and Aimee McVeigh of Disability Law Queensland, who both received 2016 QLS Agnes McWhinney Outstanding Achievement Awards.



The WLAQ named Brisbane barrister Sue Brown QC as the winner of the Woman Lawyer of the Year Award. Before going to the Bar, she was a senior associate at Minter Ellison in commercial dispute resolution.

The WLAQ's Regional Woman Lawyer of the Year Award went to Cairns barrister Tracy Fantin, while the Emergent Woman Lawyer of the Year winner was McKays Solicitors senior solicitor Kristy Dobson.

The Woman in Excellence Award was presented to former District Court and Childrens Court judge Sarah Bradley, who retired earlier this year.

1. Queensland Law Society president Bill Potts with 2016 QLS Agnes McWhinney Award winner Margaret McNamara of Thynne + Macartney.
2. Michelle Lember of Lember and Williams Lawyers was presented with a 2016 QLS Agnes McWhinney Outstanding Achievement Award.
3. A QLS Agnes McWhinney Outstanding Achievement Award was also presented to Aimee McVeigh of Disability Law Queensland.
4. WLAQ Woman Lawyer of the Year Sue Brown QC, Regional Woman Lawyer of the Year Tracy Fantin, Woman in Excellence Award winner her Honour Sarah Bradley and Emergent Woman Lawyer of the Year Kirsty Dobson.

