

2023 WLAQ Inspo List

ACKNOWLEDGING THE WOMEN
WHO INSPIRED AND
SUSTAINED US IN 2022





President's Message

Jessica McClymont, President

Past editions of the WLAQ Inspo List have attempted the Herculean task of acknowledging all of the individual women who have been sources of inspiration, mentorship and support for the members of the WLAQ Committee. With so many women shining in myriad areas of the law in Queensland, it is nigh impossible to recognise all of those who check in on us and lift our spirits, toil in service of society, or occupy leadership roles in our profession, and in all cases, remind us of why we work in law.

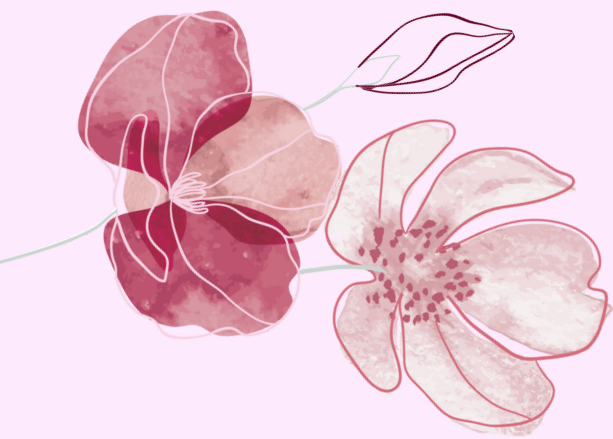
This year, the WLAQ Committee decided to take a different approach. To mark International Women's Day on 8 March 2023, our Committee wished to celebrate the collective and collegiate efforts and achievements of the groups of women from whom we drew particular inspiration over the past year.

For International Women's Day 2023, we acknowledge that it "takes a village".

To those who have inspired us, and to all Queensland women in law, the 2022-2023 WLAQ Committee wish you an uplifting and celebratory International Women's Day!

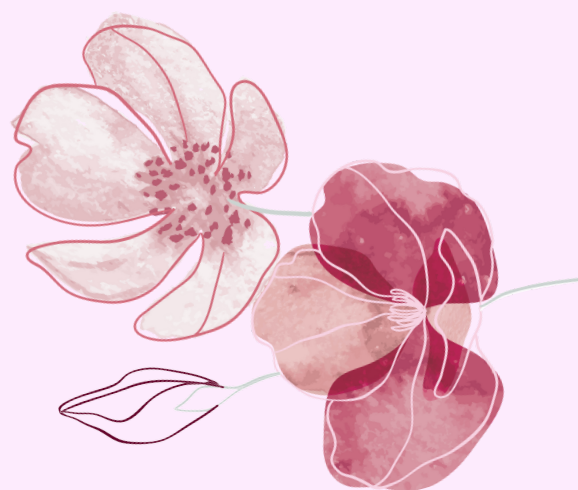
Jessica McClymont






Queensland's female Magistrates


WLAQ is excited to mark an incredible milestone for gender equity in the Queensland Magistracy in 2022, with women now comprising 50% of magistrates in Queensland! Women magistrates have been instrumental in breaking down barriers for upcoming women lawyers in the legal profession. Despite facing numerous challenges and biases, these magistrates have proven themselves to be exceptional legal professionals who are dedicated to upholding the principles of justice and fairness. Their achievements have paved the way for future generations of women lawyers to enter the profession with confidence and the knowledge that they too can achieve success in their chosen field following in the footsteps of these trailblazers. By recognising the contributions and accomplishments of these remarkable women, WLAQ hopes to spread this inspiration to women lawyers across the state to continue striving for excellence in their careers.

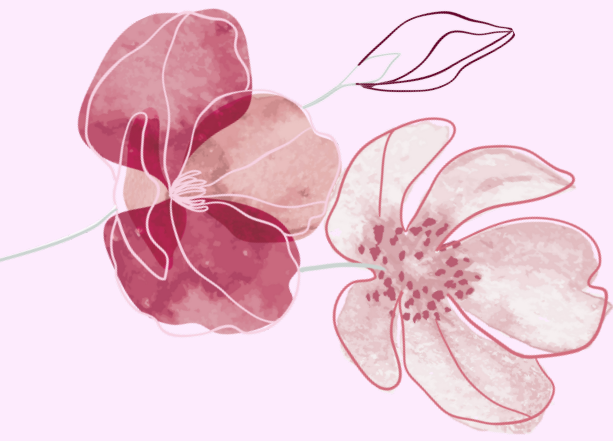




Women graduates from Queensland law schools in 2022

WLAQ wishes to acknowledge and celebrate the inspiring achievements of graduates from Queensland law schools in 2022. These women are especially deserving of recognition due to their incredible resilience and adaptability in the face of unprecedented challenges. Graduates in 2022 have completed their studies while navigating the complexities of online learning, social distancing, and limited access to resources while continuing to achieve their academic goals and gain work experience in an evolving industry. Despite the difficulties they have faced, these women have demonstrated a commitment to their studies and a determination to succeed. By recognising their achievements, we can empower future generations of women lawyers to persevere through adversity, delay, restrictions, and changes to learning resources, to make a positive impact on communities surrounding them.

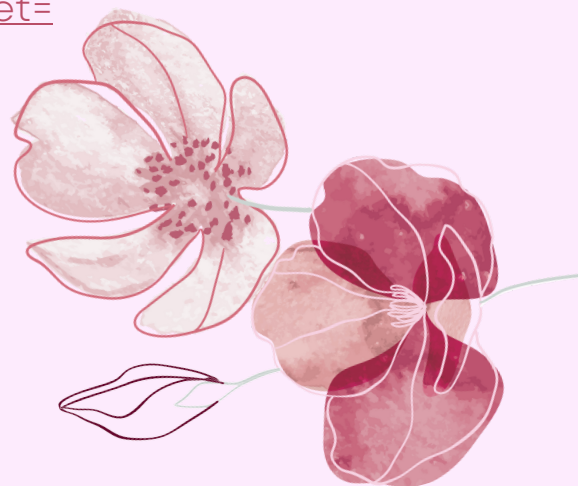




WLAQ Awards finalists

In the 44th year of the WLAQ Annual Awards, we were overwhelmed with outstanding nominees for the three categories: the Leneen Forde AC Woman Lawyer of the Year, the Regional Woman Lawyer of the Year and the Emergent Woman Lawyer of the Year. The breadth of the field was astounding and the finalises were all leaders in their field. Each finalist's unique background and exemplary contribution to the law highlighted the talented women lawyers who progress the law in Queensland and make it better and brighter for all those who work with them currently, and all those who will follow. The WLAQ judging panel also awarded the Trailblazer Award to recognise an outstanding finalist across all categories. WLAQ celebrates all the finalists and the winners of the 44th WLAQ awards.

See them here:
[https://www.facebook.com/
photo?
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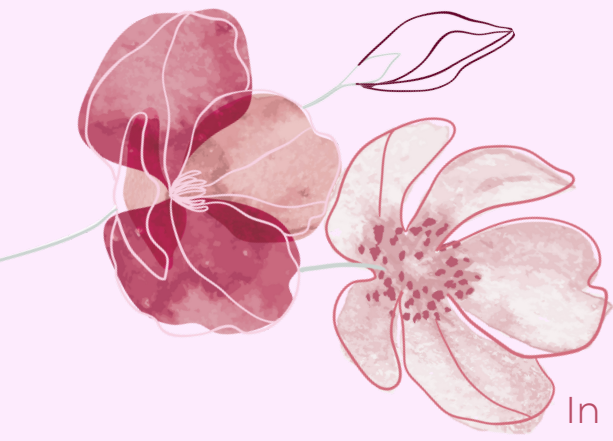




Bar Practice Course graduates

WLAQ is thrilled to acknowledge that the latest cohort of Bar Practice Course graduates and admittees to the Queensland Bar takes the proportion of Queensland's female barristers to precisely 30%; the highest proportion ever. For barristers of less than five years seniority, the proportion of women is close to 50%. These graduates come from a number of different backgrounds and areas of law. Each of these women passed a challenging entrance exam and then completed the 6 week intensive Bar Practice Course. WLAQ congratulates these women on the exciting new stage of their career and we eagerly look forward to watching their careers progress and flourish.

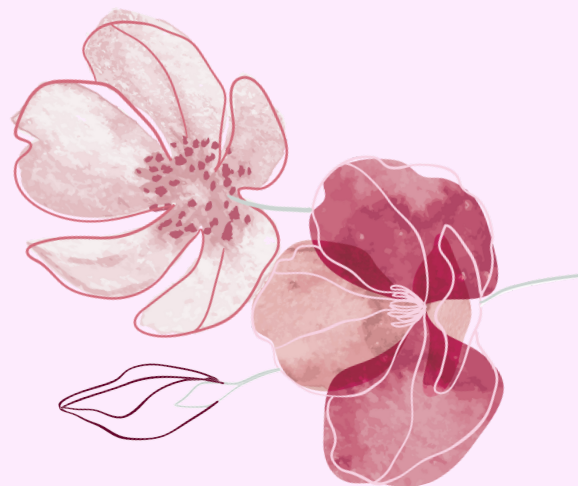




Women who achieved specialist accreditation

In 2022, the QLS specialist accreditation program offered accreditation in personal injuries law, criminal law, business law and workplace relations. It was a phenomenal task just to complete the course, with the time commitment required being between 100 and 200 hours. The candidates had to complete an assignment, an examination and a client interview or mock court hearing, all requiring advanced legal skills and knowledge, communication skills and the ability to navigate through complex legal scenarios.

An enormous amount of planning was required to facilitate this level of commitment by the candidates, particularly those with children, in managing employer and client expectations and family responsibilities. Not only did the work diary need to be managed for months in advance to accommodate working and studying the intensive course at the same time, but delegation of family roles, pre-planning of meals and pre-organisation of regular daily tasks were needed. As always, the success rate was low and, of those who were successful, 55% were women, the majority in criminal law which is a particularly difficult area of practice for women. One candidate said that she will never know that amount of information again! Huge congratulations to the women who have achieved this amazing qualification



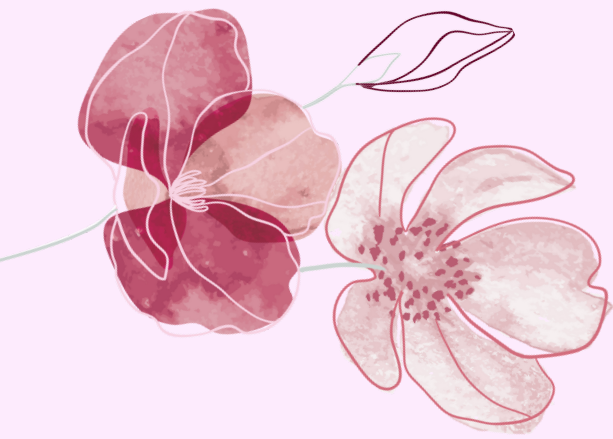


Women involved in Royal Commissions/ Commissions of Inquiry

Women who are involved with Royal Commissions and Commissions of Inquiry are on our list because they demonstrate an intense dedication to uncovering the truth and providing recommendations for reform. These women also possess excellent legal skills in research, advocacy, and communication, with the impact of their efforts proving to be significant and far-reaching, making recommendations leading to changes in legislation, policy, and practice. Women who are involved in these inquiries bring a unique perspective to the table. They can offer insights into issues that affect women and other marginalized groups, which may otherwise be overlooked. This diversity of perspective can lead to more well-rounded and comprehensive recommendations, for the betterment of all.

One woman barrister told WIAQ, "Being involved in law reform or commissions of inquiry which tackle systemic issues across our criminal justice system provides a unique opportunity to take our skill and experience as lawyers and apply them to the question of how best to improve the way justice is done in our community. It is truly exhausting, but deeply worthwhile."

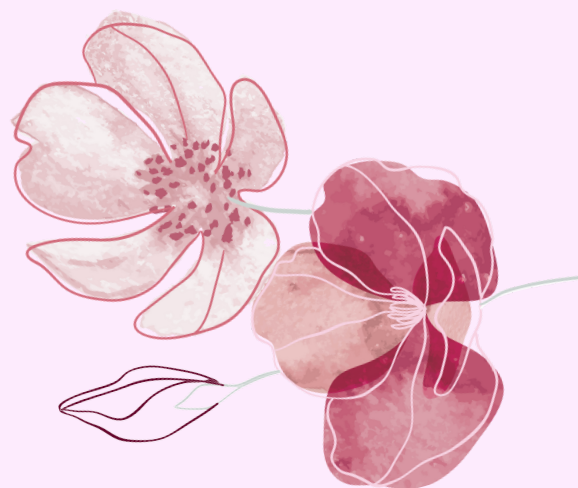




Female heads of jurisdiction

WLAQ acknowledges and honours our numerous female heads of jurisdiction across the judiciary in Queensland. These pre-eminent women of the legal profession provide crucial balance, in their positions as female leaders. They uplift and motivate us with the offices they hold and the grace and skill with which they conduct those offices. They inspire us to “be what we can see”.

We thank them for their dedication and celebrate their exceptional achievements.

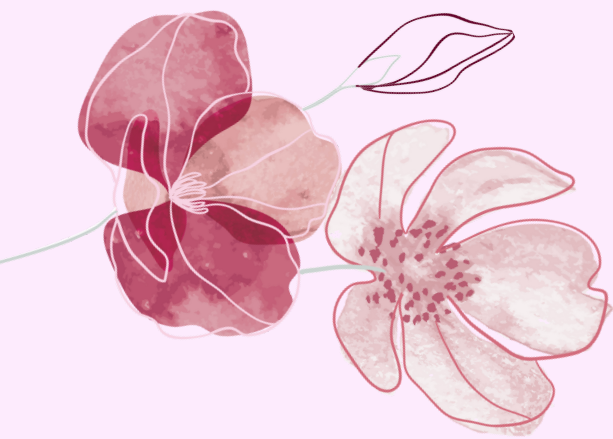




The QLS leadership team

In 2022 and 2023, for the first time since the first incarnation of the Queensland Law Society came into being, the peak body of solicitors in Queensland has been led by women in the positions of President and Deputy-President. These positions involve an enormous commitment of time, energy, leadership ability, strategic thinking, communication skills, tenacity and knowledge. We thank those women for sharing their enthusiasm for and allegiance to the profession. It is inspiring!

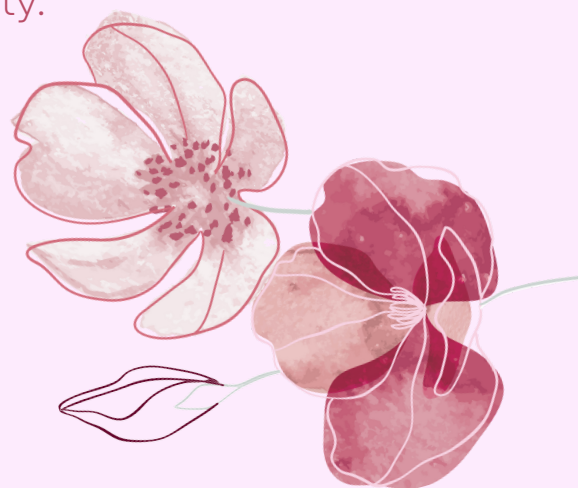




Women assisting victims of domestic violence

Lawyers who assist victims of domestic violence don't just fit one mould. They act in differing capacities, and appear across varying jurisdictions. WLAQ wishes to recognise, and thank, the lawyers who undertake this crucial work, including those who represent aggrieved persons in domestic violence proceedings, defence lawyers who regularly act for clients who are victims of domestic violence, and prosecutors who undertake the important work of liaising with victims and witnesses of domestic violence.

Regardless of the particular role in which a lawyer acts when assisting domestic violence victims, the challenges and trauma presented by this service remain universal. Lawyers who assist domestic violence victims are to be commended - not only for their commitment to their work and their clients, but also for their resilience. Although domestic violence remains widespread, these lawyers are facilitating a voice for victims and in turn, are contributing to the critical goal of the elimination of domestic violence within our society.



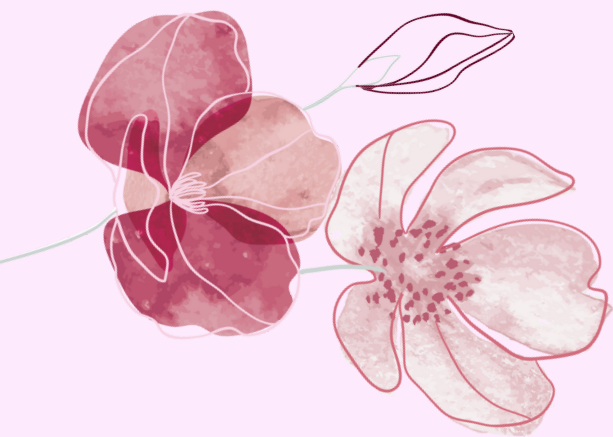


Community Legal Services

The WLAQ committee is grateful to recognise the incredible efforts of the staff and volunteers of the many Queensland community legal centres. WLAQ recognise the very important role community legal centres play in providing access to justice to members of the community. Many of these organisations juggle the dual challenges of ever-increasing demand and limited resources. Without the assistance of these services, many marginalised and disadvantaged women would not receive legal support. We thank all women staff and volunteers working within community legal centres for their time, care, support and empathy.

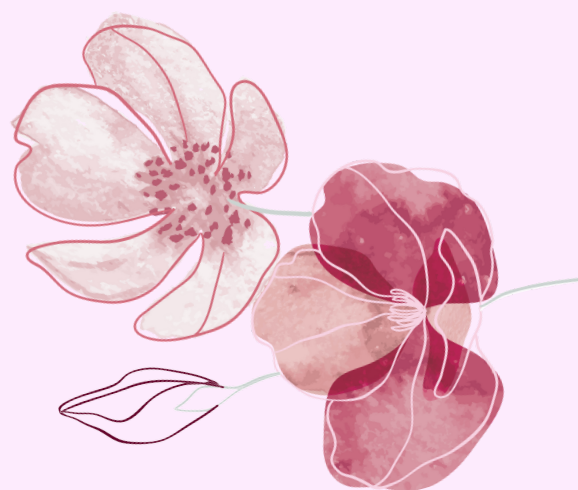
We hope that their contributions to the community inspire all female practitioners to volunteer such time as they are able to support the critical work of these incredible organisations.






Women who have served on WLAQ committees in its 44-year history

In its 45th year in 2023, the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland celebrates the 44 years of dedicated and passionate leaders who have supported and propelled the association during their time on the executive and management committees. At all times, the committees have been comprised of women who hold demanding positions in the law and who dedicate their time in a volunteer capacity. WLAQ is proud of the legacy of committees of years past and recognises their altruism to support, bring together and advance women in the law.





The Pasifika Lawyers Association of Queensland ("PLAQ")

The Pasifika Lawyers Association of Queensland ("PLAQ") has been empowering and supporting Pacific Island lawyers to embrace their cultural heritage to pave the way to create opportunities in their respective areas of practice. WLAQ wishes to celebrate many trail-blazing women members of PLAQ in 2022. One past president was sworn in as a Judicial Registrar of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia.



Members celebrated a range of achievements, such as being awarded a Doctor of Education, founding media service Pasifika TV and Radio, founding the Pasifika Autism Village Support Group, and planning for the Pasifika Lawyers Collective Conference in Samoa in July 2023 in partnership with the Samoa Law Society. PLAQ's women lawyers and women law firm owners do so much work serving the community by facilitating free community legal education on domestic and family violence, youth justice, migration etc, as well as acting on a pro bono basis when needed to promote better access to justice for cultural and linguistically diverse communities.





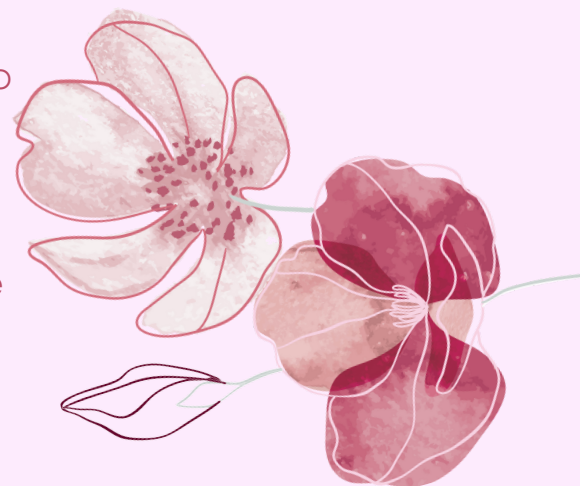
Women of the Queensland African Lawyers Network

WLAQ is proud to recognise the women of the Queensland African Lawyers Network (QALN), a group comprised of lawyers, law students, lecturers and others working within the law.

Being of African descent or having a strong interest/connection to Africa, the women lawyers of the QALN are driven by the mantra “strength in diversity”, noting not only the diverse cultural backgrounds within QALN but their expertise across countries and jurisdictions, drawing from graduate and postgraduate qualifications, a huge dose of self-motivation, and a vision to lift each other in their journey.



At its inception, there were fewer than 10 members. Thanks to the tireless efforts of the founding members, including influential and prominent women lawyers, in connecting law students and emerging African lawyers with the network, QALN has rapidly grown and now has a membership base comprising over 100 African law students, recent graduates and lawyers, and counting! The founding women members have been a leading force in developing the QALN into a network that provides opportunities for emerging lawyers to find work experience, mentoring support and guidance from experienced African lawyers as they commence their careers.



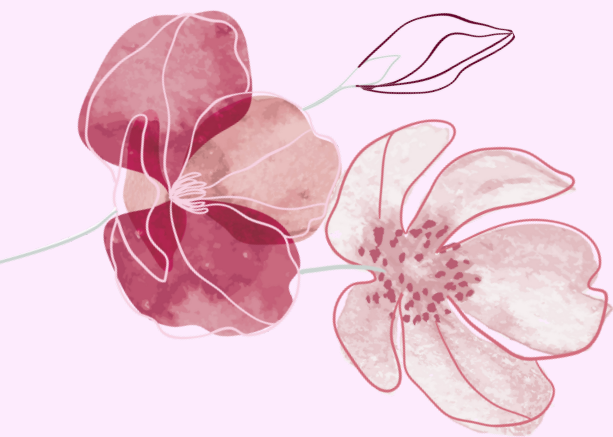


Women of Pride in Law

WLAQ celebrates the women of Pride in Law, not only as trailblazers in smashing the glass ceilings of the legal profession, but also as tireless advocates for the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community in Australia. As a national volunteer led organisation, the women members of Pride in Law represent the legal profession across the board having positions in top-tier law firms, the public service, in-house, the bar and the judiciary. The executive of Pride in Law told us:

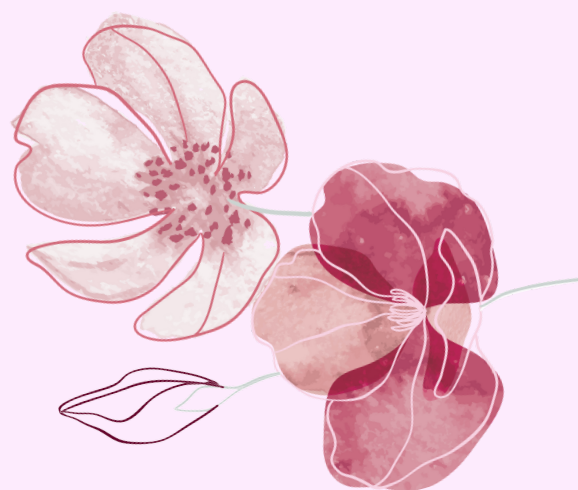
“Our Pride in Law team recognises the value in a diverse legal profession, and the benefits diversity, visibility and advocacy can bring to our clients and other Queensland lawyers. We are focused on working productively and collaboratively across all parts of the legal profession and legal system to drive positive and long-lasting change.”





WLAQ Honorary Members:

Over the course of many years, the WLAQ Management Committee has had the privilege of appointing sixteen inspiring women as Honorary Members, whose involvement with WLAQ spans the entire period of its history from foundation to the present date. The 2022-2023 Committee holds each of these women in the highest regard, and looks to them as exemplars of service to the justice system and to women in law. To read more about the extraordinary women whom WLAQ are honoured to call our Honorary Members, go to www.wlaq.com.au/honorary-members



THANK YOU TO THE WOMEN OF QUEENSLAND'S LEGAL PROFESSION

#EMBRACEEQUITY



WLAQ | **WOMEN LAWYERS**
ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND INC
