



MEDIA RELEASE

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ABA Vice President Fiona McLeod SC given Victorian honours

The leadership, advocacy and long standing contribution of Fiona McLeod SC to women in the legal profession and beyond has been recognised by her induction on to the Victorian Honour Roll for Women on International Women's Day 2014.

Ms McLeod is a Senior Counsel at the Victorian Bar practising in the areas of human rights, commercial law, common law and administrative law.

She is the Vice President of the Australian Bar Association, an executive director of the Law Council of Australia and is the immediate past Chair of the Victorian Bar Council. She has voluntarily contributed to professional and government policy at state and national levels for more than 20 years undertaking work to enhance the support and retention of women lawyers and provide better access to justice for women in all walks of life.

The Premier Denis Napthine and Victorian Minister for Women's Affairs, Heidi Victoria MP celebrated the accomplishment of Ms McLeod, one of 20 women awarded the honour, with a lunchtime ceremony at Parliament House today.

Ms McLeod said it was an extraordinary honour to be included in a list of such remarkable women, many of whom had inspired her throughout her life and said that, like many women, what motivated her was 'seeing a need, the hurt or an injustice and feeling I might be able to assist.'

She joins Felicity Hampel SC (as Her Honour Judge Hampel then was) as the only other woman to be appointed when practising as a barrister and a number of other former barristers on the Honour Roll including Dame Roma Mitchell, The Hon Mary Gaudron QC and Justice Susan Crennan AC.

In accepting the nomination and responding to what sustained her commitment to public contribution Ms McLeod said that she had been lucky to have been surrounded by many outstanding women throughout her life including her mother, sisters and daughters and her former school principal Joan Montgomery OBE, also an Honour Roll appointee, who had encouraged her to make a significant contribution to others.

Ms McLeod said this had been sound advice and was certain 'that the greatest happiness in life comes from kindness and generosity to others, from sharing ideas that fire the imagination and embolden us to take risks in pursuit of worthy goals and by simple expressions of friendship, community and love.'

Ms McLeod was nominated for the Honour Roll by Victorian Women Lawyers. Her pro bono work has contributed substantially to the wider community. She has been recognised as a pioneer and a dedicated fighter in the field of anti-slavery and human trafficking in Australia, providing pro bono

services to victims and pursuing the first compensation claims on behalf of victims of sex trafficking in NSW and Victoria.

She has also negotiated significant legislative change on behalf of trafficked persons and amendments to providing greater protection for people with an intellectual disability.

Ms McLeod is also highly regarded for her pro bono work in environmental and discrimination cases. She contributes to the development of others in the profession by volunteering her time as a senior instructor in advocacy, developing training curricula at undergraduate and postgraduate levels and participated in international teaching teams in the Solomon Islands, Nepal, Bangladesh and Vanuatu over several years.

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