

Law Council awards Elizabeth Heenan 2013 President's Medal

The Law Council of Australia has announced Mrs Elizabeth Heenan as the 2013 recipient of the Law Council of Australia President's Medal.

The President's Medal is an annual award that recognises an Australian lawyer's outstanding contribution to the legal profession.

Law Council of Australia President, Mr Michael Colbran QC, presented Mrs Heenan with her award and said her personal and professional contribution to the Australian legal profession in a career spanning more than 36 years has been inspirational.

"Elizabeth's lifelong commitment to advancing the interests of women in the profession along with her extensive contributions to academia and to the work of professional associations make her a most highly valued member of the Australian legal profession," Mr Colbran said.

Award recipient, Mrs Elizabeth Heenan, said she was honoured and humbled to be the recipient of the Law Council's President's Medal.

"I come from the coalface of the profession, being a solicitor, I am much more involved with the public on a day to day basis."

During her acceptance speech Mrs Heenan noted she was pleased to see the support the Law Council has given in recent years to furthering the causes of those in the profession who perhaps may be at a disadvantage.

"We've seen this support through the adoption of the Equitable Briefing Policy, the support for the Court Appearance Survey and the National Attrition and Re-engagement Study which is examining why there is a high rate of attrition of women lawyers in the legal profession – all of which contribute to furthering the role of women in the profession," Mrs Heenan said.

The support the Law Council has given in encouraging the participation of indigenous students by the award of the John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship and the setting up of a separate committee to deal with indigenous issues was also recognised by Mrs Heenan.

As a highly respected mentor and advocate for change within the legal sector, Mr Colbran said Mrs Heenan has been a positive and influential role model for many lawyers.

"Mrs Heenan served the legal profession as President of the Law Society of Western Australia in 2003 and is a continuing member of the Law Society.

“Mrs Heenan has also made a great contribution to the Law Council - serving as Director in 2003 and for many years as a member of the Equalising Opportunities in the Law Committee and the National Elder Law and Succession Law Committee.

“It is important that the profession recognises and honours the work of our colleagues who have paved the way for others and given so much of their time and energy to the benefit of the profession and the community at large.

“Mrs Heenan is a woman of courage, determination and commitment, as well as being an excellent role model for all lawyers - she is a very worthy recipient of this award,” Mr Colbran said.

Further information on the President’s Medal is available at the Law Council of Australia [website](#).

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