

Committees.....

Community Issues Committee

On 1 February 1999, the Law Institute's Legal Assistance Scheme was launched by His Excellency Sir James Gobbo. The Scheme involves the establishment of a referral service which aims to systematically link those with a need for pro bono services with solicitors who are willing to provide such services. The Scheme was instituted as a result of recommendations contained in a report entitled "Bridging the Gap" produced by current and former members of the Community Issues Committee. Congratulations must go to Jason Newman and Phoebe Dunn, current members of the Community Issues Committee, who were involved in producing the Bridging the Gap report and who served on the Implementation Committee which got the Scheme up and running.

Following a submission from the Victorian Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby, the Community Issues Committee has decided to produce an entirely new guide to the law for gay and lesbian couples, rather than updating the existing guide. We hope that by producing the guide in conjunction with the VGLRL, we will ensure that the content addresses relevant legal issues in a way that is

sensitive to our target group. The VGLRL has extensive networks within the legal profession and is well placed to secure contributions from relevant specialists. We propose to seek funding from the Victoria Law Foundation for the production of the new guide in the next funding application round.

Preparations are currently underway for the 1999 Shadow Program to be held during Law Week. The Program will be run along similar lines to the pilot run last year, during which students from disadvantaged schools shadowed legal practitioners to glean some knowledge of the legal profession. If you are interested in mentoring a student as part of this program please contact Darren Hogeboom at the Law Institute on 9607 9385 or email d-hogebo@liv.asn.au for more information.



*Alexandra West,
Chair*

Young Criminal Lawyers Sub-committee

How do you cope with your first client who is sent to jail by a Magistrate? What are the views of young criminal lawyers on heroin trials or the amalgamation of community legal centres? The Criminal Law Section of the Law Institute of Victoria has recently established a Young Criminal Lawyers sub-committee to address issues such as these, which are of interest or affect young criminal lawyers.

This sub-committee aims to meet the needs of members who have been practising in the criminal law area for less than five years. The Committee has formulated a statement of its purposes which include:

(a) To provide an accessible forum that encourages young criminal lawyers to participate in the activities of the Criminal Law Section;

(b) To discuss, investigate and/or conduct campaigns to address issues identified by the Committee or the Section as issues of particular concern to young criminal lawyers;

(c) To provide continuing legal education for young criminal lawyers.

Sally Foreman and Shaun Ginsbourg are the joint chairs of the sub-committee and meetings are held on a monthly basis. If you are interested in joining this Committee, please contact Voula Konstantopoulos on 9607 9383 or voulak@liv.asn.au.

Voula Konstantopoulos