

# Australian Young Lawyers Report

Australian Young Lawyers recently convened in Sydney for its annual "face-to-face" meeting to discuss current projects and future directions.

A major topic of conversation was the expansion of the Australian Young Lawyers Awards. The Awards have run successfully for over ten years and recognise excellence in young lawyers in the categories of professional issues, community issues, and continuous and outstanding contribution to the profession and the community. The Awards have now been renovated to provide funding for worthy projects through a grants scheme. Grants will be made to facilitate the accomplishment of a proposed program or enable publication of prepared information while awards are made to recognise the achievements of individuals and organisations in working for the benefit of the broader community. Applications for the awards are invited (see advertisement on page 20).

Another major focus of the meeting was uniform national standards for admission to practise. Representatives from various states debated substantive issues raised by the paper entitled "Legal Education, Training and Admission Requirements" which was presented by the Victorian Attorney-General, Jan Wade, to the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General last year. Delegates as a whole supported the concept of a national standard in relation to admission, particularly to raise training standards and to facilitate a national practising certificate regime. It was, however, felt that some of the proposals contained in the paper were unclear. The paper was therefore endorsed with qualification.

Mr Jesse Clarke, President of Australian Law Students' Association ("ALSA"), attended the conference as a guest

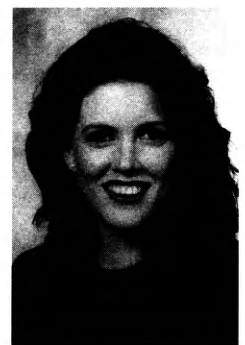
and gave a most informative presentation about the objects and aims of ALSA, as well as insight as to ALSA's impressive activities. Australian Young Lawyers looks forward to maintaining strong links with ALSA in the future.

The face-to-face meetings of Australian Young Lawyers provide a rare opportunity to meet representatives (rather than merely talking via long distance teleconference). Everyone enjoyed the chance to get to know one another and share stories about recent activities in the different states. There is a lot of activity nationally at a junior practitioner level and it was encouraging to see such enthusiasm across the board.

General business involved ensuring that there is cross-fertilisation between the states by means of exchange of law journals, and the possibility of an interstate legal conference was raised. Samantha Miles announced her resignation as Chair of the committee and nominations were considered for the position. We, as representatives for Victoria, were elected to Chair the committee on the basis of a joint ticket from both Young Lawyers and Young Barristers. We would like to thank Samantha for her four years of hard work and commitment to Australian Young Lawyers, and we look forward to working with the committee to develop new initiatives and programmes in the future.

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*Grania Connors and Justin Serong*



*Grania Connors,  
Joint Chair  
Australian  
Young Lawyers*