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NT LEGAL AID

IN BRIEF

Read NT Legal Aid's Annual Report 2016/2017

Read about NT Legal Aid's services and achievements from the 2016/2017 financial year.

Click here to read NT Legal Aid's Annual Report

Community engagement

NT Legal Aid's CLE, Outreach and Helpline staff have been out and about recently, engaging people with our polaroid photo booth, films, activities and information resources at:

- Casuarina Shopping Centre, December and March
- Top End Defence families *"Welcome to Darwin"* Expo, February
- CDU Darwin campus O-week (with NT Electoral Commission), February
- Henbury school's *"Possabilities expo",* March.

Indigenous women tipping the scales of justice

The Bilata Legal Pathways Program congratulates the six Indigenous women: Kacie Winsley, Erica Harvey, Tamara Espie, Rachel Ponter, Kristy Bloomfield, and [we are very proud— NT Legal Aid's] May Mooka for successfully completing the Indigenous Pre-Law Program. The students were offered a place in the Bachelor of Laws through the School of Law at Charles Darwin University. The Pre-Law Program aims to increase Indigenous participation in law courses offered through CDU by providing opportunities and pathways to studying law.

The need for greater Indigenous participation in the legal profession is outlined in the article in Balance 2/15, the Law Society of the Northern Territory's magazine. Of the 533 practising lawyers, only 10 identified as Indigenous, which equates to under 2% of the legal profession in the Northern Territory. Of the 10 practitioners who identified as Indigenous, 5 were Indigenous women. The six recent graduates of the Pre-Law Program have taken inspiring steps to increase participation by Indigenous people in the legal profession. Bilata highly commends them all for beginning their journeys in law.

Photo and article credit: Bilata Legal Pathways Program

The Helpline celebrates a milestone

The Legal Aid Helpline has assisted over 10,000 people so far this financial year! That's over 10 000 people who have:

- **received information to help them resolve a legal problem**
- **obtained an appointment to get free legal advice**
- **been referred to another service for assistance.**

Thank you to everyone who refers clients to the Helpline. Once the operator talks to a Helpline caller, there are often multiple issues identified. Even people who are clear about what they need when they first call us can also benefit from speaking with the Helpline first, regardless of the type of legal matter they have. This applies to people across the whole of the Northern Territory, and the Helpline also speaks to people from all over Australia seeking legal information or assistance on an NT topic or problem.

The work of the Helpline is diverse and challenging—every call is different. Operators have to jump from one legal area to the next with each call, and the clients often have complex and multiple problems. The Helpline also has to meet the changing needs of each section and regional office of the NT Legal Aid. Well done, Helpline team!

Community legal education

The community legal education (CLE) team at NT Legal Aid designs and provides education for a range of audiences and supports staff across our sections, regions and partner agencies to be involved in programs. For the past 2 years the team has held a 2 week long CLE Roadshow from Darwin to Alice Springs. The 2018 NTLAC CLE Roadshow will take a different format, with a series of regional visits to build skills, work on projects and share materials and ideas. More dates will be announced soon but we will kick off with:

- Katherine (16-18 April)
- Tennant Creek (June TBC)
- Alice Springs (30/4 – 4/5)

Contact cle@ntlac.nt.gov.au to find out more.

Indigenous outreach

Our Indigenous Outreach team supports Top End communities who are not serviced by other agencies with civil law outreach, community engagement and education programs. The team visited Warruwi in March, talking with community members about the law and enjoying morning tea to celebrate International Women's Day.

The team's upcoming travel schedule is*:

- Jilkminggan & Manyallaluk: 1-2 May
- Binjari: 21 May
- Minyerri 22-23 May

*Please note that outreach trip dates are subject to change

CALD update

NT Legal Aid's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities program continues its regular outreach visits to English second language classes at Charles Darwin University and STEPS, as well as community legal education with community members and service providers—including interpreters. In December 2017, Shelley Alvarez took on the role as the multicultural educator. This stimulating role brings together her diverse experience in civil law, tenancy work at Melaleuca Refugee Service, and outreach with Indigenous communities.

Evacuation planning handbook

The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience has recently published a revised *Evacuation Planning Handbook.* This is a useful resource for advocates and communities, and will help make planning and emergency evacuation smoother and more

effective. It outlines nationally agreed principles, including help with communicating with different parts of the community, the value of local knowledge in evacuations, and timely, authentic community engagement as part of planning.

Evacuation Planning Handbook

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