



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WESTERN**  
**AUSTRALIA**



# **UWA Law School Dean's Circle 2023 Impact Report**

# **Thank you**

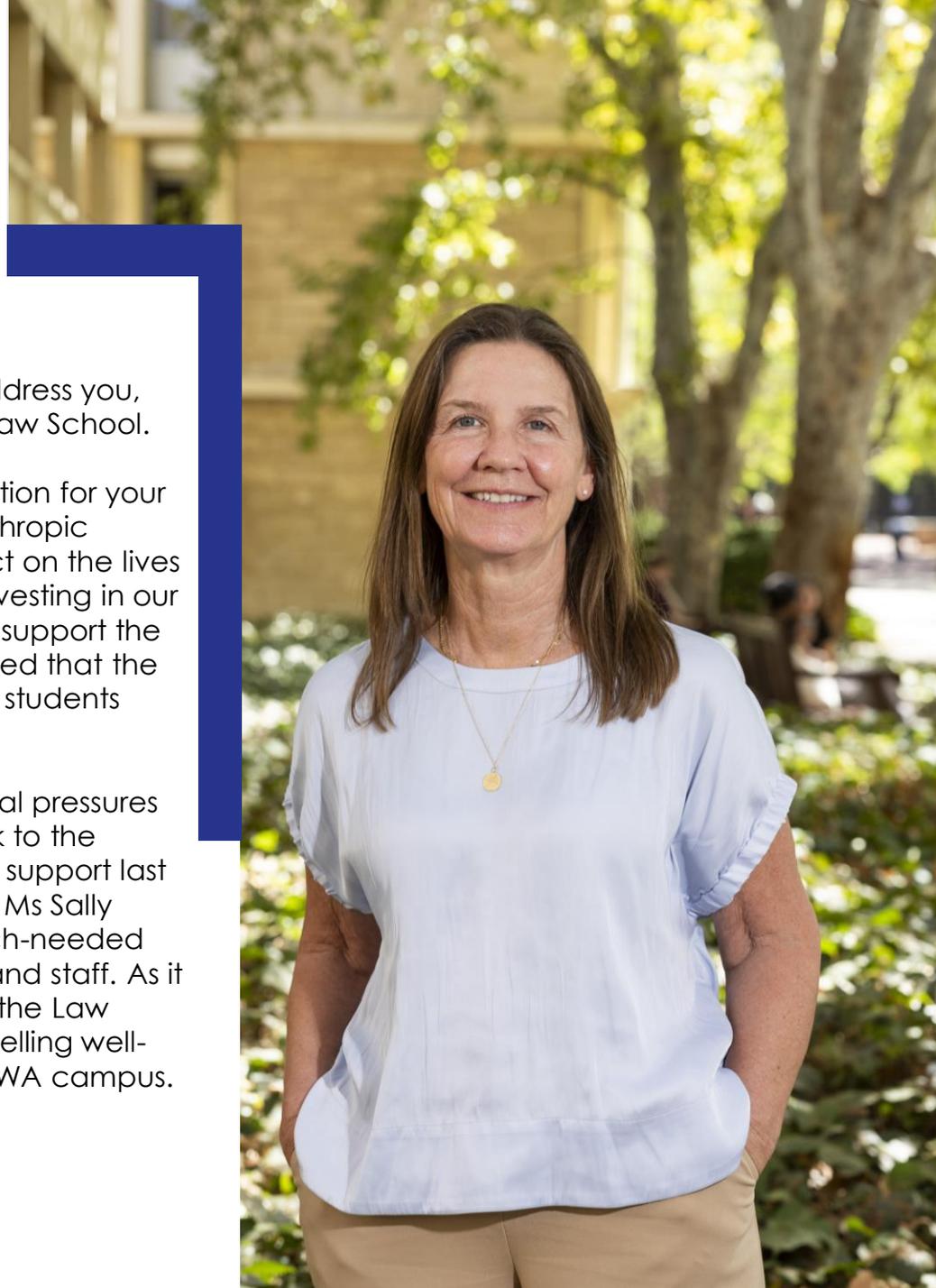
# Dean's Message

Professor Sharon Mascher

It is with great pleasure that I have this opportunity to address you, our generous supporters, as the new Dean of the UWA Law School.

First and foremost, please accept my heartfelt appreciation for your unwavering commitment to our law school. Your philanthropic contributions continue to have made a profound impact on the lives of our students, and the broader legal community. By investing in our scholarships, and initiatives, you have empowered us to support the educational experience for all of our students and ensured that the Juris Doctor qualification remains accessible to talented students from diverse backgrounds.

In 2023, your contributions have helped ease the financial pressures of students, and in turn, have inspired them to give back to the community. One of the most significant impacts of your support last year has been the engagement of a Wellbeing Advisor, Ms Sally Stott, to our team and this has allowed us to offer a much-needed drop-in counselling service for the Law School students and staff. As it turns out, the impact of this support has spread beyond the Law School, with the Student Experience Office at UWA modelling well-being offerings for students in other schools across the UWA campus.

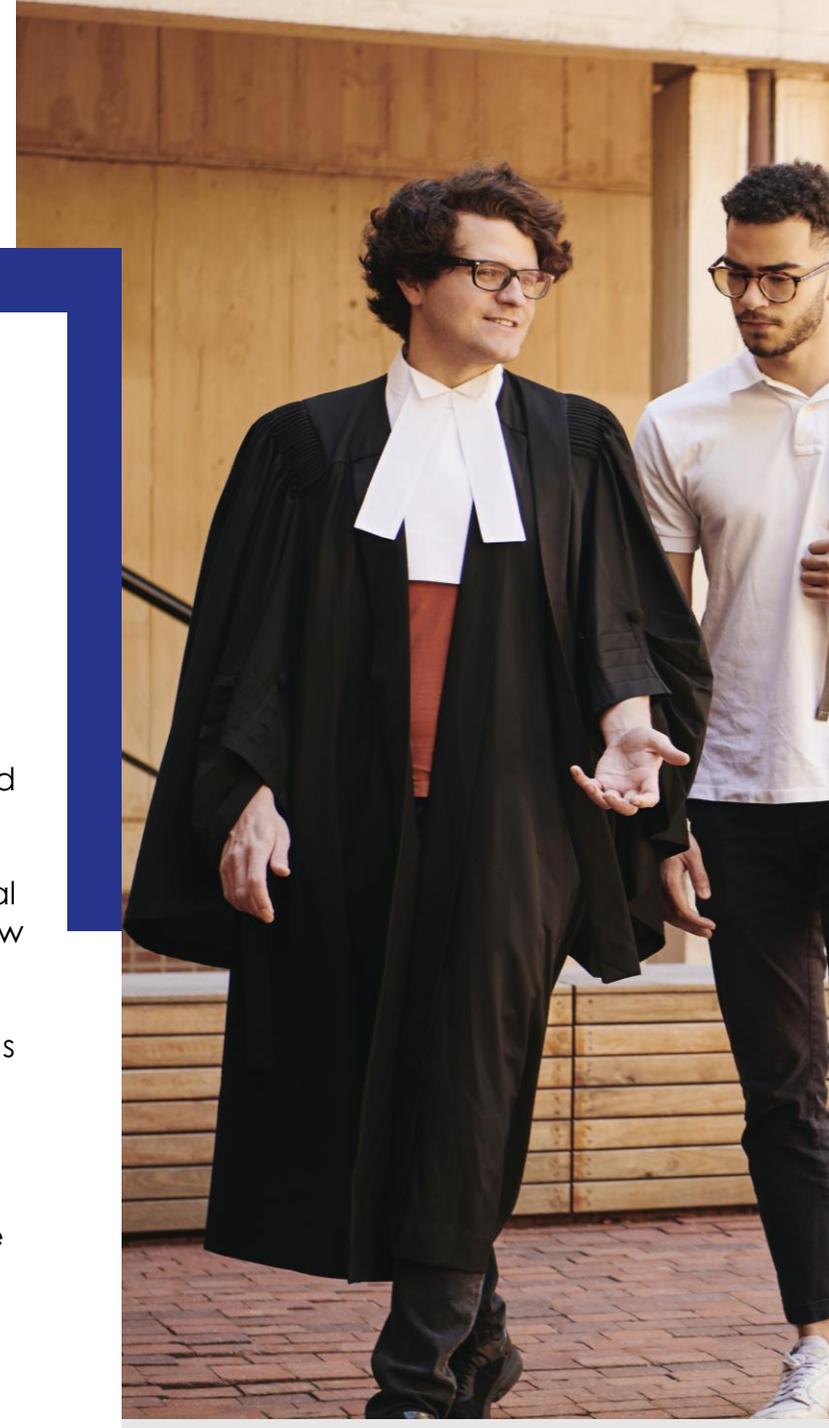


As we embark on a new chapter in the life of our law school, I want to assure you that your commitment to our institution remains at the heart of our activities. We are dedicated to ensuring that your investments continue to make a difference and create lasting value. We will remain accountable and transparent, utilising your contributions effectively and efficiently to maximize their impact on our students' education and the positive changes they will bring to the legal profession.

Furthermore, I invite you to deepen your engagement with our law school community. Your expertise and insights are invaluable to us as we strive for excellence and innovation. We aim to provide distinctive opportunities for meaningful interaction between you, our donors, and the students who directly benefit from your generosity. Together, we can create a vibrant network that supports our students' professional growth and nurtures the future leaders and changemakers in the legal field. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we might continue to work together to advance these shared goals.

Thank you sincerely for your unwavering support. Your partnership fuels our dedication to shaping the future of legal education and promoting justice in society. Your belief in our mission ignites our motivation, propelling us to achieve new levels of excellence.

Your commitment to our law school community and investment in the future of the legal profession are deeply appreciated. I am truly grateful for your ongoing support and eagerly anticipate the opportunities and achievements that await us.



# Scholarships

Scholarships play a crucial role in providing assistance to the upcoming generation of legal professionals and influential leaders.

Last year, the Dean's Circle supported 12 students through a diverse range of scholarships. We extend our heartfelt appreciation for your generous contributions. Your support has provided much needed assistance to many students. These scholarships not only recognise the merit of deserving students but also provide them with the necessary financial stability to confidently progress through their legal studies.

Moreover, the Law School Strategic Fund ensures emergency financial aid is accessible to students dealing with unforeseen crises.

# New Well-being Advisor



In 2023, the Law School's Strategic Fund provided funds to appoint an inaugural Law School Wellbeing Advisor, Ms Sally Stott. Sally's appointment allowed us to offer a much needed drop in counselling service for Law School students and staff, providing early intervention and preventive wellbeing strategy.

The UWA Law School, through philanthropic funding, were the first UWA school to implement such a position, recognising the importance of the role and that it could be tailored to meet the unique needs of Law Students. Through consultation with the Dean of School and Deputy Head of School – Students, it was agreed that the Wellbeing Adviser would be present in the Law School one day per week for drop ins or booked appointments and allowing for immediate referrals from the Deputy Head of School and wider consultations with teaching staff.

The service has been well utilised by both domestic and international students with numbers increasing steadily over the last twelve months (75 referrals into the service with students accessing the service at least once), allowing students to access advice and

support, fast tracked referrals when required, and the ability to identify and discuss emerging trends and needs.

The Wellbeing Adviser also facilitated a pop-up Living Room in the Law Library once a month to encourage more students to access low barrier, early intervention wellbeing support and regularly met and consulted with the Vice-President of Wellness from the Blackstone Society. She also attended a number of events to promote the role within the Law School, providing an effective strategy and generating a number of JD students accessing the service for support.

*“Thank you for yesterday Sally. I am so grateful for your insight, compassion and support. I left with a renewed sense of hope. It's a rare and precious thing.”*

In addition to the face-to-face work with students, the Wellbeing Adviser delivered a series of bespoke psycho-education training/presentations for staff and students.

In February 2024, the Wellbeing Adviser was invited by Unit Coordinator of 'Introduction to JD' unit to deliver a presentation covering: Normalising challenges that they may face during their studies; providing an introduction to strategies that may assist them; and knowledge of the support services at and beyond the university that may assist them. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive with a request to return next year.

To date, training has been delivered to over 300 Law students from commencement of the service, with plans for further sessions to be delivered in Semester 2, 2024.

The role has continued into Semester 1 of 2024, with previous students returning to access support and word of mouth resulting in new self-referrals into the service.

As the student profile continues to evolve, so too has presentations to the Wellbeing Service. In addition to students presenting with a range of mental health challenges, the service has also supported students with issues such as welfare

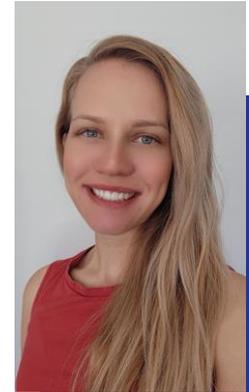
(financial, housing, work obligations), gender-based violence, family pressure and expectations, academic pressures, stress and academic misconduct.

In summary, the role of the Law School Wellbeing Adviser has been a successful and much needed addition. Staff and students have embraced the role recognising the value in it becoming an embedded part of the UWA Law School.



# 2023 Dean's Circle Scholarship Recipients

**Claire Local** – “I know that I want to use my degree and my situation to better the lives of those around me. I wanted to thank you again for offering me this scholarship, it has helped me so much.” **Dean’s Circle Juris Doctor Scholarship**



**Maria Ambrose** – “Thanks to this scholarship, I was able to reduce my work commitments and afford the necessary books and stationery to excel in my course.... My goal is to use my law degree to serve the community and I hope that one day I can give back to society by volunteering at Community Legal Centres and other not-for-profit organisations to assist everyday people with legal issues”  
**Daryl Williams KC Scholarship in Law**



## JD Scholarship for Promotion of Social Justice

**Celine Kwok** was the recipient of the 2023 JD Scholarship for Promotion of Social Justice. She is passionate about advocating for women experiencing domestic violence and hopes to continue work in this space for the rest of her career to assist the most vulnerable members of society and support other aspiring individuals who face similar challenges.

*"I cannot emphasize how much this scholarship means to me and my family. The financial assistance we received has alleviated some of the burdens we face and allowed me to focus more on my studies and volunteer work...Being able to contribute to my family's wellbeing while pursuing my educational goals is truly a blessing, and I am extremely grateful for this opportunity."*



## K.W. Hatfield Q.C Memorial Scholarship in Law

Matthew was the recent of the 2023 K.W. Hatfield Q.C Memorial Scholarship in Law. He graduated in December and is now into his employment with King & Wood Mallesons.

Matthew has always envisioned a career in corporate law, the creative and complex challenges that face commercial lawyers daily was what attracted him to this area. During his semester break last year, he interned at Herbert Smith Freehills which helped increase his chance of securing a graduate position with the firm after graduation.

*“The support provided by the scholarship played an essential role in my final year in the juris doctor... and has inspired (me) to make the most of the opportunity you have provided as I take the first steps in my legal career.” - Matthew Swain*

# UWA Law School

## Dean's Circle Members

Ms Liz Bedford-Brown  
Bendat Family Foundation  
Dr Sarah Beshar  
Ms Anna Ciffolilli  
Ms Nicoletta Ciffolilli  
Mr Rick Crabb  
Adjunct Professor Brett Davies  
Mr Kanaga Dharmananda SC  
Mr Liam Elphick  
Mrs Evi Ferrier  
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Mr Nick Kee  
Mr Graham Laitt

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Mr Mladen Ninkov  
Professor Stephen and Wendy Powles  
Professor John Tarrant  
Mr Daniel White  
Honourable Daryl Williams AM KC  
Mr Melvin Yeo  
Dr Christine Scholes  
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