

Nigel Browne

Indigenous Legal Professional of the Year 2011

*Matthew Storey,
President, Law Society Northern Territory*

*Megan Lawton,
CEO, Law Society Northern Territory*



The Law Society was delighted to see one of their colleagues and Treasurer of the Society, Nigel Browne, honoured as the National Indigenous Legal Professional of 2011. The Commonwealth Attorney-General's award recognises the exceptional commitment of Indigenous legal professionals, both in the field of law but as members of their community and as champions of the rights of Indigenous persons.

The awards presentation was held in Sydney on Friday 12 August 2011 as part of the 6th National Indigenous Legal Conference.

All Territory legal professionals are honoured by this national award being presented to one of their colleagues and a member of the Law Society Northern Territory Council.

Nigel is a worthy recipient of this award and it is wonderful to see his commitment to the community and the profession being recognised. Nigel is a shining light to all of us.

Nigel has made a significant contribution to the community

through his work as a director on the board of the Larrakia Development Corporation (LDC), where he is the current Chairperson. In this role Nigel has harnessed the support of and championed the rights of the Larrakia people and been instrumental in achieving resolutions to some of the many issues arising from the longest running Land Rights claim in Australia's history, the Kenbi decision.

In accepting the award Nigel thanked his family and did not hesitate to call for the Federal Government to resolve the remaining outstanding issues for his countrymen and women.

Nigel graduated from Casuarina Senior College in 1996. After

commencing his law degree in 1997 at Northern Territory University, Nigel was the inaugural recipient of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cadetship. Nigel graduated





...an inspiration to all lawyers in the Northern Territory.



from NTU in May 2001 and was admitted as a legal practitioner of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory in February 2002. Nigel completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course in 2006.

From 2002 to 2008 Nigel worked as a Prosecutor and Crown Prosecutor in the Northern Territory, where his Larrakia and Wulna heritage were invaluable.

Nigel was a member of the North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service (NAALAS) appeals committee and became the Larrakia representative on the NAALAS General Council, ensuring the views and aspirations of the traditional owners were represented.

Nigel was for a time acting chairman of the NAALAS General Council during the amalgamation of NAALAS, KRALAS (Katherine) and MIMATJ (Nhulunbuy) in to the Northern Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA).

Nigel chose to nominate for a position in 2002 on the Chief Minister's Round Table for young Territorians. In 2003 Nigel was accepted onto the National Indigenous

Youth Leadership Group (NIYLG). In 2005 Nigel enlisted as a reservist with the North West Mobile Force Unit (NORFORCE) in the Australian Defence Force Reserves, qualifying as a patrolman, medic, and small craft handler. Nigel discharged from NORFORCE in 2011 and is presently pursuing a long held ambition to be commissioned as a reservist Navy Legal Officer with the royal Australian Navy. Nigel sits on a number of Boards across the community including the Public Purposes Trust Allocations Committee, which considers applications for funding from the community.

Nigel is currently an employed solicitor in the Department of Justice, Aboriginal Lands Section.

Nigel is a hardworking and dedicated advocate for his people. The Society has benefitted from Nigel's experience and skill in his contribution as Treasurer over recent times. This award is well deserved. Nigel has made an outstanding contribution to the legal profession, both in his time as a legal student and as a prosecutor; and now with the Solicitor for the Northern Territory.

Beyond this though, Nigel has made an outstanding contribution to the local community, particularly in his work with the Larrakia Development Corporation and a number of other community organisations.

He could be an inspiration to all lawyers in the Northern Territory. ●



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