



Address at the CareerTrackers and Gadens End of Year Indigenous Internship Presentation 19 December 2016

**The Hon Justice A Philippides
Court of Appeal**

I want to acknowledge the traditional owners on the land on which we gather and pay tribute to elders past, present and emerging. It is a great pleasure to be present today on the occasion of Gaden's annual Indigenous Internship Program End of Year Presentation. There are presently six indigenous interns in Gadens' Brisbane office. I am delighted to have already met you on many occasions during the year, including at the breakfast attended by the Chief Justice of the High Court, the Honourable Robert French AC.

I acknowledge and congratulate Gadens on their significant commitment in joining with CareerTrackers to provide these important internships. In providing these internships, Gadens has demonstrated a genuine commitment to indigenous advancement. The indigenous internship program provides paid internships for indigenous law students for the duration of their legal studies. Students are afforded a valuable opportunity to learn about the profession they seek to join and to feel a sense of familiarity with that potential working environment.

The internship program represents a commitment to nurture and guide you, to enhance your knowledge and skills and to equip you so that you can realise your full potential.

And there can be no mistaking what that potential is. You have what it takes to be at the pinnacle of whatever career path you choose. You have worked very hard to get to this position in your lives. You have already garnered many awards and prizes on the way. There can be no doubt about where you will be found in the years to come: partners in law firms, CEOs of enterprises, general counsel of corporations,



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departmental heads, parliamentarians, judges, and lawyers on the international stage. The list is limitless.

The documented research is overwhelming. We need your engagement, we need your voices, ideas, perspectives and insights. The way forward is to empower the next generation from which new leaders will emerge. There is a growing realisation of just how important and special the contribution of your generation will be. As a society, we will only be the best we can be with you taking your place in leadership positions in our society. You don't need anyone to speak for you. You simply need to be given the opportunity to speak for yourselves, and you will do that better than anyone else.

Your abilities mean that you will, inevitably, be in positions of power and influence and you will provide an important indigenous presence in your chosen fields. You will help change perspectives. You will help non-Indigenous people to also understand how much is to be gained by acknowledging, respecting and making an important place for Indigenous culture.

You are all on a wonderful path of achievement. I see six extremely talented law students, proud of their Indigenous heritage, confident within themselves and determined to make the most of the opportunities afforded them. I am looking forward to hearing your presentations and learning more about the experience of the last 12 months of your internships. The stories of each of you are inspiring – I hope many come to hear of them.

My very best wishes to you in your studies, your internships and your brilliant future careers!