

UNA PRENTICE AWARDS

Every year, WLAQ recognises the achievements of the highest achieving graduating female law student from each Law School in Queensland thanks to the generous bequest of Ms Prentice and through the establishment of the Una Prentice Memorial Trust Fund.

The Una Prentice Awards celebrate the achievements of these remarkable women in the name of Una Prentice, the first person (of either gender) to graduate from the Faculty of Law at the University of Queensland in 1938, a truly inspiring achievement. After graduating, Una was admitted to the Bar in September 1938. Following her admission, Una was not invited to the function held by the Bar. Instead, as the social pages of the Courier Mail informed its readers, she was entertained by her mother and friends at morning tea at Rowe's. Una looked for a job for two years before accepting a position cataloguing the library of Sir James Blair, which became the nucleus of the UQ Law Library. When World War II broke out, Una was offered work with the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor. It was made clear in her interview that she would be dismissed at the end of the war when she would be replaced by a returned serviceman.

In 1942 she became the first female lawyer to be employed in the Department, performing legal duties as well as being the office bookkeeper. She was paid as a typist – the only salary scale the department had for women. After a few years, Una was eventually paid a proportion of the legal officer's scale. At the end of the war, Una married Tony Prentice, a barrister. Anticipating dismissal from the department, she resigned in 1946 and joined the Brisbane firm of Stephens & Tozer.

Una then became the Australian President of the Business and Professional Women's Association and attended an international conference, touring England for eight months talking about the status of women in Australia.

On 17 April 2019, WLAQ hosted the Awards with the inaugural Una Prentice Memorial Trust Patron, The Honourable Justice Debra Mullins of the Supreme Court of Queensland, in attendance to present the awards to the recipients, who were joined by family and friends. Justice Mullins gave an inspiring address and spoke fondly of Ms Prentice's achievements.

The Una Prentice Awards for 2018, were awarded to:

Georgina Buckley | Bond University
Jessica McDonald | Central Queensland University
Siew Lau | Griffith University
Tamara Hage | James Cook University
Eliza Burke | Queensland University of Technology
Hannah Williams (dual recipient) | University of Queensland
Zoe Brereton (dual recipient) | University of Queensland
Djordja Vico | University of Southern Queensland
Beth McKenna | University of the Sunshine Coast

WLAQ is grateful to The College of Law for hosting the Awards and their ongoing support. Thank you to all who attended the Una Prentice Awards.

18 April 2019

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For further information, please contact events@wlaq.com.au.