

## Law Council announces 2012 John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship recipients

The Law Council of Australia today announced three new recipients of the John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship: Peter Dawson, Melinda Mitchell and Danielle Davis.

Law Council of Australia President Ms Catherine Gale said the Scholarship, established in 1994, commemorates John Koowarta—a member of the Winychanam community at Aurukun and a traditional owner of the Archer River region on Cape York Peninsula in Queensland.

“The Law Council’s John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship has helped 22 Indigenous law students in their pursuit of an education in the law and it was a great honour to add Peter, Melinda and Danielle to that list.

“All three recipients embody the passion with which John Koowarta lived his life and fought for Indigenous legal rights and I congratulate them on their achievement,” Ms Gale said.

Peter Dawson is currently in his fourth year of law at the University of Notre Dame in Fremantle and said winning the Scholarship was a great honour.

“It’s great to be recognised for the work I’ve done during my university studies, but it’s also a great honour because the Scholarship is in the memory of John Koowarta which provides inspiration to continue my studies and take up the fight for Indigenous justice issues,” Mr Dawson said.

Melinda Mitchell is studying law at James Cook University in Townsville—having already completed an Arts degree at Macquarie University—and is aiming to become a legal officer in the Australian Defence Force at the completion of her studies.

“It makes me very proud to be a recipient of this Scholarship—John Koowarta was an inspirational advocate for Indigenous people so to be linked to that is quite humbling,” Ms Mitchell said.

Danielle Davis is currently studying a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Psychological Science at Griffith University and said the Scholarship had added to her desire to pursue Indigenous legal issues through her education.

“I felt honoured to win the Scholarship, particularly given the standard of applicants was so high—it’s important to have scholarships like this available to Indigenous students so they can have the same level of access to higher education as everyone else,” Ms Davis said.

Ms Gale said the winners epitomised the values and principles the John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship stood for.

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“It was a great honour to present Mr Dawson, Ms Mitchell and Ms Davis with their scholarships. They are great role models to all young Indigenous people through their hard work and commitment to their culture and community.

“The Law Council is proud of what the John Koowarta Scholarship has helped its recipients achieve and we consider it an important part of promoting Indigenous involvement in the legal profession,” Ms Gale said.

More information about the Scholarship, including how to make a tax deductible contribution to the scholarship trust fund, is available [online](#).

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