A look at some of our pro bono achievements and community initiatives of the last year – and some follow ups on past community stories.
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We believe that we have an important part to play in bringing about change through the support we give to a wide range of inspirational and brave community organisations and people: be it our skills through pro bono work; time in volunteering; donations through philanthropic initiatives; or helping to raise awareness and educate others about why change is crucial.

At Allens, we actively encourage a culture of doing things differently, not being afraid to fail and trying new and innovative ways to work with our clients and to be leaders. We know these are important hallmarks of any successful, progressive organisation. Allens is a firm of firsts in this area: the first Australian organisation to become a signatory to the UN Global Compact; the first Australian law firm to become certified carbon neutral; the first major law firm to commit to a Reconciliation Action Plan; and the first law firm to become a member of Pride in Diversity.

But what is very pleasing to me is that while we were the first, importantly we are not the last. We are now in good company, with many others also achieving such milestones.

I look forward to leading the firm in the years to come, and to continuing the work we do for so many terrific and important causes.
WHAT IS IMPACT?

Does the support we – and other corporates – provide make a lasting difference?

This year, we not only want to reflect on the work we have done in 2015, but also look back further and see if our efforts have delivered real, sustainable advances.

We will look at where to next, and how we can collaborate to continue to make real change.
Mental health and suicide

Established in 2009, R U OK? is a not-for-profit organisation with a vision for a world where we’re all connected and protected from suicide. Its mission is simple, yet powerful: to encourage and equip everyone to regularly and meaningfully ask ‘are you ok?’

The firm’s pro bono work has helped R U OK? to set itself up to access funds and donations, allowing it to grow to the point where R U OK? Day is now known by more than 70 per cent of Australians.
Around 2500 people a year take their own life in Australia. For the family and friends left behind, the grief and sense of loss lasts a lifetime.

From feedback and research, we knew people wanted to be part of a movement dedicated to inspiring regular, meaningful conversations. We needed money to grow, but we couldn’t access funds or donations.

I approached Allens in 2011 to help us achieve deductible gift recipient status, and Allens and Tax Partner Charles Armitage kindly agreed to do the work on a pro bono basis. Charles had an extraordinary amount of patience and good humour, and tolerated the many bizarre, misguided and odd questions that arise when tackling the unchartered, complex world of tax law.

In less than six months, we were granted the much-coveted status. For us, it was—and is—a game-changer. It has enabled us to take advantage of funding that can be invested in strategic priorities, unsupported by existing financial partners.

Lawyers are four times more likely to experience depression than other professionals. Therefore, this year, Allens—with 17 other law firms—has formed and funded an alliance to develop a new campaign called ‘Look Deeper’, which aims to promote mental wellbeing and connectedness in the legal community, alongside RU OK?

Instead of just delivering the R U OK? Day campaign in September, we now have campaigns targeting school kids, workers in fly in fly out jobs, the rail sector, and the legal profession. R U OK? Day is now known by more than 70 per cent of Australians.

These results are extraordinary and are also testament to the countless people and businesses who believe that suicide is worth addressing.

Pro bono work is more important than an outsider can appreciate because we have limited funds and we’re a small team of three full-time and three part-time employees. Our mission is ambitious and addresses one of the most complex and misunderstood human behaviours: suicide. We cannot take on this challenge alone.

ruok.org.au
Sydney’s LGBTI group (ALLin) attends their annual dinner.

Marriage equality and LGBTI RIGHTS

Creating a diverse workforce that is inclusive of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex members of our firm is a priority for Allens. We understand the value of our partners and employees feeling welcome, included and comfortable being themselves among their colleagues and clients.
Allens is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workforce, and backing equal marriage rights is key to that. We strongly believe that the Federal Government must make laws for marriage equality. This year Allens joined more than 750 Australian organisations to support marriage equality. We are in good company, with many of our clients, peers and suppliers also advocating for equality.

Allens does not see marriage equality as a conscience vote issue: it’s a straight-up law reform issue.

Rachel Nicolson, Allens Partner and Co-Chair of ALLin, Allens’ LGBTI network.

In 2015, Allens was voted 14th in Pride in Diversity’s Australian Workplace Equality Index for workplace inclusion, the highest ranking law firm. Allens was also the first law firm to become a member of Pride in Diversity.

In addition, we recently updated our people policies to make them transgender inclusive.

Our work and commitment to LGBTI rights is longstanding. We know that words are important and, as lawyers, we can help re-shape the way they are understood in crucial legislation, like the Marriage Act. But actions are just as important.

We have provided significant pro bono assistance focused on recognising and enforcing the rights of the LGBTI community.

A snapshot

- Assisted Australian Marriage Equality to intervene in the Federal Government’s High Court challenge against the ACT’s Marriage Equality Act, through which the High Court recognised the Federal Government’s constitutional power to legislate for same-sex marriage.

- Acted for A Gender Agenda in the Norrie case, in which the High Court unanimously held that NSW laws permit the registration of a person’s sex as neither male nor female, but as a third ‘non-specific sex’ category.

- Providing assistance to LGBTI asylum seekers fleeing persecution because of their sexuality.

- Assisting to expunge the criminal records of men who were convicted of consensual homosexual offences under repealed legislation in Queensland. (see over)

- Volunteering, including at the LGBTI Legal Centre in Sydney.

- Launched the ALLin network in 2011, which provides opportunities for Allens’ LGBTI partners, employees and allies to build relationships with each other, our clients and the wider community, as well as helps the firm ensure its policies are LGBTI inclusive.
 Until 1990, homosexuality was considered a criminal offence in Queensland.

In that time, mostly men – and some women – who had engaged in consensual homosexual activity could be charged with a string of offences, including indecency, ‘unnatural offences’, and sodomy.

The Queensland Government has called for reform, with the goal of clearing the names of individuals with convictions under unjust laws that criminalised homosexual activity. The LGBTI Legal Service and the Human Rights Law Centre came together to make a submission to the Government review. This submission talks of men harmed by the continuing legacy of their convictions, and a blueprint for best practice reform.

The submission tells the stories of many men convicted of these now-repealed offences, and describes the damaging long-term effect these convictions have had on their reputations, career choices and mental health.

Queensland follows a number of other jurisdictions to consider expunging historical homosexual offences.

The submission, to which Allens contributed, is based on historical and comparative research. It was prepared by the LGBTI Legal Service in partnership with the Human Rights Law Centre, the Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services, Brisbane Pride Festival and Caxton Legal Centre.
ASYLUM SEEKERS
and collaborating with others on refugee rights

An interview with David Manne, the Executive Director of Refugee Legal

A young Afghan refugee sits on his father’s shoulders in the scorching midday sun.

A large group of refugees and migrants surge forward after becoming impatient while being kept waiting by Greek police before crossing the border between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
Every year, millions of people around the world are forced to leave their homes, some because of religious and political persecution, others because of their race, gender, or ethnicity. The wars they flee are different, as are the extremists they fear. But what is common among asylum seekers the world over is they seek a place to live that is safe for themselves and their families.

Refugee Legal and Allens have worked together for many years, acting on some of the highest-profile refugee matters of the past decade. Many of these cases have been argued all the way to the High Court, and all have been successful. Many legal teams at Allens have worked with Refugee Legal over the years, often at short notice. In addition, many corporate services staff, such as business development managers and graphic designers, also work with Refugee Legal on projects such as their annual report and competitive tenders.

One of the recent cases was the story of Plaintiff M150, a 15-year-old Ethiopian boy and an unaccompanied minor. Refugee Legal and Allens – led by Partner Malcolm Stephens – worked together to challenge a cap imposed by the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection on the number of protection visas granted in a financial year, which meant that M150 would not have received a visa.

The firm worked predominantly on this case with David Manne, but also leading Counsel in this field, including Richard Niall QC (now Solicitor-General Victoria), Kristen Walker QC and Siobhan Keating.

Sadly, what is also very common with refugees seeking asylum is the limited access they have to good legal representation to help them navigate the very complex world of immigration law.

David Manne, the Executive Director of Refugee Legal.

Refugee Legal and Allens have worked together for many years, acting on some of the highest-profile refugee matters of the past decade. Many of these cases have been argued all the way to the

While sitting over coffee with David, he began to talk about another Refugee Legal/Allens client. Locked up in detention for more than five years before being released, this former Tamil refugee now has two jobs, while waiting for final resolution of his case. He had recently contacted David.

‘He apologised for not having responded to me quicker, but he’s now working two jobs, one at a supermarket, one at a restaurant, while living in a home close to a beautiful river in outer-suburban Melbourne. He was enjoying working, and really just making up for lost time.’

This work ethic is common among people seeking asylum, says David. Most simply want the chance to rebuild their lives, live safely and with dignity, and to be able to make a valued contribution to the communities in which they live.

Sadness, what is also very common with refugees seeking asylum, is the limited access they have to good legal representation to help them navigate the very complex world of immigration law.

David shared more stories of refugees, where the impact of solid and fair legal representation has put their lives back on track.

He next talked of Plaintiff M70 – but who now can, pleasingly, be called by his name, Mr Shah. Mr Shah was the plaintiff in the high-profile ‘Malaysian solution’ case in 2011.

‘It was a Saturday evening and I was cooking at home, when I received a call for help.

‘It was a distress call from a group of men incarcerated on Christmas Island wanting advice. These men, some of them from Afghanistan, feared being expelled to Malaysia. They were petrified. They explained, through the aid of interpreters, that they had recently arrived by boat in Australia seeking protection, only then to be told by Australian officials that they would not be allowed to seek protection as refugees in Australia. Instead, they were to be sent to Malaysia, as Australia had just entered an agreement with the country where Australia would accept 4000 refugees from Malaysia in return for Malaysia taking 800 boat arrivals.’

According to David, the brief had an extra, complex twist. ‘One of the men I spoke to, Mr Shah – who became the lead plaintiff – sounded even more concerned about the plight of the unaccompanied children and families – that is, mothers and their children – who were incarcerated separately and out of reach on Christmas Island. They too wanted legal help.’
‘Six of these unaccompanied children were only able to join the High Court action because the next morning, on Sunday, Mr Shah was able to recall their names from the boat journey and agreed to act as their litigation guardian.’

At this point, Refugee Legal got in touch with Allens to assist. Within 24 hours, everyone was before the High Court of Australia in Melbourne seeking an urgent injunction to stop the Government from expelling any of our clients to Malaysia. It was here that they learnt that 16 of the men were to be put on a plane at 11.30am the next morning. The court granted an interim injunction, which was extended the next day, pending the full determination of the matter.

‘That’s how close these people came to losing their rights,’ said David.

‘About three weeks later, the High Court ruled, by a majority of 6-1, that asylum seekers could not be deported from Christmas Island to Malaysia for the processing of their refugee claims because Malaysia did not meet certain international standards in its treatment of asylum seekers and refugees.’

Since that time, after telling the six unaccompanied children and the 36 men that they had won their case, Mr Shah has been able to move on with his life, living and working in Melbourne.

‘For someone who was really quite shy, and very unassuming, Mr Shah achieved a great thing for many, while also putting himself at some risk. We still see him today at our office as he comes along to our legal clinics and sessions in Collingwood, where we have 8000 clients. His act of solidarity at these sessions gives others so much hope.’

One final story of collaboration between Refugee Legal and Allens that David shares is one that has been in the media in more recent times: the story of Ranjini.

‘In 2010, Ranjini, a Sri Lankan Tamil woman and her two young boys arrived by boat in Australia seeking protection as refugees. Initially, they were detained on Christmas Island.

‘After being moved around between community detention across the country, they were allowed to move about freely in the Australian community subject to conditions, such as regular reporting. They were all found to be refugees by the Department of Immigration.

‘Until six months later, in March last year, they moved to Melbourne to live with the mother’s then de facto and now husband.

Soon after, Ranjini and her two children were transferred to a locked detention facility at Sydney Immigration Residential Housing in Villawood.

‘Officials told her that this move was required because she had been assessed by ASIO to be a risk to national security. She was not told why she was deemed a risk,’ said David.

Ranjini remained incarcerated there for more than two years, giving birth to a baby boy while in detention—an Australian citizen. Her two eldest sons were later granted protection visas and became Australian permanent residents.

Although her three sons had visas and were allowed to live in the community, they lived in the detention facility as ‘visitors’ so that they could be with their mother. Ranjini was still not told why she had been deemed a risk to national security, and was never charged, tried or convicted of any offence.

‘Despite an incredibly long process for Ranjini of three years in detention, and many hours and resources from Refugee Legal and Allens, I am really pleased to say that Ranjini is now free as of November 2015.

‘While Ranjini is yet to find out why she was considered a security risk, she is just relieved and happy to be with her family, and living a life that is simple and free,’ said David.
Despite some harrowing stories, and some dark days at work, according to David, there is much goodwill from the community when it comes to people seeking asylum.

Media and public discourse about attitudes to asylum seekers is often distorted. In fact, the reality I see is much kindness and concern for the wellbeing of these refugees and disadvantaged migrants. Once people know the facts and, even better, meet people seeking refuge, most are happy to help.

'I think it stems back to the ancient dictum which is one of my core convictions: ‘That the true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members.’ And for me, it is pleasing to see that this predominantly reflects we are part of a mass movement of global citizens wanting to know what they can do as individuals and as communities to help people caught up in the worldwide humanitarian crisis.'

This gets David on to the role of CSR in helping to support organisations just like his. The role of corporate Australia – and the impact of CSR or community engagement – is something that comes up in the media a lot at the moment, and there have been countless forums discussing this very issue.

Does the support corporates provide make a lasting difference?

'Very much so,’ says David.

‘In my work, solid legal representation for asylum seekers is vital. The process of going through a protection visa application is a minefield and the average person born in Australia would find it a challenge.’

For instance, an immigration form can include 62 pages, with 184 questions, and applicants also need to write a detailed statement in English about the fears they are fleeing, often in extremely tight timeframes.

‘It’s virtually impossible to navigate without the assistance of skilled legal help and goes against the premise that everyone who appears before the courts, no matter who you are or where you’re from, should be on an equal footing.’

Talking about the partnership between Refugee Legal and Allens, David said: ‘It’s collaboration at its best and the model we have is world leading. It is looked to as best practice in refugee, human rights, and immigration law internationally and is achieving some really cutting-edge milestones for our clients. In fact, I fly out to Geneva this weekend as part of my role with the UN Refugee Agency as expert interlocutor and partner, and will be sharing my insights on what we are doing in Australia.’

The partnership model David talks about is actually quite simple.

‘It brings together three elements: our expertise in refugee law and being able to forensically navigate the complex and compulsory procedures in place in Australia; Allens, and top litigation experience and knowledge; and counsel, where we have access to the best representation possible.

‘For the very vulnerable people we represent, who are unlikely to have ever had anyone independent, let alone the law, spring to their defence through the trauma of their pasts – the sense of relief is deep and overwhelming.’

So, with these hard times and dark days, why do it?

‘While my full-time career in this work stretches back 15 years, I have been passionate about refugee law and asylum seeker advocacy for far longer.

‘Growing up in Melbourne, the idea of refugees wasn’t too far from my world. I had family members displaced from Europe after WW2, and who then came to Australia, and one of my school mates was a Vietnamese boy who had come out with his family.

‘I could see the value that refugees and immigrants could offer Australia. But I could also see that for many of these disadvantaged people, being given the chance to migrate was almost impossible.

‘So my interest in the law stems from that – and appreciating the ability of law to bring about common good. I did lots of volunteering when young too, which cemented my path to human rights and immigration law,’ David added.

‘My premise – and those of which I collaborate – is about equality. A conviction in asserting our common humanity. And ensuring that every person – whatever their background – gets a fair a go before the law, and is treated with basic decency and dignity. It is actually quite simple.

‘To me, it is just applying the law as it should be applied – to give everyone a fair chance of being represented and recognised. And so when you can help someone who is in their darkest days, who just wants to be safe or reunited with their families, and then to hear their relief when you have been successful for them, you know that choosing this path just can’t be wrong.’

Back to Plaintiff M150, the young Ethiopian teenager Refugee Legal and Allens worked with last year.

The High Court did unanimously uphold the challenge and found that the Minister’s determination to cap the number of protection visas was invalid. The decision means that now thousands of asylum seekers who have been found (or may be found) by the Australian Government to be genuine refugees, but who would have been unable to receive protection visas while the cap was in place, can be helped.

‘I rang him as soon as I heard we won the High Court challenge. I caught him just as school was finishing and he was off to soccer practice,’ said David.

‘He simply said to me: ‘Mate, I can’t believe it, you have saved my life’.

‘When you hear that, you know this path can’t be wrong,’ smiled David.

rlic.org.au
Any night in Australia can see one in 200 people being left homeless – men, women and children, of all ages. Homelessness can be caused by a number of circumstances: including family violence; a shortage of available and affordable housing; unemployment; drug and alcohol dependence; or mental illness. But what is common among many people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness is the cycle in which they find themselves, where breaking out is a challenge.
The very nature of being homeless means that people are often forced to break the law just to sleep, like using public transport without money for tickets, or needing to do activities that others do behind closed doors, like drinking alcohol on the street. The result from these activities can often include fines needing to be paid. When these fines are unable to be paid – due to unemployment, common with those who are homeless – infringers can receive records, making it difficult – even impossible – to find work, and therefore there is no money being made to pay the fines. It’s a vicious pattern that can snowball for homeless people.

In Victoria, people can apply for fines to be waived if they have special circumstances. There are only three special circumstances that are recognised – homelessness, drug or alcohol dependence, and mental illness or incapacity. Proving a ‘special circumstance’ can be difficult. How do you prove you do not have anywhere to live? How do you prove your mental illness when you cannot afford to pay for the cost of a medical report? It can be a stressful and complicated legal process to go through, inaccessible to many.

Thanks to organisations like Justice Connect Homeless Law, people looking to make special circumstances applications can do so with free legal assistance to navigate a complex area of the law, and go some of the way to getting their lives back on track.
Using corporate skills to support development in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Jawun works to partner government and corporate organisations with Indigenous businesses and leaders, to support development and long-term sustainability in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

This year marked the fifth year of Allens’ partnership with Jawun.
More than 20 Allens staff have now undertaken secondments to a number of the regions Jawun supports. Staff from across our corporate services and secretarial teams have worked on a range of development and capability building projects with Indigenous organisations, and some of our senior lawyers have spent time working with the Empowered Communities project.

Here is a look at just some of the projects undertaken this year by our people.

1. **Anna Collyer** (Energy, Resources & Infrastructure Practice Leader) joined other senior leaders as part of Jawun’s National Partners Executive visit to the East Kimberley.

2. **Natalie Mammarella** (Graphic Designer) spent six weeks in Yirrkala working on the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre’s website, making it easy to use and maintain (more on page 36).

3. **Ann Middlebrough** (Secretary) worked in Shepparton on the set up of a new database designed for Aboriginal art centres. This allows each gallery to better manage artist records and track sales. Ann also trained staff to use it.

4. **Beth Patterson** (Chief Legal & Technology Services Officer) visited the Waringarri Arts Centre, where she helped develop a document management system, so secondees’ insights and work can be passed on. This technology is now being rolled out nationally.

5. **Jennifer Hor** (Records Officer) worked to tidy up Gadigal Information Services’ archives on the hard drive and migrate it to a cloud-based system. She also helped out with voice-over radio advertisements.

6. **Rod Fielding** (Chief Operating Officer & Chief Financial Officer) took part in an executive visit to north-east Arnhem Land.
Empowering Indigenous communities to set their own priorities is a shift away from the traditional relationship many have had with governments, and is one that is likely to be more successful.

The Empowered Communities project is a joint project between Indigenous leaders from eight Australian regions, the Australian Government, and Jawun. It aims to close the gap on the social and economic disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to enable the cultural recognition and determination of Indigenous Australians.

Melbourne Senior Associate Dora Banyasz was seconded to work on the project, spending three months on the Central Coast, NSW. While there, she worked with the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council and secondees from other corporations, including KPMG, Westpac, BCG, CBA and NAB on the design and implementation of a new governance model for the region.

‘It was a unique opportunity. You don’t often get the chance to come into a community, which is very welcoming and supportive because they know why you are there and how you will help them,’ said Dora.

The Central Coast has more than 5000 Aboriginal cultural sites, all of which have been mapped by the Land Council. Dora was able to visit many of the sites, get involved in community events and share stories with many locals and other secondees.

‘The staff at the Land Council are very generous in involving the secondees in all sorts of activities. The best part of the whole experience was learning about the culture and meeting the people within the community.’

empoweredcommunities.org.au
The Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre is the Indigenous art centre of north-east Arnhem Land located in Yirrkala, a small Aboriginal community, approximately 700km east of Darwin.

It is one of the major tourist attractions of the region, with most tour groups making it a must-see stop-off. It also contributes to exhibitions across Australia and internationally, providing a creative outlet, and income stream, for many Indigenous artists.

But this was not always a world-class gallery.
During the 1960s, a humble gallery was started in Yirrkala. When government policy shifted and self-determination came to communities in Arnhem Land, the artists believed the establishment of a community-controlled art centre was crucial to the improvement of their economic independence, cultural security over sacred designs, and to maintain political and intellectual sovereignty.

yirrkala.com
Since that time, the locals and the Yolngu artists have helped the gallery evolve from a small beachfront gallery, to now include the Yirrkala Art Centre (which represents Yolngu artists exhibiting and selling contemporary art) and the Mulka Project (which is a digital production studio and archiving centre incorporating the Museum).

Buku Art Centre is one of Jawun’s partner organisations, and two Allens staff members have undertaken secondments at the centre. In 2013, an Allens secondee created training videos for young Indigenous people working at the gallery, where the written manuals were not the most efficient teaching guides. This year, Allens graphic designer Natalie Mammarella helped to rebuild Buku’s website, a vital channel for the gallery. Natalie helped to replace an ineffective, outdated website. The new website and its operating system are more efficient and able to be maintained by a local employee.

We have worked with Jawun from their first entry into north-east Arnhem land in 2012. During this time we have been assisted in numerous and diverse ways to improve our professionalism, governance, performance and service delivery.

Without Jawun’s support we would have been unable to strive for the levels of excellence that this key organisation requires. The input from high-calibre professionals has proved a catalyst to institutional and community change and growth. We will always be grateful to each of the individuals who have so freely and openly given more than just their skills.

Will Stubbs, Buku Arts Centre
The movement to recognise Indigenous Australians in the Constitution, and to address sections that allow racially discriminatory laws, has attracted broad support throughout the Australian community and both sides of politics. Yet even with popular reforms, amending the Constitution is a complex and challenging process.

For many years now, Allens has played a role in helping the country to reach its ultimate goal of achieving constitutional recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The story of our involvement in Constitutional Recognition starts with our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2009. Then, in 2010, the then Federal Government promised to bring forward to the Australian people, during the term of that government, a referendum on constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Reconciliation Australia was asked to lead the campaign and a division of Reconciliation Australia, Recognise, was established. Recognise was to be the peak national organisation to lead the awareness and education campaign that would underpin the referendum proposals.

An Expert Panel was established in 2010 to investigate how to give effect to constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Several members of the Allens RAP committee became aware of this development and proposed that the firm take a lead in this area by providing a detailed response to an issues paper developed by the Expert Panel.

According to Partner Ian McGill: ‘The decision to take an active role was an easy one. As lawyers, we have an important civic responsibility to bring our expertise to bear on matters of national importance, particularly when it concerns our Constitution and recognition. The drafting team all subscribed to the view of Recognise that formal recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our Constitution was a real opportunity to walk together, in a spirit of respect, friendship and hope, towards a truly reconciled nation. As indicated by the Apology, words are important. They are even more important in our founding document.’

We were all very pleased to see our submission extensively quoted in the Expert Panel’s final report published in January 2012, and again in the follow-up Joint Select Committee report released earlier this year.

Ian McGill
Following the publication of the Expert Panel report, the RAP committee continued to follow developments, including the decision of the 44th Parliament on 2 December 2013 to re-establish the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Following the Expert Report, the firm was contacted by the Human Rights Legal Centre (HRLC), where alumna Anna Brown is the Director of Advocacy and Strategic Litigation, and asked to prepare high-level advice on the potential application and interpretation of the recommendations made by the Expert Panel. Allens delivered the draft opinion to the HRLC that was given to Mr Neil Young, QC, for his comment and opinion. We have provided a final draft opinion to the HRLC, and await further instructions.

**Awareness and understanding of what constitutional recognition forms a large part of the campaign.**

So when asked about what would be the key take-away message to give to someone who didn’t know much about this milestone in Australia’s history, Ian’s answer was understandably considered and complex.

’I think we need to secure explicit recognition in our founding constitutional document of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ occupation of this continent before European settlement. That recognition then needs to be coupled with legislative power to support existing legislation that is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people and their heritage, their language and culture,’ says Ian.

**So what’s next?**

’I hope we continue to build national consensus to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and, sometime during 2016, we have some constitutional language that can be shared with the Australian people to build popular ownership and momentum. As lawyers, we need to assume a vital role in assisting the prosecution of a public education campaign around the proposed words.

’If we have bipartisanship, popular ownership, a strong public education campaign in support of a sound proposal for recognition, I think Australia can approach a referendum with the best chance of success,’ added Ian.
SNAPSHOT

1.29m+
THE AMOUNT SPENT ON PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES FROM SUPPLY NATION CERTIFIED INDIGENOUS BUSINESSES SINCE 2009

86
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER LAW STUDENTS HAVE COMPLETED OUR INDIGENOUS LEGAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

4000+
HOURS OF PRO BONO WORK OUR LAWYERS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS IN THE PAST YEAR

1100+
NUMBER OF STAFF HOURS CONTRIBUTED TO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ORGANISATIONS THROUGH OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH JAWUN AND THE EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES PROJECT IN THE PAST 18 MONTHS

2%
THE PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS TO THE FIRM’S FIRST CULTURE SURVEY WHO IDENTIFY AS ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER OR BOTH

148
NUMBER OF LAWYERS ENGAGED IN PRO BONO LEGAL WORK FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS THIS YEAR

SNAPSHOT
SympaMeals is a Vietnamese charity supporting poor patients, mainly in the Vietnam Cancer Hospital (K Hospital), Hanoi.

Partner and Co-Founder of SympaMeals, Hop Dang sings along with young patients at the children’s performance for K Hospital.
In Vietnam, there are many people without access to enough food, but equally there is a lot of wastage. Also, patients need to fund part of their own treatment, including meals, in Vietnamese hospitals. For many this is impossible. This issue had bothered me for some time, especially as I looked at patients of the K Hospital from my office window. Many were sleeping in the nearby park, eating a plain ball of rice, looking frail and so sad.

Anh Phan, Co-Founder of SympaMeals and Allens Senior Translator, Hanoi

My husband [Allens Partner and Co-Founder of SympaMeals Hop Dang] knew my desire to help, so he wrote a detailed ‘how-to’ document, which essentially was a step-by-step guide on how to begin and run SympaMeals, the charity I had long envisaged.

Our premise was simple: give patients meal coupons to use in the Hospital’s canteen, allowing them the flexibility to choose whatever type of food that suits them, at whatever time they want. Hop and I had originally intended to do everything, including funding the coupons, by ourselves.

Everything was ready in less than a week, and we started distributing 20 coupons, each worth VND 5,000 (equivalent to about US$0.25) each day. A few weeks into delivering the coupons, I also delivered my baby. My son was born on 1 September, which became the official start date of SympaMeals too.

We chose the name ‘SympaMeals’ because we wanted our patients to know that the meals come from our sympathy and desire to share with them the difficulties they have to face every day.

This year marked 10 years of SympaMeals. We now not only help the poor, but also many others who desperately need help: sick sole-income earners, single mothers with cancer and who have to leave their children behind for treatment; veterans, and so on.

These patients cannot afford the co-payments or the travel fares, as well as Hanoi’s living costs. Sadly, many face quitting treatment. We started in 2008 a ‘special patient program’ that covers costs outside health insurance coverage, including medication and travel costs. We have also extended our service to distribute milk powder to out-patients.

Social activities are important, so we organise annual performances and gift-giving visits. Donations from individuals and organisations – like my employer Allens – also keep SympaMeals afloat.

Looking back, I often say that if I knew SympaMeals would grow to this size, I would have freaked out and never dared to start. From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank everyone who has helped SympaMeals. I am also very grateful to our patients who have trusted SympaMeals, opened their hearts to us, and kept us going.

facebook.com/SympaMeals
THE STORY OF CUONG

Each of the patients SympaMeals has helped has their own special story.

However, one of our most special beneficiaries, whose life we have followed for the past four years, is actually not a patient at all.

He is Tran Van Cuong, son of Tran Thi Thuy from Ha Tinh Province, a poor area about 500km from Hanoi. Thuy, the daughter of a man who died during the Vietnam War, had all her treatment fees funded by SympaMeals during the three years she was treated in K Hospital.

Unfortunately, due to her serious condition, Thuy died in 2011, just a few months after her husband had passed away from hepatitis. They were survived by their two children, then 16 and 13 years old. On her deathbed, Thuy pleaded to us in tears: ‘My old mother is so weak now, I have no brother or sister, so you are the only help for my children, please do not abandon them’.

Since then, Thuy’s two children stayed with their grandmother and SympaMeals has paid all their school fees, as well as medical fees (Cuong has a benign tumour in the throat which required regular treatment for more than two years).

In September 2013, Cuong passed the University entrance examination with the excellent result of 26/30 marks. When Cuong called to inform us, both he and we could not hold our tears.

SympaMeals has since then paid for his medical fees, his extra classes including English, and train tickets for him to visit his grandmother and young brother back home. His younger brother works part-time for a carpenter during his free time to earn his own living, and told us he wants to follow Cuong’s footsteps, entering a University when he finishes high education next year.

The boys’ parents would certainly have been very happy seeing what their children have achieved.
ALLEVIATING DISADVANTAGE

Community disadvantage is a result of many varying factors, and is a complex issue to address. More than just unemployment or low income, the knock-on effect on a community can impact many things including access to healthcare, food and shelter, and even education.

Through the firm’s Charity Committee, support is provided to a range of projects being undertaken by not-for-profit organisations in the community. These organisations work hard to make real change to the lives of many people facing disadvantage, often without any government funding.

Here are just some of their stories, as well as the projects we have supported this year.

TAD DISABILITY SERVICES

TAD Disability Services aims to improve the lives of people with disabilities by providing custom-made equipment, technology and services to assist them in their everyday lives. Its volunteers design and build a variety of customised and modified equipment.

One example is a ‘Chailley Cart’. This cart can be used by children who cannot walk, but who are still too young to use a wheelchair. It is close to the ground to support play time and can be easily manoeuvred and propelled by pushing directly on the side wheels. TAD also produces custom-made bikes for children with disabilities as part of the ‘Freedom Wheels’ project. This allows these children to experience the joy of riding a bike even where they may not be able to walk due to their disability.

Allens’ donation this year to TAD will be used to fund such equipment for children and adults with disabilities.

tadnsw.org.au

FARESHARE

Every year, two million Australians will experience hunger. But, over the same period, we’ll also waste 200kg of food for every man, woman and child in the nation.

FareShare rescues and redirects quality food that would otherwise be wasted, providing free catering to charities to feed people in need.

Our donation this year to FareShare will be used to purchase a commercial vegetable tumbler. The machine tumbles, peels and cooks various root vegetables, allowing volunteers to cook and pack an extra 400 meals per day.

fareshare.net.au
**BOOKS IN HOMES**

Being read to from an early age helps children to develop the essential pre-literacy skills they need for success in school. However, many Australian children do not have access to books in their homes.

Books in Homes provides books-of-choice to families and children living in remote and low socio-economic circumstances, ensuring crucial early literacy engagement and the development of reading skills needed for life-long success.

The firm has provided continued support to Books in Homes at St Brendan’s School, Flemington. In fact, over the past four years, more than 5000 books have been donated to kids at the school. Pleasingly, the Grade 3 class now read above grade level (NAPLAN).

booksinhomesaustralia.com.au

**AUTISM WEST**

Autism West aims to enrich the lives of those people affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders by providing educational and social services to young people.

This year, Allens is supporting ‘Step into Social’- a social program for up to 60 young people aged between 18 and 25 on the autism spectrum. The program aims to promote independence and enhance the social skills of participants who would otherwise miss out. This includes weekly outings and sporting excursions.

According to Executive Officer Gabriella La Bianca, the program would not have been possible without Allens’ support. A lovely handmade card signed by the young people set to participate in the program now takes pride of place in the Perth office!

autismwest.org.au

**MATER FOUNDATION**

The Mater Foundation aims to assist the Mater Hospitals and Mater Research Services to provide exceptional health care and research services to patients.

Our donation this year was used to purchase eight recliner recovery chairs to help ensure the best outcomes for mothers and babies in the Mater Mothers’ Neonatal Critical Care Unit at the Mater Mothers’ Hospital. Staff at the Brisbane office were fortunate to be invited to attend a tour of the NCCU. Gill, Matt and Garrett had the opportunity to observe a new mother and baby using a recliner recovery chair purchased with our donation this year, as well as the height adjustable cot purchased with our donation in 2014.

www.materfoundation.org.au

**HEARTKIDS WA**

HeartKids WA aims to find a cure for congenital heart disease and provides support services to the families of affected children, while raising awareness and vital funding into the causes of this chronic disease.

This year, Allens funded the ‘Youth in Transition’ program, which provides emotional support to 80-150 youths with heart disease by easing their transition from the children’s hospital to the adult hospital system.

heartkidswa.org.au
At Allens, we encourage courageous steps. No idea is too big or too small.
In 2014, Allens became certified as carbon neutral under the Carbon Neutral Program.
While becoming a carbon neutral firm was a goal we set ourselves a few years ago, Allens has been committed to sustainability and supporting the environment for more than 10 years.
Our Australian offices are now certified carbon neutral under the Australian Government’s Carbon Neutral Program. We are the first Australian law firm to achieve such a milestone.

This was achieved largely by the work of our committees – and the support of the firm – who have continued to drive real and significant improvements in the firm’s environmental performance over the years.

In 2015, our program is still a very strong grassroots program, but our commitment has continued to grow and mature. This year, we also appointed a Community Engagement Manager with responsibility for the firm’s environmental program and our carbon neutral commitment and we achieved certification for our AusLSA environmental management system – or AEMS – based on ISO 14001.

Cutting our emissions still remains our number one priority. This year, we have reduced our emissions by 13.5 per cent.

Ten years ago, the idea of the ‘Footprint Committee’ at Allens was created and rolled out across our offices. The committees were made up of passionate and motivated partners and staff, and they established and inspired the firm’s environmental program.

The premise was simple – help the firm to be more sustainable. First task to address was a humble, but worthy, goal: helping the firm to cut our paper usage and implement compulsory double-sided printing.

Other achievements:
- Reduced energy use by 7.6 per cent
- Achieved 100 per cent virtualisation of all production servers and successfully centralised the majority of IT systems into our core data centre
- Used 100 per cent recycled, FSC certified A4 copy paper
- Named National New Signatory of the Year by CitySwitch
- Participated in Earth Hour, Ride to Work Day, National Recycling Week and celebrated World Environment Day

When offsetting our residual emissions, Allens set the rule that we would only buy high quality, accredited offsets and we would seek to buy offsets from projects that aligned with the firm’s community engagement program and objectives. We have achieved this by entering into a carbon offsetting partnership with Qantas, called the Qantas Future Planet Program.
THE QANTAS FUTURE PLANET PROGRAM AND OUR CARBON OFFSET PROJECTS

This year, Allens partnered with Qantas on its Future Planet Program to support carbon offset projects that mitigate climate change, protect wildlife and nourish communities. Here is a snapshot of some of the carbon offset projects we have supported.

1. Thailand’s Biomass co-generation project, where biomass waste from agriculture is used to generate renewable energy, avoiding the use of fossil-fuel generated electricity. It not only reduces emissions, but also waste to landfill and provides employment opportunities for the local community through the purchase and processing of the biomass.

2. The April Salumei project in Papua New Guinea is home to 163 local communities who depend upon the rainforest for their livelihoods. The project protects 177,000 hectares of virgin rainforests which would otherwise have been harvested for timber and converted to agriculture. The project will direct significant revenue from the sale of carbon credits to local communities and ensure the protection of habitat for the diverse range of flora and fauna, including the 387 endemic bird species found in the region, three of which are endangered.

3. The Vietnamese Rice Husk Thermal Energy Generation Project, where Cai Be District captures rice husk methane to generate renewable energy. River congestion and ecological damage is also reduced.

4. The Peruvian Brazil Nut Project, located in the Amazonian rainforests of Peru, conserves 300,000 hectares of virgin rainforest managed by 400 local farming families. The project empowers local communities to harvest Brazil nuts from natural rainforest, and protects more than 2400 plant species, jaguars, toucans and spider monkeys.

5. The Cambodian Cook Stove Project, which provides locals with improved woodstoves developed to protect forest resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This also transfers technology to the local Indigenous communities and creates local employment.
PNG’S CARBON OFFSET PROGRAM
One of the carbon offset programs Allens supports via the Qantas Future Planet Program is the April Salumei project in Papua New Guinea. Allens has worked in Port Moresby for more than 20 years, therefore supporting a carbon offset program in the country was important to the firm.

This year, The Guardian ran a story on this very project – about its origination, the genesis of the international carbon market framework that underpins it, the project participants and the community transformation it is achieving through environmental and social benefits.

Here is an excerpt from that article.

The incredible plan to make money grow on trees

Excerpt from The Guardian, November 2015

By Sam Knight

One day about five years ago, Frank Nolwo, a compact, quietly spoken boat skipper from the upper reaches of the Sepik river, in northern Papua New Guinea, woke up and headed into town. Nolwo, who is 42, has nine children. He was adding an extension to his house, and needed to buy some building materials.

After a day on the water, Nolwo reached Ambunti, a large village of around 2,000 people, where he spent the night. The next morning, he motored on. Nolwo was a prosperous and influential local figure. As well as running his boat, he was the chairman of a district of more than 30 small villages that included Kagiru. At around lunchtime on the second day, Nolwo moored his boat and got on a truck bound for Wewak, the provincial capital and his destination, a four-hour drive away on the coast. It was at the market in Wewak, buying hardware, that Nolwo ran into another district chairman from the upper Sepik, named David Salio, who invited him to a meeting in a local hotel about carbon trading.

Nolwo sat and listened. He had been to high school and remembered the idea of photosynthesis, so what [Speaker Stephen] Hooper was saying about leaves and carbon and oxygen was not completely bizarre, but it was pretty far out. The gist was this: because of pollution in countries far away, and something happening to the atmosphere, people along the Sepik river were going to be able to start selling the clean air produced by their trees. And by the sound of things, they might get very rich.

Four other local chairmen had already signed up with their communities. Nolwo decided to think about it. He bought what he needed for his house and started the long journey back to Kagiru.

Back on the water, Nolwo looked at the skinny, grey-barked trees set back from the muddy banks, thickening into forests on the hills behind. They framed the powerful and unforgiving landscape that he had known all his life: sources of food and fuel and spiritual energy, where men and women would spend a few days on their own from time to time, to prepare for rituals, and to come of age. Now he found himself considering the trees in a new light. Nolwo’s mind filled not only with financial possibilities, but with the chance to contribute to a project of global importance.

‘This is to save the life of the world,’ he thought. When he got home, Nolwo explained the whole idea to his wife.

The first time you hear about REDD+, it tends to make a big impression. The acronym stands for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation. It is the UN’s plan to bring forests into the fight against climate change: to measure their contribution to stabilising the atmosphere, and to pay for it.

REDD+ is, among many other things, a beautiful idea. There are three trillion trees on Earth and they are perfectly made to take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. Every year, the world’s forests and bogs are thought to absorb around 1.6 gigatonnes of our 10 gigatonnes of manmade emissions.
Of course we are degrading these ecosystems at a terrible rate. Practices such as cutting down trees, draining swamps and burning brush, all to make way for agriculture, produce anything between 10% and 20% of greenhouse gas emissions in their own right. It is what is known in the pidgin of Papua New Guinea as a ‘double buggerup’.

REDD+ promises to turn the situation around. Given how valuable these biological systems are – forests are ‘carbon capture and storage’ technology in a cheap yet wondrous form – the idea is that we should pay for what they do. Where intact wildernesses remain in developing countries, scientists should figure out how much carbon they soak up and store, and governments and communities should be incentivised to preserve them rather than turn them over to asphalt or industrial farming.

On our battered, warming planet, a tree should be worth as much standing as felled.

From day one, the idea was that poor countries such as Papua New Guinea would be happy to curb their emissions by preserving their forests in return for money. (Around 70% of Papua New Guinea’s carbon emissions come from logging.)

On a good day, this is what makes the country appear to be the perfect test case for REDD+, and for the UN’s broader vision of ‘green economies’, in which developing countries manage to avoid the same fossil-fuel burning, tree-cutting path that the rest of us have followed. ‘If it is going to work anywhere it has to work in Papua New Guinea,’ the UN’s resident coordinator, Roy Trivedy, told me. ‘Papua New Guinea is one of a very, very small number of countries in the world that has a really big choice to make about a development model that is different to the normal one.’

Stephen Hooper, the Australian carbon developer who established the Sepik river REDD+ project, which Frank Nolwo joined, sold his first carbon credits in 2013. The project, known as April Salumei, has been certified to avoid 23m tonnes of carbon emissions over the next 38 years. At $5 a tonne, the UN’s current notional price for REDD+ transactions, that could work out at $115m.

The next morning, in the dark, we set off for Binomo, Nolwo’s district. We reached the river at noon and boarded two of the project’s new speedboats. The water in the Sepik was low, because of the drought, and the air – as everywhere – was blurred with the haze of distant fires. ‘Carbon dioxide,’ said Nelson Garabi, one of the chairmen. The solar lights were being delivered to Igai, one of the villages in Binomo which, like all the rest, had no electricity. When we arrived, Nolwo was standing in front of a makeshift arch, fashioned from a palm leaf, next to a handwritten sign that said: ‘Welcome! Welcome! To the land of ‘untouchable virgin forest’ the land of fresh oxygen (O2) the purifier of green house gases’ (sic).

Nolwo led the procession up to the centre of Igai, away from the river. According to Papua New Guinean custom, the men gathered in the main village hall, known as a haus, while women, children and teenagers stood or sat on the ground. After five years of hearing about carbon trading, this was the first time that many of them had seen anything arrive as a result. There were speeches. ‘The forest is your home,’ exhorted Anton Pakawi, a former schoolteacher who handles the day-to-day administration of the project. ‘The forest is your sister. The forest is your brother.’

Nolwo said a few words, but spent most of the time looking quietly amazed. ‘I just sit where I am and the money comes,’ he said. ‘It is kind of like a miracle thing happening.’
One project that we will support this financial year through the Qantas Future Planet Program is the Savanna Fire Management program, a fire abatement project established by the North Kimberley Traditional Owners.

When you think of burning, you may not think ‘environmentally friendly’. But there are a number of interesting sustainable elements to this project.

‘Firestick farming’ is a technique long used by Australia’s first peoples. Early season, controlled dry burning, in fact, leads to lower greenhouse gas emissions as compared to those emitted when allowing savanna vegetation to grow and inevitably burn in large uncontrolled wildfires later in the season.

Controlled burning keeps the traditional owners in contact with their land and traditional practices, provides them with employment, and also helps the local communities to protect their region’s flora and fauna, which can be devastated by hot late season wildfires.

Lastly, and importantly, by selling carbon credits through the Qantas Future Planet Program, the North Kimberley community has access to a consistent revenue stream.

Emily Gerrard, Allens’ Co-Head of Climate Change, volunteers one day a week – as well as provides pro bono work – for the North Kimberley traditional owners and alongside the Kimberley Land Council, which provides technical and other services to groups involved in this fire project. The North Kimberley Fire Abatement Project has generated more than 295,000 carbon credits under the Carbon Farming Initiative, which can be sold to generate income for remote Kimberley communities. The Project involves fire management activities across a large area of the North Kimberley and enables traditional owners to fulfil cultural responsibilities and maintain their contact with the land, as well as provide employment, health and environmental benefits.

klc.org.au

This December, Emily presented on a panel at UNESCO in the lead up to the Paris Climate Conference – aka COP21 – with Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), Nolan Hunter (Kimberley Land Council) and Sam Johnston (United Nations University). Their topic was ‘Resilience in a time of uncertainty – Indigenous People and climate change’, where Emily discussed private sector involvement in the Savanna Fire Management program as an example of an opportunity for generating and selling carbon credits. The consensus was that Australian projects, including this one, is world-leading, representing new investment in an ancient technology.
THE STORY OF THE NIGHT PARROT

A legendary, rare critter long thought to be extinct, a top secret location and a complex legal process – the story of the Night Parrot is a captivating one.

Sadly, Australia has lost many native species over the past century. For more than 75 years, it was thought that the Night Parrot, one of the rarest birds in the world, was one of them. The introduction of feral animals was feared to be one of the main reasons that this ground-dwelling bird was extinct.

Then in 2013, naturalist John Young captured footage of the bird.

Since then, there has been global interest in the re-discovery of the Night Parrot. Fearing this interest could again endanger the bird, Bush Heritage Australia stepped in to provide their expertise in conservation land management. And priority one was keeping the location of the bird top secret.

This year, lawyers in our Brisbane office worked with our long term pro bono client Bush Heritage Australia to negotiate the purchase of 56,000 hectares of pastoral land in the region in which the bird is located.

The secret location now means Bush Heritage can work on protecting the Night Parrots’ habitat, ensuring the land remains undisturbed by human interference, establishing a plan for mitigating wildfire, implementing feral predator controls and continuing ongoing ecological monitoring.

bushheritage.org.au
Allens has a long-standing association with the United Nations, from being the first organisation in Australia to become a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact, to the work we have done with the UN Special Representative on Business and Human Rights, as well as other pro bono matters.

Our Global Compact commits the firm to aligning our operations and strategies with 10 universally accepted principles, covering human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.

Allens’ internal and external practices – including our workplace and environment policies and community activities, as well as the achievements of our community committees over the past 12 months – have regularly met the criteria set by the Compact.

Working to fulfil the Compact means businesses like ours can help ensure that markets, commerce, technology and finance advance in ways that benefit economies and societies everywhere.

Corporate sustainability and the role of General Counsel

General Counsel are increasingly expected to advise their organisations not just about whether something is legal, but whether it is a sustainable practice for the business from a commercial, environmental and social perspective.

Partner Rachel Nicolson has worked with Linklaters and the UN Global Compact to develop a guide for General Counsel on Corporate Sustainability.

The guide provides practical guidance and examples to in-house counsel on how to advance corporate sustainability issues within their respective organisations, while also reinforcing the UN Global Compact’s 10 Principles that focus on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption.

To develop the guide, General Counsel from companies across a wide variety of sectors and regions around the world were interviewed.

According to Rachel: ‘From the discussions I had, and as seen in the guide, it really emerged that corporate responsibility is increasingly becoming a core business issue and General Counsel have a growing role in advancing sustainability within their companies.’

We are really pleased to be able to help our clients to navigate what is becoming an important and incredibly complex part of their roles.

Rachel Nicolson

unglobalcompact.org.au
1. Cooking up a feast for OzHarvest with GPT
2. The Port Moresby office takes part in the annual PWC Corporate Challenge, a fun run that raises money in the sectors of health, education, women and children.
3. Carolyn Oddie, Catherine Francis and Andrew Wiseman sing up a storm for Jeans for Genes Day.
4. Partnering with Qantas on the Future Planet Program.
5. Sydney Summer Clerks Claudia Hall, Johanna Deutsch, Anna Moran and Jewel Zhu at carnival drinks to raise money for WEAVE Youth & Community Services.
6. Summer clerks visiting the Sydney Children’s Hospital, learning about the firm’s Neurology Fellowship.
7. Jason Borg and Reno Caruana collect the donations for the soft plastic recycling drive.
8. Rosie Batty, who founded the Luke Batty Foundation in memory of her son, speaks at the Supreme Court Breakfast marking White Ribbon Day in Brisbane.
9. Dianna Barton and Grace Williamson hand over a cheque to Youth Futures, a community organisation that aims to reduce and prevent youth homelessness and increase education for disadvantaged young people.
10. The Melbourne Mo Bros raise mo’money once again for Movember.
11. Anna Collyer joined other senior leaders as part of Jawun’s National Partners Executive visit to the East Kimberley.
12. The Allens team, with Hon Michael Kirby AC, at the Pride in Diversity Australian Workplace Equality Index awards, where Allens placed 14th.
13. Patrick Easton and Richard Spurio mix up a cocktail on the blender bike for Ride to Work Day.
14. Rachael Duggan and her AIEF mentee at their induction day.
15. Marking AIME’s Hoodie Day in Perth.
16. The Brisbane RAP Committee and the AIME crew celebrate Hoodie Day at Musgrave Park.
17. Supporting RedKite.
18. Michael Rose with Reconciliation Board member Djapirri Mununggurrirji and CEO Justin Mohamed at the 2015 Garma festival in north-east Arnhem Land.
19. Peter Brennan meets his AIEF mentee in Brisbane.
20. At the Heartkids WA Grants in Aid lunch.
22. Lindsay Dick, Rachel Joseph and Karina Travaglione help out at the Stitches Bear Fair at Princess Margaret Hospital.
23. Professor Colleen Hayward from the Edith Cowan University and Marshall McKenna at the Perth office Reconciliation film night.
24. Perth’s Phillip Richardson and Emma Cundale run a workshop session with final-year law students on how to conduct a witness interview and draft a proof of evidence.
25. Brisbane Footprint Committee celebrate National Tree Day.
27. Natalie Mammarella with her Jawun crew learn how to drive 4WD as part of their secondment to north-east Arnhem Land.
28. Sydney summer clerks Hana Kaci, Roseanna Bricknell and Harry Cook at the Sydney Children’s Hospital Randwick with Lynne Fitzsimmons of the Emergency Department.
29. Tyson Yapao at the ‘shave, trim or dye your hair to fight cancer’ event for the Hospital Poroman Foundation in Port Moresby.

GALLERY
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BOARD

Board Members: Jim Dwyer, Phillip Cornwell, Chris Schulz, Maryjane Crabtree, Rod Fielding, Nicky Friedman and Michael Rose.

Nicky Friedman (Director of Community Engagement)
Emma Fitzgerald (Environmental sustainability activities)
Jodie Symes (RAP program)

PRO BONO

Chair: Phillip Cornwell

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CHARITY

Chair: Jim Dwyer

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**FOOTPRINT**

**Chair:** Phillip Cornwell

**National Secretariat**

- Gavin Smith
- Grant Anderson
- Emma Fitzgerald
- Jane Foley
- Nicky Friedman
- Peter Gjokmarkovic
- Lisa Harris
- Rebecca Judd
- Gerard Neiditsch
- Beth Patterson
- Toula Panopoulos
- Gwenneth Taylor
- Noveen Thrower
- Jenelle Tonks

**Brisbane**

- Bill McCredie
- Logan Brown
- Barton Donaldson
- Ross Galbraith
- Peter Gjokmarkovic
- Jack Henderson
- Lester Lim Kok
- Whitney Shanahan
- Noveen Thrower
- Katharine Ward
- Lisa Watt

**Melbourne**

- Grant Anderson
- Matthew Brennan
- Maryjane Crabtree
- Emma Fitzgerald
- Rebecca Judd
- Meg Lee
- Ann Meehan
- Ellie Mulholland
- Toula Panopoulos
- Alice Sheahan
- Renee Amundsen
- Patrick Easton
- Francisca Hoffmann-Axthelm
- Duncan Travis
- Michael Graves

**Perth**

- Jodi Reinmuth
- Janelle Adams
- Lindsay Dick
- Helen Dolling
- Anthony Graham
- Julie Moore
- Melanie Rifci
- Dianna Barton
- Elliott Clutterbuck
- Mark Vasiljkovic

**Sydney**

- Philippa Abbott
- Christine Allen
- Renee Boundy
- Rae Galas
- Tarsha Gavin
- Emma Leske
- Jonathan Light
- Alistair Oakes
- Beth Patterson
- Anna Persson
- Gavin Smith
- Tim Stewart
- Luke Morey

**ASIA COMMUNITY COMMITTEE**

- Melissa Keane
- Sarah Kuman
- Hieu Nguyen
- Hien Tran
Many partners and members of staff serve as office bearers or board members of not-for-profit organisations, including:

- AMF Australia Foundation
- Arts Law Centre of Australia Ltd
- Aurora Education Foundation
- Australian Ballet School Board
- Australian Museum Foundation
- Australian Pro Bono Centre
- Bush Heritage Australia
- ChildFund Alliance
- ChildFund Australia Ltd
- Children’s Medical Research Institute
- Committee for Sydney
- Cystic Fibrosis New South Wales
- Documentary Australia Foundation
- EarthWatch Institute
- Epworth HealthCare
- Florey Neuroscience Institutes
- Give a Smile
- Historic Houses Trust of NSW
- Howard Florey Institute
- Human Rights Law Centre Ltd
- Justice Connect
- Kaldor Public Art Projects
- Mission Australia
- National Gallery of Art Foundation
- Navy Clearance Diver Trust
- OzHarvest
- Palmerston Association
- PNG Sports Federation and Olympic Committee
- Sculpture by the Sea
- SecondBite Future Trust
- Sony Foundation Australia
- St Vincents & Mater Health Sydney
- St Vincent’s Curran Foundation
- Suicide Prevention Australia
- Sydney Symphony Ltd
- The Alliance for Safe Children (Vietnam)
- The Goodes O’Loughlin Foundation Ltd
- The Northcott Society
- The Victorian Women’s Trust
- UnitingCare Ageing
- WA Opera
- Wesley Mission Brisbane
- World Wide Fund for Nature Australia
I am proud to be Allens’ first Director of Community Engagement – a role that brings together the management of our longstanding pro bono and philanthropy programs with our newer, but equally valued, sustainability and reconciliation work. I am privileged to take up a role like this and, helped by a highly able and committed team, to lead our firm’s many efforts to contribute to our community.

As a law firm, our commitment to corporate social responsibility is informed by our profession’s noble ethos of pro bono work. Although most people in our society will need legal services at some stage, many of them cannot afford the advice and representation they need. In a democracy, it is governments’ role to ensure the people can have access to the justice system but governments do not always fulfil this responsibility fully. There are gaps in access to justice and, fortunately, many within our profession consider that it is the role of lawyers to provide some services freely to those who need them. Allens is firmly committed to making a significant contribution of our legal skills free of charge to a range of disadvantaged individuals and civil society organisations.

Major work takes major effort and we rely on the commitment of partners and staff across our firm to achieve our community goals. We also work closely with our peer firms and others within our profession on pro bono work, reconciliation projects and sustainability initiatives.

Our commitment to social responsibility is a broad one and, at every step along the way, we work closely with a wide range of inspirational and brave community organisations and people. We deliver much of our pro bono legal assistance through pro bono projects with community legal organisations and NGOs; we spend time volunteering with grassroots charities that directly support the neediest people; and we make donations to important philanthropic initiatives.

As the Australian business community becomes more aware of the important role business can play in supporting human rights, embracing diversity and working toward sustainability, we have more opportunities to learn from and partner with our corporate clients, some of whom are prominent leaders in their commitments to and efforts toward inclusion and sustainability.

I look forward to continuing this great work, and also would love to hear from our clients and community contacts on how we can collaborate more in the future. So get in touch.

Nicky Friedman
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