



LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
LAW STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

2015-16

Annual Report



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LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
**LAW STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION**

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01.

Welcome

President



Dean D'Angelo,
2015/16 President,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association

Our aims and objectives for the 2015/2016 LSA Committee were to build on the strong achievements and programs established by previous committees, and develop other areas including student engagement through our online and social media networks.

Further we aimed to strengthen the existing events and programs run by the LSA, with a view to continuing to provide those crucial extra-curricular opportunities to our members.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The 2015/2016 Committee was presented with many challenges from the outset, primarily centred around access and functionality of our website. With student engagement a key focus for the term we embarked on a project to create a new website for our organisation, including a complete rebrand across all platforms. I am tremendously proud of the way that we were able to handle this process.

Our new website launched shortly after the commencement of Semester 1 providing exciting new opportunities and avenues for us to engage with our members, and encourage them to get involved in our events and programs. As a result, we saw an increase in the number of students engaging with us, particularly attendance at our careers and social events. I am of the view that this project will put our organisation in a great position to further our engagement and presence in the years to come.

Another task we initially faced was to work with the Law School in restructuring the way we work together to organise and run events and activities across the board. With the Law School taking a fresh approach to student engagement in 2015/16 it was outstanding to receive increased support and funding, in order to work together on many careers and competitions events.

The relationship between the Law School and the LSA is, and has always been central to providing a successful and engaging environment for our members with each party acknowledging the need to work together to help deliver new opportunities, events and resources that would further support our core objectives. Whilst our journey was a challenging one, fraught with miscommunication and disagreement at times, I strongly believe both parties have learnt a tremendous amount about how we can work together to get the best outcome for students.

In 2015/2016 we continued our commitment as the peak body for law students, in representing our members with pride and uncompromising professionalism, at national forums like ALSA, legal committees, and LIV events and associated activities. This level of engagement with other representative bodies will continue to provide us with the opportunity to improve the way we represent our members.

I have been blessed to work with and lead an outstanding team of dedicated and driven individual in 2015/2016. I would like to thank each and every members of the team, particularly our executive members who worked tirelessly, and often without recognition to consistently provide quality extracurricular opportunities for our members.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like acknowledge and thank the Law School, and particularly, the Head of School Patrick Keyzer for his ongoing support and guidance. Our Law School is in good hands under your leadership and I have no doubt that you will continue to improve our experience and our standing. I would also like to thank Oscar Cantieni for always providing outstanding support and comradery in his capacity as Vice President, and our Immediate Past President Tahanna Byatt for her ongoing advice and support.

A special thankyou to our 2015/2016 sponsors who have again chosen to invest their time and money in or organisation, with a view to building strong relationships and providing exciting opportunities for our students.

I joined the LSA Committee in my first year as a law student and it has been an honour and a privilege to be elected as a representative ever since. It is my hope that in my role as President of our organisation I have been able to provide the leadership required to build on the good work of past

committees; and stimulated the interests and passion of the committee to the benefit of the LSA, and ultimately our members.

I extend my best wishes to our incoming President Mariam Francis and the 2016/2017 Committee. I believe the outgoing committee has left the LSA in a strong position, equipped to tackle future challenges, and importantly, build on the achievement of the past twelve months. I am hopeful that our legacy has strengthened the reputation of our organisation, in the eyes of our members and other organisations in the legal fraternity.

Vice-President



Oscar Cantieni,
2015/16 Vice-President,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association

The 2015/16 Committee has built success upon the foundations of previous committees; and continued to strive in its dedication to encourage engagement between law students, the legal profession, and the wider community.

The Vice-President's portfolio exists to aid the President in his or her executive duties, as well as providing crucial administrative assistance to the executive body. One of the major focuses of the 2015/16 Vice-President's portfolio is social media engagement. The 2015/16 Committee continued to maintain its position as one of the most dynamic, innovative Law Students' Association in Facebook, Twitter and Instagram engagement.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The 2015/16 LSA has delivered on a range of important initiatives across all portfolios; some as a result of review and refinement of previous activities, others completely new programs. Notable achievements have included;

- The LSA Lead Generation List - A mailing list was created for LSA members in late February of 2015 and the 2015/16 Committee took this comprehensive list and converted and expanded that list into a Facebook Lead generation. Lead generations expand on the ordinary mailing lists as instead of mass advertising and email blasts, the LSA can now focus on those found and learn to build continuous

relationships with those leads, and continue to serve those consumers specifically targeted ads which will ultimately lead to higher engagement.

At the start of July 2015, there were 280 subscribers which represented over 20% of all La Trobe law students. It was the aim of the LSA to increase this representation over the next few years through collecting emails from various events. However, since the lead generation and targeted social media strategy, the LSA is now about to target a population of over 300,000 men and women aged between 18-35 in the local area who have a genuine interest in the core values and purpose of the LSA.

- The LSA Website - The new LSA website was designed to be the "information vault" of LSA communication to members and the public. The websites improvement was sought as the data showed that the greater population of the LSA's traffic was coming from mobile and tablets as such the LSA needed an interactive design website capable of adapting to mobile and tablet formats.
- For the 2015/2016 new regular content features have included: Legal Eagles, Weekly Wrap Up and Take a Study Break and on the radar. As expected, careers related content tends to be the websites biggest performer in terms of views. Website views have increased by 55.1% compared to the same period last year. Average views per day between Jan-Jul have increased by 57.48% compared to the entirety of 2014.

Finance



Gemma Saccasan,
Director of Finance,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association.

The Finance portfolio is responsible for overseeing the committee's budgeting in consultation with the executive, managing assets and financial processes, and reporting as required by law. The association has continued to perform very well across the 2015/2016 financial year accruing a significant surplus and running a profit on the majority of our events. This is due in large part to the hard work of the executive in their respective portfolios. We have also significantly increased law school funding compared to previous years, which has greatly increased our capacity to run our events to a high standard.

into simplifying financial record keeping processes, as well as ensuring that the committee and especially executive committee members follow the existing processes to increase accuracy and accountability.

Key Achievements

- Increase in law school funding- As well as traditional sponsorship, this year the LSA secured an added \$14,400 in funding from the law school. This is largely due to initiative taken by the executive as well as the positive relationship with the law school which has been developed over over previous years. In future it is imperative that these relationships continue to be fostered in particular by the President and Vice President, particularly as traditional means of sponsorship such as that from law firms is increasingly more difficult to attain.
- Investment in long-term projects- This year the LSA invested in a complete re-branding as well as a new website. This will benefit the organization's long-term ability to communicate with students and fulfill our commitments to our sponsors. In turn this will assist us in marketing ourselves when attaining sponsorship and increase our autonomy as an organization in coming years.
- This year as a part of our constitutional review process we have also begun to look into the possibility of added measures for passing money in emergency instances without the need for a full committee meeting while still maintaining accountability. In the future it is recommended that the committee and future directors of the finance portfolio look

Marketing



Isabella Varrasso,
2015/16 Director of
Marketing,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association.

The Marketing Portfolio across 2015/2016 branched out significantly in both the range of sponsorship opportunities offered and sold to sponsors, and the scope of business in the sponsors themselves.

This term brought forward significant new sponsorship opportunities in our digital realm which has allowed our website and online platforms to distinguish themselves in the new advertising opportunities provided.

The greatest achievement of this term has been the feat of maintaining and superseding past figures in a time of general sponsorship re-structuring in many firms. This has come by sourcing sponsorship opportunities with a focus wider than the traditional top and mid-tier commercial law firms.

- New events created to accommodate the rise in sponsorship, such as the upcoming Mental Health & the Law Panel Discussion.

Now and Beyond

The Marketing portfolio now looks ahead into the future through a wide lens, hoping to secure sponsorship through avenues less travelled. The portfolio has found many new and existing sponsors quite receptive to the idea of establishing and increasing sponsorship and we hope to secure them for future events with the end goal of providing as many opportunities and prospects for La Trobe Law Students.

Key Achievements

- The introduction of “Platinum” Level sponsorship that has incorporated moving and hyperlinked banner advertisements on all pages of the LSA website.
- Increased sponsorship financial contribution.
- An increased number of firms in the LSA Publication, Pathways, coupled with a substantial increase of firm involvement in the guide as a whole with an increase in sponsored articles.
- Increased sponsorship in LSA Competitions.
- The increase in new sponsors and the growth seen in the contribution and extent of sponsorship in many current sponsors has led to events such as our Competitions’ Grand Final Night and Law Ball being sponsored as a whole now.

Administration



Nada Elagha,
Director of Administration,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association.

The administration portfolio of the LSA ensures the committee is operating under the constitution, it provides assistance to students with any general queries as well as organising the much loved La Trobe Law hoodies. Administration is very much a role that oversees the entire committee with the help of the President and Vice President, in order to maintain a responsible team who are accountable for their actions.

To successfully and efficiently adhere to the rules and regulations of the LSA, this year a Constitutional Review Committee was created. The purpose of the review committee is to make changes to the constitution, in order for the rules and regulations to be in line with the current needs of the LSA. The committee was able to draft revisions of the current constitution, and update it to the relevant legislation and modern changes to the LSA.

Another key role for administration this year was assisting the other portfolios in the LSA with their events. Hopefully in the future, the portfolios will continue to work together and provide an ever higher calibre of events and promotions. Expectations for the future of administration is to expand the interaction with the executive, with hopes of even more cohesive and effective committees to come.

Juris Doctor



Jane Le,
2015/16 Juris Doctor
Representative,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association.

The Juris Doctor (JD) program will become a portfolio as of 2017. The JD was launched in 2016 and is held primarily at the La Trobe city campus on Collins St. It is taught at a post-graduate level.

The program has received a significant amount of interest and is growing in popularity. The role of the 2015/16 JD representative was to liaise between the LSA and the JD students; providing them with information regarding all events. Whilst this year's cohort are still first year students, careers was not a core target focus. However, events such as women in the law, justice speech, social events and skills workshops were the successful in engaging the JD cohort.

As of 2017, a new JD portfolio will be created. It will consist of director and two officers. I expect the future JD portfolio will work hand in hand with the current LSA team to build a stronger, better future for all law students at La Trobe across both campuses

Education



Mariam Francis,
2015/16 Director of
Education,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association.

The 2015/2016 Education Portfolio had a very successful term, hosting more events than ever before, and hosting a much wider range of events. These activities ensured to address students' health and wellbeing, which has previously been difficult to tackle, as well as students' demands and requirements. The Education team was able to successfully deliver a number of events and increased student engagement with the Education portfolio.

- The **Wellbeing Dogs** program finally started during this term, and was a great success! The dogs came in either each week, or every second week and occupied the common room, helping students stress less and have a break from their studies. Students loved this initiative and it definitely had a lasting positive impact on students. This was a great way to address student health and wellbeing, and helped students acknowledge wellbeing as an important issue in law school.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **The 101 Series** was an initiative which was introduced in the previous Education portfolio and has continued successfully through this term. These 101 sessions were delivered through a collaboration with the law school. These sessions received great feedback from students in attendance, as they covered essential information which lecturers do not often have the time to deliver, such as essay writing, problem solving, case studies, and exam success skills.
- The **LSA's Women in Law Breakfast** hosted in semester two 2015 was a very successful event. The turnout almost doubled in size from previous years. We received such great feedback about the venue, that we have decided to host the event at the stunning venue by the Yarra for the 2016 event.
- The LSA's **Annual Justice Speech** has been successfully organised for the 10th August 2016, in conjunction with Leo Cussen Centre for Law. We are very honoured to have the Honourable Justice Chris Maxwell, President of the Victorian Court of Appeal as the keynote speaker for 2016.

NEW AND IMPROVED

- The LSA provided the students with a **free bake stall** in the Agora during Wellbeing Week. This was a tremendous effort on behalf of the committee who provided free baked goods that were provided to law students whilst also collecting donations for the Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation. It was a fantastic way to address student wellbeing and chat to students to see how they were coping with their studies.
- The **Legal Scholar Speech** is designed to provide students an opportunity to engage on a specific topic of interest within the legal profession with an academic or scholar with a background in the certain area. The 2015 event was an extremely successful event with a turnout of over 50 students, addressing the issue of family violence. The 2016 speech will cover the topic of refugee and migration law.
- This year the Education portfolio hosted **Law Netball** as a way to ensure student health and wellbeing was promoted within the law school. We worked with the Sports Centre to ensure the competition ran smoothly – it was very successful and students had a lot of fun! The competition will run again in semester 2.



Genevieve Yarak,
2015/16 Director of
Careers,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association.

This portfolio is essentially 'for the students, by the students', working behind the scenes to deliver exceptional career related events with an aim to connect La Trobe Students with a range of employers and organisations within legal and non-legal sectors.

These events provide students with an opportunity to develop skills such as networking, which is not usually taught in the black letter law classroom. Students are able to network with industry professionals and gain valuable knowledge about possible career options and pathways. We realise that students need to be equipped in areas such as CV and application writing and we aim to provide workshops designed to assist the student in attaining a career after university. The LSA website and social media platforms keep students informed and up to date with our upcoming events and career information throughout the year.

Key achievements

The 2016 Careers Week included a number of clerkship presentations by Commercial Law Firms and Practical Legal Training providers. The presentations offered students first-hand advice from the firm and a chance to hear the experiences from the graduates themselves. Each presentation boasted good attendance levels with most students feeling confident about submitting seasonal clerkship applications.

The annual Careers Cocktail night was an absolute success yet again! The impressive venue set the scene for over 100 La Trobe students a chance to network with firm representatives from an array of Melbourne's leading law firms. The overall feedback for the night was positive and many law firm representatives and students left the event in high hopes.

New & Improved

Careers Connect Fair 2016 was held at a new venue called Tazio's in the CBD where the stunning second level was hired out for the night. An attendance of over 100 students, the 'sold out' event had the pleasure of ten organisations providing an insight into career options outside the area of commercial law. The feedback from students, sponsors and organisation representatives was amongst the lines of amazing venue, delicious food and a successful night. The only issue being the event was too full which may mean a cut down in the number of tickets available next year.

Careers Week: King and Wood Mallesons BBQ lunch! The first time the LSA had the honour of holding a law firm clerkship seminar followed by hot dogs, hamburgers and veggie burgers! This gave students the opportunity not only to be informed of how to apply for a clerkship with KWM but also were able to connect and converse one on one with KWM's HR and graduate lawyers.

Competitions



Shakire Saban,
2015/16 Director of
Competitions,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association.

The Competitions portfolio has worked diligently to provide students the opportunity to participate in various moots and competitions. The Competitions portfolio successfully organised seven competitions over semester two of 2015 and semester one of 2016. These competitions included the Client Interview, Negotiation, Witness Examination, and the moots including International Humanitarian Law Moot, Criminal Law Moot, Junior Moot (Torts-based) and Senior Moot (Contract Law based).

These two semesters have been such an exciting time as the portfolio has provided students, including first-time mooters, an opportunity to enhance their advocacy and legal research skills within internal and external competitions.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The competitions portfolio successfully held a 101 Mooting Session that was very well attended. The session was run solely by students from various year levels, whereby past competitors each discussed the basics of mooting such as preparing memos, oral submissions and any important tips. The session received excellent feedback as many students, particularly first year law students or first time mooters, found the event highly informative and helpful.
- While the Junior Moot is always one of the most popular moots run by the Competitions portfolio, this semester, we saw more than 30 registrations for the competition. This increase is very rewarding, as it is a true reflection of the portfolio's success in encouraging first year law students and first-time mooters to participate in the moot and give it a shot!
- During both semesters, the portfolio has assisted in organising teams for various external inter-varsity and national competitions such as the Australian Law Students' Association Championship Moot and International Humanitarian Law Moot; the Nowicki

Carbone Personal Injury Law Moot; and the Victorian Championship Moot.

- This year, five of our seven internal competitions were sponsored by various law firms, including Clayton Utz, Herbert Smith Freehills, King and Wood Mallesons, Minter Ellison, and proudly a new criminal law firm, Doogue O'Brien George. Not only did this increase student involvement in the competitions, but also provided the opportunity for representatives from the firms to attend the Competitions Grand Final Night and participate as judges for the competitions.
- The Competitions Grand Final Night was a great success as many students, family, friends, spectators and representatives from sponsored firms attended and supported the grand finalists and competitions throughout the night. For the first time ever, the whole event was proudly sponsored by the College of Law. The event was held at the Federal Circuit Court and oversaw the seven competitions running concurrently. The evening was concluded by celebratory drinks at the Essoign Club. The night received excellent feedback, particularly regarding its great organisation, professionalism and enjoyment.

NEW AND IMPROVED

The Competitions portfolio is delighted to have a new moot court, a replica of the Federal Court located at La Trobe University. We are proud to say that this moot court was recently formally opened by Chief Justice Robert French of the High Court of Australia in its opening ceremony held in 2016. We look forward to holding many of our competitions in this amazing and sophisticated facility!

Activities



Laura Hook,
2015/16 Director of
Activities,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association.

In 2015/16 the Activities portfolio went from strength to strength, introducing a number of new events as well as expanding and improving existing ones. From the very beginning the Activities team worked incredibly well together and worked hard to produce events that received overwhelming success.

The portfolio is responsible for a number of social events, which provides law students with the chance to mingle and meet other like-minded students. The main aim of the portfolio is to hold events that create an enjoyable and relaxed environment to allow for students to take a well deserved break from the demands of law school study. It also allows for friendships to develop, that can support them throughout their law degree.

Key Achievements

Through the cooperation and hard work of the portfolio Director, the Executive Team, and the full committee; the LSA has achieved an extremely successful year of delivering the three key events for this portfolio, which all surpassed expectations. They included;

The LSA's Law Camp – The main purpose of law camp is to provide a fun and relaxing environment for law students (especially first years students) to meet new people and form relationships that they will hold on to through the rest of their degree and beyond. This years law camp was incredibly successful, with a record number of tickets sold and incredibly positive feedback about how the camp successfully fulfilled our primary aim. The camp was so successful; that we even received a letter from a law student saying how much he enjoyed it and how he regretted not attending in the past.

The Maritime Cruises – This year, the Activities portfolio decided to take a risk and introduce a second booze cruise in the year. This risk paid off, with both events being a complete success, with our first second booze cruise held in 2016 selling 250 tickets.

Welcome Back Drinks – For the first time in LSA history, the Activities portfolio decided to hold welcome back drinks, for new and returning law students. The night provided a great way to start off the year and set the tone for the year ahead. I do believe that this event will continue to improve and grow and become a major event of the Activities Portfolio.

The Annual Law Ball – By far the biggest event for the Activities portfolio, the Annual Law Ball for 2016 was better than ever. It was a complete success and we had positive feedback from many attendees.

Publications



Liam McColl,
2015/16 Director of
Publications,
La Trobe Law Students'
Association.

The Publications portfolio is an essential portfolio, it aims to provide law students with valuable resources and essential information on how to get the most out of their time at La Trobe University. Developing on the work of past Publications portfolio investments, the 2016 portfolio has dedicated time, resources and money to further produce bigger and better publications, which has overall improved content and quality for the law students of La Trobe university.

Key Achievements

Publications has dedicated more time and resources to producing better content and in greater numbers, this includes bigger and better editions of the cult classic student interviews "Legal Eagle". Legal Eagle has been well received due to the quality of the people that have been interviewed which provide an insight into both an academic lifestyle and a personal lifestyle and how to balance and maintain both.

The Weekly Wrap has also continued from last year and enables students to catch up on the events they may have missed out on.

Producing perhaps one of the best "Careers Guides" to date for the LSA. The LSA decided to improve "Pathways No.2". This required an increased allocation of resources. The aim was to allow the Publications portfolio to integrate more members and portfolios into the production of the guide and generally improve its appeal, content and appearance. "Pathways No.2" was well received, which gained extensive compliments from both students and law firms.

New & Improved

Publications has worked hard throughout the committee term to generate more and more content, instead of releasing the Legal Eagle's sporadically, Publications has coordinated its

release for two times every week on a Tuesday and Thursday morning. This initiative was well received within the student cohort and the committee, as it actively engaged more students with other outstanding students in the faculty.

The initiative of including more career orientated content on how to improve your self as a prospect employee was added to "Pathways No.2", to shift a primary focus away from seasonal clerkships and towards general future career prospects. This idea was largely heralded as a good way to orientate the annual careers guide, as it shifted more of a focus to students who wanted to flourish outside the legal sector.

Acknowledgements

Editor / Co- Designer – Edmund Simpson
Designer – Pooja Desai

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With Special Thanks to:

Patrick Keyzer – Head of La Trobe Law School

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