



Family Law  
PATHWAYS  
NETWORK

WESTERN  
AUSTRALIA

KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH WITH NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES IN WA FAMILY LAW

APRIL 2022

## Greetings from the Chairs

by Mark O'Hare & Robyn King

Welcome to the latest edition of WA Family Law Pathways Network eBulletin.

With the Annual Conference coming up in May, we have been very busy working with an Aboriginal Reference Group to bring you an all First Nations People focused and run event, borne through feedback from 2021.

The 2022 theme is **Truth** – Justice – **Listening** – Healing

**Truth:** Accepting the truth of Colonisation, Dispossession, Oppression, and Violence towards our First Nations Peoples.

**Justice:** Supporting the fight for justice, for our First Nations Peoples.

**Listening:** to our people (our elders and Leaders) hearing and understanding their truths and experiences.

**Healing:** Knowing and understanding (empathising) with the trauma suffered by our Elders and intergenerational trauma of today's First Nations Peoples.

We have worked tirelessly in our preparation of the event to procure and invest in the services of local and Aboriginal owned enterprises. This year, the conference speakers comprise of prominent Aboriginal professionals who work in the Family Law sector across the Perth Metropolitan area.

Representatives will be attending from Aboriginal Legal Services, the Department of Communities, Legal Aid, Aboriginal Family Law Services, First Nations Kinship Connections,

Yorgum Healing Services, Langford Community Centre, The National Suicide Prevention & Trauma Recovery Project and Wungening Aboriginal Corporation.

Ceremonial activity and dancing will be delivered by Boorloo Aboriginal Cultural Experiences with Geri Hayden, Olman Walley, and a troupe of dancers. There will be an artist in residence, cultural Swan River Walk, upskilling session in Noongar Language, smoking and tea ceremonies.

We have engaged with local Aboriginal artist Acacia Collard, who has interpreted the conference theme and preamble and created the magnificent visual concept seen on the preceding page.

Acacia has captured the essence of the theme beautifully in using green, the seasonal colour of Djeran (April – May), while the river flows with the colour purple to represent The Stolen Generation and is cushioned in white for healing, along its banks. And while the Black Swan symbolises Western Australia, it also displays personal power, persistence, and courage. The Emu footprints move in one direction as a timely reminder that they cannot

walk backward and finally, a yarning circle of three men and three women: the amazing members of our Reference Group.

In March, we welcomed Carol Draper as the Events Officer to our Pathways Network. In her role, Carol will be working with the founder and director of the Known Associates Event Company, Tamara Cook, her husband Troy, and their team to deliver high tech sound, audio visual and live streaming services throughout the conference which will be available online and in person at our Perth venue or at one of five regional areas including Albany, Bunbury, Carnarvon, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie.

We know the reference group have put considerable thought and effort into their planning of the event and have consulted with well-respected Aboriginal Elders along the way, to bring to WA a professional practice changing and networking journey to immerse yourself in over two days.

The full program, ticketing and more information is available on our website at <http://wafpn.org.au>.

We look forward to seeing you there!



## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## 2022 Annual Conference Preparation

The saying “many hands make light work” is so true when we consider the journey we have been on to prepare for this year’s annual conference.

For this year’s conference we have sought the assistance of a wonderful group of individuals to guide us in the right direction.

We have been working with the Aboriginal Reference Group to bring you an all First Nations People focused and run event.

As such we would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge their support and guidance and to let you who they are.

The reference group members are:

- Tara Farmer
- Tony Hanson
- Eric Hayward
- Sean Holyoake
- Jonathon Reid
- Michelle Sims
- Jannine Taylor

## Michelle Sims

Michelle is a Yamatji Wadjarri Nyarlu (woman) who has been with Legal Aid WA for 5 years.

She has practised in both Civil and Criminal Law and is now the Coordinator of First Nations Services where she is tasked with implementation of Legal Aid’s First Nations Strategic Plan.

Michelle is passionate about equal access to justice for First Nations People. She has recently led the roll out of the First Nations Advice Bureau and First Nations Legal Health Check with the goal of providing trauma informed and holistic services more suitable to vulnerable clients.

Michelle is also the chair of Legal Aid WA’s RAP committee, part of the Kwobidok Yok Working Group for the Western Australian Aboriginal Leadership Institute and serves on the Board of Directors for Kinship Connections

## Eric Hayward

My grandfather Eric Samuel Hayward played for South Fremantle Football Club in the 1930’s, with his two brothers Bill and Maley. They were the first Aboriginal league representatives in the WAFL. My grandmother Lily Underwood was born in Manjimup and worked as a servant and breaking in horses around Busselton.

My connections to Noongar country are with the Esperance Wudjari and the South West Wardandi.

I graduated from the University of Western Australia in 1990, with a Bachelor of Jurisprudence and Bachelor of Laws Degrees. In 1992, I completed my Articles of Clerkship and was the first South West Aboriginal Solicitor admitted to the Supreme Court of Western Australia.

Following my admission, I worked as a Criminal Solicitor in Mt Isa and spoke at the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous People, in Geneva, Switzerland.

In the 1990’s I worked for the WA Health Department, Aboriginal Affairs Department and as a Case Manager, for the National Native Title Tribunal.

I come from a family of teachers going back to the 1960’s and 1970’s. So, in 2002 I made a career change to become a Teacher, by completing a Graduate Diploma of Education, from Edith Cowan University. For over 16 years I taught in Primary Schools in Esperance, South Hedland, Fitzroy Crossing, Kalbarri, Bunbury, Collie and Brunswick Junction.

In 2019, I relocated to Alice Springs to work as a Community Legal Educator, for the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency.

After three years I returned to Perth and started work as a Solicitor for Legal Aid. I am grateful for the opportunity to return to my first profession and help disadvantaged clients.



Michelle Sims



## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

I am looking forward to making a difference for my clients and community, by advocating for social justice.



Eric Hayward

## Jannine Taylor

Jannine is an Aboriginal Case Worker at Perth Family Relationships centre.

She has worked as a Support worker in refuge and Homelessness Services in NSW and Aboriginal Health Worker/ Practitioner in AMS and Community Health Centres in WA, NSW and Vic.



## Jonathon Reid

Jonathon is a Budimaia Yamatji with Italian heritage.

He began working as an Indigenous Court Officer at ALSWA Inc. in 1999 before commencing his Law degree at the University of Western Australia in 2002 and returning to the ALSWA Inc. in 2007.

He was admitted to practise in 2009 and has since worked in the Family Law Unit.

He practise's Law predominantly in the Child Welfare jurisdiction of the Children's Court and Family Court 'Child Related Proceedings'

In this role he represent parents and grandparents from aboriginal communities all over Western Australia.

We will feature the other members of our reference group in our next e-Bulletin.

## Tara Farmer

Kaya everyone, my name is Tara. I am a proud Noongar woman from the Great Southern region with connections to the Pilbara (in that my Great-Grandmother was removed as a young child from her family, never to return again).

I am currently employed by Centrecare as Team Leader for the Stronger Together Intensive Family Support Service, in partnership with Wungening Aboriginal Corporation.

I have held many positions throughout my career within both the Government and Not-for-profit sectors. My longest standing career was as a Police Officer with the WA Police (serving 11 years) wherein I gained many skills along the way, helping me to develop resiliency, empathy, valuable skills and knowledge that have helped and will continue to help my Community and others. Unfortunately, a yearning for a work life balance and motherhood made me give up the 'blue uniform'. I am now fortunate to work in the Community Services sector where I hope to pass on my knowledge and experience to others, as well as form positive working relationships along the way.

I believe that if we can all walk together and talk together, to be on the same path of understanding then our journey will be on the positive path to achieving what we need to do.



Tara Farmer



# **WA Family Law Pathways Network Annual Conference 2022**

**24 & 25 MAY 2022**

# **Booking Now Open**

**Welcoming all professionals working in or  
alongside the family law system.**



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## REVIEW OF WAFLPN EVENTS

## Legal Aid WA

with Colleen Brown

### Stronger Woman's Program in the Media

The new Stronger Woman's Program run by Legal Aid WA has received strong media coverage in the regions this month.

The program has been very successful so far with women in the regions quickly taking the opportunity to attend for advice. In the first three months of this year, lawyers have travelled to Broome, Bunbury, Kalgoorlie and Albany and delivered 298 services to vulnerable women experiencing legal issues including parenting, child protection and family violence.

Vulnerable women include older women, youth, aboriginal women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, those suffering mental health issues, those who have substance or alcohol issues, the disabled and others.

The program is available to all vulnerable women and is not currently means tested. Women seeking assistance can call their local regional Legal Aid office or email via

[strongerwomen@legalaid.wa.gov.au](mailto:strongerwomen@legalaid.wa.gov.au)



## Free Lunchtime Webinar



Current news and COVID-19 updates can sometimes feel overwhelming, and you may be experiencing higher levels of stress and anxiety than usual.

Now, more than ever, our self-care strategies and support networks are especially valuable, as we collectively face the current challenges.

During this free lunchtime webinar our counsellors Fiona & Lisa will share their advice on how to positively navigate times of change and uncertainty.

They will also provide you with some easy and practical tips for self-care and ideas on how to support those around us. Tune into this webinar to learn the tools to help you stay resilient and recharge.

This is a free event, but bookings are required. If you are unable to join us during the livestream at 12:30pm, please register and you will receive a link to the full recording.

Scan the QR code to register

or

[register here](#)



## Walk in Their Shoes Tours

Unfortunately there will not be any tours conducted in April.

The following videos produced for Family Court of Western Australia are to assist parties in understanding processes related to Conciliation Conferences, Child Related Proceedings and Case Assessment Conferences and what to expect at these court events.

To view the videos please click [here](#).

Check in [here](#) to register for the next available tour.



## WAFPLN Annual Conference

24 & 25 May 2022

## What's happening around town

If you or your organisation has something to announce, pin it on the board! Submit an article for the notice board by emailing:

[WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationshipswa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationshipswa.org.au)

## Service Wait Times

Find waiting periods for WA Family law services on our website [here](#)

## Unsubscribe?

If you would like to stop receiving the WAFPLN monthly eBulletin please send an email with the subject "unsubscribe" to [WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationshipswa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationshipswa.org.au)

## More Training and Events

Check out the 'Resources' section on our website for more relevant training and events.

[WAFPLN](#)

## Feedback

If you have any suggestions on how to improve our ebulletin, please email them to [annette.marie@relationshipswa.org.au](mailto:annette.marie@relationshipswa.org.au)

## Disclaimer

Content included in this eBulletin originates from a range of sources including contributors from the wider community. The opinions and viewpoints contained do not necessarily reflect those of WAFPLN or its affiliates.



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