

VISIONARY PRO BONO LEADER RECOGNISED FOR ONGOING COMMITMENT TO INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION IN LEGAL PROFESSION

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Firm news

Herbert Smith Freehills' global Head of Pro Bono and Pro Bono Counsel Brooke Massender has been awarded the Co-Chair's Award from CareerTrackers in recognition of her longstanding commitment to increasing Indigenous participation in the legal profession. The award was presented at the organisation's 8th annual gala dinner in Sydney last week.

The prestigious award acknowledges Massender's essential role in Herbert Smith Freehills' ongoing involvement in the CareerTrackers program and her outstanding commitment, participation and leadership towards fulfilling the vision of CareerTrackers.

In 2015, Herbert Smith Freehills made a 10 year commitment to the CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship program, one of 19 organisations to do so, alongside a number of high profile corporate clients, including Bupa, Westpac, IAG, Lendlease, CBA and Qantas.

As the first law firm to join the program in 2011, the tenure of the program has allowed the firm to continually learn from the experience of CareerTrackers interns and develop its offering based on their feedback and experience.

Research launched by CareerTrackers at the dinner revealed 66% of non-Indigenous students graduate university, whereas 89% of CareerTrackers students graduate university. Further, 69% of Australian university graduates secure full-time employment within four months of graduating, whereas 95% of CareerTrackers Alumni are in full-time employment within three months of graduating. This demonstrates the outstanding outcomes achieved as a result of the dedicated resources and commitment of the program.

Herbert Smith Freehills' Regional Managing Partner Andrew Pike said the firm was delighted to see Brooke Massender honoured by the organisation and paid testament to her contribution to the board as a trusted advisor.

"Congratulations to Brooke for this significant honour from one of our highly valued clients," he said. "It demonstrates what an important relationship this is for our firm, and the leading role that Brooke has played over many years in providing legal and strategic advice and nurturing our interns. Their contribution to our firm culture is enriching and valuable and our interns bring fresh insights to the work we do for our clients."

"Brooke is a leader in her field and it is great to see her receiving this recognition. The award also recognises all of the gifted CareerTracker interns we have welcomed into the firm over our years working together"

Brooke Massender said the firm's relationship with CareerTrackers was an integral part of the firm's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

"CareerTrackers is one of our core RAP leadership initiatives and includes Herbert Smith Freehills being the primary provider of pro bono legal services, hosting interns, and providing organisational capacity building within CareerTrackers. It's an incredibly rewarding and enriching relationship, and I am proud to support such incredible talent," Ms Massender said.

ABOUT CAREERTRACKERS

CareerTrackers is a national non-profit organisation that creates internship opportunities for Indigenous university students. Leveraging the 45-year legacy of the INROADS African-American internship program in the United States, CareerTrackers has adapted this model to address Indigenous disadvantage throughout Australia.

CareerTrackers supports pre-professional Indigenous university students and links them with private sector employers to participate in paid multi-year internships. Students perform their internship with a sponsoring company with the aim of converting from intern into full-time employee upon completion of their university degree.

In addition to making long-lasting placements CareerTrackers provides a wide spectrum of support to help prepare students for leadership in the workplace and the community.

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