

28 November 2022

2023 John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship recipient

University of NSW arts and law student, Sharleigh Crittenden was named the 2023 John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship recipient at the Law Council of Australia's Gala Dinner on Friday, 25 November 2022.

The John Koowarta Scholarship is a national scholarship dedicated to helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students achieve their ambition of becoming a lawyer.

The scholarship honours John Koowarta, a Winychanam Elder, who pioneered Aboriginal land rights in Australia during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

"Sharleigh has overcome significant adversity to pursue her dream of becoming a lawyer," Law Council of Australia President Tass Liveris said. "Her experiences have imbued her with a deep and unwavering compassion towards others and she will be a dedicated advocate for those in need.

"In particular, Sharleigh is driven by a determination to be a force in correcting and preventing injustice.

"Sharleigh has generously shared her knowledge and experience to help others achieve their goals, giving back as a mentor to younger Indigenous students.

"She has also already tackled subjects of significant complexity and importance through her research, including how to make our jury system fairer to address the overincarceration of First Nations Australians, and plans to continue this work."

Accepting the award in absentia, Ms Crittenden said: "My specific interests include the value of comparative scholarship; access to justice issues for First Nations; and their underrepresentation in important institutions like the criminal jury. There are many amazing First Nations people and organisations out there doing important and difficult work. Their resilience, commitment and kindness inspire me.

"As a proud Wiradjuri woman, I am deeply thankful for the honour of this scholarship, which has had such a high calibre of past recipients. I hope to spend 2023 completing my LLB and Arts degree, as well as continuing to work on amplifying the voices and perspectives of First Nations Australians in policy, law reform and academia."

"It was a great honour to be able to present the John Koowarta Scholarship to Ms Crittenden and I wish her the best for what I know will be a remarkable and impactful career," Mr Liveris said.

Contact: Kristen Connell, P. 0400 054 227, E. kristen@talkforcemedia.com.au

The Law Council of Australia is the national voice of the legal profession, promoting justice and the rule of law.