

President's Report: AGM

13 February 2018,

La Trobe Law School, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

This report has been prepared for the 2018 AGM and covers the activities of the Corporate Law Teachers Association (CLTA) for the period February 2017 to January 2018.

Executive Committee of the CLTA

The CLTA was established as an unincorporated association in 1994, by scholars of corporate law. The association seeks to represent the voices of the various corporate law scholars in Australia, New Zealand and the Asia Pacific region. The goals of the CLTA include:

- Advancing corporate law teaching, research and scholarship.
- Promoting cooperation and exchange of ideas between corporate law scholars in the region.
- Promoting active cooperation between corporate law teachers and universities.
- Promoting cooperation with professional legal associations and law reform agencies.
- Hosting an annual conference to highlight current developments in corporate law scholarship.

The Executive Committee of the CLTA for 2017 comprised:

- Jason Harris, UTS [President]
- Michelle Welsh, Monash University [Immediate Past President]
- Kath Hall, ANU [Secretary]
- Gill North, Deakin University [Treasurer]
- Anil Hargovan, UNSW
- Ellie Chapple, QUT
- Susan Watson, Auckland University
- Suzanne Le Mire, University of Adelaide
- Jennifer Dickfos, Griffith University
- Beth Nosworthy, University of Adelaide
- David Wishart, La Trobe University

2017 CLTA Conference

Last year's conference was hosted by the Department of Accounting, Finance & Economics, Griffith Business School and the Griffith Law School. The theme for the Conference was 'Agile Corporate Law: CSR, Innovation & Environment', and featured Professor Sally Wheeler, Head of Law, Queen's University Belfast, Ireland as the keynote speaker. The conference was held in the picturesque bush setting of the Griffith Business School Gold Coast campus with conference attendees travelling from Gold Coast hotels on the new light rail (with travel cards provided in the conference packs) and was a great event, with stimulating presentations across

all 3 days. The conference dinner was held at the spectacular Soul hotel on the beachfront at Surfers Paradise with an interesting insight into corporate counsel work for the upcoming Commonwealth Games. The CLTA sincerely thanks Dr Jennifer Dickfos, Catherine Brown, Associate Professor Therese Wilson and Tim Peters and their team for a wonderful event, as well as the plenary speakers and panellists for sharing their insights.

2018 Conference

This year's conference is hosted by Dr David Wishart and his colleagues at La Trobe Law School, in their Melbourne CBD campus, under the theme of "Let's make corporate law great again!". The conference features three plenary sessions, with keynote presentations from Professor Paddy Ireland, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, University of Bristol Law School, and Professor Charles Yablon, Director Cardozo Data Law Initiative, Benjamin Cardozo School of Law, New York. The conference also features a plenary discussion panel on 'Solving Directors' Duties' with Professor Ireland, Professor Yablon, Professor Jean du Plessis from Deakin Law School and Dr Rosemary Langford from Melbourne Law School. The conference also features a teaching and learning panel discussion on Sunday afternoon: "Lets Make Teaching Great Again", featuring reflections from Dr David Wishart, Associate Professor Anil Hargovan (UNSW), Catherine Nguyen (UTS) and Jason Harris (UTS).

2018 Best Paper Prize

Every year one paper is selected from the annual conference for the best paper prize. A full description of the terms of the award can be found on the CLTA website. The prize is designed to encourage scholarship by authors at Senior Lecturer level or below. Accordingly, papers submitted by authors whose appointment is above Senior Lecturer (or equivalent) are ineligible for the prize. The eligible papers must be submitted by a certain date which is nominated in the call for papers.

The Best Paper Prize is presented at the CLTA Conference dinner by Ms Louise McIntyre (Victorian state manager, Governance Institute of Australia) on behalf of our major sponsor, Governance Institute of Australia Ltd. We thank the Governance Institute for their continued support of the CLTA and the Best Paper Prize.

This year we have a tied vote among the executive, with joint winners:

Vivien Chen, 'Private and public enforcement of directors' duties in Malaysia and Australia: the implications of context', Monash University

Alice Klettner, 'Stewardship Codes and the Pursuit of Corporate Sustainability', UTS

2018 CLTA Conference Bursary

Our bursary program, which offers financial support to enable HDR candidates to present a paper at the conference, provides a valuable opportunity for HDR students to share their research with corporate law scholars. There are generally two bursaries awarded each year. Congratulations to this year's recipients:

Kate Watson, 'Harnessing the power of corporations for positive social change: the example of women on boards', University of Newcastle

Robyn Trubshaw, 'Responsibilities within the Governance Space: A Study of the Boundary Spanning Role of the Company Secretary operating around Contemporary Boards', QUT

General Activities of the Executive

The CLTA executive has had a busy year with a number of new initiatives.

Conference timing

In mid-2017 an email survey was sent to members seeking their views on moving the timing of the conference (traditionally starting the first Sunday in February) to the second week of February to address conflicts for parents with school commencement. The executive agreed to move the 2018 conference to the second week of February after a majority of respondents to the survey agreed. The 2019 conference timing is also scheduled for the second week of February to avoid overlap with public holidays in New Zealand. The executive is keen to hear from members as to their preferred timing and this will be raised again in the AGM.

Student corporate law essay prize

The first CLTA Corporate Law Student Essay Prize was offered in 2017, with submissions from CLTA members who recommended student essays of between 3,000 and 5,000 words from students studying corporate law and related subjects in 2017 at either undergraduate or postgraduate level in Australian and New Zealand universities. The executive were pleased with submissions for this new prize, which offers a first prize of \$300, second prize of \$200 and a third prize of \$100. The editors of the Australian Journal of Corporate Law (published by LexisNexis) have expressed interest in receiving submissions from the prize winning papers (subject to standard refereeing processes). Submissions were received from students studying at ANU, University of Newcastle, University of New South Wales, University of Queensland and Western Sydney University. The winners were:

1st prize: Jock Gardner, ‘Arendt and Corporate Culture: Instilling Thoughtfulness into the Commonwealth Criminal Code’, Australian National University

2nd prize: Thomas Mowbray, ‘The Maxwell Test: A Necessary Limitation on the ‘Stepping Stone’ Approach’, University of Newcastle

3rd prize: Daniele Wilson, ‘ASX Corporate Governance Principles and their applicability to RNTBCs: A Possible Future?’, University of Queensland

We encourage CLTA members to promote the prize to their students in 2018. Please speak to the President if you have any queries regarding the prize.

Commemorative book

The CLTA executive emailed members in mid-2017 seeking expressions of interest in contributing to a commercial book of essays on corporate law spanning the period of the CLTA’s existence. Preliminary discussions have been held with Federation Press to publish this book, and a call for expressions of interest will be sent to members soon. Those interested in contributing should speak to Anil Hargovan (executive member coordinating the project) asap.

Newsletter

This year saw the commencement of a periodic newsletter to members, with updates on initiatives and upcoming events. This is distributed via Mailchimp and I’m pleased to report that we have over 140 subscribers and a high open and click through rate for our emails. If you would like to advertise an upcoming event for the newsletter, please contact the President.

Improving administration

A priority for the executive this year has been improving our back-office systems and databases. We engaged research assistance to convert our membership list (comprising an excel

spreadsheet of member emails) into a fully functioning basic CRM system with tailored spreadsheets and email lists based on member location, employer and seniority so that tailored email notices can be sent out. Moving to the MailChimp system also allows recipients to unsubscribe, helping to reduce unwanted emails.

2019 CLTA Conference

We are very pleased that the Auckland Law School, University of Auckland, represented by Professor Susan Watson, has offered to host the CLTA conference in February 2019. Please check the CLTA website: www.clta.edu.au regularly for 2019 conference details (dates, conference theme and call for papers) and for the link to the host university's website.

Thank You

I am standing down as President at the 2018 conference, after serving one year in the role. I would like to thank the members of the 2017 Executive for their support and wonderful collegiality. It has been an honour to serve as President of the CLTA and I look forward to remaining part of the CLTA community for many years to come.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. R. Harris', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Jason Harris (UTS)
CLTA President**