

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE5431

Bolton, Genevieve

(1971 -)

Nationality Australian

Born 1 January, 1971, Bendigo Victoria Australia

Occupation Lawyer, Solicitor

Summary

Genevieve Bolton was born in Bendigo Victoria but spent most of her childhood growing up in Brisbane. After graduating from Mount Saint Michael's College in Ashgrove, Brisbane she undertook her Bachelor of Law Degree at the Queensland University of Technology graduating in 1994.

She then spent a year in Melbourne undertaking a social justice volunteer placement run by the Jesuits and Sisters of Mercy where she was placed with the then Refugee and Advice Casework Service now Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre (RILC). In that role, she provided legal assistance to onshore asylum seekers and people seeking to sponsor relatives from refugee situations abroad.

She quickly learnt that she wanted to pursue a career in the community legal sector. In 1995, she completed her legal practical training at the Leo Cussen Institute in Melbourne and was admitted as a Solicitor and Barrister in Victoria and obtained her first paid legal job with then the Victorian Immigration Advice and Rights Centre now known as RILC. Genevieve has also been admitted as a Solicitor in Queensland and the ACT and is on the High Court roll.

Genevieve Bolton is currently (2015) the Co-ordinator/Principal Solicitor at Canberra Community Law which provides free legal services to disadvantaged and vulnerable people.

Details

Genevieve Bolton was born in Bendigo Victoria but spent most of her childhood growing up in Brisbane. On graduating from Mount Saint Michael's College in Ashgrove, Brisbane she undertook her Bachelor of Law Degree at the Queensland University of Technology graduating in 1994.

Yearning to find a satisfying and rewarding path which would enable her to make a difference, she spent a year in Melbourne undertaking a social justice volunteer placement run by the Jesuits and Sisters of Mercy where she was placed with the then Refugee and Advice Casework Service now Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre (RILC). In that role, she provided legal assistance to onshore asylum seekers and people seeking to sponsor relatives from refugee situations abroad and quickly learnt that she wanted to pursue a career in the community legal sector.

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During the period 2000 to 2003, Genevieve was the Principal Solicitor of the then Welfare Rights Centre in Brisbane, now known as Basic Rights Queensland. During this time she managed a large casework practice and ran several test cases in the Social Security jurisdiction. During this period she was also an active member of the Refugee and Immigration Legal Service's Management Committee and was one of two integral members who put together a migration training program for the services' migration agent volunteers.

Currently, Genevieve is the Co-ordinator/Principal Solicitor at Canberra Community Law which provides free legal services to disadvantaged and vulnerable people. In this role she manages the Centre and its legal practice whilst continuing to provide front line legal services to some of the most marginalised and disadvantaged people in the ACT community. Under her leadership, Canberra Community Law has successfully established a number of innovative programs including the Street Law program and a multi-disciplinary practice model which combines legal and social work advocacy to prevent homelessness. Genevieve was also instrumental in the establishment of the Centre's Community Law Clinical Program in partnership with the Australian National University (ANU) and has led the ongoing development of the program. The program is regarded as the ANU's flagship clinical program.

Genevieve is currently the chair of the ACT Community Legal Centres Association and a member of the National Association of Community Legal Centres's (NACLC) Advisory Council. She has recently been appointed as a Commissioner to the Legal Aid ACT Commission Board.

Genevieve was an inaugural member of the National Welfare Rights Network Inc (NWRN) from 2002 to 2008 and played a leading role in the establishment of NWRN as a national peak body in the area of Social Security law. Whilst NWRN's National Liaison Officer, Genevieve also undertook a scoping study on legal need in the Northern Territory in 2007 which resulted in the funding of four welfare rights worker positions in the two Aboriginal Legal Services in the Northern Territory.

Genevieve helped set up the Pro Bono Clearing House in the ACT in 2005 and continues to serve on its Management Committee. She is currently the Secretary of the Tenants Union (ACT) Management Committee and the ACT Representative on the NACLC's Professional Indemnity Insurance subcommittee.

Events

2016 - 2016

Medal (OAM) in the General Division, Order of Australia: For service to the law, particularly to welfare rights.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Site Exhibition

Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers>

Author Details

Genevieve Bolton

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Digital resources



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