

**Tuesday, 11 June 2024**

## **Solicitors recognised in King's Birthday Honours List**

**Current and former NSW solicitors, including the Governor-General designate, feature prominently in this year's King's Birthday Honours list, underscoring the important role of the profession in the life of our communities, our state and the nation.**

President of the Law Society of NSW Brett McGrath has congratulated all who've received Orders of Australia honours, while applauding the particular contributions of those who serve the law.

"I regard lawyers' service to the community so highly that I have made it one of my President's Priorities for my 2024 term representing the interests of more than 42,000 solicitors across the state," Mr McGrath said.

Australia's next Governor-General Sam Mostyn AC began her career as an Associate to the former President of the NSW Court of Appeal (and subsequently High Court Justice) Michael Kirby AC CMG, before a relatively short period as a solicitor. Ms Mostyn has been a welcome and valued keynote speaker at events at the Law Society of NSW.

The late Ruth Charlton (dec) AM was a member of the Law Society for over 35 years and was a pioneer in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) from almost the beginning of her legal career. In 1986, the year after her admission, she became a founding member of the Australian Dispute Resolution Association. She was a Law Society Accredited Specialist in Mediation and served as the founding chair of the Law Society's ADR Specialist Accreditation Committee.

Robert Kelly AM, a solicitor of 26 years before being called to the Bar in 2000, has applied his legal skills to the service of the medical profession as a hearing member of medical disciplinary tribunals, including a period as Deputy President of the New South Wales Medical Board. Mr Kelly has served as Pro-Chancellor of University of Technology Sydney. He has led the Law Foundation of NSW and the Solicitors Benevolent Association.

Nalika Padmasena OAM was a relative latecomer to the law when she was admitted as a solicitor in 2007. A decade before Ms Padmasena joined the legal profession, she served some of the community's most vulnerable people as a court support worker at Parramatta. Ms Padmasena has filled leadership roles at the Senior Rights Centre, where she now practises, the Toongabbie Community Legal Centre and the Community Legal Centres Association of Australia. She was awarded her Order of Australia Medal for service to the multicultural community.

Mr McGrath also congratulated former Federal Circuit and Family Law of Australia Judge Lewis Driver AM who was honoured for significant service to the judiciary, and to the law. Mr Driver's 22 years on the bench of the FCFCOA (formerly the Federal Magistrates Court) caps half a century of dedicated service to the justice system and rule of law.

"It's impossible for the King's Birthday Honours List or this statement to recognise all lawyers who serve in countless ways as leaders in their communities, including providing no-cost or low-cost legal services to the vulnerable. However, these awards are a fitting way to offer a nation's gratitude to Australians whose generosity and diligence set an example for us all," Mr McGrath said.

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