

## Law students honour memory of Indigenous rights campaigner through scholarship

Indigenous law students Aurora Milroy and Ashley Walker have been announced as the 2011 John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship recipients.

First established in 1994, the Scholarship commemorates John Koowarta, a member of the Winychanam community at Aurukun and a traditional owner of the Archer River region on Cape York Peninsula in Queensland.

“The Law Council of Australia has been involved with this initiative for over 15 years and it has helped 19 Indigenous law students pursue their legal education,” said Law Council President, Alexander Ward.

“Aurora and Ashley are great role models for young Indigenous people across the nation considering a future career in the legal profession.

“They are deserving winners and I congratulate them for what they have achieved.”

The Scholarship is available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in an approved course of study at or through an Australian tertiary institute, which is a prerequisite to admission as a legal practitioner in any Australian jurisdiction.

Ms Milroy—a Palyku woman of the Pilbara, Western Australia, and in her fourth year of a Bachelor of Arts/Law at the University of WA—said she was excited and honoured to win the award.

“The Scholarship is going to make a real difference to my studies,” she said.

“I’d like to put some of it towards going up to the Pilbara to go to native title meetings and get experience in that field of law.

“It will work as a supplement to what I have been studying and help me gain practical experience.”

Mr Walker—a fifth year Bachelor of Laws/Commerce student at the University of NSW and Director of Ngalaya Aboriginal Corporation—said winning the Scholarship went beyond helping ease the financial strain associated with studying at university.

“It’s an honour to be counted amongst the previous recipients of the Scholarship who are a pretty talented bunch. It’s a great feeling,” he said.

“I’ll be able to cut down on part-time work and really focus on my studies, which is really important around exams time.”

Mr Ward said the winners epitomised the values and principles the John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship stood for.

“It was a great honour to present Ms Milroy and Mr Walker with their scholarship; they’re two outstanding role models within their respective communities and I wish them all the best for their future studies and careers,” said Mr Ward.

“The John Koowarta Scholarship is something the Law Council has been immensely proud to be involved with and we consider it an important part of promoting Indigenous involvement in the legal profession.”

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