

# Media release

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14 March 2019

*For immediate release*

## Graduate legal program to honour Magistrate Steve Myall

Victoria Legal Aid has today announced the inaugural Steve Myall Graduate Program, for students completing legal studies in Melbourne's west.

The program will offer a nine to twelve-month graduate position to work at Victoria Legal Aid's Sunshine office while completing their post graduate studies.

Regional Managing Lawyer for the Western Suburbs, Tamsin Mildenhall says the program was created to acknowledge the contribution Mr Myall made to legal services in western Melbourne: "this program will ensure the characteristics that His Honour Steve Myall spent his professional life defending and upholding endure in this region."

"His Honour was particularly interested in the professional growth of lawyers who chose, as he had, to spend their professional lives practicing in this area. He was known both within the profession and by those who came before him as compassionate and genuinely interested in social justice." Says Ms Mildenhall

The program will provide a student from a disadvantaged background with access to the networks, expertise, real-life work experience, mentoring and training that can open the door to a career in the social justice sector.

"It's a great opportunity for 'westies' who sometimes lack the cultural capital usually required to gain employment as a lawyer.

"At Victoria Legal Aid, we can offer hands-on experience within the areas of criminal, family and civil law based in the Sunshine office, which will assist in developing practical legal skills and knowledge, with exposure to a range of legal aid work.

"Most importantly, it allows a person from this community to assist disadvantaged people in this community with their legal problems. This concept of 'from the community, for the community' aligns with Victoria Legal Aid's approach to cultural diversity and inclusion." Says Ms Mildenhall

His Honour Mr Steve Myall sat as a Magistrate at the Sunshine and Werribee Courts for five years. On 14 March 2018 at the end of an unremarkable day hearing cases in the Sunshine Magistrates Court, he took his own life. Prior to being appointed as a Magistrate, His Honour practiced as a criminal lawyer in the Western suburbs of Melbourne.

Applications for the program will open in May 2019, more information is available at

[www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/about-us/careers](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/about-us/careers).

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