

Monday, 13 May 2019

LAUGHING OUT LOUD WITH A ROOM FULL OF LAWYERS

Julian Morrow may have shot to fame producing the TV series “The Chaser’s War on Everything” in the 2000s, but like many of Australia’s most successful comedians (Rebel Wilson, Charlie Pickering, Anh Do, Jane Turner and Shaun Micallef), he also has a law degree.

And despite seeming to be poles apart, according to Morrow, there have been many moments on his path from the legal profession to professional comedy, when law and comedy have complemented each other. Which puts Morrow in the ideal position to host more than 800 bleary-eyed lawyers at 7.30am on Friday 17 May 2019 at the legal industry’s most anticipated event - the NSW Young Lawyers’ Golden Gavel Competition.

The Golden Gavel will see 10 bold, brave and talented young lawyers take to the stage in the ultimate battle of wits and offer up their comedic insights on some of the current legal topics dominating the headlines.

President of NSW Young Lawyers, Jennifer Windsor, said the Golden Gavel was one of NSW Young Lawyers’ oldest and most well-known events.

“While the public has a long tradition of making jokes about lawyers, the Golden Gavel competition shows that we are not afraid to turn the spotlight on the legal profession and use ourselves as fodder for our own entertainment,” Ms Windsor said.

Ms Windsor said the Golden Gavel judging criteria is quite tough with participants assessed on humour, cleverness, originality and performance.

“If entertaining a room full of 800 lawyers before they are fully caffeinated isn’t quite daunting enough, our competitors only receive their topic the day prior to the competition, giving them less than 24 hours to prepare.

“Seeing what our 10 competitors manage to come up with is always completely unexpected, creative, absolutely hilarious and sometimes irreverent.

“One minute they have the audience ‘laughing out loud’, the next minute they are choking on their croissants.

“It’s little wonder this event is a sell out every year.”

This year’s Golden Gavel competitors are:

- Benjamin Keyworth, Federal Circuit Court
- Daniel Taha, King & Wood Mallesons
- Dhanu Eliezer, LegalVision
- Hudson Digby, Thomson Geer
- Joseph Bates, Baker McKenzie
- Lane Pitcher, University of Technology Sydney
- Marcelle Chester Harding, Mills Oakley
- Sarah Hort, Ashurst
- Thomas Johnston, Dentons
- Thomas Spohr, Legal Aid

This year's Golden Gavel is sponsored by Sparke Helmore Lawyers and Unisearch and will be held at the Westin, Sydney on Friday, 17 May 2019. The winner will go on to fly the flag for the NSW legal community at the National Golden Gavel.

The Golden Gavel is one of many events taking place across NSW and Australia during **Law Week 2019** from 13-19 May.

The City of Sydney Regional Law Society will host its annual Law Week Breakfast on 17 May 2019 with keynote speaker, Emeritus Professor Rosalind Croucher AM, President, Australian Human Rights Commission.

Many local libraries are also hosting [Legal Aid workshops](#) on "Avoiding Scams" including Merrylands Library, Campbelltown Library, Rockdale Library and Bowral Library. Local libraries and councils are also hosting Legal Aid talks on "NDIS – How the Law Can Help". These include Ryde Library, Randwick City Library, Wollongong City Library and Shellharbour City Council.

Other Law Week events around Sydney include:

- "The Law & You Expo", Cabramatta focusing on legal rights and responsibilities for students studying AMEP English at Navitas Cabramatta College. Legal sessions covered will include fines & WDOs, police powers & employment rights on 4 June 2019.
- "Renters' Rights and the Law", Waverley Library, 14 May 2019, a discussion about tenants' rights and protections, organised by the Eastern Area Tenants Service.
- "Know Your Shopping Rights – The Australian Consumer Law", Lane Cove Library, 14 May 2019, presented by NSW Fair Trading.
- "Legal Issues for Older People" panel discussion at Woollahra Library, 15 May 2019. The event will include a film screening of the play *Piano Forte*, which explores elder abuse.
- Local Court Open Days for Multicultural Communities at Fairfield Local Court (31 July 2019) and Liverpool Local Court (1 August 2019), with mock trials and sessions on AVOs, Care & Protection and Family Law.

Law Week events in Regional NSW include:

- Regional Law Expos at Coffs Harbour, in partnership with Coffs Harbour TAFE, and Armidale, in partnership with University of Armidale.
- "Conversations in the Chair", a community legal education session in Coffs Harbour focusing on domestic violence and family violence.
- Performance of "Youth and the Law" play at Singleton Library (written, produced and directed by year 11 drama students at St Catherine's College).
- Open Court Day in Broken Hill in partnership with the Aboriginal Services Unit.

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- Presentations on Consumer's Legal Rights with Department of Fair Trading and local solicitors in Henty, Holbrook, Culcairn and Jindera.

For more information about Law Week 2018 visit: www.nswlawweek.com.au/ and for information on Golden Gavel, visit www.lawsociety.com.au/learning-and-events/young-lawyers/golden-gavel.

CONTACT:

Sue Finn | Media and Public Relations Manager

The Law Society of New South Wales

T: +61 2 9926 0288 | M: +61 413 440 699 | E: media@lawsociety.com.au