Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE5440

Vickers, Laura

Occupation Businesswoman, Lawyer, Solicitor, Writer

Summary

Laura Vickers is the founder of Nest Legal, Australia’s first online after-hours law firm. She graduated from the University of Melbourne in 2006 with first class honours in law and since then has practised law in everything from conveyancing to High Court appeals.

Vickers has worked as a Principal Solicitor with the Victorian Government Solicitor’s Office, where she represented the State of Victoria in the constitutional challenge to chaplains in schools and was the legal advisor to the Victorian Floods Review, assisting former Chief Commissioner Neil Comrie AO, APM. She has also worked for top 20 firm Maddocks and local Clifton Hill law firm Elliott Stafford & Associates, taught undergraduate law at La Trobe University, chaired the Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee at the Law Institute of Victoria and volunteered with the Fitzroy Legal Service.

Go to ‘Details’ below to read an essay written by Laura Vickers for the Trailblazing Women and the Law Project.

Details

The following additional information was provided by Laura Vickers in June 2015.

Laura Vickers is the founder of Nest Legal, Australia's first online after-hours law firm.

Laura grew up in Castlemaine, Victoria. She ran a number of businesses as a child, including a roadside egg stall, coordinating birthday parties and playing functions with her string quartet. In 2000, she moved to Melbourne for university to study a double degree in law and communications.

Throughout her university studies, Laura worked as a skincare consultant, copywriter, pyjama model, secretary and conveyancing clerk in Melbourne and London. She had planned to finish her degrees, get admitted as a lawyer and then return to Europe to pursue a career in communications.
She graduated from the University of Melbourne in 2006 with first class honours in law. She then lived for three months in Paris at Shakespeare & Co bookshop, supplementing her writing income by teaching French children to sing English nursery rhymes.

In 2007, she undertook her articled clerkship at Maddocks, coordinated the marketing for the inaugural Human Rights Arts and Film Festival, and wrote a column for Richard Ackland's Justinian. By the time of her admission to the legal profession in 2008, she had made three discoveries that adjusted her life plans: it was a hard slog earning an income as a writer, she didn't mind legal practice and she was rather fond of a handsome prosecutor in the firm's Construction Law team.

In 2009, when the global financial crisis hit and Laura's state government commercial practice dried up, the prosecutor (who she would ultimately marry) helped her develop a practice prosecuting dog and brothel owners for local councils. After the novelty of this wore off and the prosecutor went to the Victorian Bar, Laura accepted a position as a constitutional lawyer with the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office (VGSO).

Laura worked at the VGSO from 2009 until 2013, during which time she acted as the legal adviser to the Victorian Floods Review, taught undergraduate law at La Trobe University, performed with her band at various Melbourne live music venues, completed a Graduate Diploma in Government Law and chaired the Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee of the Law Institute of Victoria (LIV). In 2013, her son Rufus was born. Whilst he slept, Laura created and managed the VGSO blog.

At the end of 2013, unable to secure enough childcare to enable her to return to fulltime work at the VGSO, Laura started Nest Legal. Its services are designed to meet the needs of busy working parents who do not have time to visit a lawyer's office during the day. It provides after-hours Skype consultations, advertises its fixed fees online and obtains initial instructions via secure web forms, which can be provided at the client's convenience. This not only suits her client base but enables Laura to do the bulk of her work at times when her son is asleep or her husband is home to assist with childcare. The firm's law clerks collaborate with Laura via the cloud, working at times that suit their own personal commitments. The firm grows through word of mouth on social media.

Nest Legal has been heralded as a blueprint for lawyers thinking creatively about technology to better serve their clients and parents continuing to practice law meaningfully after having children. In 2014, Nest Legal received the LexisNexis Legal Innovation Index award and in 2015 was shortlisted for the Law Institute of Victoria's Law Firm of the Year (less than 50 partners). Laura now mentors other lawyers wanting to develop online law firms and sits on the LIV's Technology and the Law Committee, which guides the profession on the use of technology.

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

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Digital resources



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