

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6387

Ashmor, Kate

(1980 -)

Born 19800101, Melbourne Victoria Australia

Occupation Business owner, Community Leader, Lawyer, President

Summary

When Kate Ashmor was young, a family member advised her that the best way for her to channel her argumentative tendencies while earning a living was to become a lawyer. She took this advice and now Kate runs her own practice, Ashmor Legal. She has previously worked in a variety of government and corporate settings.

As well as running her own business Kate has a variety of community interests, applying the skills she has in her professional toolkit to leadership in not-for-profit and voluntary organisations. She is Chair of the board of Caulfield Park Bendigo Bank and has served on the boards of Alola Australia and Project Deborah. She is a Past Convenor of Victorian Women Lawyers (2010-2011) and a Past President of Australian Women Lawyers (2012-2013). She served as an elected Councillor in the City of Glen Eira from 2005-2008.

She combines all this with family life, but hastens to add that she doesn't want to intimidate others with her level of activity. 'I've always felt – and it's difficult for non-Jewish people to understand this – that there is a motivation that comes from deep within,' she says. 'It is like a compass – something that gets me out of bed, and navigates me through tough times. It is an obligation to those who didn't make it.' She carries that obligation, 'in the choice I have made in life to pack in as much as I can, in the types of things I've chosen to pack in and in the career risks I've chosen to take.' By 'packing it in' she doesn't assume or expect that others must do the same, but she does hope her example, and some lessons she has learned along the way, will inspire other women to take risks, take leadership opportunities and get involved.

Her view is that if we are going to address the structural issues that work against women, then we need voices that are influential who can stand up and speak. 'There are a hell of a lot of these voices,' she says, 'but they are pushing through each day on a few hours' sleep, trying to be a million things to a million people, working full time or running their own businesses with a child on their hip.'

Many of them are well educated, and that education creates opportunities. 'The most powerful tool that a Jewish woman can have, she says, 'is what is in their head, not what is on their fingers. Stuff just comes and goes. But the legacy you can leave by using your education is what's important to me, as a Jewish woman. It can't be taken away.'

Who knows what lies ahead for Kate Ashmor? She certainly won't waste time moving onto it if the calling comes:

There are those who want to get involved to enjoy the status quo, there are those who want to change it to improve the lives of others. My adult life is to help advocate on behalf of others... I see myself as a problem solver and a change maker. I want my epitaph to be 'I did the best I could.'

Author Details

Nikki Henningham and Kate Ashmor

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