



# Marrickville Legal Centre

From the inner west,  
serving NSW

## November Update

This month, we are thrilled to recap the highlights of our 45th Anniversary Gala Dinner, a night filled with celebration, reflection, and gratitude. We also take this opportunity to celebrate the champions of MLC - our dedicated staff, volunteers, and supporters - whose unwavering commitment has been instrumental in our journey as an organisation for 45 years. We acknowledge the invaluable partnerships we have with pro bono partners, community organisations and educational institutions who help us achieve successful outcomes for our clients and broaden our impact across the community. These collaborations are the backbone of our success, enabling us to continue our mission of providing access to justice for all.



## MLC's 45th Gala Dinner

On 31 October, MLC hosted a Gala Dinner to celebrate 45 years of community impact and creating access to justice for the most vulnerable members of our community. Nearly 300 guests gathered at the Marrickville Town Hall, where our services were established in 1979. We were honoured to have special guests in attendance, including the Honourable Justice Michael Lee, who delivered the keynote address.

Reaching this 45-year milestone is a significant achievement, made possible by the vision of our founders and the support of all of you, our dedicated partners, donors, and volunteers, in helping us achieve #JusticeForUsAll.

We thank you and ask that you [please consider donating now](#) so that our centre can continue on strongly for the next 45 years and beyond to provide legal services to those in our community who need it the most.

[Donate Now](#)

## Notice of Annual General Meeting

MLC will be holding our 2024 Annual General Meeting on Monday 25 November 2024 at our Addison Road Office. We encourage all supporters of MLC to join as a member to help us guide the impact our organisation has in the community. Members have the opportunity to vote at general meetings, allowing you to directly influence decisions and policies that affect the direction and initiatives of MLC.

[Become a Member today](#)



## **UTS Shopfront Managing for Social Impact**

This semester, MLC partnered with UTS Shopfront's Managing for Social Impact Course to work with a group of students to develop a comprehensive fundraising and donor engagement strategy. Our partnership aims to set a roadmap to secure more funds, enhance brand visibility and elevate our organisation's profile via strategic fundraising initiatives. The students delivered their final presentation to us earlier this month and we are looking forward to executing the strategy to increase the number of regular donors to the organisation and reach our fundraising targets for the year.

### **Champions of MLC: Marcus Vella**

This month, we feature long-term volunteer solicitor and supporter of MLC, Marcus Vella. Marcus helped establish two new ongoing pro bono partnerships to provide additional volunteer lawyers to assist MLC through law firms he has worked at - Gilchrist Connell and Wotton + Kearney.



"I started as a baby law graduate in 2018, shadowing other lawyers on the Wednesday evening MLC General Advice Clinic on a fortnightly basis. However, since then, I just never stopped. My fortnightly MLC sessions have become a part of who I am, and I look forward to them, and the wonderful stories of help that I get to be a part of, always.

My personal favourite story was a man who I first assisted through an evening advice clinic in 2019, by helping him draft a statutory demand to recover a debt owed to him by the taxi company he worked for, who wrongfully told a third party to sue him personally for damage to their vehicle, which was out of the client's control and happened while he was working. I recommended that the law firm I was working with at the time (Sparke Helmore) took the matter on as a referral, and we did. A few months later, COVID-19 hit, and the client was jobless and struggling to support his family. We pressed on, and after commencing proceedings to wind-up the taxi company, the client received payment of the entire debt in full, plus costs. Since the firm was acting pro bono, we passed those costs on to the client as a gift, and his son called me the following day crying to thank me for all we had done.

For me, this is my "why". I will never forget that man, and how it meant the world to him to put food on the table for a few more weeks or months. I try to always remember that there are good people out there, who are willing to help – you just need to find them. MLC makes that connection possible."

### **Client Case Study: Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Service**

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A young client named Jessica\* approached our service for assistance after escaping a violent relationship with her ex-partner. The client needed legal assistance in responding to a vexatious family law property claim as well as assistance with dealing with a finance provider who was pursuing her for an unpaid loan for a vehicle.



The client required a trauma-informed service and spoke English as a second language. We assisted Jessica in responding to the ex-partner's legal representative in relation to the family law claim and through negotiations, this resolved with each party walking away. In relation to the car finance, it was our client's ex-partner who placed the loan in Jessica's name even though she does not drive and never had the income to afford the loan. The ex-partner had the car. Through extensive negotiations, we were able to have the car delivered back into the possession of Jessica. From there, we were able to enter into dispute resolution with the car dealer and financier on responsible lending and financial hardship grounds and successfully negotiated for the remaining \$15,000 owing to be waived in full on the basis Jessica returns them the car.

*\*Name changed for confidentiality.*

Warmly,

MLC Team



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