

Young community solicitor wins Lawyer of the Year 2009 Award

The Employment Law Centre of WA (Inc) (**ELC**) is delighted that its Principal Solicitor, Toni Emmanuel, was awarded Lawyer of the Year by the Law Society of Western Australia at the Law Week Luncheon yesterday.

Toni was given the award for making a significant contribution to the legal profession in WA.

As ELC's only solicitor, Toni oversees all ELC's legal services to vulnerable West Australian employees. She has supervised and mentored over 40 paralegals, volunteers and junior solicitors. The excellent pro bono relationships established by Toni have enabled ELC to provide thousands of hours of quality free legal advice and services to those who otherwise could not access justice.

Toni has also contributed significantly to other community legal services as a volunteer on the Board of Management for the Welfare Rights Advocacy Service since October 2008 and Street Law Centre WA since November 2005.

Having started her career with a prominent national law firm, Toni moved to ELC in 2006. Toni was honoured to receive the award and believes *"it reflects the generosity of many people - my family volunteering in the community, the incredible commitment of staff and volunteers at ELC and the lawyers and law firms volunteering time and expertise to assist those who need it most."*

ELC is the only community legal centre in WA providing free employment law advice, further assistance and representation to thousands of vulnerable Western Australian employees each year. The demand for this essential service has doubled in the past 9 months.

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