

Judith Fordham

I was delighted to be asked to address this conference, and to attend the awards dinner. I have been a member of many women's groups in my time. All had their politics, like any group. Some were supportive of all women members, some mostly of an inner circle. Some looked to people outside their own group, others were inward looking.

I have NEVER, EVER come across a group such as ACWAP before. Not only were the stories of the award winners (dreadful overworked word) inspirational, but it was obvious that there were so many others who had similar reasons to be admired. The generosity of spirit with which police women recognised and applauded the achievement of their own (against familiar obstacles that are magnified in a policing environment), and the overarching desire to make this world a better and safer place, was extraordinary. I will never forget it and never cease to be impressed and inspired.

I wish I were not too old to have yet another career change. Let me know when there is a special Squad for geriatrics. I will join.

And please, if there is anything I can ever do to help any group of, or any one of you, please let me know. judith@judithfordham.com.au

Biography

Judith was once a battered wife with three small children who was forced to live on food vouchers from the Salvation Army. Today she is one of Western Australia's best known criminal lawyers, who built up her own firm (Fordham's Barristers & Solicitors) from a one person practice to a firm with twelve employees. She subsequently sold her practice to become a barrister.

Judith is currently undertaking groundbreaking research at the University of Western Australia where she taught Criminal Law and Evidence for science undergraduates and postgraduates at the Centre for Forensic Science. She is also doing a PhD on the way juries deal with evidence on criminal cases. Her thesis stirred intense interest across the criminal law field because Judith has secured unprecedented access to jurors for post trial interviews. It is usually illegal to approach jurors but personal permission from the W.A. Attorney General, has given her a rare insight into their deliberations.

As a barrister Judith has been briefed on a wide range of State and Commonwealth Criminal cases, including trials at all levels and appeals including the High Court of Australia. Throughout her career Judith has assisted police in the investigation and prosecution of criminal offences. Her science training and current studies gives her a special interest and expertise in forensics, including pathology, ballistics and entomology.