

The Honourable John Basten KC

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you an outstanding candidate for admission to the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University (honoris causa): The Honourable John Basten KC, Bachelor of Laws (Honours), the University of Adelaide, and Bachelor of Civil Law, University of Oxford.

Justice Basten's familial connection to the University is prestigious. His father, Sir Henry Bolton Basten, was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide from 1956 and a room in the Mitchell Building commemorates his contribution to the University.

Throughout his long and distinguished career, Justice Basten has made an outstanding and rarely matched contribution to the community as an appellate judge, barrister, academic, public interest lawyer and a champion of Indigenous rights.

As a part-time commissioner of the New South Wales Law Reform Commission from 1996-99, he prepared a report on the operation of the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Act 1977. He was a member of the New South Wales Pay Equity Taskforce from 1996 to 1997, a part-time

lecturer in law at the University of New South Wales from 1974 to 1976, a Teaching Fellow at the University of Chicago from 1972 to 1973. He was a part-time Hearing Commissioner of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission from 1994 to 1997 and an Assistant Commissioner of the Commission Against Corruption in 2003-2004.

Justice Basten has served as a judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales since being sworn in on 2 May 2005. In the course of his judicial career, he has participated in over 2,300 cases in both the Court of Appeal and the Criminal Appeal, in addition to sitting from time to time as a judge in the Common Law and Equity Divisions of the Supreme Court of New South Wales.

He sat on some of the most difficult and high-profile cases in the court. His judgments have proven extremely influential. In many instances, his judgments have been upheld in the High Court, with a number of powerful dissents in the Court of Appeal being vindicated. The New South Wales Law Reform Reports, the Local Government and Environment Reports and the Human Rights Reports are replete with his notable judgments.

Justice Basten is a recognised intellectual leader in many areas of law, including constitutional law, public and administrative law including judicial review, statutory interpretation, tort law, criminal law, discrimination law, human rights law and questions concerning federal jurisdiction and the jurisdiction of the District and Land and Environment Courts of New South Wales, the Administrative Tribunal, the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the New South Wales Crime Commission.

John Basten played an instrumental role in the establishment of Sydney's "community legal centre movement" in the 1970s and early 1980s and has been described by the Honourable Virginia Bell AC SC as "an inspiration to a generation of public interest lawyers".

He was a founding member of the Redfern Legal Centre, sitting on its management committee from its inception in March 1977 until 1983. In the ensuing 39 years, the Centre has developed into a landmark institution providing free legal advice, services and education to disadvantaged and marginalised people in New South Wales, particularly those living in inner Sydney.

Having left academia for the New South Wales Bar in 1982, John Basten continued to support the work of the Redfern Legal Centre and other legal centres, accepting briefs on a pro bono or legal aid basis.

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