



Mark Speakman
Attorney General
Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence

MEDIA RELEASE

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FIRST NATIONS CADETSHIPS TO KICKSTART CAREERS

A new \$200,000 scholarship will enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students to gain valuable work experience in community legal centres (CLCs) across NSW.

Attorney General Mark Speakman today announced the First Nations Cadetship Program to be funded by the Commonwealth Government and administered by Legal Aid NSW.

Mr Speakman said four university students will undertake cadetships at four CLCs, where they will receive training and mentoring.

“The cadetships will offer crucial work experience for these promising young students, providing them with opportunities to kickstart their careers,” Mr Speakman said.

“Strengthening the cultural understanding of CLCs will boost access to justice for First Nations people.”

The one-off cadetship program is open to Aboriginal students in the final two years of a degree in law, social work, community development or communications.

The scholarships aim to address the underrepresentation of First Nations peoples in the legal sector and help CLCs meet commitments and access to justice and employment outcomes made under their [Reconciliation Action Plans](#).

Community Legal Centres NSW (CLCNSW) Executive Director Tim Leach said Aboriginal people make up a considerable proportion of CLC clients.

“Cadets will undoubtedly bring knowledge, skills and expertise that will strengthen our services. These cadetships will have many benefits, including providing vital work experience to First Nations students and encouraging cadets to think about a career in CLCs,” Mr Leach said.

CLCNSW will employ one part-time Aboriginal staff member to support the scheme, and cadets will receive training and mentoring from the CLCNSW Aboriginal Advisory Group.

The program draws on Legal Aid NSW’s highly regarded [Judge Bob Bellear Legal Careers Pathways Cadetship Program](#). It will run state-wide with a focus on CLCs in regional NSW, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney.

Eligible CLCs must already employ at least one First Nations staff member, who may also provide the cadets with informal mentoring support.

Applications are expected to open in the second half of 2021.