

Her Excellency Quentin Bryce AC

The honorary degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred upon Her Excellency Quentin Bryce AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, by the Chancellor Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO at the Faculty of Law graduation ceremony held in the Great Hall at 11.30am on 21 May 2010.



The Chancellor Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO and Her Excellency Quentin Bryce AC, *photo, copyright Memento Photography.*

Citation

Chancellor, I present Her Excellency Quentin Bryce, Companion of the Order of Australia, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, for admission to the degree of Doctor of Laws (honoris causa).

Quentin Bryce graduated from the University of Queensland with degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws. She was admitted to the Queensland Bar in 1965, one of the first women to be admitted in that jurisdiction. In 1968 however she returned to the University of Queensland, joining the ranks of academia in the Faculty of Law where she taught Introduction to Law, Criminal Law, Administrative Law and Legal Aspects of Social Work. These 14 years of legal scholarship no doubt laid the foundations for her future career.

In 1984 Ms Bryce's career changed direction on her appointment as the inaugural Director of the Queensland Women's Information Service in the Office of the Status of Women, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. In 1987 she was appointed Queensland Director of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and was able to put her legal scholarship and experience into practice.

In 1988 Ms Bryce went national. From 1988 until 1993 Ms Bryce served as the Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner, during which time she contributed to the evolution of human rights law and the abolition of discriminatory practices in this country. In 1993 Ms Bryce was the founding Chair and CEO of the National Childcare Accreditation Council, tasked with establishing national standards in the childcare industry.

Returning to the University life in 1997 as Principal of Women's College at this university, Ms Bryce made a personal and lasting impact on the lives of hundreds of young women who resided there over the next 7 years. Ms Bryce recently returned to the College to present the Louisa McDonald Oration. She reminded the young residents and guests of the importance of a university education for women in Australia; the importance of an institution that is [in her words] "founded on principles of access, equity, and justice."

Recognising her contribution to equality and justice, the rights of women and children, and the welfare of family, Ms Bryce was appointed as a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2003. In the same year she was invested as a Dame of Grace of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, and was sworn in as the 24th Governor of Queensland. In 2008 Ms Bryce became the 25th Governor-General; the first female Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Throughout her career, Ms Bryce has been a role model for Australian women, as she practiced what she preached and managed to balance commitments to her family, workplace and the community. Ms Bryce has variously served as member, chair, director, vice-president, president and patron-in-chief to a wide range of committees, advisory groups, councils, boards, centres, networks and delegations. These include a time as President of Women's Cricket Australia, member of the Research Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences Advisory Board at this university, and Chair of the Jessie Street National Women's Library - a service named after activist Jessie Street who, like Ms Bryce, worked throughout her life to improve the status of women.

Chancellor, I have great pleasure in presenting for admission to the degree of Doctor of Laws (*honoris causa*), Her Excellency Quentin Bryce, Companion of the Order of Australia, and I invite you to confer the degree upon her.