

Ann Sherry AO

The honorary degree of Doctor of Letters was conferred upon Ann Sherry by the Chancellor, Ms Belinda Hutchinson AM at a Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences graduation at 2.00pm on 28 September 2017.

Citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Ann Sherry AO to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) in recognition of her significant contribution to Australian business and the community through the promotion of corporate management policies and practices that embrace gender equity, social justice and work family partnerships and support for economic development in the Pacific.

Ann is Executive Chairman of Carnival Australia, the largest cruise ship operator in Australasia with Carnival being the world's largest cruise ship business. Ann joined in 2007 as CEO and has transformed the industry with growth being double digit each year since 2007. She has overhauled the group and its reputation and boosted annual cruise numbers from 100,000 to over a million.

Prior to Carnival Australia, Ann spent 12 years with Westpac including roles as Chief Executive Officer, Westpac New Zealand, the CEO of the Bank of Melbourne and Group Executive, People & Performance. She was the first female bank CEO in Australia and New Zealand. Ann was a driver of cultural change, community engagement and customer focus in commercial and retail banking. One of Ann's first actions upon joining Westpac was to implement a paid maternity scheme for staff, the first private-sector organisation to do so. She also pushed for flexible working practices for all staff.

Before joining Westpac, Ann was First Assistant Secretary of the Office of the Status of Women in Canberra, advising the then Prime Minister, Paul Keating, on policies and programs to improve the status of women and was Australia's representative to the United Nations forums on human rights and women's rights.

Ann's passion for supporting women in the workforce has been a constant theme throughout her career. As well as implementing policies to improve organisational culture and advocating for women's rights, Ann has made a significant contribution to Indigenous communities via the Jawun Project which is a not-for-profit organisation that manages secondments from the corporate and public sectors to a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partner organisations in urban, regional and remote communities across Australia. The Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, as it was originally known was renamed Jawun on its 10th anniversary in 2010. Ann was a founding Director.

Westpac Banking Corporation was a foundation partner of the Jawun project. Ann was heavily involved in encouraging and supporting Westpac staff's involvement in the project with over 600 staff having participated. Jawun now has involvement through many firms such as KPMG, Commonwealth Bank, News Limited, Qantas and QBE Foundation as well as the Commonwealth Government. This year the numbers of secondees taking part in the project reached 2,000 and Ann continues to act as an Advisor to the Board of Jawun.

Ann was also the former Chair and Director of the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (AIEF) and is now an Ambassador for the AIEF.

In addition to her executive role, Ann currently holds a number of non-executive roles including Sydney Airport, Palladium Group, Infrastructure Victoria, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, and ING Direct (Australia). She was the first woman to be appointed to the board of the Australian Rugby Union.

Ann has received many awards including a Centenary Medal for her work on providing banking services to disadvantaged communities and an Order of Australia for her contribution to the Australian community.

In 2010, Ann was listed as one of the Top 15 Businesswomen globally by Pink, a US business magazine for women and in 2011, was listed as one of the 100 Women in Leadership by the FTSE Group in the UK. She has further been awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters by Macquarie University and an Honorary Doctorate of Business by University of Queensland and in 2015, was named as the overall winner of the Australian Financial Review and Westpac 100 Women of Influence Award.

Chancellor, I present Ann Sherry for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa), and I invite you to confer the degree upon her.