

# Lawyer wants to right wrongs

A FORMER Central Coast student has made her mark on the legal world after taking out Woman Lawyer of the Year in this year's Women Lawyers Association of NSW Awards.

Anna Walsh, who attended high school at St Joseph's Catholic College in East Gosford and Corpus Christi College in Tuggerah, is director of Maurice Blackburn's medical law practice in NSW and now lives in Sydney.

But Ms Walsh, 38, still considers herself a "coastie" at heart because her parents still live in the house she grew up in at Bensville. Ms Walsh started a degree in nursing before realising her true calling.

"I cannot say that I ever dreamed of being a lawyer when I was a child but my older brother was studying law and I realised that I have always had a very sensitive button when it came to unfairness and the need to redress wrongs," she said.

However it wasn't until her final year at law school that Ms Walsh became completely satisfied with her career choice: "I was concerned about how I could continue to help everyday people," she said. "It all



Woman Lawyer of the Year Anna Walsh accepts her award from Justice Jane Matthews.

seemed to be about working at the big end of town, making lots of money and living a sophisticated life.

"It wasn't until I had the opportunity to work in the community legal centre, helping everyday people with real problems, that I realised ... the law is a caring profession."

## HELPING OTHERS IS MAIN PRIORITY

MS Walsh practices exclusively in medical law, particularly in cases involving children, and has acted for many families in coronial inquests.

"I am passionate about being a plaintiff lawyer and

working for everyday people," she said.

"Most of my clients are brain-injured children and the difference made to their lives and their families when their legal cases are resolved is immense.

"It has been a very humbling experience to get to know my clients - all real people who have very difficult lives. Their strength of character and decency in adversity has had a very profound effect on me."

## ANNA'S ACCOLADES

■ MAURICE Blackburn's medical negligence practice national director Kathryn Booth said the firm was immensely proud of Ms Walsh's achievement.

"Anna is an extraordinarily compassionate and caring lawyer and with immense skill in medical law cases has achieved great outcomes for her clients," she said.

"At the same time Anna has provided support and mentoring for her female colleagues and finds time to present and write about her specialty to audiences of young lawyers and health professionals."



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