



Chief Executive Women

Women leaders enabling women leaders

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**26 June 2019**

## **2019 CEW Scholar: Sharon Cowden wins scholarship to Harvard**

Sharon Cowden, Assistant Commissioner, Ethical Standards Command in the Queensland Police Service, is the winner of the 2019 Chief Executive Women (CEW) Scholarship to the *Authentic Leader Development* program at Harvard Business School.

Assistant Commissioner Cowden will attend the highly regarded leadership program at the prestigious business school in July.

Announcing the winner, CEW Scholarships Committee Chair, Colleen Harris, says: “CEW works to remove the barriers to women’s progression into leadership positions.

“More diversity through female voices at every level of leadership will deliver better decisions and more equitable outcomes for Australia.

“CEW’s annual scholarship program provides an opportunity for talented Australian women to strengthen their leadership skills together with their international peers.

“We are delighted to support Sharon Cowden to attend Harvard Business School’s Authentic Leadership Development program,” says Colleen.

### **The winner**

**Assistant Commissioner Sharon Cowden APM** leads a team of 135 staff and has state-wide responsibility for driving ethical behaviour, discipline and professional practice among the Queensland Police Service’s workforce of over 15,000 people.

She has been a police officer for more than 32 years, starting her career in Victoria Police as a constable and rising through the ranks in operational and corporate roles.

She was appointed to the Queensland Police Service in 2018.

Sharon says: “I’m looking forward to broadening my leadership skills and becoming a better coach, mentor and guide to others, particularly women in leadership.

“I understand the challenges women face, so I’m proud to be a strong advocate for inclusion and diversity in all workforces.

“The Authentic Leader Development program at Harvard will help me build relationships and support networks, not just in policing but at an international level outside my line of work,” says Sharon.

## **The scholarship**

The CEW scholarship enables Sharon to attend the *Authentic Leader Development* program at Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts, in July this year.

The program aims to help leaders uncover the unique characteristics that comprise their authentic leadership – enabling them to become the type of leader they most admire.

During the intensive and often confronting 5-day program, Harvard professors and top leadership experts guide participants through a profoundly personal exploration, during which they design a leadership approach driven by their most deeply held values.

The scholarship is part of the 2019 CEW Scholars program, which is providing 19 talented Australian women with the opportunity to take their careers to the next level by supporting executive education at internationally acclaimed business schools.

Assistant Commissioner Cowden will be the fifth CEW Scholar to attend the *Authentic Leader Development* program at Harvard Business School following:

- **2018** Dr. Bridie O'Donnell, Office of Women in Sport and Recreation Victoria
- **2017** Mary Ann Curtis, Queensland Treasury Corporation
- **2017** Virginia Nelson, Queensland Police Service
- **2017** Preeti Bajaj, Schneider Electric

## **ENDS**

### **About Chief Executive Women ([www.cew.org.au](http://www.cew.org.au))**

*Chief Executive Women is the pre-eminent organisation representing more than 550 of Australia's most senior women from the corporate, public, academic and not-for-profit sectors. Its mission is "women leaders enabling women leaders". Through advocacy, targeted programs and scholarships, CEW works to remove the barriers to women's progression and ensure equal opportunity for prosperity.*

### **About CEW Scholars ([www.cew.org.au/scholarships](http://www.cew.org.au/scholarships))**

*The CEW Scholars program enables women leaders by supporting them at critical junctures in their careers, from their first management roles to top executive positions. More than 170 women have been awarded scholarships to business schools in Australia and internationally since CEW commenced its executive program for women leaders in 1992. In 2019, 18 scholarships will be offered for talented women to attend leadership courses at international business schools.*

**CEW Scholars program is funded** through the CEW Annual Dinner and the generosity of sponsors including: PLATINUM SPONSOR: KING & WOOD MALLESONS. OFFICIAL AIRLINE SPONSOR: QANTAS. PREMISES PARTNER: CBRE. GOLD SPONSORS: ANZ, BHP, KPMG, NAB, QBE, TELSTRA. SILVER SPONSORS: ALLENS LINKLATERS, AMP, ASHURST, BCG, COMMONWEALTH BANK, CELLARMASTERS, EGON ZEHNDER, EY, GILBERT + TOBIN, GPT, HARVEY NORMAN, HEIDRICK & STRUGGLES, IAG, LENDLEASE, MACQUARIE, MICROSOFT, MIRVAC, SPENCER STUART, SYDNEY AIRPORT, SUNCORP, WESFARMERS, WESTPAC GROUP and NINE ENTERTAINMENT.

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