

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Award winners “humble all lawyers”

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Melbourne lawyers Lex Lasry QC and Julian McMahon are the winners of the prestigious 2006 Australian Lawyers Alliance Victorian Civil Justice Award.

They were nominated because of their work on the trial of Melbourne man Van Nguyen, who was hanged in Singapore on 2 December 2005 on drugs charges.

Lawyers Alliance Victorian president Richard Morrow said both men had been involved in Mr Nguyen’s defence free of charge for a number of years.

“Largely through their work, the case generated great public interest in Australia,” Mr Morrow said.

“They dealt with an extremely sensitive issue and pursued all options available for Mr Nguyen with complete dedication, all on a pro bono basis and with little assistance from the Australian Government.”

“The commitment and dedication shown by these men should humble all lawyers and make us extremely proud to be in the same profession as them.”

“While there is no excuse for Mr Nguyen’s actions, the continued use of the death penalty is something that should concern us all, regardless of where and against whom it is being used,” Mr Morrow said.

The Lawyers Alliance Civil Justice Awards recognise unsung heroes who have shown a high degree of personal commitment, achieved an outcome of significance to the community and made an enduring social justice contribution through their actions.

Other award winners have included Beryl Crosby, president of the Bundaberg Hospital Patients’ Support Group, and asbestos disease campaigner Bernie Banton.

The award will be presented at the dinner of the Australian Lawyers Alliance annual Victorian conference in Lorne tonight.

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