

Georgia Goldsworthy

2019 Bridget Whelan Scholarship Recipient

Presented by The Hon. Anthony Albanese, Leader of the Opposition - Tuesday 15 October, 2019

Excerpt from Georgia's acceptance speech:

It's a privilege to receive the Bridget Whelan Scholarship – she was someone that I know was respected across the show for the work she did as an adviser and for women in the ALP.

One of the reasons I am a proud Labor member is because of our commitment to gender equality. It is testament to the women – and men – of the ALP that we have significantly higher levels of female representation in our parliamentary team compared to the Tories. But we still have some way to go when it comes to those who work behind the scenes.

We already know the many women who are usually the backbone of our offices – they look after logistics, manage diaries, answer the phones and greet our guests. It is the work that is invaluable to the very operation of every office in this place. That's not to diminish the significant roles of women in areas like my parliamentary, policy and media colleagues and friends.

But despite this fact, more senior positions are filled by men.

I applied for the scholarship this year because I believe that we need to support more women in positions of leadership in our staffing cohort – as senior advisers, deputy and chiefs of staffs.

These are roles that I want to hold – ideally in a Labor Government and see the many talented women I know do the same.

For me, this scholarship provides the opportunity to do three things.

- First, it helps support me attending the Women's Campaign School at Yale University next year. I want to be part of the team that ensures Labor wins Government in 2022, and that means winning the election first.
- Second, staffers are some of the hardest working people I know – but we need to do a better job in training and development, particularly for those who want to hold management positions. That's why I'm attending a series of professional development courses in management and leadership here in Australia.
- **Finally, this scholarship is not just about me – it's a way to give back. We have amazing networks of women in the Labor Party – both current and former staffers. I want to talk to them, learn from them and turn their**

words into advice for other women. We need to harness the corporate knowledge of Labor women to better identify what works and what doesn't when it comes to improving the pathways to leadership for women working in the ALP.

I'd like to thank the Elizabeth Reid Network, the family of Bridget Whelan and the generous donors to the scholarship.

This is a scholarship that focuses on women, but I believe the principles it represents apply more broadly. We know that Parliament should reflect the diversity of our society, and so should the teams that support our bosses.

We need to make the case to invest in diversity within our staffing pool, we need to share our knowledge and we need to take time to learn.

This scholarship is a step towards that goal.

Thank you.