

One day in the life of Paolo Tatti

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In 2005, Paolo Tatti graduated Valedictorian and Dux of Gladstone Park Secondary College. Now studying a double degree in Law and Science at the University of Melbourne, Paolo was given the unique opportunity to spend a day doing work experience with the Honourable Justice Michael Kirby of the High Court of Australia in Canberra.

Why do you think you were given this opportunity?

At Gladstone Park Secondary College, I was given many opportunities to do different things. With the help of my Principal, Mr Ken Thompson, and as Student Representative Council President and student member on various committees, I was provided with opportunities to see the school from a different perspective. When I became interested in law, I did work experience with a law firm, where I now work part time (De Marchi & Associates in Brunswick). After attending a special lecture by two lecturers who had returned from working at the High Court, I decided that this was something I wanted to experience.

Why Justice Kirby?

Over my first semester studying law, I grew to admire Justice Kirby. His judgments always seemed to be able to paint a clear picture of not only the facts of the case, but the legal issues that needed answering. I soon became a reader of his 'extra curricular' writing, finding that he had a keen interest in genetics and the law, an area I also find fascinating.

Did you approach Justice Kirby yourself?

I found out that Justice Kirby is due to retire in the next few years, well before I will complete my degree. I realised that I probably would not get a chance to work with him, so I emailed his associate to explore any opportunity I could that might be available to me. I never expected a response, especially the one I received. Justice Kirby's email offered me the opportunity to spend a day with him. I was the first person to ever do work experience with him and I still can't quite figure out why he allowed me this honour.



Paolo Tatti with the Honourable Justice Michael Kirby.

Can you tell us briefly about the experience?

It was extraordinary! I witnessed the court in action. I was shown around various facilities including the gigantic library. I was given a glimpse into how the chambers are organised and run and how judgments are formulated which was extremely interesting. The Judge also spent time with me and provided me with valuable advice which will stay with me throughout my professional career.

Although it was only for a day, I learnt a great deal. The experience provided me with an insight into the hard work that goes on behind the scenes and into the life of a judge. As I walk around university, it is sometimes all too easy to feel lost in the sea of private school students. However, I am sure from now on, my mind will cast back to the day that I shared with a Judge who will no doubt go down in history as one of our great Justices of the High Court of all time, another product of public education.

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