This year’s QLS Agnes McWhinney Award, named after Queensland’s first admitted female solicitor, was presented to Ann-Maree David, who is passionate about life-long learning and has devoted her career to professional development. Ann-Maree led the Society’s CLE program for eight years and established the Queensland campus of the Australian College of Law. She is also the president of Australian Women Lawyers, vice president of the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland and chair of the QLS equity and diversity law committee.

This year the QLS Innovation in Law award was presented to Streten Masons Lawyers, a south-east Queensland-based firm founded by directors Jeremy Streten and Craig Mason. Working mainly with small to medium-size businesses, they pride themselves on their progressive and innovative attitude.

Both the Community Legal Centre (CLC) Member of the Year award and the Equity Advocate Award were presented to Terrence Stedman, a descendant of the Kamilaroi people.
Terence was a qualified plumber and gas fitter before working as a prison officer and as Commissioner of the Queensland Corrective Services Board. He joined the legal profession later in life and began a 10-year career as a solicitor with the South West Brisbane Community Legal Centre.

This year the Equity and Diversity Award for a large legal practice went to Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, while Miller Harris Lawyers took the small legal practice award, for the third time!

The inaugural Queensland First Nations Lawyer of the Year was presented to Leah Cameron, the current recipient of the Attorney-General's Indigenous Legal Practitioner of the Year Award and the owner of Marrawah Law, Queensland's only Supply Nation certified Indigenous legal practice. Leah's business employs more than 75% Indigenous staff. Leah was a finalist in the Cairns Business Women's Club Awards and AIM Leadership Awards in 2016/2017.

The other inaugural First Nations award, for the Queensland First Nations Legal Student of the Year, was won by Nareeta Davis. Nareeta, while enjoying the challenges of working in insolvency for 24 years, always wanted to be a solicitor. This dream has nearly been achieved, and Nareeta will be admitted as a solicitor this year and while pursuing a Masters Degree in Applied Law.