

## Law firm champion of the homeless

by Jocelyn Nickels

Local Adelaide Hills resident Natasha Jones, a partner in KelledyJones Lawyers, has been named as a finalist in the Telstra Business Women's Awards which are to be announced in Melbourne on November 18.

Three years ago business partner Michael Kelledy and Natasha made a decision to leave their current firm and start their own business, without phones, contacts, files or even a business name.

By 1.30pm that afternoon they had already hit the ground running and now run a successful business.

It has been something that Natasha had wanted to do for some time but the opportunity arose a lot quicker than expected, although this did not slow her down.

Within a few months KelledyJones had four other staff members, all of whom took a leap of faith to grow the business with Natasha and Michael.

The firm is the only one in South Australia dedicated to providing legal, strategic and business support to local government and not-for-profit clients, even helping out women who are homeless.

This is what really makes KelledyJones different, as they are able to provide the best service to their clients and never act against their interests.

It was a big step for the two but once they jumped over the hurdles and toughed out their first day they made their way in leaps and bounds.

"The first day of the new business was the greatest test of character," she said.

"It really was the sheer determination, self-belief despite the unknown and never compromising on what we stand for including the unwavering support from our clients that has propelled us to where the firm is today," she said.

Natasha was nominated for the award by 2011 Telstra Business Women's Award winner and friend, Theresa Hines.

Theresa has known Natasha for about two years and has been there to see her business grow and thrive.

"She is just an amazing business woman, she is highly intelligent and engaging and her staff are very responsive," she said.

"The team work so well together and it is a great work environment."

This is something that Natasha and Michael both felt very passionate about forming.

"Michael and I wanted to



Co-owner of KelledyJones Natasha Jones. Photo by John Hemmings

establish a work place culture that goes with our set of values," Natasha said.

Theresa also explained how KelledyJones is a business in a real niche market that is very community based.

"They help a lot of women who are homeless and sometimes even take days off work to go out and help build houses for the homeless – it's amazing," she said.

Natasha feels very grateful to have been nominated.

"It's a real honour to just be nominated and recognised for it," she said.

Not only is Natasha a successful business woman, she is a step mother to two boys and is soon expecting twin girls.

For many mothers, managing that work-life balance is tricky, but Natasha has a different view,

urging mothers to dismiss the notion of a work-life balance and instead simply feeling good about your work and your family.

"Many women focus on getting the balance right which only adds additional pressure when you feel like it's not achieved," she said.

"They try and jump from one demand to the other."

The firm now has a team of nine lawyers who work together to ensure they meet their client's needs. They aim to remain consistent with their values and expand market share.

For those looking to start up their own business Natasha has her own words of wisdom that she lives by.

"My message for aspiring business owners is to always back yourself, be confident and embrace resilience," she said.