

## Media Release

### Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## Commitment to international human rights recognised with memorial scholarship

A Faculty of Law graduate's commitment to international human rights and humanitarian action has been recognised with the 2016 Tim Hawkins Memorial Scholarship.

Matias Thomsen was awarded the prestigious scholarship at a ceremony this morning.

Matias has purposefully tailored his academic pursuits to foster a career in International Law, undertaking study and volunteering initiatives across a range of humanitarian fields both here and abroad.

The scholarship will allow Matias to take up a Research Assistant position in the Prosecutor's Office at the International Criminal Court in The Hague for six to nine months.

He will also receive an allowance of \$19,000 and a return airfare.

University of Tasmania Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen congratulated Matias on his achievement.

"Matias' devotion and commitment to helping those most in need through his studies and volunteering work is to be commended," Professor Rathjen said.

"It is only fitting then his tireless efforts are recognised with the Tim Hawkins Memorial Scholarship, which will help to support and encourage him in his goals to achieve social justice in an international arena."

Matias graduated with a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws (First Class Honours) in August last year.

As part of his studies, Matias completed an Honours Supervised Research Paper on the Law of International Disaster Relief, which was published in the *Melbourne Journal of International Law*.

The article contained “new and innovative arguments” that provided “valuable contribution” to the relevant debate and development of International Law.

Beyond his academic achievements, Matias has actively pursued a number of initiatives in a bid to help those less fortunate.

He has held tutorial classes in law; taught English in French high schools; volunteered in community and refugee projects; and helped organise games, activities and learning opportunities for children in refugee camps in Greece.

He also volunteered to help asylum seekers when the Pontville Detention Centre was operational.

Matias said he is looking forward to continuing the work of previous recipients of the Tim Hawkins Scholarship at the International Criminal Court, and to making a strong contribution to the important legacy in Tim’s honour.

**About the Tim Hawkins Memorial Scholarship:**

This is the 13th presentation of the Tim Hawkins Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is provided in memory of Tim Hawkins, an outstanding young Tasmanian. Tim was an international oarsman and had completed a building apprenticeship before graduating in the combined degrees of Commerce and Law with Honours in Law. He was admitted to the Bar of the Supreme Court of Tasmania. His tragic death in Bali in October 2002 was a result of a terrorist act. Family, friends and associates of Mr Hawkins and members of the wider community have endowed a scholarship at the University of Tasmania as a fitting memorial to this fine Tasmanian.

**Information released by:**

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