Guiding light on rights

Law | Blanca Carmona

TEACHING human rights in Kosovo and founding a national association for women in construction are among the many varied highlights of Paula Gerber’s career. The Kew East resident said teaching international human rights law in Kosovo in 2001 was an “eye-opening” experience.

“We were teaching in a building with no electricity, no glass in the windows, you had to walk past bombed-out buildings to get to class,” Dr Gerber said. “They didn’t even have books.

“I’m still in contact with several students, many from Kosovo. It has been life-changing.

“I love teaching, mentoring and guiding the next generation of lawyers; it gives me an enormous sense of pride, seeing them make a wonderful contribution to the world.”

Dr Paula Gerber has been recognised in the 2011 Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Voice for women in construction

Dr Gerber is deputy director of the Castlem Centre for Human Rights Law and is on the board of the Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

She also founded the National Association of Women in Construction in 1995, and has lectured and published extensively on the topic. “It can be quite hectic, focusing on construction law one minute and human rights the next,” she said.

Dr Gerber was one of 20 women inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women this month.

Kew Liberal MP Andrew McIntosh said the Honour Roll acknowledged the achievements of “inspirational” Victorian women. “Dr Gerber has been a champion for women working in the male-dominated field of construction. She has been a catalyst for the advancement of women in the industry,” Mr McIntosh said.