



Connecting Women in the Law

WLF Newsletter Spring 2015 Edition

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Carol Cash

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QC, Simi Dosanjh, Kathryn Sainty

CBABC WLF Upcoming Events Save the Dates!

Annual General Meeting
Monday, June 22, 2015, 5pm – 8pm
Metropolitan Hotel, Vancouver, BC

Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope
Sunday, September 13, 2015
Queen Elizabeth Park, Vancouver, BC
33rd Ave. and Cambie St.

**WLF Third National
Leadership Conference**
Friday, November 20 – 21, 2015
Vancouver Fairmont Waterfront Hotel

Remarks of the Chair

By Deborah Taylor

In my last message to you I noted several articles that illustrated how universal the issues facing women lawyers are around the world. I submitted that message before I went to Halifax for the annual meeting of the National WLF Executive. Much has happened since then and I hope you enjoy reading about some of those events in this newsletter.



One event that I was proud to represent you at was that meeting in Halifax. It took place the weekend the story broke about female MPs being harassed in our own Parliament by fellow MPs. This story was breaking while we were still shaking our heads about the alleged exploits of CBC radio host Jian Ghomeshi, who has been charged with four counts of sexual assault. It was shocking to learn that when this story was breaking, no one was prepared to deal with this issue. As Michael Den Tandt of the National Post commented after the story broke: *Not only are House of Commons systems for dealing with workplace-related sexual harassment and assault inadequate; there are no systems. That has to change.*

Needless to say, these public events could not go unnoticed by the women lawyers attending our meeting. It was clear that none of us in that room could remain silent on this issue, especially when we knew all too well through whispers of stories, that young law students and lawyers live with this problem daily and feel helpless to stop it for fear of what it will do to their legal careers.



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BAR ASSOCIATION**
British Columbia Branch



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At that meeting it was decided that the national WLF would sponsor a resolution to be presented at the CBA mid-Winter Meeting in Ottawa in February, calling on all Canadian law firms and workplaces to take active steps to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault in their workplaces and to create and provide accessible, safe and non-threatening reporting channels. We are proud to report that the resolution was passed unanimously. You can find a copy of that resolution at: <http://www.cba.org/CBA/resolutions/pdf/15-05-M-ct.pdf>.

Also coming out of the Halifax meeting was the decision to launch a campaign across Canada asking all lawyers (men and women) to send us anonymous accounts of sexual harassment or sexual assault that have taken place in their workplace or as a result of workplace interaction with colleagues, clients, or others. The WLF will then publish these stories next fall in order to remind all lawyers that sexual harassment and sexual assault does happen. In addition, a toolkit is being prepared that will be available next fall to assist in dealing with this issue.

It is hoped that by raising our voices, others who are more vulnerable than us will not have to remain silent and there will be systems for dealing with workplace related sexual harassment and assault in all workplaces, including law firms.

Sexual Harassment Awareness Campaign

Sexual harassment is a degrading act that feeds off of an imbalance and abuse of power. Sexual assault is a particularly invasive and traumatizing form of assault. The legal profession is not immune, and until we recognize and acknowledge this, we cannot address the root of the problem.

The CBA Women Lawyers Forum, SOGIC and the Equality Committee want to raise awareness about this issue and generate discussion.

Tell us your story. We want to hear from you.

Use this confidential and anonymous tool to help us focus awareness on the problem so that we can talk about solutions.

Identities will be protected, however your story may be shared.

You can participate [online](#) or by filling in the [word document](#) and sending your story to:

The Canadian Bar Association

"Write your Wrong"
C/o Women Lawyers Forum
500 – 865 Carling Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5S8





CBABC WLF 2015 Awards Luncheon

By Kareen Zimmer

On April 23, 2013, the CBABC Women Lawyers Forum recognized the achievements and contributions of the Honourable Judge Patricia Janzen, recipient of the CBA BC WLF Award of Excellence, and Carla Forth, QC, recipient of the Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award. The Right Honourable Kim Campbell gave the key-note address.



Carla Forth, QC, The Right Honourable Kim Campbell, The Honourable Kerry Lynn Findlay, and The Honourable Judge Patricia Jantzen

After accepting her award, Judge Janzen shared several lessons that she had learned in her practice:

1. It's about the clients (you must balance the perfect with the practical).
2. Do it your way – define success on your own terms and stick with it – do not let money be your measure of success (unless you choose to define it as such).
3. Make friends in the law – older and wiser, empathetic peers, as well as younger people who will challenge and inspire you.
4. Stop complaining - be resilient. If you aren't happy in your life, have the courage to make a change, but stop complaining.
5. Civility matters – the lawyer's code of conduct and your own mental health requires it. Law is about conflict but that does not have to define how we practice law.
6. Give back – to your colleagues, your professions, your community. You will always gain more than you give.

The Mentoring Award Ms. Forth received honours the memory of Debra Van Ginkel, QC, who believed that all women lawyers need a mentor to support and encourage them. Ms. Forth discussed the importance of mentoring in her own career and how the people she has mentored have started to mentor her. Ms. Forth also stressed the importance of family support.

Ms. Campbell provided the audience with a historical perspective of her career in the law, including her time as Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, where she convened the first ever National Symposium on "Women, Law and the Administration of Justice". Ms. Campbell stressed the importance of listening to the voices of all women in making legislative change. She urged the legal profession to draw on studies in other industries that have shown the positive impacts that participation by women bring as a way to advocate for the increased presence of women in the law.

The awards luncheon was very well attended by the Vancouver bench and bar, and was an excellent showcase for the extensive programs of the Women Lawyers Forum that promote and support the enhancement of the stature and influence of women in the legal profession.



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Junior Women Lawyers' Networking Event

February 4, 2015



(L – R) Ainsley MacCallum, Leni Adriano, Sterling Nelson, Julia Lockhart, Raman Dosanjh



(L – R) Carol Cash, Elizabeth Pan, Heather Dale, Deborah Labun

Senior Women Lawyers' Dinner

January 15, 2015





Recent Appointments and Recognition of CBABC WLF

Canadian Bar Association

Kerry Simmons, QC of Victoria has won the election for the incoming Second Vice-President of the Canadian Bar Association. This position is the first step on the ladder to the national presidency, a post she will assume in August 2017.

UBC – Honorary Doctorate of Laws

Constance Isherwood, QC, aged 95, received an honorary doctorate of laws from the University of British Columbia on May 20, 2015 in recognition of her extensive contributions to the legal community in BC and for helping to open doors for other women to become lawyers. Ms. Isherwood began practicing in 1951 and after more than 60 years of practicing law, she says that she still looks forward to each working day.



Update from the CBABC WLF Kamloops

By Rachel Lammers

The CBABC WLF – Kamloops was pleased to host its annual Women Lawyers' Forum Retreat this year from February 27th to March 1st, 2015 at Quaaout Lodge near Chase, BC. Approximately 30 women from around the province enjoyed the beautiful scenery of the spring Shuswap while appreciating the company of their peers. This year's theme was "improving communication" and to that end, we heard from several different speakers on topics such as courtroom etiquette, personality types, law society complaints and the latest on online legal research resources. Among our distinguished guests was Madam Justice Smith from the Court of Appeal. WLF – Kamloops would like to thank all of its members who worked hard to make the event a success, including its sponsors Morelli Chertkow LLP, MJB Law, Mary McGregor, and Epp Cates Oien.

As for other events, we held our annual "spring cleaning clothes drive" on April 23, 2015, at which we called upon our members to drop off

Women Lawyers Forum Third National Leadership Conference – "Creating Our Future"

Vancouver Fairmont Waterfront Hotel, Fri., Nov. 20 – Sat., Nov. 21, 2015

By Linda K. Robertson, Chair National CBA WLF

Women lawyers and professionals across Canada have a unique opportunity to attend a truly inspirational conference that will bring together an international faculty of renowned and celebrated women leaders to inspire, embolden and teach invaluable leadership skills. This conference is a first for Vancouver and many of these presenters have never spoken in Vancouver before.

Change is coming to professional practice, and women need to be at the forefront of that change, driving it and directing it. This conference will give women lawyers and professionals the tools, skills and confidence to influence careers and workplaces in ways that will work better for clients, professions and ourselves.

Whether you want to be a leader of your firm or practice group, be successful in government or the corporate world, start your own firm, or simply find ways to thrive in practice on your own terms, this conference will help you create the future you desire.

Hear from influential women speakers like Supreme Court of Canada Justice Rosalie Abella and The Rt. Hon. Kim Campbell, Canada's first female Justice Minister and first female Prime Minister, who will lead a conversation about succeeding and flourishing as women at the highest levels of professional life. Other inspirational discussions will include:

- Leadership and practice styles that empower women;
- Women and our relationship with power;
- Grit and growth, and how they lead to success;
- Skills to navigate difficult conversations and increase productivity;
- Thriving in practice – how it goes beyond work-life balance; and
- Corporate leadership skills.

This interactive, transformative, inspiring and fun conference is relevant to all women lawyers and professionals, whether you are just starting out, mid-career looking for that next opportunity, or a seasoned professional wanting to continue to make a difference.

Take advantage of this unique opportunity to network and build relationships with clients. Invite a client to come with you and share in this amazing experience – for a nominal cost, you can have two full days with your client and a lifetime of experiences to share.

Connect with women lawyers and professionals from across North America and be the change you want to see in your world. For more information on the agenda and speakers, and registration details go to: http://www.cbapd.org/details_en.aspx?id=NA_WLF15

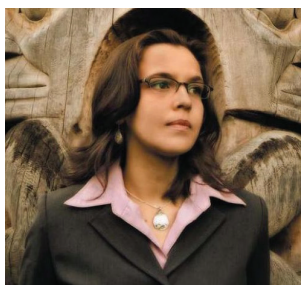




Justicia in BC – Update

by Andrea Hilland

The Justicia Project has been actively underway in British Columbia since November 2012, with the goal of identifying and implementing best practices to retain and advance women lawyers in private practice. The first phase of the Project involves representatives from 17 national law firms with offices in BC and large regional firms working together to develop model policies and best practice materials in six areas:



- enhancing flexible work arrangements;
- improving parental leave policies;
- tracking gender demographics;
- fostering women's networking and business development;
- promoting leadership skills for women; and
- developing paths to partnership initiatives.

Once completed, phase two will involve encouraging smaller firms to make use of the resources.

Three working groups have now completed model policies and best practice materials on parental leave, flexible work arrangements, and demographic data collection. These resources were unanimously endorsed by the Benchers on December 5, 2014. They are now available on the Law Society's website: <http://www.lawsociety.bc.ca/page.cfm?cid=947&t=Model-Policies>.

The Justicia focus groups are currently working on best practices guides for business development, leadership, and paths to partnership for women. These materials will also be publicized once they are completed by the focus groups and endorsed by the Benchers later this year.

One component of the Justicia Project requires managing partners from participating law firms to attend an annual meeting. This year, the meeting featured an unintentional bias seminar that was delivered by a renowned speaker, Steve Robbins, on April 30, 2015. The goal of the session was to raise participants' awareness of their own unconscious biases to enable them to rethink their own realities and the realities of others. It is hoped that addressing unintentional biases in law firm leadership will help to improve the retention and advancement of women and diverse lawyers in private practice.

For more information on the Justicia Project in BC, please contact Andrea Hilland, Staff Lawyer, Law Society of British Columbia: ahilland@lsbc.org

donations of used professional wear. This professional wear was then provided to women in need of such clothing for interviews and employment.

Our AGM will be held on June 19. Judge Stella Frame has graciously offered to host our AGM in conjunction with our BBQ/pool party at her home.

Update from the CBABC Women Lawyers Forum Vancouver Island By Nicole Hamilton

The CBABC Women Lawyers Forum – Vancouver Island (WLF-VI) has been continuing to host events that bring together female members of the bar in a manner that encourages interaction, discussion and mentorship. The relatively close knit legal community in Victoria and the rest of Vancouver Island has allowed the WLF-VI to capitalize on opportunities to guide interactions between senior women lawyers, those just recently called to the bar and all of the women lawyers in between.

Back by popular demand this past February was the Women Judges' Dinner, a sold out event held in an intimate dining room at Zambri's restaurant in Victoria. A number of ladies were able to join Master Carolyn P. Bouck and the Honourable Judge Susan E. Wishart to discuss a number of topics specific to their roles as decision makers. The discussion naturally focused on self-represented litigants and the challenges and opportunities that counsel face when dealing with this increasingly common situation.

Following up on this event was a WLF-VI Networking Event held to celebrate International Women's Day. The law firm of Cook Roberts LLP hosted a wine and cheese event to bring together experienced members of the bar with those just embarking on their careers. The event was informal in nature and allowed everyone to mingle and seek advice in a relaxed and fun atmosphere. Paired with this event was a request for clothing donations to be made to Wear 2 Start. Wear 2 Start is a Victoria charity that provides professional clothing and accessories to unemployed women for job interviews.

To round out the year the WLF-VI is in the process of planning a Nanaimo event to encourage a similar level of networking and support as seen in Victoria to those women lawyers working in smaller cities and towns on the island.





Attendees of the CBABC WLF 2015 Awards Luncheon

CBABC WLF Newsletter

CBA National WLF Newsletter - The Common Room is available at http://www.cba.org/CBA/newsletters-sections/2014/12_wlf.aspx

The CBA National WLF is seeking articles for its newsletters. If you would like to contribute, please contact news@cba.org.

Get Connected!

Forum membership is open to CBA members only. For membership information call the BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association at (604) 687-3404, toll free in BC at 1 (888) 687-3404, or visit cbabc.org/sections/enroll for a Section enrolment form.

We hope you will enroll to the Forum!

Write Us

Are you interested in writing an article for the WLF BC Newsletter or do you have any comments or feedback? If so, please contact the CBABC WLF Marketing and Communications Committee Co-Chairs: Carol M. Cash and Simi Dosanj.

CBABC WLF Continues its Support of Ovarian Cancer Canada

By Tracy Kolwich

In 1995, when Corinne Boyer succumbed to ovarian cancer at the age of 57, she left an enduring legacy.



Corinne's husband, Patrick Boyer founded the Corinne Boyer Fund to advance ovarian cancer research and to raise awareness of the disease in Canada. This organization eventually became the National Ovarian Cancer Association (NOCA). Twelve years later, NOCA and a Vancouver-based organization joined forces to form the only registered national charity in Canada dedicated to overcoming ovarian cancer, adopting the name Ovarian Cancer Canada.

Today, Ovarian Cancer Canada continues to capitalize on the strengths of its founders to meet the needs of women and families living with the disease, the broader ovarian cancer community and the Canadian public.

The urgency for greater attention to ovarian cancer remains still and cannot be ignored. The facts are that in Canada:

- 17,000 women are currently living with ovarian cancer;
- Each year 2,600 women are diagnosed with the disease;
- Each year 1,750 women die from ovarian cancer;
- Ovarian cancer is usually diagnosed at a late stage; and
- 70% of women succumb to ovarian cancer within five years of their diagnosis.

There is still no effective screening test for ovarian cancer. The symptoms are vague and often go unnoticed. Warning signs are easy to dismiss. A Pap smear does not detect ovarian cancer and the HPV vaccine helps prevent cervical cancer, not ovarian cancer.

A recent study by Charity Intelligence Canada shows that only 2.1% of Canadian donations for cancer are directed towards ovarian cancer.

We, at Ovarian Cancer Canada, would like to express our deepest gratitude to all of the women lawyers with the CBABC WLF who have given of their time and their resources over the past two years. We are overjoyed to report that to date the CBABC WLF has contributed critical funds for research to overcome this devastating disease and increased education and awareness within the general public and healthcare professionals.

Ovarian Cancer Canada is a non-profit organization that relies on donations from individuals and corporations, grants and fundraising event. It does not receive any government funding. If you are interested in becoming a donor, volunteer or even a host for a "Knowledge is Power" presentation in your office, please contact Tracy Kolwich, Director for the Pacific Region of Ovarian Cancer Canada at tkolwich@ovariancanada.org or (604) 676-3428.

Watch *The Injustices of Ovarian Cancer*: vimeo.com/45517528

