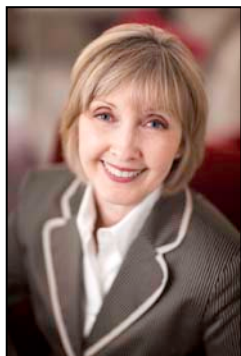


WLF Newsletter

Connecting Women in the Law

Comments from the Chair



by Carol Anne Finch-Noyes

Welcome to the Winter edition of the WLF Newsletter!

The theme of our 2010/2011 programs and events is "Connecting Women in the Law." Our goal is to connect you to other women lawyers from different practices and experiences; from firms and work places of all sizes; working full-time, part-time or, re-entering practice. The program and event listings in this edition offer many opportunities to connect and support women in law through networking, education, and mentoring.

We started the season with the *WLF Fall Launch and Hot Tips from Hot Mentors* on September 23. Seven experienced practitioners offered their advice to an audience of over 80 lawyers, covering leadership, common practice issues, and balancing work with family and extracurricular commitments. The *Fall Potluck* provided an opportunity for women lawyers to gather and network in an informal setting and was hosted on October 28 by Ellen Gerber, a prosecutor with the City of Vancouver. The *Mentoring Celebration*, held on November 19, recognized the 172 lawyers matched in 2010.

The WLF Mentoring Program has been highly successful, matching over 700 lawyers in seven years. Consider participating in this program which facilitates mentoring relationships for women lawyers and supports other women in the practice of law.

Plan to join us at our third *WLF Awards Luncheon* featuring our guest speaker, the Honourable Associate Chief Justice Anne MacKenzie, of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, on February 25, 2011 in Vancouver. The awards recognize recipients of the WLF Award of Excellence, celebrating the accomplishments of a woman who has succeeded in breaking new ground for women in the legal profession in British Columbia, and the Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award, honouring an exceptional mentor who has participated in the WLF Mentoring Program.

It has been said that a good leader leads by example, and we have benefited from the leadership of our founding members and Chairs: Margaret Ostrowski QC, Kerry-Lynne Findlay QC, Jennifer Conkie QC, the Honourable Judge Stella Frame, Debra Van Ginkel QC (who passed away in 2008), and Linda Robertson. Their practices have covered litigation, corporate counsel and tribunal work, as well as coaching and educating lawyers. Many have balanced parenting with legal practice. Under their

UPCOMING EVENTS

CBABC WLF Awards Luncheon
Friday, February 25, 2011
Vancouver

Join us for our third WLF Awards Luncheon at which two awards will be presented: the WLF Award of Excellence and the Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award.

We will be joined by
Special Guest Speaker:
Associate Chief Justice Anne MacKenzie,
of the Supreme Court of BC.

CBABC WLF Education Day
Friday, May 13, 2011
Vancouver

Planning for the WLF 2011 Education Day is already underway. The focus of the day will be "creating connections" and "making change happen."

At the end of the Education Day each participant will have developed a personal professional action plan. The goals of the day are for participants to learn how to: establish personal and professional goals; analyze their strengths and gaps; and, build a personal brand that reflects what's truly important to you and much more.

See the CBABC Sections calendar for further event information.

PAST EVENTS

CBABC WLF
Senior Women Lawyers' Dinner
Thursday, January 13, 2011, Vancouver

Special Dinner Guest: The Honourable
Pat Carney, PC, Senator for British
Columbia (Retired)

This was a good opportunity to network with other senior women lawyers in a casual environment and hear the experiences of our special guest.



THE CANADIAN
BAR ASSOCIATION
British Columbia Branch

CBA WLF National UPCOMING EVENTS

The Canadian Bar Association, National Women Lawyers Forum is holding their first Leadership Conference for Professional Women: Skills for Success from January 28-29, 2011 in Toronto.

For more information, please visit the conference webpage at www.cba.org/pd/details.aspx?id=NA_WLF2011.



WLF Program & Events

We offer programs that are designed to encourage and support women lawyers in the area of practice enhancement and professional and personal development. The Forum offers members a large variety of mentoring, education, leadership and networking events. See the CBABC Sections calendar for further event information.

Are you interested in writing an article for the WLF Newsletter or do you have any comments or feedback?

If so, please contact the CBABC WLF Marketing & Communications Committee Co-Chairs, Janine F. Jones (jjones@lawsonlundell.com) and Vanessa Gauthier (vgauthier@lklaw.ca).

leadership, the WLF has established Forums across Canada and in BC (with a branch now in Kamloops), initiated our Mentoring Program, created the WLF Awards, and developed numerous networking and education events. The WLF continues to benefit from their experience and historical knowledge of the Forum and it is my privilege to work with many of these leaders.

The WLF events and programs are made possible only through the many hours of volunteer time contributed by our Executive, Co-Chairs and members of Committees (Education, Events Planning, Mentoring, and Marketing & Communications). Please contact any of the Executive if you are interested in volunteering for a committee or, have a block of time to commit to a project or event. Volunteering is a great way to get connected with other women in the law.

An Inside Look at the WLF Mentoring Program

The seventh year of the CBABC Women Lawyers Forum Mentoring Program concluded in November, with 86 pairs participating in 2010. To find out more about the WLF Mentoring Program, visit www.cba.org/BC/Sections_Groups/wlaw/mentoring.aspx.

Vanessa Gauthier recently interviewed one of our mentoring pairs – Patricia Armstrong and Jessica Yee – about their experiences.

Patricia Armstrong

Pat is a Senior Associate Lawyer in the Insurance Law and Litigation practice group of LK Law with many years of experience in insurance defence litigation for ICBC. She has mentored several women lawyers and articulated students through the WLF Mentoring Program.

Why did you apply to become a mentor? My dear friend Debra Van Ginkel, QC started the mentoring program. Also, I began an insurance litigation practice at a time when there were few, if any, women in this area of the profession and while I had positive mentoring from several male senior lawyers when I was starting out, I felt the lack of a female role model and confidant so I hoped that I might provide that to young women starting out now.

How would you describe your role as a mentor? I see my role as mentor as a neutral sounding board who has the mentee's interests at heart.

What personal attributes do you bring? Certainly my age and having 30 years of practice in a variety of firms and in house.

What one piece of advice would you give to a new mentee? Choose a job that suits you, don't try to change yourself to suit a job.

How often did you and Jessica meet? It varied. Some meetings were in other locations, such as Victoria. We continued our mentoring while Jessica was in China for six months. Generally, we maintained contact every month or so.





We welcome and encourage all lawyers into our membership. Please contact:

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What do you see as the benefits of mentoring? I have benefited enormously from mentoring. I have gotten to know a wonderful group of young women and I appreciate their perspective on life and work. For my mentees, I have supported several in their decisions to change jobs (or not) and provided references and advice and I hope that I have made them feel that we are all in this together and given them a bit of historical perspective.

Any specific successes you can share? I helped two mentees in their decisions to change jobs, which is a huge decision for junior lawyers. I think they appreciated having a senior lawyer to discuss these things with on a private basis.

Jessica Yee

An Associate at FMC Law, Jessica was called to the BC Bar in 2007. She practises securities and corporate law.

What were you looking to achieve from the WLF Mentoring Program? I wanted to meet someone outside my firm who could be a sounding board for any issues I was facing with my career. I didn't have many expectations because I know lawyers can be very busy. I just wanted to meet someone with experience and knowledge who could be frank with me and meet with me every so often.

Has the WLF Mentoring Program helped you to achieve your goals? Yes, definitely. Pat has been truly dedicated to guiding me through my legal career. She is proactive in meeting with me and has helped answer my numerous questions relating to my growth in the legal profession.

What qualities do you think are most important in a mentor? A good mentor is someone who is dedicated to the program and someone who has the passion for mentoring.

What do you enjoy most about having a mentor? I really enjoy how casual my relationship with Pat is. We meet every month or two for lunch and I can share and ask questions on matters relating to practice, marketing or work life balance. Pat always has my best interests in mind and I really value her friendship.

Would you consider becoming a mentor yourself? Yes, because I've been enriched by the program and I hope our new calls to the profession can, too.

Hot Tips from Hot Mentors

by Janis McAfee

At September's WLF Fall Launch, seven senior lawyers generously offered "Hot Tips from Hot Mentors" for the benefit of all the women lawyers who attended the event. Deborah Taylor and Julie Fisher, Co-Chairs of the Mentoring Committee, introduced the mentors: Rita Andreone, Rosanne Kyle, Alison Murray QC, Karen Nordlinger QC, Margaret Ostrowski QC, Lisa Vogt, and Jean Whittow QC.





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Are you interested in writing an article for the WLF Newsletter or do you have any comments or feedback?

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The over-riding theme of the evening? How important it is to take time to develop your career, and to surround yourself with trusted friends and loved ones. Here's a sampling of the tips they imparted.

Be a joiner. Join professional bodies and organizations, even if you work part-time. CBA Sections and the WLF are a great place to start and allow you to stay engaged in the profession.

Treat others the way you want to be treated. While law is an adversarial system, you don't have to be an adversary with opposing counsel. Conduct yourself honestly and fairly and communicate to avoid surprises.

Prioritize your practice. Set short-term and long-term goals. Be aware of the fact that your priorities may change as your career evolves, and re-evaluate your priorities and goals on occasion. Be prepared to adjust your expectations, and to compromise.

Have a career plan. Decide where your passion lies and create opportunities. This may mean changing firms, more study, a lateral or backwards move, or some other sacrifice, but take ownership of your career path.

Gratitude. Be grateful for what you have accomplished, and to those who have helped you. Don't be afraid to delegate and surround yourself with a broad support network, including colleagues, friends, family, and child caregivers. Abandon perfectionist tendencies.

Flexibility. Many women lawyers feel compelled to return to work too quickly after having children, fail to explore creative work alternatives, and don't take adequate personal time. Explore options like working closer to home or in house positions. Establish firm boundaries when it comes to how much you will take on. Do what's right for you.

Imposter Syndrome. Come to grips with your inner critic. The first five years of practice will be the toughest, so just work hard and accept the fact that you will make mistakes. Remember that mistakes provide learning opportunities.

Get Creative!

Help us re-name the WLF Newsletter.

This is the second edition of the re-launched CBABC WLF Newsletter and we need your help coming up with a great new name. The name should capture our purpose, which is to promote, support and advance the stature and influence of women in the legal profession through mentoring, networking, recognition, education and leadership. Send your suggestions to the Marketing & Communications Committee Co-Chairs Janine F. Jones (jjones@lawsonlundell.com) and Vanessa Gauthier (vgauthier@lklaw.ca).

The first 10 people to send a suggestion will receive a copy of the book "Briefcase Moms" by Lisa Martin.



CBABC WLF Fall Launch: Hot Tips from Hot Mentors



Photo Left to Right: Rita Andreone, Jean Whittow QC, Karen Nordlinger QC, Lisa Vogt, Margaret Ostrowski QC, Alison Murray QC and Rosanne Kyle.

Honouring Outstanding Women Lawyers

by Nicole Byres

On February 25, 2011, the WLF will host a luncheon to honour the newest recipients of the WLF Award of Excellence and the Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award - both recognizing outstanding women in the legal profession. Madam Justice Anne MacKenzie, Associate Chief Justice of the BC Supreme Court, will be our featured guest speaker.

WLF Award of Excellence

The WLF Award of Excellence recognizes an exceptional woman who has taken risks, fostered change, and enhanced the practice of law for women through activities like initiating successful retention strategies, promoting leadership roles for women in law firms, mentoring others, teaching, writing, and engaging in community work. Recent winners include Kathryn Berge QC (2009) and Maria Morellato QC (2008).

The Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award

The Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award honours the memory and accomplishments of Debra Van Ginkel QC, who believed that everyone — especially women lawyers — needs a mentor to support and encourage them professionally and personally. Debra played a key role in creating the WLF Mentoring Program, now heading into its eighth successful year. The 2009 award went to Brenda Edwards.

Plan to join us to honour this year's honourees!

WLF Newsletter
Winter 2010/2011 Edition

Editor
Andrea Verwey
Assistant Editors
Janine F. Jones
Vanessa Gauthier



These two awards support the WLF's mandate to promote, support, and advance women in the legal profession. By recognizing those who have made important contributions to women in law, we hope to inspire a new generation to get involved in mentoring and leadership roles.

CBABC Women Lawyers Forum Awards Luncheon

The February 25th Awards Luncheon will be held in Vancouver at the Sutton Place Hotel. Mark your calendar and plan to join us to honour this year's Award recipients at the WLF Awards Luncheon. Click here to read the notice or go to the CBABC Sections calendar for further event information.

The CBABC Women Lawyers Forum is pleased to announce the recipients of the WLF Award of Excellence and the Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award.

CBABC Women Lawyers Forum Award of Excellence

The recipient of the third WLF Award of Excellence is Margaret Ostrowski, QC.

Margaret has spent much of her legal career working on access to justice issues including issues of importance to women lawyers. She introduced advice panels for women law students, potluck dinners for WLF members and senior women lawyer dinners featuring prominent guest speakers. While serving as President of the CBABC in 2000, she sponsored a President's Forum titled "Creating Success – A Symposium for Women in Law." Margaret established an association of women and the law by initiating and chairing the working group of CBA women lawyers who founded the CBABC Women Lawyers Forum.



CBABC Women Lawyers Forum Award of Excellence

The recipient of our second WLF Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award is Joan M. Gordon.

Joan has spent countless hours mentoring women in law both formally and informally and is noted by her mentees as exhibiting the greatest of skills at listening, understanding, and assisting them to work through many professional and personal issues. Joan exemplifies all of the best qualities of a mentor providing insight and wisdom on issues relevant to today's women lawyers.



Report from the Kamloops WLF

by Kathleen Kendall

This year the energies of the Kamloops WLF have been directed towards the launch of the group, Co-Chaired by Kathleen Kendall and Linda Thomas. The group was officially adopted as a CBABC Forum in December, 2009 following a year of planning and organizing. The support of a local female Master and a Provincial Court Judge were extremely important in formulating plans for the group and attracting members. The first "official" meeting was held in February, 2010 and consisted of a potluck dinner followed by a panel discussion on "Practice and Ethics – Frequently Asked Questions." The most recent meeting of the group was held December 1, 2010 and involved a discussion on "Dealing with Difficult Clients." Five other meetings were held throughout the year, covering a variety of topics. The Kamloops WLF also held an annual summer barbeque that was graciously hosted by Judge Stella Frame (WLF Past Chair, 2007). In December, the group held a Christmas potluck lunch at which the group donated a Christmas hamper for a family and celebrated their first year.

