



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Outstanding Lawyers Honoured  
With Bar Awards**

**Vancouver (BC)** - The Canadian Bar Association, British Columbia Branch (CBABC) honoured five outstanding lawyers and an impressive BC law firm, all of whom have contributed to their profession and the community in five areas of service: Community Service, Equality and Diversity, Pro Bono, Innovative Workplace and the President's Medal. CBABC President Dean Crawford made the presentations this past weekend at the CBABC Provincial Council meeting where more than 100 of BC's top legal leaders gathered to celebrate. The five BC lawyers and one law firm bestowed with awards are as follows:

***CBABC Community Service Award***

To recognize the valuable contributions of CBABC members serving the communities in our province, the CBABC sponsors *Community Service Awards* every other year. The awards honour CBABC members who have demonstrated outstanding dedication, service and commitment to their community. This year two outstanding lawyers were recognized: **Kim Karras** of Brawn Karras & Sanderson in Surrey and **Frances Kelly** of the Community Legal Assistance Society in Vancouver.

### ***CBABC Equality and Diversity Award***

Each Year, the BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association is proud to present the *Equality and Diversity Award* to celebrate the accomplishments of a lawyer who has succeeded in advancing equality within BC and more specifically, the legal profession. The award recognizes significant contributions to improving the status of women, people with disabilities, people of colour, aboriginal peoples, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or two spirited people, or people who are members of historically marginalized communities. The 2014 recipient is **Janine Benedet** of Vancouver. Ms. Benedet is associate professor at UBC Faculty of Law and director of its Centre for Feminist Legal Studies.

### ***CBABC Harry Rankin QC Pro Bono Award***

The *Harry Rankin QC Pro Bono Award* recognizes significant contributions of: pro bono legal services to a client; community organizing in establishing pro bono clinics; coordinating pro bono services, and education and advocacy work to promote pro bono culture. The 2014 *Harry Rankin QC Pro Bono Award* recipient is **Jamie Maclaren**, executive director of Access Pro Bono and a Vancouver Bencher of the Law Society of BC.

### ***CBABC Innovative Workplace Award***

The *Innovative Workplace Award* recognizes lawyers, law firms or organizations who demonstrate leadership in promoting workplace innovation within the practice of law. The award is designed to reward innovation and creative thinking in the workplace and to recognize a CBABC member, law firm or organization who demonstrates this innovation in their practice or who is a leader in the development and implementation of innovative workplace strategies. The inaugural recipient of this new CBABC award is Vancouver law firm – **Clark Wilson LLP**.

### ***CBABC President's Medal***

Awarded personally by the CBABC president each year, this medal honours an outstanding lawyer who has been recognized for one or more of the following: legal academic proficiency, works of legal scholarship, significant contribution to the profession, or noteworthy contribution to Canadian public life. This year, the CBABC President's Medal was awarded to **Tino Di Bella**. A general practitioner in Victoria, Mr. Di Bella is the chair of the British Columbia Law Institute and a past chair of the CBABC's Legislation and Law Reform Committee. In making the award to Mr. Di Bella, President Crawford said, "I can think of no lawyer in British Columbia who has committed as many volunteer hours to the important work of law reform. He is a most deserving recipient."

Photos are available here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/95025663@N07/>

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*The Canadian Bar Association is the professional organization representing more than 38,000 lawyers, judges and law students in Canada, including 6,800 members in British Columbia.*