

# Faculty of LAW

## NEWSLETTER

SPRING\SUMMER, 2021

### THREE MANDATES OF THE FACULTY OF LAW CURRICULUM

Aboriginal-  
Indigenous Law

Natural Resources  
Environmental Law

Small Practice  
with IPC



## Message from the Dean

So many exciting things have happened over the winter term, it is hard to know where to start: We are thrilled to announce the appointment of Rodi-Lynn Rusnick-Kinsky as Director of our Community Legal Services Clinic. Her appointment comes at a critical time as Legal Aid Ontario is revising its rules in preparation for the coming-into-force of the new *Legal Aid Services Act* and renewing funding agreements. We look forward to seeing the Clinic continue to thrive under her leadership.

After a long wait, we learned in December that our grant application to the federal Department of Justice for an Indigenous Law and Justice Institute was approved, and we were able to launch on April 1. Read more about the Institute in our feature article.

The 2Ls hosted a very entertaining halfway to grad party online, proving that even a pandemic can't take the fun out of socializing with your law school friends. We had a faculty and staff end-of-term dinner on Zoom. It was great to see colleagues and share a meal, though we have to give it to the 2Ls that we did not have a professional comedian!

Our Ontario Trial Lawyers Association moot team brought home the OTLA cup, great work from the team and coach! Read more about this stellar success on p. 3.

An application to the Law Foundation of Ontario for a new clinical program in immigration and refugee law was approved and the new clinic will begin offering services come September. Once fully operational, the clinic will provide public legal education, legal advice and representation to resettled refugees and international students as well as newcomer entrepreneurs.

Congratulations to all Bora Laskin Faculty of Law students for making this year a success against all odds. A very fond farewell to the Class of 2021, we look forward to giving you a proper send-off at graduation and convocation. We are so proud of your many accomplishments and can't wait to see the many ways in which you will make access to justice a reality for your clients and your communities!



## *Maamawi Bimosewag (They Walk Together) Indigenous Law & Justice Institute Announcement*

Dean Julia Hughes is happy to provide exciting news for the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law (BLFL) community! As of April 1, 2021, we are the proud hosts of the *Maamawi Bimosewag (They Walk Together) Indigenous Law & Justice Institute*! The *Maamawi Bimosewag Institute* is funded by the Department of Justice in response to the TRC 50 for the development, use, and understanding of Indigenous laws and access to justice which accord with the unique cultures of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. BLFL is also committed to upholding our treaty obligations, and proactively respond to the TRC 27, 28, and 42 in providing skill-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism. The work of the *Maamawi Bimosewag Institute* will correlate with the core elements of our mandate: Aboriginal and Indigenous Law, Natural Resources and Environmental Law; and Sole/Small Town Practice with the Integrated Practice Curriculum.

The *Maamawi Bimosewag Justice Institute* will be guided by the Anishinawbe Omaa Minowaywin advisory committee at the BLFL. Our goal is to develop internal capacity, support the work of our Indigenous partner communities and organizations as we engage in Indigenous law revitalization efforts together by supporting:

- research and pedagogical work which includes a strong comparative and trans-systemic aspect
- revitalization of Anishnaabe and Métis Indigenous legal orders and how they may interface with the Canadian justice system



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- growing awareness, use and, where appropriate, modernization of Anishinaabe and Métis law in communities and organizations
- empower community members, law students and practicing lawyers to develop the necessary skills to effectively apply Anishinaabe and Métis laws;
- assist in making Anishinaabe and Métis law more accessible and widely known among community members, justice system participants and legal professionals
- create resources that will be implemented in a sustainable manner through the *Maamawi Bimosewag Justice Institute* and housed at the BLFL; and to
- actively engage and build strong and effective relationships with other research and academic institutions

In all of its research and curriculum development the *Maamawi Bimosewag Institute* will respect community-based protocols and accord with Indigenous principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession, and university research ethics processes and Gender Based Analysis Plus principles.

For over a year we have been eagerly anticipating approval of our funding application, and continued collaboration with Indigenous partners, organizations, and communities in the development of the *Maamawi Bimosewag Institute*. Work is already underway to enhance our summer course for incoming Indigenous students, we are planning a series of smaller land-based excursions and activities throughout the upcoming year, we are planning a law camp for faculty and administrative staff that will evolve into an annual law camp for students, faculty and partner communities; and we are exploring opportunities to build capacity and revitalize

Indigenous laws with Indigenous partner organizations and communities.

Professor Nancy Sandy will lead us in this exciting journey as the inaugural Director of the *Maamawi Bimosewag Institute*.

You can find the official Lakehead University announcement [here](#).

## Class of 2022 Halfway to Grad

On February 12<sup>th</sup>, faculty, staff and second-year law students at the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law joined together on Zoom to celebrate “Halfway to Grad”. The event was hosted by Kimberly Kenney, VP Operations on the Lakehead University Law Student Society. Halfway to Grad was an opportunity for students to reflect on the perseverance, determination and accomplishment of making it halfway through their law degree, particularly through these unprecedented times.

The event began by welcoming Comedian Jeff Leeson, who performed a stand-up comedy show where he made fun of all things law school and lawyers. Mr. Leeson had us all laughing until we cried, and his show ended with a virtual round of applause and many smiling faces. There was then a raffle of various gift cards for Amazon, Best Buy, Sport Chek, and more. Ten lucky students and staff members claimed these exciting prizes. The event concluded with an encouraging and motivational speech by Director Hope Buset. She provided insight into the personal challenges she faced during law school and some helpful advice and lessons for current law students. We all appreciated and enjoyed her advice. The event was an absolute success, and we thank all those able to join!

## NEVER UNDERESTIMATE YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

### Anyone with assets should have a Will to:

- protect your family and your estate
- minimize taxes
- establish a legacy and safeguard future generations

### A gift in your Will to Lakehead University can:

- **CHANGE LIVES**
- remove barriers to a post-secondary education
- sustain important programs and initiatives

## A GIFT IN YOUR WILL. SOMETHING YOUR FUTURE SELF WILL BE PROUD OF.

For more information contact **Lee-Anne Camlin**  
T: (807) 343-8010 Ext. 7792 | E: [rlcamlin@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:rlcamlin@lakeheadu.ca)



*“Because of the **Coughlin-Courtland Family Bursary**, I was able to continue to pursue my educational goals – dreams, really – without financial hardship.”*

KERI-LYN DURANT,  
2019-20 award recipient Coughlin-Courtland Family Bursary

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## Movers and Mooters!

This past year the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law participated in six virtual moots/negotiations including the Wilson Moot, the Arnup Cup, the Kawaskimhon Moot, the OTLA Cup, the Walsh Family Negotiation and the Julius Alexander Isaac Moot. A big CONGRATULATIONS to the OTLA moot team for winning this year's competition!! Coached by Jeff Moorley (White MacGillivray Lester LLP), Karson Blackwood, Sean Cahill, Jordan Petruska and Monika Steger brought home the cup! A special shout-out goes to Jordan Petruska who won the Joyce Thomas Memorial Award for the Best Witness. For the first time, the BLFL participated in the Julius Alexander Isaac Moot. Named after the first Black judge to sit on the Federal Court of Canada, this moot focuses on an area of law where an issue of equity and diversity arises. Thank you to Professor Martin-Joe Ezeudu for coaching our inaugural team in such an important moot competition. Congratulations to all of our students who participated in a moot this year: Andrew Allen, Petri Bailey, Karson Blackwood, Alyssa Buttineau, Sean Cahill, Michael Chiang, Shannon Darby, Mitchell Goldenberg, Declan Gunovski, Aria Kamal, Kimberly Kenney, Rachel McLean, Adrianna Mucciarelli, Daniel Mulroy,



Tochi Nwaokocha, Jordan Petruska, Steven Rayson, Greg Sanders, Jenna Sheikh, Monika Steger, Courtney Turner, and Kim Young. Thank you to all of our coaches who have volunteered countless hours mentoring our promising young advocates: Professor Joan Braun, Daniel Cox (alumnus), Michael Hargadon (PM Law), David Pierce (PM Law), Shawn Bell (Edwards Bell Law Offices), Etienne Esquega (Esquega Law Office), Jeff Moorley (White MacGillivray Lester LLP), Justice Claudia Belda, and Professor Martin-Joe Ezeudu.

## Clerkships in the North

This coming summer, five BLFL graduates will be starting clerkships at various courts: Shakiba Azimi (Supreme Court of Canada), Erin Chochla (Federal Court), Justis Danto-Clancy (Superior Court- Thunder Bay), Shannon Darby (Superior Court- Brampton), and Erin Vagnini (Superior Court- Sudbury). We wish them all the best on what promises to be a busy but exciting year!

Two of our recent graduates are in the process of completing clerkships in Sudbury and Thunder Bay. Here is what they have to say about their clerking experiences:



### Claire McCann

Despite the unusual circumstances of 2020, I have very much enjoyed my role as the Northeast Region Judicial Law Clerk for the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. My work with the Court has provided me with invaluable insights into the inner workings of our judiciary. I work closely with the 17 presiding Justices of the Northeast on matters involving

often nuanced legal issues. I value the diversity of the work, which includes everything from family, civil, real estate, criminal and administrative law. Some days are spent editing

decisions, while others involve researching an evolving area of the law. More than ever, I am grateful to have had the opportunity for hands on learning during my time at the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law. From the integrated practice curriculum, I had a foundational understanding of how the Court worked from the outset. The most gratifying part of the clerkship has been having the purposeful mentorship of the Justices.

### Daniel Cox

When my clerkship began last August, I was apprehensive about what the year ahead would bring. March of 2020 saw the legal system quite literally grind to a halt, prompting one of the most monumental

transformations the courts has ever undergone. There I was, coming on board smack dab in the middle of it. There have most certainly been challenges. Yet in a way, I feel these challenges have brought me closer to my colleagues and the judges for whom I clerk than I might otherwise have been by facing these new challenges together. Even more rewarding has been knowing that Northwestern Ontario, being uniquely versed in issues of access to justice, has been able to make such a significant contribution to bringing the rest of the province into this new era. It has been a privilege serving the judiciary through this time, and I am particularly proud to be one of the many Bora Laskin alumni who are helping to make this great transformation a reality.



## Alumni in the Classroom

It was exciting for us to be able to welcome some of our alumni back to the Faculty of Law as they returned this year as instructors and tutors! We are grateful for their continued support of our program, and appreciate the unique perspective they bring to the classroom.

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### Nimkiikwe (Sherry) Abotossaway

Class of 2019  
Abotossaway Law / Matthews Dagvik Law  
Aboriginal Legal Issues

Sherry is a mom of three children and three fur babies, first and foremost, but in her spare time, she is a criminal lawyer, which is her passion, as she gets to assist marginalized, vulnerable populations. She also proudly co-teaches with Dean Hughes.

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### Shawn Bell

Charter Class of 2016  
Edwards Bell Law Offices  
Federal and Aboriginal Law of Work

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### Katy Commisso

Charter Class of 2016  
Buset & Partners LLP  
Tutorial Instructor, Civil Practice

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### Liz McLeod

Charter Class of 2016  
O'Neill Associates  
Federal and Aboriginal Law of Work

Liz is an inaugural class graduate and practicing labour and employment lawyer serving both employees and employers throughout Northern Ontario. Through their respective practices in this area, Liz and former classmate Shawn Bell identified an opportunity to provide instruction to Bora Laskin students in the area of labour and employment, but that also engaged elements of this practice focused on aspects unique to the North, as well as within the mandate of the law school. Liz is thrilled to continue her involvement with the Faculty of Law as an instructor in this area.

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### Larissa Speak

Charter Class of 2016  
Kinna-awaya Legal Clinic  
Indigenous Legal Traditions

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### Warren Mouck

Charter Class of 2016  
O'Neill Associates  
Tutorial Instructor, Civil Practice

Warren is currently a tutorial instructor for the Civil Practice course, and took on the role to stay connected with the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law community. While being relatively new to practice in the grand scheme, the first few years taught him a number of lessons he has shared with students in his tutorial group. The fact that this year's mock problem was a wrongful dismissal case made the transition to being an instructor a little easier for him, given that is one of his main practice areas!



## Student Services Update

Virtual or not, the Winter Term always proves to be busy, busy, busy! The Student Services team of Hope and Sarah continue to support students virtually, and they have been so impressed with the adaptability and resolve of our students.

While we miss our “open door” drop in chats with everyone, our morning “Coffeehouse” sessions continued on a bi-weekly basis this term, often with a professor joining in as well for some lighthearted discussion before class. We also hosted a few socially-distanced “Winter Walks” and hope to resume them again later this spring.

Staff, faculty, and student volunteers came together to deliver our first virtual Welcome Day event for all currently admitted incoming students at the end of February. It was a great afternoon, featuring a mock lecture by Prof. Alford, a “photo tour” of the school, and panel discussions on everything from the IPC to the “must-do” activities in Thunder Bay. We are looking forward to welcoming the Class of 2024 this fall!

We are nearing the end of this term's Practice Placements and would like to extend our congratulations to all 3Ls for another successful year; once again, feedback from placement supervisors speaks to the professionalism, dedication, and strong capabilities of our students. All 2L students have been matched to their placements for next year and we know they will all do a wonderful job as well.

We would like to wish good luck to all our students who have secured summer positions. We have students headed to private firms, government, and legal organizations. Some of our 1L and 2L students have been selected for exciting summer opportunities with the Law Commission of Ontario's Summer Scholar program, the Debwewin Summer Law program, and internship positions, funded by the Law Foundation of Ontario, with various non-profit organizations which aim to promote access to justice. We know they will gain valuable experience and we cannot wait to hear all about it!

The Student Services team has a busy summer ahead as we plan for the next academic year and prepare our newest students for law school. But first, we must (sadly) say goodbye to the remarkable Class of 2021! Your law school journey was certainly different than what anyone could have anticipated and yet you've navigated it with poise and positivity. It is safe to say that you will be able to handle whatever curve balls may come your way as new lawyers! Hope, Anya, and Sarah wish you all the best on the next chapter – please keep in touch!





## Challenges of Teaching During Covid

This past year has been challenging. COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on Canadian society and this impact has also drastically altered my teaching and research agenda. Not only has the Law Faculty had to contend with the shift to online teaching, but the content of my courses has also been affected by the pandemic. This past year, I taught both Public Health Law and Canadian Constitutional Law; two courses whose subject matter is deeply engaged by the policy decisions made during Canada's covid-19 response. Class discussions have been heavily influenced by the pandemic and we have been able to have lively and interesting discussions about our public health care system and the flaws that have been exposed in the system as a result of COVID-19. In addition to shaping classroom discussion, the government response to the pandemic has also provided a multitude of opportunities for academic research. As Canada attempts to control the third wave of this pandemic, it has become readily apparent that vaccinations will be the only way to return to pre-pandemic normalcy. Canada's vaccine roll-out is underway; however, critical issues surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine are only beginning to emerge. Two of my recent research projects attempt to grapple with some of these issues.

The first project, *Mandatory Childhood Immunization Programs: Is There Still a Role for Religious and Conscience Belief Exemptions*, co-authored with Professor Vanessa Gruben (University of Ottawa-Faculty of Law) and Dr. Kumanan Wilson (Chief Executive Officer of CANImmunize and University of Ottawa-Faculty of Medicine), was recently published by the University of Alberta Law Review.

This project begins with an overview of the scientific and epidemiological properties of vaccination policy in general and in the context of a COVID-19 vaccine, before turning to examine how Canadian provinces deliver their respective childhood immunization programs. In Canada, most childhood immunization programs are voluntary, New Brunswick and Ontario being the exception. While childhood vaccination programs have a long and rich history in Canada, the increase in vaccine hesitancy and the rise in popularity of the anti-vaccine movement has meant that provincial governments have started to contemplate changes to these long-standing public health programs.

Although provincial governments had already started contemplating potential changes to their childhood immunization programs, the emergence of this current pestilence and the development of multiple vaccinations for it has only increased the attention on childhood vaccination programs. Unlike other childhood vaccinations that have long-standing safety records, COVID-19 vaccinations and their potential side effects may only be measured through post-market surveillance. Moreover, unlike other common childhood diseases, such as measles and polio, COVID-19 is a relatively minor illness for children. As such, the benefit of vaccinating children will be for the greater public good and will help control the spread of the disease to more vulnerable populations. How should such a vaccine fit into the current childhood immunization scheme and do constitutional rights play a role in limiting options available to provincial governments? The paper contended with these questions before proposing what

types of changes governments should adopt and what types of safeguards should be implemented into childhood immunization programs.

My second project, which will again be co-authored with Prof. Vanessa Gruben, also centers on COVID-19 vaccinations; however, it shifts focus from childhood immunization programs to the controversial issue of mandatory workplace vaccinations and/or alternative programs such as mask or vaccinate policies. Mandatory workplace vaccination policies have caused a polemical response for those impacted by them. In Ontario, recent arbitration awards have struck down such policies. These arbitration awards, which focused on hospital-based vaccinate or mask policies for the influenza vaccine, will need to be re-examined in light of our current pandemic and the development of highly effective vaccines. This project will seek to examine how these arbitration decisions may evolve in response to the global pandemic and the COVID-19 vaccine and what limits can or should be placed on such employer-based policies.

Over the course of this summer, provincial vaccination programs will continue the daunting task of inoculating millions of Canadians. Once the initial roll-out of the program is complete, governments and private sectors (including hospitals and long-term care facilities) will have to contemplate how to best deal with individuals who choose not to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Hopefully, these research projects will provide some insight and potential solutions to such a complicated and divisive area of public health policy.

Dr. Mariette Brennan



## Black Law Students Association

We are so proud to inform the Lakehead University community that this year, the Lakehead University chapter of Black Law Students Association was able to host our second annual Black History Month symposium with the support of the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law.

This year, Black Law Students' Association celebrated Black History Month with events that brought law students and faculty together to learn about and honor the achievements and contributions of Black lawyers and scholars—contributions that are foundational to our collective history here in Canada.

BLSA put together a symposium consisting of three events highlighting how the law intersects with race, starting with a documentary screening on February 4, 2021 of *The 13th*, a documentary by Ava DuVernay, which explores the history of racial inequality in the United States, focusing on the fact that prisons are disproportionately filled with black Americans.

The documentary screening was followed by a fireside chat with Asha James, Bora Laskin Faculty of Law members, and the BLSA team members on February 10, 2021 to further explore lawyering from a critical race theory and intersectional perspective.

The final event hosted by the BLSA was a candid conversation on February 25, 2021 with keynote speaker Omar Haredeye, who is a Toronto and Durham Region lawyer and legal academic. He is the Executive Director of the Durham Community Legal Clinic in Oshawa, and teaches part-time at Ryerson University.

Throughout the month, BLSA was happy to initiate important discussions on campus about race and effective allyship. BLSA was proud to host Black History Month programming to promote an understanding of the Black experience in Canada and the law. Through the engagement and feedback of our attendants, we were also pleased to see the willingness of Bora Laskin Faculty of Law to increase collective awareness on how much we can learn from each other's experiences to expand our praxis and promote justice, inclusivity, diversity, and unity.

We thank the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law community for their support and involvement, look forward to continuing these conversations on equity and the law in the next academic year!

Eman Cheema

## Harold G. Fox Distinguished Lecture Series 2021: Beyond Zoom Hearings by Shannon Salter

It was my honour to provide opening remarks for the honoured speaker for the 2021 Harold G. Fox Distinguished Lecture Series, Ms. Shannon Salter. Ms. Salter's talk was titled "Beyond Zoom Hearings: Human Centered Design and Access to Justice in the Age of COVID-19." As is the new normal, and perhaps particularly apt given Ms. Salter's expertise in issues of technology, access and the law, this engaging talk was delivered virtually via zoom on the 26th January.

Shannon Salter is the Chair of the British Columbia Civil Resolution Tribunal, and an adjunct professor at University of British Columbia, Allard School of Law, where she teaches administrative law and legal ethics. Ms. Salter's career is impressive and her accolades are many. I would bring attention to Ms. Salter's significant expertise in issues of law and technology and access to justice. Ms. Salter is currently a board member of the Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII) and has been recognized as an Access to Justice All-Star by the National Self-Represented Litigants Project (NSLAP). Just this month, in January 2021, Ms. Salter was recognized as a Women of Legal Technology Honouree by the Legal Technology Resource Centre at the American Bar Association.

The issue of technology and its adoption by the legal community is an urgent one. Technology can be used to make legal services more efficient, accessible and user-friendly. Increasingly, legal data about all aspects of the legal process have been identified as important for innovation. It is argued that disaggregated data could help better identify indications of racism within our legal systems; that data analytics could be utilized to develop predictability in judicial decision-

making and that greater data interoperability across legal services could make legal information more accessible.

Highlighting the role of data as a measuring tool for law is to draw out the observation that there is a great need for increased access to and transparency in our legal system. COVID-19 has drawn out this urgent need in a more immediate and frankly more foundational way. In Ontario this meant figuring out how to move court processes online. The Attorney General of Ontario noted that COVID was the catalyst that allowed us to move forward on Court modernisation 25 years in 25 days.

There is some concern that adoption of zoom technology to conduct court services is to introduce a technological overlay to the existing judicial system, while not necessarily addressing ongoing challenges around access to justice. Advocates argue for the creation of an "online court" that is built digitally from the ground up. Utilizing technology to serve those who access the legal system and not creating a digital barrier to an already often inaccessible legal system. The British Columbia Civil Resolution Tribunal – and the work of Ms. Salter as Chair of the tribunal – is an example of an online process that is built around the fundamental principles of access to justice built on user-centric technology.

I want to again thank Ms. Salter for joining us at Bora Laskin Faculty of Law, Lakehead University for the annual Fox Memorial Lecture. Her insights, ideas and energy about the importance of developing technology that is centered on the user is an important reminder of the central goal for us in the legal community which must be to ensure access to justice.





## Congratulations to Sharon Tathgur, this year's PBSC Chief Justice Richard Wagner Award Recipient!

**T**hank you to all the members of Pro Bono for this opportunity! This year has been very memorable and working with Northwestern Ontario Women Centre (NWOWC) was certainly an important part of my experience as a law student. I worked alongside my amazing mentor in assisting vulnerable women through their innumerable

challenges. NWOWC's goal is to increase women's access to knowledge, skills, and resources so they can proceed to make informed decisions when dealing with their legal issues. I continue to be inspired by the wide range of work NWOWC undertakes and hope that I can carry it forward through my professional career.

## Director of Indigenous Relations Updates

**D**espite the challenges of a virtual learning and social environment, we have all made it through another year of law school. Congratulations to everyone! A special congratulations to all 1Ls who successfully completed their Aboriginal Perspectives hours almost exclusively online. Opportunities for engagement will continue to be made available to you over your next two years at Lakehead, as some experiences were simply not possible this year.

Another set of congratulations is due to the incoming Class of 2024. You have made it into law school during a very challenging and competitive year. A big thank you (gichi miigwech) to this year's Indigenous Admissions Committee for all your feedback, as well as to the Summer Course Working Group for working throughout the year to prepare and deliver a Foundations of Canadian Law course

for credit to incoming Indigenous law students. This year has presented many challenges and struggles for students, something considered when planning this year's summer course but also addressed through regular meetings with current students and referrals to various supports and services, including our Elders in Residence program.

Some of the biggest highlights for me this year were attending and assisting with ILSA events when possible, including their academic panels, film screenings, arts & culture series, and end-of year Virtual Networking Feast. Let us keep the gratitude going with another gichi miigwech for everyone involved with ILSA for hosting such wonderful online events this year! All events were a great opportunity for everyone to connect and for 1Ls to accumulate AP hours. Miigwech!



## Law Students' Society Update

**A**s we approach the end of our current academic year, the Law Student Society Executive has reflected back on the many changes, challenges and obstacles that our students have encountered as a result of the global pandemic.

Although this year certainly was not what many of us had dreamed or anticipated, these unprecedented circumstances have driven our student body to rise up and address many unforeseen and un-anticipated hurdles with exemplary resilience and determination in pursuing our legal careers and overcoming the changes that our school has had to endure in true "Lakehead Spirit" fashion.

The Law Student Society Executive has been adaptive and flexible in engaging with students regularly and modifying events to promote and support a safe and secure environment while still enabling students to foster growing relationships with peers, faculty and administration.

The LSS encouraged and inspired student engagement through trivia nights, academic panels, health and wellness events and pets on zoom! The 1L class this year demonstrated ample enthusiasm and commitment in building the Lakehead Law experience by founding the Lakehead Asian Law Student Association and advocating for an LSS executive position for student wellness and engagement.

On behalf of your LSS Executive, I am very proud of the achievements of all Bora Laskin students and am excited to see the continued growth of our school. We have proven ourselves to be resilient, determined and motivated when faced with new challenges and obstacles.

I am honoured to have had the privilege to serve as your LSS President this past year.

Alyssa Buttineau  
LSS President 2020/2021

# LUCLS —

## As seen through the lens of our graduating caseworkers!



“Memorable”, “compassion” and “invaluable”. Those are just some of the words our graduating 3L’s used when they were asked to use one word to describe the clinic. While our hats go off to all our caseworkers who excelled in perseverance this school year, we especially want to thank our graduating 3L’s for their dedication to Lakehead University Community Legal Services. When we asked our graduating caseworkers to reflect on their time spent with the clinic, Justis Danto-Clancy\* (3L) shared this:

*The clinic represents a supportive place for many people who don't have anywhere left to turn. For many of limited means in Thunder Bay, the Lakehead clinic may be the only viable way to seek a remedy for tenancy issues, or a defence to prosecution. For that reason, and others, Student Caseworkers need to be compassionate towards the clinic's clients, no matter their circumstances. Working with vulnerable members of the community gives clinic students practical exposure to common client-management situations, within a supervised environment. It also gives students a chance to give their time, effort, and nascent expertise back to the community.*

When asked what skill she learned in the clinic that she thinks will be most helpful in practice, Shannon Darby\* (3L) said, “[c]linic developed my skill set in a lot of ways, but probably most useful has been improvements to my legal writing. I can now comfortably write effective, concise correspondence to opposing counsel.”

A lot of students wonder whether they have the time or ability to take the clinic course. When asked what words of encouragement she would give to law students contemplating these questions, Brooke Rogers\* (3L) offered this:

*Don't shy away from experiences that involve hard work -move towards them. Circumstances which force you outside of your comfort zone are experiences which will make you grow the most, as it strengthens your weaker skills. We tend to pick experiences in which we already have strong skills because it feels comfortable. In my experience, for example, oral advocacy has always been one of my strong skills, however I was never a great writer. Taking the clinic course forced me to work on and further develop that skill. Clinic work put my weaknesses directly in my face and admittedly receiving back Draft 7 of a letter from Review Counsel was certainly uncomfortable. BUT, it was a growing pain that I suffered through in order to develop my writing skills. I received one-on-one guidance from extremely knowledgeable lawyers, in an environment where it was safe to make a mistake.*

Student caseworkers make such a difference in the lives of our clients and their families. Thank you to our graduating caseworkers, who have all shown the utmost respect and kindness to the people we serve in the clinic. Your dedication and compassion in continuing to provide access to justice in our community will serve you well in your chosen career path in law! On behalf of the lawyers and staff at LUCLS, best of luck in your future!

Rodi-Lynn Rusnick-Kinsky  
Acting Director, LUCLS

\* Justis Danto-Clancy was a 2019 summer caseworker, a 2L student caseworker from September 2019 – April 2020 and a 3L student caseworker from January 2021 – April 2021.

\* Shannon Darby was a 2L student caseworker from September 2019 – April 2020, a 2020 summer caseworker and a 3L student caseworker from January 2021 – April 2021.

\* Brooke Rogers was a 2L student caseworker from September 2019 – April 2020, a 2020 summer caseworker and a 3L student caseworker from January 2021 – April 2021.

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