

ALUMNI MAGAZINE 2025



# PETER A. ALLARD SCHOOL OF LAW

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Creating a Just Future

How Indigenous Allard Law  
alumni are helping decolonize  
the criminal justice system



Kory Wilson (LLB '99),  
Chair, BC First Nations Justice Council

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Letters to the editor, class notes, address updates and general feedback about the magazine can be submitted to the editor by email at [alumni@allard.ubc.ca](mailto:alumni@allard.ubc.ca) or by mail at the address above. Submissions may be edited for length and clarity. Address updates and Class Notes may also be submitted online at [allard.ubc.ca](http://allard.ubc.ca). The *Allard School of Law Alumni Magazine* is published annually by the Allard School of Law; 10,000 copies are distributed to Allard School of Law alumni and the community via direct mail.

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Number 40564501



# Message from the Dean



**THIS ISSUE OF THE ALLARD LAW ALUMNI MAGAZINE highlights our community's efforts to make law and the legal profession more inclusive, equitable and innovative, and to advance meaningful decolonization initiatives. We learn about the work our alumni are doing in relation to Indigenous people and the criminal justice system (page 8) and explore our new initiative on technology, law and society (page 2). We also take a look at some of the law school's recent initiatives that reflect our commitment to our equity, diversity and inclusion goals, including student support and mentorship initiatives through our new EDI Office (page 16) and through the IDEA Leaders Pre-Orientation program (page 5). With 59% of our first-year students identifying as racialized or Indigenous, these initiatives speak to who we are as an institution, and we will continue to be intentional in forging direct connections with diverse communities.**

For me, these stories emphasize the important place the law school continues to have for students and alumni in relation to broader contemporary challenges that face our local and national communities. Those who have attended events where I have spoken will have heard the following message before: one of the most important roles of a law school in a community is to serve as a convenor. We bring the legal community together to network, share ideas and develop strategies to tackle our most pressing challenges. Within the law school, we help students think critically about the history, context and impact of these urgent challenges and attempt to provide some blueprints and structure for paths forward.

This forward-looking, problem-solving approach is increasingly at risk. Here in North America, the political divides are sharper and more polarizing than ever. Feelings of division and unbelonging can appear within our own personal and professional spheres. It is a continuing goal for our institution to both maintain a sense of belonging for all members of the Allard Law community and to serve as a productive venue for the collegial exchange of different viewpoints.

When we are at our best, we are able to engage one another, name the challenges we face in a pluralistic community, and explore the constellation of approaches we might take to address these challenges, understanding that each decision to act or not to act has an impact. A strength of the law is that it strives to make these impacts explicit so that we might evaluate — with open minds, open hearts and guidance from careful research — their implications for individuals and communities. It is this habit of reflection, this desire for lucidity and this practice of compassion that has kept me engaged in law and academics for more than three decades. I look forward to deepening this work with our alumni community and seeing what the next decades hold for the Allard School of Law.

**NGAI PINDELL**

Dean, Peter A. Allard School of Law

# Shaping Law and Legal Education for the Future



*From self-driving cars to legal advice chatbots, artificial intelligence is raising new questions about how technology will impact our lives.*

A new Allard Law initiative will help law students and the broader legal community respond to technological change

BY HEIDI WUDRICK

**AI HAS BEEN HERALDED** as a potentially revolutionary force for both legal practice and access to justice. At the same time, numerous lawyers and self-represented litigants have been making the headlines for inadvertently citing bogus case law hallucinated by generative AI chatbots, such as ChatGPT.

As the development and adoption of artificial intelligence continues to accelerate, law schools face the challenge of preparing students to respond to new opportunities and risks posed by AI, as well as other emerging technologies.

Launching this fall, a new Allard Law initiative focused on technology, law and society will advance the law school's work to future-proof legal education. The initiative will provide support for teaching, research and multidisciplinary collaboration.

"This timely new initiative builds upon Allard Law's strengths in law and technology, and will ensure we have the capacity to quickly respond to future technological changes," says Allard Law Dean Ngai Pindell.

Jon Festinger, KC, an expert on law and tech who has taught courses on topics including digital media and video game law at Allard Law since 1992, will oversee the initiative's activities. This year, he's launching a course on AI and the Law as part of the new initiative. The course will explore the impact of AI on law and society, issues in regulating AI and the use of AI in legal practice.

But while AI is currently the hottest topic in tech and will be an initial focus for the initiative, the overall scope will be broader. "We don't want to limit ourselves," says Festinger. "As hard as it is to imagine, there is something beyond AI that we haven't seen yet. The rule of law is the long game."



## More support for teaching law and tech

The initiative is launching amid strong student demand for more courses and opportunities related to technological developments and the law, says

Dr. Graham Reynolds, who helped shape the new program during his recent term as Allard Law's Associate Dean, Research and International.

Plans are underway to expand on the law school's current offerings to create new courses exploring the legal and policy implications of technological change, with the potential longer-term goal of launching a new specialization in technology, law and society. "This will position us as leaders in law and technology," says Reynolds. "We have so many faculty members doing so much incredible work in this area." The law school currently offers numerous courses at the intersection of law and tech, including courses focused on AI and criminal justice, intellectual property law, e-commerce, cyberspace law and video game law.

Dr. Moira Aikenhead (LLM '15, PhD '22), a lecturer at Allard Law, applies a technology lens in all her courses, drawing examples from her own research on technology-facilitated gender violence, including abuses facilitated by social media. In her Evidence course this spring, Aikenhead will also be teaching her students about challenges courts increasingly face when dealing with digital evidence, which is likely to include an increasing amount of AI-generated content in the future such as "deepfake" video and audio recordings that can appear highly authentic despite being created by AI.

"Much of the recent case law dealing with the authentication and weight of digital evidence demonstrates how counsel and judges often fail to consider and apply mandatory legislation and rules of evidence, often admitting and considering digital evidence without any robust analysis of whether that evidence is genuine," says Aikenhead. "There is a significant need for a proactive approach to dealing with digital evidence as AI technologies become more accessible and convincing."



There is a significant need for a proactive approach to dealing with digital evidence as AI technologies become more accessible and convincing."

*Dr. Moira Aikenhead (LLM '15, PhD '22)*

Recognizing the emerging challenges AI poses, in 2024 Allard Law Professor Benjamin Perrin launched the UBC AI & Criminal Justice Initiative, which includes an upper-year seminar exploring the promise and perils of AI in the criminal justice system. He's also leading a research project on police uses of AI.

Perrin says privacy, automated bias against marginalized communities, Indigenous data sovereignty, and the intersection of AI and mental health are just a few of the major issues that future legal professionals will increasingly need to address — all of which will require increased collaboration between technology and legal experts.

"Everyone has a stake in these discussions, but many people feel intimidated by gaps in their knowledge," says Perrin. "We need to be bringing people to the table who have an interest in making sure that important questions about the future of criminal justice are not decided solely by Silicon Valley."

## A hub for innovation and collaboration

Another goal of this initiative is to build on and expand the range of interdisciplinary collaborations involving Allard Law faculty and students.

Allard Law faculty members are currently involved in numerous multidisciplinary projects focused on emerging technologies. For example, Dr. Cristie Ford, an expert on innovation



*Dr. Moira Aikenhead's research examines how Canada's legal system responds to technology-facilitated gender violence and digital evidence. She is a founding member of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund's Technology-Facilitated Violence Advisory Committee.*

and regulation, lends her expertise to UBC's TrustML (Trustworthiness of Machine-Learning-Based Systems) Research Cluster, supporting the development of machine learning systems that are reliable, secure and ethical. Through a collaboration with UBC's Emerging Media Lab, Festinger and Professor Nikos Harris, KC (LLB '95), developed a moot simulator last year. This year, they're developing a prototype AI tool for student legal clinics, designed to help students develop legal reasoning and analytical skills.

Building on these strengths, the initiative presents "a huge opportunity to spur greater interdisciplinarity," says Festinger, and Vancouver is the ideal place for this work. "The video game, film and music industries — they're all here in Vancouver, and that really allows us the freedom to create courses and do research that's relevant to these industries and the legal community."

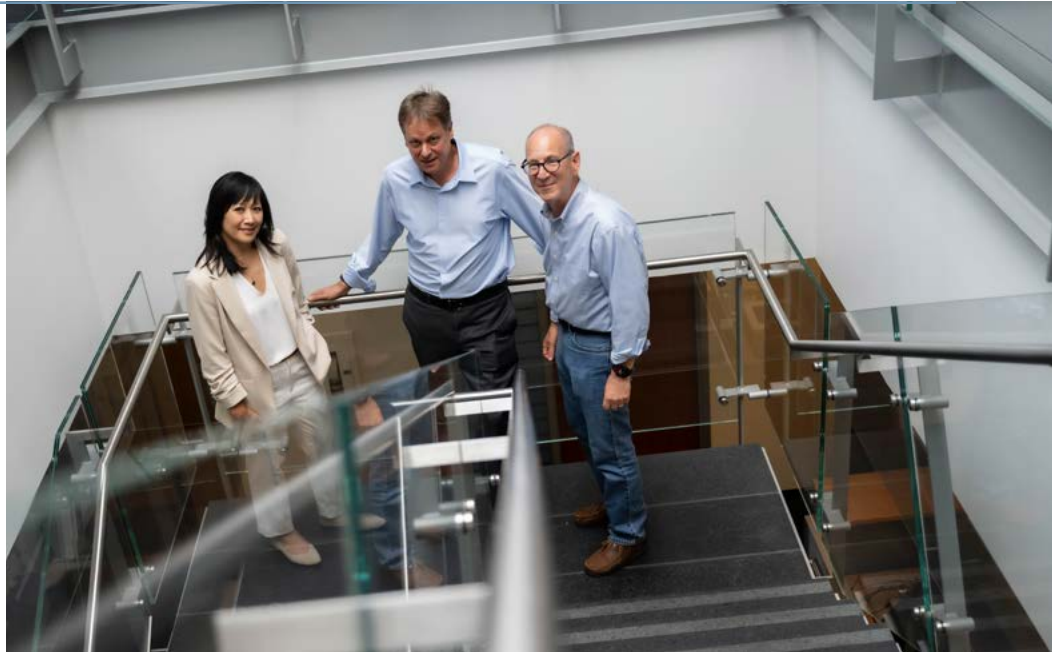
In the works are plans to host community events that bring together academics and the legal and tech

communities. In future, Festinger also hopes to see a multidisciplinary course for graduate students from law and STEM programs and an externship program that will give law students the opportunity to work directly with tech companies. In addition, a proposed new course for legal professionals, in conjunction with UBC Extended Learning, would teach participants how to design AI workflows to support legal practice. “The idea is to show you how to design an AI that works for you,” explains Festinger.

Festinger notes that there are also plans to bring in additional expert guest lecturers and visiting scholars who will offer courses and deliver public lectures, complementing the ongoing work within the faculty. Allard Law is already a hub for speakers whose work focuses on law and tech. This year, speakers include UBC Okanagan professor Dr. Wendy Wong, author of *We the Data: Human Rights in the Digital Age*, and University of Melbourne law lecturer Dr. Megan Pricor, an expert in law and health technologies.

### Looking ahead

As the new initiative begins to take form, remaining flexible and attuned to new developments in law and technology will be key to its success. That will mean working closely with the broader legal and tech communities. Allard Law alumni who are interested in learning more or contributing to the initiative are warmly invited to reach out to Jon Festinger. [A](#)



*From left to right: UBC Cloud Innovation Centre Director Liana Leung with Allard Law’s Professor Nikos Harris (LLB ’95) and Lecturer Jon Festinger. Their collaboration to develop an AI tool for student legal clinics is just one example of the work Allard Law’s new initiative on technology, law and society will help support.*

Allard Law’s new initiative on technology, law and society has been made possible thanks to a gift of \$3.5 million in support from Gordon B. Shrum (LLB ’58).

**GORDON B. SHRUM (1931–2018) was a creative and innovative thinker who left nearly all of his estate to charity. A renaissance man whose interests spanned the arts, justice, science and innovation, Gordon took an unconventional path to law school. Before enrolling in law at UBC, he studied fine arts at UC Berkeley and the Vancouver School of Art (now Emily Carr), and then applied his interest in the arts and new technologies in the graphics department of the then-fledgling CBC.**

Gordon excelled in law school, graduating as a gold medalist with the highest marks in his class. He went on to co-found Shrum, Liddle & Heberton, which was known for attracting some of the brightest young minds in the city and became a founding member of McCarthy Tétrault. “He built this place that attracted people of great ability,” says Jon Festinger, who will oversee the initiative. He describes Gordon’s firm as a “hothouse” for new ideas. As our law school’s new initiative on technology, law and society launches this fall, the aim is to foster that same spirit of creativity and innovation here at Allard Law.

In addition to this significant gift, Gordon’s philanthropy has supported numerous advancements in health, education, the environment and social wellbeing, including substantial gifts leading to the formation of the UBC AI and Health Network and the BC MS Cell Therapies Translational Research Network. UBC has honoured his legacy of generosity by naming the Gordon B. Shrum Building — home of the School of Biomedical Engineering and Canada’s first purpose-built biomedical engineering facility — in his honour.





IDEA (Identity, Diversity, Equity, Allyship) Leaders students outside Allard Hall.

# Building Confidence and Belonging with the IDEA Leaders Pre-Orientation Program

BY HEIDI WUDRICK

**WHEN PETER A. ALLARD SCHOOL OF LAW** alum and UBC Student Ombudsperson Shirley Nakata (LLB '88) started law school at UBC in 1985, there was a notable lack of diversity in Canadian law schools, law firms and the courts. Since then, many Canadian law schools have made progress in increasing diversity, but a sense of community and belonging can't be taken for granted.

Today, Nakata is on the advisory committee of the Allard School of Law's IDEA Leaders Pre-Orientation Program, which takes its name from the values it aims to foster: Identity, Diversity, Equity and Allyship. Launched in the summer of 2024, the program brings together incoming first-year students from persistently, historically and systemically marginalized groups and allies, to support students and build connections from day one.

Before launching the program, Kaila Mikkelsen, Allard Law's Assistant Dean, Students, often met with law students who felt isolated and who questioned whether they belonged in law school or the legal profession. "My main goal in developing the program was to enhance a sense of belonging among students from populations that we know have struggled to feel like they belong in law school," says Mikkelsen. "We wanted IDEA Leaders students to know they belong and to ensure they feel welcomed, supported and ready for their first year."

While similar programs had previously been held at several US law schools, the IDEA Leaders Program was the first of its kind in Canada. In the program's first year, 22 incoming students came together over three days at the end of August.

"I would have loved an opportunity to join a small community of first-year students with whom I could walk the journey of law school without having to explain or justify what it felt

like to be a racialized, immigrant woman in a predominantly white student population,” says Nakata. She adds that when she was a law student, it wasn’t easy to find the confidence to talk about these experiences.

Nakata says she jumped at the chance to join the program’s advisory board: “It’s critical for students to have the opportunity to share stories and hear from others who have navigated similar challenges.”

### You don’t know what you don’t know

Allard Law student Adhithya Krishnan was among the first cohort of students who applied to the program.

“It was quite daunting to come to law school all the way from Ontario since there are so many preconceived notions about the field online,” says Krishnan. “I was very nervous.”

One of the themes of the program was you don’t know what you don’t know — and it’s okay to ask.

“You’re entering a new environment where there’s significant information asymmetry as to how law school operates and what your expectations are,” adds Krishnan, which makes hearing from students who have already navigated the same terrain all the more valuable.

Through workshops and panels with first-generation lawyers and students who have been in similar positions, Krishnan says the program addressed his fears and provided a soft landing “compared to the larger orientation, where you can feel a bit lost and your specific concerns are unaddressed.”

“They walked us through the exact intricacies of law school — what to expect and how to best prepare ourselves,” Krishnan adds.

Gurman Dhaliwal, a third-year law student and the program’s first student coordinator, says many students he spoke with signed up for the IDEA Leaders Pre-Orientation Program largely for the opportunity to ask questions in a judgment-free environment.



Allard Law student Gurman Dhaliwal worked as the student coordinator for the IDEA Leaders Pre-Orientation Program. Dhaliwal says the program helped address students’ anxieties about starting law school.

“Law school is great, but there are a lot of rumours about what you need to do to succeed,” says Dhaliwal. “The most important outcome of the program was providing that reassurance that we all know we belong here and that we have the same potential to achieve as anyone else.”

### Building confidence and making connections

Over the course of the weekend, students came together for panels and workshops with professors, upper-year students and practising lawyers. One of the most popular panels featured representatives from equity-deserving affinity associations, such as the Aboriginal Lawyers Forum and the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers.

“Students really appreciated getting to speak with lawyers who look like them,” says Dhaliwal. “During that panel, the students all got on their phones to join these groups,” adding that it was “amazing to see” students making these connections so early on.

Allard Law alum Maira Hassan (LLM ’18, PhD ’24), a speaker on the Diversity at Allard Law panel, says her goal was to convince



We wanted IDEA Leaders students to know they belong and to ensure they feel welcomed, supported and ready for their first year.”

Kaila Mikkelsen

students of their own power, the importance of diversity and the value that their unique perspectives bring to law school and to society as a whole.

“The topic of race or diversity is often taboo, particularly at law schools,” notes Hassan, which she says makes the IDEA Leaders Program a critical part of ensuring students who face systemic barriers have a real and equal chance for success.

### Ongoing structured support

Providing a warm introduction to law school and building community were key goals of the program, says Mio Tomisawa, Senior



“

The best part about this program is having a community of amazing peers and mentors who have been consistently supportive and invested in each other's growth.”

*IDEA Leaders student Ariel Moon*



*IDEA Leaders students attend a faculty and graduate student panel discussion on diversity at Allard Law.*

Manager of the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Office at Allard Law. But setting students up for future success was just as important. “Our goal was for the program to translate to competencies, confidence and all the skills necessary for students to have success beyond law school and to become leaders in whatever they choose to do,” she says.

Once the school year began, IDEA Leaders students were offered workshops and events to help them navigate their first year, with a focus on academic and career planning, as well as informal events aimed at strengthening connections between students.

“The best part about this program is having a community of amazing peers and mentors who have been consistently supportive and invested in each other's growth,” says IDEA Leaders student Ariel Moon. “This program gives you both the tools and the community to turn to when challenges arise.”

Moon says the program has also helped shape how she approaches law school, giving her the motivation to stay


“collaborative and engaged” throughout the school year.

With participants having now completed their first year of law school, Dhaliwal says the program has made a noticeable difference, giving participants the confidence to take on leadership roles at the law school without hesitation. That was a stark contrast to his own first-year experience.

“I think a lot of first-year law students felt really lost,” Dhaliwal adds. “We just walked straight in on the first day of orientation without having these important conversations.”

Alumni supporters like Nakata have likewise found the experience fulfilling. “It's so rewarding to work with and for the next generation of law students, who have the potential to change the world for the better,” says Nakata. “I would encourage any alumni to get involved with this program and other opportunities to volunteer with Allard to get inspired, share your knowledge and connections, and take part in the continuing evolution of the legal education system and profession.”

## How alumni can get involved

Alumni support is critical to the IDEA Leaders program. Allard Law alumni are invited to get involved as speakers and through informal mentorship opportunities throughout the school year. To learn more, please contact Mio Tomisawa, Senior Manager, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, at [tomisawa@allard.ubc.ca](mailto:tomisawa@allard.ubc.ca). 

## Thank you!

The IDEA Leaders Pre-Orientation Program was made possible thanks to the generous support of Dentons Canada; Blake, Cassels & Graydon; Hammerco Lawyers; Harris & Company; and Richards Buell Sutton.

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# Creating a Just Future

How Indigenous Allard Law  
alumni are helping decolonize  
the criminal justice system

BY ROBERTA STALEY

*Kory Wilson (LLB '99), BC First Nations Justice Council  
Chair and Executive Director of Indigenous Initiatives and  
Partnerships at the British Columbia Institute of Technology.*





Dr. Judith Sayers, CM (LLB '81), President of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, Chancellor of Vancouver Island University, and Director, BC First Nations Justice Council.

**THE FACTS ARE WELL KNOWN.** Behind the disproportionate representation and racist treatment of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system lie the historical and ongoing wrongs of colonization. This has involved the active suppression of Indigenous cultures and traditions, including attempts to erase Indigenous legal orders. Against this backdrop, Indigenous Allard Law grads are working with Elders and communities to decolonize Canadian legal structures and revitalize Indigenous legal traditions in ways that have a direct impact on Indigenous people's lives.

For trailblazing Allard Law graduate Dr. Judith Sayers, CM (LLB '81), President of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council and Chancellor of Vancouver Island University, Indigenous self-determination is the key to justice for Indigenous peoples. "We have to put our own governing systems in place," says Sayers, who is also a director of the BC First Nations Justice Council (BCFNJC) and the organization's lead on policing, oversight and accountability. "Decolonizing doesn't mean duplicating the system as it now is. We just can't replicate a system that has never worked for us," adds Sayers, who still keenly recalls the racism she experienced as a young lawyer in the 1980s from colleagues and judges.

The existing system doesn't work due to two main factors, says Sayers: paternalistic governments and *stare decisis*, the legal doctrine of precedent. Court decisions

involving Indigenous people must follow established legal decisions that are based "on values that aren't ours," she says. The solution is for First Nations to "put their own processes in place."

As of 2021, Indigenous people account for around five percent of Canada's population, but Indigenous men and women constitute 32 and 50 percent of federal prison populations, respectively. Sayers emphasizes that the bleak incarceration statistics are rooted in "the *Indian Act*, racism, poverty and the post-trauma of residential schools." The social determinants contributing to incarceration are linked with people's efforts to deal with deep-seated grief and trauma created by the effects of colonization, she says.

Established a decade ago, the BCFNJC is one organization advancing Indigenous-led transformation. The BCFNJC focuses on two main tracks. The first seeks to decolonize Canada's justice system, while the second focuses on the restoration of Indigenous legal orders and structures, says Allard Law alum and BCFNJC Chair Kory Wilson (LLB '99), who is also Executive Director of Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships at the British Columbia Institute of Technology.

As Wilson explains, one new initiative aimed at decolonizing the justice system is the BCFNJC's Indigenous Justice Centres (IJC), which work to reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the justice and child welfare systems and

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Decolonizing doesn't mean duplicating the system as it now is. We just can't replicate a system that has never worked for us.”

Dr. Judith Sayers (LLB '81)



*Jessica Buffalo (JD '16), Academic Director at the Indigenous Community Legal Clinic and Assistant Professor at Allard Law.*

make it easier to find culturally appropriate and safe support. Each of the 15 centres, including a virtual centre, provides free legal representation to Indigenous people, as well as connections to holistic support — such as referrals for housing and mental health services — in their own communities. “The IJCs support Indigenous people to remain connected to their community,” adds Wilson.

In addition, the creation of a police accountability unit, primarily focused on helping educate and train new members of the Surrey Police Service, aims to help overcome systemic racism and discrimination in the system, Wilson says.

Like Sayers, Wilson emphasizes that systemic reform requires more than just changes to the criminal justice system. It also means tackling the underlying factors that place Indigenous people at risk and ultimately increase their interactions with the justice system. “You have to ask, why are they in that situation? Are there mental health issues? Are there learning disabilities or poverty? A lot of it comes down to poverty and being unhoused,” she says. She names three social factors that disproportionately affect Indigenous people: the housing crisis, the toxic drugs crisis, and involvement in the child welfare

system. Addressing these factors, she says, will carve a path towards justice for Indigenous peoples.

Alongside the IJCs, in July 2025 the BCFNJC opened its first Indigenous Diversion Centre — also the first of its kind in Canada — in Prince George. The Centre redirects Indigenous people out of the criminal justice system by emphasizing accountability, healing and support within one’s own community and cultural traditions. An important part of its work is addressing the root causes that determine whether individuals do or do not become involved with the criminal justice system, says Wilson.

The BCFNJC’s Community-Based Justice Fund provides direct support to First Nations communities to “develop their own nation-based justice plans,” Wilson says. The fund is focused on helping First Nations “reinvigorate and re-establish their own systems of justice and laws,” revitalizing, supporting and reinforcing the “traditions and Indigenous legal orders that all of the First Nations in British Columbia have had since time immemorial.” The BCFNJC not only distributes funds but works together with communities to establish initiatives like a Knowledge Keepers Council, comprised of Elders and other individuals

who can provide traditional wisdom and cultural guidance, including advice on Indigenous law.

The Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC (NCCABC) is another organization working to decolonize the criminal justice system. It was co-founded in 1973 by Hereditary Chief Bill Wilson (LLB ’73), Hemas Kla-Lee-Lee-Kla, the second Indigenous graduate of Allard Law and the father of Kory Wilson and the Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, KC (LLB ’99). Chief Wilson, who passed away in January 2025, was a lifelong advocate for equitable, culturally sensitive legal services for Indigenous people. When working to secure funds to establish the NCCABC while still in law school, he found that “there was no awareness or any interest here from provincial government” in addressing the systemic issues impacting Indigenous peoples, as he explained in an interview for Allard Law’s history project in 2023.

Fifty years later, the NCCABC now has a presence in approximately 70 percent of BC courthouses, says the organization’s president, Jacob Caouette (JD ’24), a recent Allard Law grad. Caouette would like to see the NCCABC active in all provincial courts, but says the organization is stymied by a lack of funds.





Jacob Caouette (JD '24) as a student at Allard Law's Indigenous Community Legal Clinic.

“

This work is heavy, but steps are being made. We just have to keep pushing because it is valuable and will benefit all Canadians at the end of the day.”

Jessica Buffalo (JD '16)

The NCCABC works within the court system to serve on average 6,600 Indigenous people annually, providing culturally appropriate legal services that incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and being into the criminal justice system. The NCCABC's courtworkers, all of whom are Indigenous, facilitate obtaining counsel, which can be challenging in remote areas. They also advocate for Indigenous people in a system where they are more likely to receive a custodial sentence and less likely to receive bail than non-Indigenous people, Caouette says.

In addition, NCCABC programs look to address the social determinants of overincarceration by providing mental health and addiction counselling, doing family preservation work and engaging in advocacy for Indigenous youth. Such programs can factor into Gladue reports, which highlight the specific circumstances and systemic factors that may have influenced an Indigenous person's involvement with the criminal justice system, significantly reducing sentence lengths and influencing bail conditions, says Caouette.

Caouette relates the story of an NCCABC staff member working with a man who failed to show up to his court appearance. The courtworker asked the judge to delay issuing an arrest warrant while he located the man at home and brought him to court. “This points out the value of the courtworker and how we're able to alleviate a bit of the suffering and make the system more efficient,” says Caouette.


In the colonial context of Canada's legal institutions, however, the path to genuine justice is through systemic change. Allard Law alum Jessica Buffalo (JD '16), Academic Director at the Indigenous Community Legal Clinic and an assistant professor at Allard Law, says the Indigenousization of law can look similar to peacemaking. It focuses on restorative justice, whereby, for example, an Elder or traditional knowledge keeper might bring a person whose actions have caused harm together with the person harmed. “There's a ceremonial aspect to it,” says Buffalo. “It's a taking of responsibility and

accountability, which is meaningful to the Indigenous participant.”

A restorative approach can also involve developing and implementing a healing plan, an important tool for addressing trauma and fostering cultural resurgence — supporting self-determination and community connection, as well as connection to the land. For instance, Elders, traditional knowledge keepers and cultural counsellors might accompany an individual into a purifying sweat lodge for spiritual healing. One demonstrated positive outcome is reduced repeat involvement with the criminal justice system, says Buffalo.

Buffalo adds that all practising lawyers should have a thorough grounding in the Gladue principles and factors, which are restorative in nature and “take into consideration what brought them before the judge — including looking at the history and legacy of things like residential school, the Sixties Scoop, the Indian Act and how that impacted them.”

Imprisonment statistics are a clear indicator that Gladue factors and Indigenous identity aren't being taken into consideration in the courts, says Buffalo. “When I was duty counsel and working in the Calgary Indigenous Courts [which opened in 2019], this was something that I saw all the time: counsel did not know what Gladue factors are,” she says. “They didn't know how to obtain them and put them in front of the court properly and their client suffered as a result.” Buffalo adds that the situation hasn't improved, highlighting the need for a solid grounding in Gladue factors in law schools. “Where the Gladue factors are taken into consideration and resources are provided, people are able to get their lives back.”

Decolonization and Indigenousization are ongoing, and success will depend on the next generation of Indigenous lawyers and judges who will carry on the work of systemic reform and the renewal of Indigenous legal traditions. “This work is heavy,” says Buffalo, “but steps are being made. We just have to keep pushing because it is valuable and will benefit all Canadians at the end of the day.” 

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# Solving the Puzzles of Assisted Reproduction

Allard Law scholars and alumni  
are making progress in a  
complex and personal realm  
of Canadian law

**BY RICHARD LITTLEMORE**







**IN A CONVERSATION** about the legal implications of assisted reproduction — about surrogacy and multi-parent families — Allard Law Associate Professor Dr. Régine Tremblay keeps saying this: “It’s a bit puzzling.” On the question of surrogacy, for example, Tremblay points out that it’s illegal in Canada to pay a woman to act as a surrogate — to carry a child for someone else. Yet surrogacy, an increasingly common arrangement, also sets off something of an economic bonanza. The health professionals who assist with *in vitro* fertilization or other fertility aids all get paid. The lawyers drafting often complicated surrogacy agreements get paid. The agencies that match surrogates with would-be parents — a function that Tremblay describes as “straight-up illegal” in Canada — get paid a lot, up to \$55,000 in known Canadian instances.

“All of these people are in a constellation in which they charge for services, but the woman who is going to be pregnant will be reimbursed only (for expenses), and won’t make money. So, the ban on commercial services is effectively only targeting the surrogate — which is a bit puzzling,” says Tremblay, an expert in law and reproduction.

If Tremblay is puzzled, the rest of us might expect to be entirely bewildered. A “puzzle” is generally a test of ingenuity with a known solution, but there is no answer key in the thicket of personally, morally and ethically implacable questions raised by assisted reproduction. In the three-and-a-half decades Canadian governments have been trying to tame these issues with legislation, they have remained not just puzzling, but confounding.

Still, progress has been made in legislating and litigating the issues of family formation and parentage that have emerged thanks to assisted reproduction. On these matters, Allard Law alumni have been instrumental in helping to author innovative provincial laws and to clarify their interpretation through successful litigation.

For example, Allard Law grad Dr. Fiona Kelly (LLM ’03, PhD ’08), who is now Dean of Law at the University of Alberta, was tapped to help draft British Columbia’s *Family Law Act* (FLA; 2013), which made BC the first jurisdiction in Canada and one of the first in the world to permit children to have more than two legal parents at birth. Kelly was invited to work on the bill on the strength of her PhD research at Allard Law on parentage matters in law. Leveraging and expanding the scope of that legislation, Catherine J. Wong (LLB ’07) was later counsel on the first BC case where a child conceived without the use of reproductive technology — through sexual intercourse — was recognized as having three legal parents.

### A bumpy legislative history

Since the development of *in vitro* fertilization in 1978, the Canadian government has moved fitfully to legislate on the risks and concerns arising from reproductive technology. It took more than a decade (until 1989) to launch the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies, chaired by the medical ethicist and head of the UBC Department of Medical Genetics, Dr. Patricia Baird. The Royal Commission’s \$28-million inquiry incorporated the input of 40,000 Canadians and culminated in 1993 with a 1,275-page report, *Proceed with Care*, which called for sweeping legislation to prohibit many practices in assisted reproduction and to regulate many more.

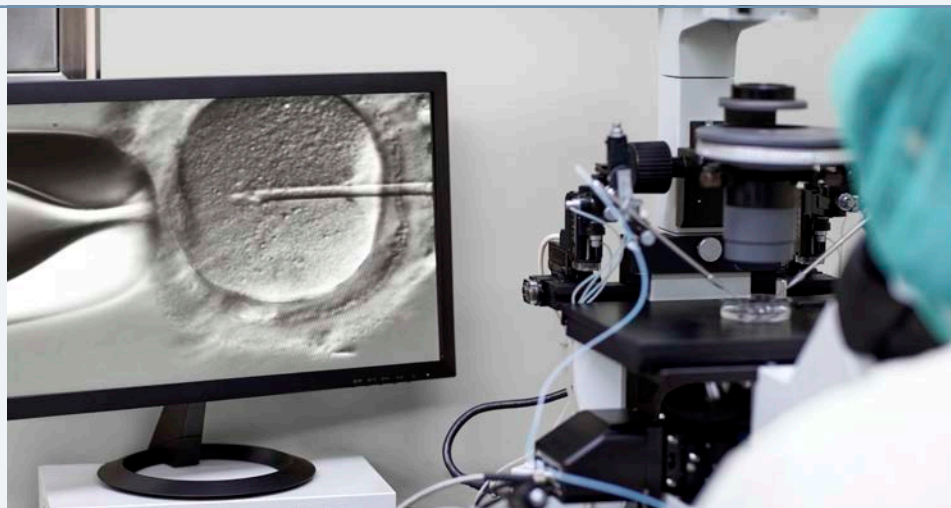
And then, mostly, nothing. The government took 11 more years to pass the resulting Bill C-13, the *Assisted Human Reproduction Act* (AHRA), in 2004. And that Act was largely struck down in 2010, when, in response to a Quebec challenge, the Supreme Court of Canada declared that most of its regulatory provisions overstepped into the provincial constitutional responsibility of regulating health care.



Dr. Fiona Kelly (LLM '03, PhD '08),  
Dean of Law at the University of Alberta.

Tremblay points out that the surviving sections of the AHRA made it a criminal offence to pay for such things as surrogacy, sperm, eggs or embryos, with the aims of preventing commercialization of these reproductive components and processes and reducing the risk of exploiting women. In Canada, these provisions should have been framed following case law and precedents to clarify what is and is not legitimate.

Except, Tremblay says, there has been only one instance where charges were laid for prohibited activities regarding illegal payments. In 2012, the RCMP charged a woman named Leia Picard (now Leia Swanberg) and her company, Canadian Fertility Consulting. As *The Globe and Mail* reported, “[h]er offences boiled down to paying money to egg donors for their eggs, paying money to surrogates for contract pregnancies and taking finder’s fees from an American lawyer who, unbeknownst to Swanberg, was running an elaborate baby-selling ring.” Swanberg pleaded guilty to three counts of charging for referrals to the US intermediary and was fined



While it’s an offence to pay for surrogacy, sperm, eggs or embryos in Canada, it’s extremely rare for charges to be laid.

\$60,000. However, she later told the *Globe*, thanks to the publicity brought on by the case, her business quadrupled, and no similar charges have been brought since.

### Who’s your daddy (or your mom)?

There is also a quirk — or a mile-wide loophole — in the AHRA prohibition against paying donors in Canada for their gametes (eggs or sperm), which further complicates matters. Kelly says that Canada imports 99 per cent of its sperm from the United States, where donors are normally paid and can remain anonymous. This means that most children born in Canada via reproductive assistance cannot easily trace their lineage, even if there is a compelling case to do so for health reasons.

And the health case is compelling. In one American example, featured in the 2022 documentary *Our Father*, a fertility doctor used his own sperm to father more than 90 children through the 1970s and ’80s without his patients’ knowledge. In addition to this violation of consent, this left the donor-conceived adults, as Kelly puts it, “at risk of hooking up with their siblings.” However, Canada can’t solve this issue simply by blocking donations at the border. Another recent documentary series, *Père 100 Enfants*, documented a Quebec case in which three men from the same family — two of whom carry a serious genetic disorder affecting the liver

— fathered at least 600 children through an unregulated online sperm market.

Kelly notes that “there is a strong movement among donor-conceived adults that the identity of donors is important — for curiosity, as well as for familial medical history.” Legislators in Australia and Europe therefore require that donor information is collected and updated. Those jurisdictions also enforce single-digit limits on the number of times any individual donor’s reproductive material can be used. But, again, Kelly says, as long as Canada is importing gametes, “You can’t make regulations because you don’t control the market — Canada can’t regulate an American sperm bank.” Any argument for protecting donor anonymity, says Kelly, fails on practical terms: Direct-to-consumer DNA testing means that anonymity “is all a false promise.” Besides, “rather

“

There is a strong movement among donor-conceived adults that the identity of donors is important — for curiosity, as well as for familial medical history.”

Dr. Fiona Kelly





Catherine Wong (LLB '07), Litigator, Collaborative Divorce Lawyer and Certified Family Law Mediator.

than putting it on the child, we have an obligation; the state has a responsibility to consider the interest of children and to gather and protect that information.”

### Parental rights; parental responsibilities

The questions of parentage — who can be acknowledged legally as a parent; who gets to claim parental rights; and who *wants* to assume parental responsibilities — are more fluid and yet better defined under the FLA, which Kelly helped write. The new law broke ground nationally and internationally in part because it recognized two things. First, assisted reproductive technology and the increasing acceptance of same-sex parenting have complicated the one-man/one-woman conception of the “nuclear family.” Second, traditional legal definitions of parentage concentrate on parents’ *rights*, while the FLA shifts the focus to *responsibilities* and to prioritizing the interests of the child.

Regardless of her contribution to the FLA — and perhaps thanks to the informed nature of her perspective — Kelly is critical of the current parentage law regime. She points out that while the FLA expanded the number of potential parents, it also set a limit of three, in a way that effectively promotes a heteronormative family model. For example, the most common type of multi-parent family is



Families exist in all shapes and sizes, and I view my job as a way to make the law work for them as much as I can.”

Catherine Wong

formed when a lesbian couple uses sperm from a male donor who all parties want as a partner in the parenting project. While it’s good that the FLA makes this possible, Kelly also detects a judicial tendency to “find fathers” for children raised by two women. Moreover, the law in BC makes no allowance for a fourth parent, for example when one person each from a lesbian couple and a gay couple contribute genetic material and all four are fully committed to helping parent the child.

### Opening the door to alternative family structures

Allard Law alum Catherine Wong, who practises family and fertility law and is a family law mediator and a collaborative

lawyer, is a frequent drafter of fertility and parentage agreements. She also recently served as an expert on the BC Law Institute’s *Report on Parentage*, which made a number of recommendations to the Attorney General to modernize the FLA.

Wong says that while the law doesn’t currently recognize many non-traditional family structures, in her practice, she’s seeing more families looking to add parents and using assisted reproduction to create new family structures. In two of her current case files, she’s working with good friends who are using assisted reproduction and need to create co-parenting agreements. In both cases, the children will be living in intentional two-household families. “It’s not that these families didn’t exist previously — it’s just now that these families are seeking legal recognition,” says Wong.

Wong adds that both fertility and parentage agreements all involve “a big spiderweb of interconnected issues,” many of which can never be categorically resolved in a legal contract, and that this type of work is always going to be complicated. “Families exist in all shapes and sizes, and I view my job as a way to make the law work for them as much as I can,” says Wong.

It’s complicated, and legal change can be slow, but as with so many aspects of law, solutions are often possible and the effort is always worthwhile. **A**



Allard Law professor Dr. Régine Tremblay, speaking with a student at Allard Law.



*Allard Law's EDI Office Team (from left to right): Carlos Nunez, Coordinator; Supriya Routh, Associate Dean, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Mio Tomisawa, Senior Manager.*

## Meet Allard Law's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Team

In September 2024, a new Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Office launched at Allard Law. Supported by a gift from the Law Foundation of British Columbia, the EDI Office works collaboratively with students, faculty and staff to support education, training and initiatives focused on anti-racism and building an inclusive environment.



**Mio Tomisawa** (Senior Manager, EDI) and **Carlos Nunez** (Coordinator, EDI) discussed their new team's work to foster community and belonging at Allard Law.



EDI work is not always easy, but I really value being able to build relationships with the community.”

*Mio Tomisawa*

#### How will the Allard Law community benefit from the EDI Office?

**NUNEZ:** The Allard community benefits in several ways. We aim to create initiatives that foster belonging and understanding, provide resources and support for students facing systemic challenges and advocate for policies that promote fairness and inclusion. Throughout the year, we offer workshops and training sessions to equip students — as well as staff and faculty — with tools to challenge biases and foster more inclusive environments.

Whether through workshops, events or simply having a safe space to share their experiences, we aim to empower students and help them feel seen and heard.

#### How does the EDI team support students in feeling a sense of belonging at Allard Law?

**TOMISAWA:** Our team is supporting a number of new initiatives at Allard Law focused on fostering equity and belonging, spanning from efforts to further increase representational diversity in admissions to initiatives that promote inclusion and support students' academic success.

This year, our office helped support a first-year academic success program with the UBC Black Law Students' Association and Professor Nikos Harris (LLB '95), hosting a range of workshops covering exam preparation, how to review cases and preparing for moots.

The IDEA Leaders program, which launched in August 2024, is another program that welcomes students from diverse backgrounds to join a cohort of emerging leaders in the legal field. Participants take part in a three-day pre-orientation and are offered year-long programming to support the first-year experience and foster a strong, connected community.

This past year, we also created a centralized repository of EDI resources for students, faculty and staff, offering information and tools related to equity, well-being and building inclusive communities.

#### What are your team's current priorities for advancing EDI at Allard Law?

**NUNEZ:** Our team's priorities focus on structural change and community engagement. One of our key goals is to foster a stronger sense of belonging and inclusion for students from equity-deserving groups by creating more consistent and meaningful opportunities for dialogue, feedback and connection.

We also prioritize faculty and staff development. We're currently planning tailored EDI training sessions that address issues such as gender equity and inclusive pedagogy, designing anti-racist and inclusive curriculum and creating an inclusive workplace culture. We believe that building capacity across all levels is essential for sustaining cultural and systemic change.

Another major priority is working closely with student affinity groups to ensure that their voices shape our programming and policy development.

Lastly, we're reviewing internal procedures and practices to identify where inclusion barriers still exist and ensure that equity is embedded in everyday decision-making.

#### How would you describe your approach to building a more inclusive community?

**TOMISAWA:** Our approach is highly collaborative. Building an inclusive community takes effort from everyone, and we're making it a priority to work closely with students, faculty and other groups at Allard Law. Since our launch, we've hosted a number of listening sessions, where we've had candid conversations with students, faculty and staff, which have helped shape our upcoming initiatives and training.

EDI work is not always easy, but I really value being able to build relationships with the community to create changes and opportunities. Seeing the enthusiasm for our office and how we can support students has also been exciting.

We also strongly encourage the Allard Law community to get in touch with our team to share ideas for initiatives or events that our office could help collaborate on. **A**

## Introducing Your New Allard Law Alumni Association President



The Allard Law Alumni Association is dedicated to connecting Allard Law alumni with one another and with our students. In January, the Alumni Association board welcomed **Emily MacKinnon** (JD '12) as the association's new president.

**MACKINNON IS A PARTNER** at Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP in Vancouver, where she practises civil and commercial litigation. A Canadian Armed Forces reservist, she also shares her military and legal expertise with the current generation of Allard Law students, teaching Law of Armed Conflict and International Humanitarian Law as an adjunct professor.

You've been an Allard Law Alumni Association board member since 2014. What first inspired you to get involved, and now to take on the role of president?

**M:** I loved law school. It was a transformative experience for me. The Allard Law Alumni Association offered a way to stay connected with my classmates, who are now scattered all over the globe and practising law in a wide variety of ways.

I took on the role of president because I wanted to continue to give back to the law school and the alumni community. I hope I can help the alumni community feel more connected to each other and to the law school. Kinji Bouchier (LLB '99), the outgoing president, was an inspiring model for community leadership. He leaves big shoes to fill.

During your time at Allard Law, was there a particular course, professor or experience that had an impact on you and your career?

**M:** So many! Isabel Grant and Janine Benedet taught me to spot my assumptions and question them — a valuable skill for a litigator. David Duff's tax course taught me that my brain can absorb more than I ever thought possible. Nikos Harris (LLB '95) taught me that the litigation style that is most effective is the one that's uniquely your own (and also that Rorschach designs are effective teaching tools).

All in all, Allard Law showed me the joy of curiosity, which is something I employ every day as a litigator.

What are your favourite aspects of litigation? Was there a moment when you realized "this is the career path for me"?

**M:** My mother would tell you that she has always known I would find a career as a professional arguer. I've always loved debating ideas and testing the limits of any particular theory. And now, I find there's a particular magic that happens when you're arguing in court, sewing together different legal principles, and answering hard questions from the bench. It's unbeatable. **A**



## Celebrating Kinji Bouchier's Decade of Inspiring, Dedicated Leadership

**THE PETER A. ALLARD SCHOOL OF LAW** is deeply grateful to Kinji Bouchier, KC (LLB '99) for his dedicated service as president of the Allard Law Alumni Association. During his ten years as president, Bouchier has been an inspiring leader who gave generously of his time in support of the alumni community and our students.

Among his many contributions, Bouchier championed diversity on the Allard Law Alumni Board of Directors, striving to ensure it reflects our alumni community. He also led the transformation of the Allard Law Alumni Achievement Awards into a highlight of the Allard community's social calendar and a fitting celebration of our incredibly accomplished alumni. Much of Bouchier's work as president has also benefitted our current law students and recent graduates. Thanks to his efforts, all first-year law students receive a personalized welcome card from an alum and have the opportunity to receive a free professional headshot. As a member of the Dean's Advisory Council, Bouchier regularly shared valuable insights with the Dean on alumni and student matters.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Bouchier for his leadership, generosity, thoughtfulness and sense of humour — and for all he has done to build and strengthen the Allard Law alumni community. **A**



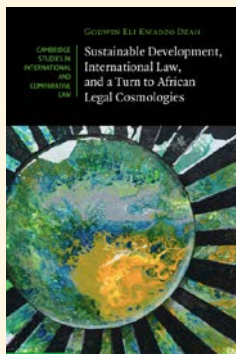
# Good Reads

**Five new books by Allard Law professors to add to your reading list.**

## **Sustainable Development, International Law, and a Turn to African Legal Cosmologies**

*Assistant Professor Dr. Godwin Dzah;  
Cambridge University Press 2024*

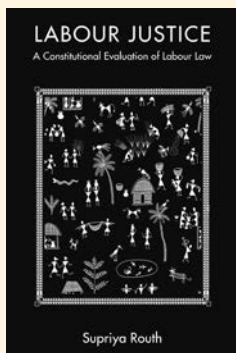
Building upon the intersection of law, politics and history in the context of Africa, this pioneering book proposes a turn to non-Western legal normativity as the foundational principle for reimagining sustainable development in international law. This highly original book was awarded the 2025 American Society of International Law Certificate of Merit for a Preeminent Contribution to Creative Scholarship.



## **Labour Justice: A Constitutional Evaluation of Labour Law**

*Associate Professor Dr. Supriya Routh;  
Cambridge University Press 2024*

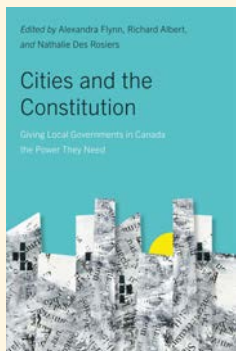
In *Labour Justice: A Constitutional Evaluation of Labour Law*, Dr. Supriya Routh examines recent labour law reforms in the Global South. This book makes the case that the imagination of the worker-citizen, inherent in citizens' constitutional duty to work, is the very foundation of constitutional citizenship and its social justice agenda.



## **Cities and the Constitution: Giving Local Governments in Canada the Power They Need**

*Edited by Associate Professor Dr. Alexandra Flynn (Allard Law), Professor Richard Albert (University of Texas) and Justice Nathalie Des Rosiers, CM, OOnt; McGill-Queen's University Press 2024*

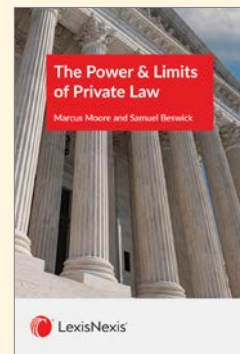
Cities are on the front lines of Canada's most pressing challenges, yet they lack constitutional status. *Cities and the Constitution* explains why this is a problem and offers a range of solutions. This book, along with a companion volume, *The Past, Present and Future of Canadian Cities*, was named to the *Hill Times's* list of Top 100 Best Books of 2024.



## **The Power & Limits of Private Law**

*Edited by Assistant Professors  
Dr. Marcus Moore and Dr. Samuel Beswick; LexisNexis Canada 2024*

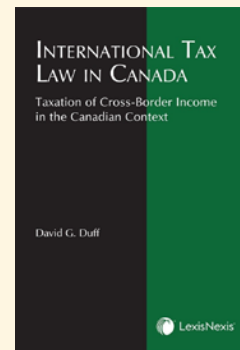
This essay collection explores the power and limits of private law from doctrinal, practical, theoretical and policy perspectives. It features chapters from experts including Dr. Stephen Waddams, FRSC, Angela Swan, OC (LLB '63), John McCamus, FRSC, Dr. Lionel Smith, FBA, Dr. Mitchell McInnes and Nathalie Vézina, Ad. E, and emerging writers like Allard alum Dr. Lachlan Deyong (LLM '14, PhD '20). Areas covered include contracts, torts and restitution.



## **International Tax Law in Canada: Taxation of Cross-Border Income in the Canadian Context**

*Professor David G. Duff; LexisNexis Canada 2024*

The product of over 15 years of teaching, writing and research, this book provides a comprehensive explanation of international tax law in the Canadian context, considering domestic rules, treaty provisions, judicial decisions and administrative guidance that governs the taxation of non-residents on income from Canadian sources and the taxation of Canadian residents on income from foreign sources.



# Class Reunions

Over the past year, many of our graduating classes from previous years took the opportunity to reconnect, reminisce and celebrate. Thank you to everyone who made these reunions such a success!

Find out how you can organize your class reunion — and enjoy more photos — at [allard.ubc.ca/reunions](https://allard.ubc.ca/reunions).



The Hon. Carol Baird Ellan, KC (right), organized the Class of 1979's 45-year reunion at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club. Ellan is pictured here with classmates Ross Beaty, OC, CM (left), and the Hon. Suzanne Anton, KC (centre).



Thanks to the hard work of Steve Chasey, Aletha Pangman (née Utley) and Natasha Rana, the Class of 2014 and their families gathered at Allard Hall for their 10-year reunion. Professor Nikos Harris offered some welcome remarks before they headed to Rogue Kitchen & Wetbar to continue their celebrations.



The Class of 1969 celebrated their 55-year reunion at the Shaughnessy Golf and Country Club on October 5, 2024. Joel Altman, Michael Moscovitch, John Norton and Marty Zlotnik gathered an impressive group of alumni for a memorable evening. Sadly, John passed away on June 8, 2025. He will be fondly remembered by his classmates and the legal community.



Three classes celebrated their reunions during Allard Law's annual Dean's Community BBQ. The Class of 2019, Class of 2009 and Class of 1964 reconnected over good conversation, beverages and burgers.



**The Class of 2019's 5-Year Reunion**



**The Class of 2009's 15-Year Reunion**



**The Class of 1964's 60-Year Reunion**



The Class of 1974 celebrated their 50-year reunion with a whirlwind weekend at Harrison Hot Springs. Classmates also raised funds for a new Allard Law student award, led by planning committee members Derek LaCroix, KC, the Hon. Linda Loo, Karen Nordlinger, KC, and Brian Trowbridge.



The Class of 1984 gathered at the beautiful home of Anne Giardini, OC, OBC, KC, to celebrate 40 years since graduation, joined by Allard Law Dean Ngai Pindell. A big thanks to the reunion committee for their work in bringing so many classmates together and to the class for their contributions to the Steven Volrich Memorial Bursary and a number of other awards.



# Celebrating Our Community at the Allard Law Alumni Achievement Awards

On May 1, 2024, the Allard Law community came together for a special evening in celebration of the six extraordinary recipients of the Allard Law Alumni Achievement Awards. Notably, each of this year's recipients has made a meaningful contribution to expanding access to justice.

Thank you to the Allard Law Alumni Association for making this event such a success!



The Hon. Christopher Hinkson (LLB '75) (centre), recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, with then-Allard Law Alumni Association President Kinji Bouchier, KC (LLB '99) (left), and Allard Law Dean Ngai Pindell (right).



Mary Ainslie, KC (LLB '91), Alumni Award of Distinction recipient, with Randy Robinson (JD '16), Outstanding Young Alum Award recipient.





Caitlin Ohama-Darcus (JD '15) gives remarks upon accepting her Outstanding Young Alum Award.



Professor Isabel Grant (centre), Alumni Award for Research recipient, together with Professors Debra Parkes (LLB '97) (left) and Janine Benedet, KC (LLB '93) (right). Professor Grant holds a limited-edition print by Nuu-chah-nulth artist Joe David, which was given to each of our award recipients.

# ClassNotes

## 1960s

**Marvin Storrow**, CM, OBC, KC (LLB '62, LLD '14), was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada.

## 1970s

**The Honourable Jon Sigurdson** (LLB '73) was awarded the KC designation.

**Eloise Spitzer** (LLB '76) was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree by the University of Victoria.

**The Honourable Anne MacKenzie**, KC (LLB '77) was awarded the KC designation.

## 1980s

**Nancy Wilhelm-Morden** (LLB '83) was awarded the Freedom of the Municipality Award by the Municipality of Whistler.

**David MacAlister** (JD '83) was awarded the Joseph D. Lohman Award by the Western Society of Criminology.

**Robert Harvie**, KC (LLB '85) was awarded the Service to the Profession Award by the Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch.

**Mary Childs**, KC (LLB '87) was awarded the KC designation.

**Steven Ing**, OOM (LLB '88), was admitted to the Order of Merit of the Police Forces.

**Winston Sayson**, MGC, KC (JD '88), was awarded the Outstanding Contribution Award by the Canadian Forensic Nurse Association and the Award of Excellence by the Filipino Canadian Lawyers Network.

**Vincent Critchley**, KC (LLB '89) was awarded the KC designation.

**Catherine Bell** (LLM '89) was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree by the University of Alberta.

## 1990s

**The Honourable Judge Michael Libby**, KC (LLB '93) was appointed to the BC Provincial Court.

**Gaynor Yeung**, KC (LLB '95) was awarded the KC designation.

**Michaela Donnelly**, KC (LLB '96) was awarded the KC designation.

**Joseph Garcia** (LLB '96) was awarded the Milton Wong Community Leadership Award by Life Sciences BC.

**Crawford Smith** (LLB '97) was named Litigator of the Year at the Canadian Law Awards.

**The Honourable Justice Tina Dion** (LLB '97) was appointed to the Supreme Court of British Columbia.

**The Honourable Justice Benita Wassenaar** (LLB '98) was appointed to the Ontario Superior Court.

**The Honourable Justice Julie Blackhawk** (LLB '98) was appointed to the Federal Court.

**Andrea MacKay**, KC (LLB '99) was awarded the KC designation.

**The Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould**, PC, OBC, KC (LLB '99), was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters degree by Nipissing University.

**Michelle Good** (LLB '99) was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters degree by the University of the Fraser Valley.

## 2000s

**The Honourable Judge Elaine Cairns** (LLB '00) was appointed to the Territorial Court of Yukon.

**The Honourable Justice Louis Marquis** (PhD '00) was appointed to the Superior Court of Quebec.

**Monique Pongracic-Speier**, KC (LLB '01) was awarded the Harry Rankin, QC Pro Bono Award by the Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch.

**Tricia Smith**, OC, OBC (LLB '85, LLD '01), was promoted to Officer of the Order of Canada.

**The Honourable Judge Lawrence Robinson** (LLB '01) was appointed to the Supreme Court of BC as an Associate Judge.

**Nikki Charlton**, KC (LLB '03) was awarded the KC designation.

**The Honourable Justice Edlyn Laurie** (LLB '03) was appointed to the Supreme Court of BC.

**Michael Feder**, KC (LLB '03) was appointed Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

**Anita Atwal** (LLB '05) was awarded the Equality and Diversity Award by the Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch.

**Shannon Salter**, KC (LLB '05) was recognized as one of Vancouver Magazine's 2024 Power 50.

**The Honourable Justice Elin Sigurdson** (LLB '05) was appointed to the Supreme Court of British Columbia.

**Joven Narwal**, KC (LLB '07) was recognized as one of *Canadian Lawyer Magazine's* Top 25 Most Influential Lawyers for 2024.

**The Honourable Judge Colleen E. Elden** (LLB '07) was appointed to the BC Provincial Court.

**The Honourable Judge Michael Fortino** (LLB '08) was appointed to the BC Provincial Court.

**Fiona Kelly** (LLM '03, PhD '08) was appointed the Dean of the Faculty of Law, University of Alberta.

**Christina Cook**, KC (LLB '09) was awarded the KC designation.

## 2010s

**Kyla Lee** (JD '11) was awarded the Fodden Award by the Canadian Law Blog Awards.

**Aaron Wilson** (JD '13) was recognized as one of Canada's leading lawyers under 40 as a Lexpert 2024 Rising Star.

**Jessie Ramsay** (JD '14) was named to *Business in Vancouver's* 2024 Forty Under 40 list.

**Trevor Bant** (JD '14) was recognized as one of Canada's leading lawyers under 40 as a Lexpert 2024 Rising Star.

**Stephen Mussell** (JD '15) was awarded the Alumni Builder Award.

**Carol Liao** (LLB '03, LLM '10, PhD '16) was recognized as one of *Canadian Lawyer Magazine's* Top 25 Most Influential Lawyers for 2024 and received the Clean50 award for Education & Thought Leadership.

**Connor Bildfell** (JD '16) was awarded the President's Medal by the Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch.

## 2020s

**Christine Arnold** (LLMT '22) was named to *Business in Vancouver's* 2024 Forty Under 40 list.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If an error is noted, please contact [alumni@allard.ubc.ca](mailto:alumni@allard.ubc.ca).



# *Thank You!*

Many of the opportunities that Allard Law students benefit from would not be possible without the generosity of our alumni community.

Our alumni donors and volunteers provide critical support for student awards, academic research, and our moot and experiential learning programs — and so much more. Thank you for all that you do to support our students and advance academic and research excellence at Allard Law.

*Thanks to your contributions,  
we can help shape a just and  
thriving society.*





# Join us for the 2026 Alumni Achievement Awards

Every two years, the Allard Law community comes together to recognize our remarkable alumni. This year, we're also celebrating our law school's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Allard Law Alumni Association's Board of Directors warmly invites you to join us on April 30, 2026, for this special event.

**Stay tuned for more details!**



**PETER A. ALLARD  
SCHOOL OF LAW**

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA