



CBA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE FOR PROFESSIONAL WOMEN
Presented by the CBA National Women Lawyers Forum

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Biographies



The Hon. Mme. Justice Rosalie Abella

Justice Abella was born in a Displaced Person's Camp in Stuttgart, Germany in 1946. Her family came to Canada as refugees in 1950.

She attended the University of Toronto, where she earned a B.A. in 1967 and an LL.B. in 1970. She was called to the Ontario Bar in 1972 and practised civil and criminal litigation until 1976 when she was appointed to the Ontario Family Court. She was appointed to the Ontario Court of Appeal in 1992. Justice Abella was appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada in 2004 and is the first Jewish woman appointed to the Court.

She was the sole Commissioner of the 1984 federal Royal Commission on Equality in Employment, creating the term and concept of "employment equity". The theories of "equality" and "discrimination" she developed in her report were adopted by the Supreme Court of Canada in its first decision dealing with equality rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1989. The report has been implemented by the governments of Canada, New Zealand, Northern Ireland and South Africa. She subsequently served as Chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board (1984 to 1989), Chair of the Ontario Law Reform Commission (1989 to 1992), and Boulton Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Law of McGill University (1988 to 1992) as well as numerous other boards and organizations. She has 34 honorary degrees.



Ritu Bhasin

Ritu Bhasin, LL.B. MBA, is an award-winning People Strategist and Diversity Specialist. Ritu is the Founder and Principal at bhasin consulting inc., a firm that provides people management and leadership strategies to international organizations, with an emphasis on diversity and the advancement of women. Ritu is also Co-Founder of Insayva, a platform for self-empowerment for those seeking personal and professional growth, which includes a series of leadership retreats for professional women. Previously, Ritu spent 10 years in the legal profession, first practicing civil litigation and then as their PD Director at a major firm.

An inspiring and engaging speaker, Ritu speaks to audiences globally and is a

regular contributor in the media on leadership and diversity issues. Ritu has won several awards and distinctions reflecting her passion and commitment to her work, including the City of Toronto's 2014 William P. Hubbard Award for Race Relations.



Nicole Byres, QC

Nicole Byres is a partner and head of the Labour and Employment Group in Miller Thomson's Vancouver office. Her practice focuses on employment law, labour law, and corporate governance. Nicole is a Past Chair of the Women Lawyers Forum in BC.

Nearly half of Nicole's career was spent as in-house counsel at a major integrated mining, refining, and energy generation company, where she obtained experience in a broad range of legal and business matters, and won the President's award for her role on a team which successfully concluded a complex, multi-million dollar transaction. This corporate and industrial experience, together with her involvement with boards (as director or legal counsel) of major institutions and corporations have provided Nicole with business and operations knowledge, and strategic perspective that her clients appreciate.

Nicole has appeared before various administrative tribunals and at all levels of courts in BC.

For over 25 years Nicole has volunteered her time on boards of crown corporations, and not-for-profit and professional organizations. She cares deeply about issues related to diversity and inclusiveness in workplaces, and she currently is the Chair of Miller Thomson's Inclusion and Diversity Committee, and the firm's representative on the BC Law Society's Justicia Project and the BC chapter of the Law Firm Diversity & Inclusion Network.



Rt. Hon. Kim Campbell, PC, CC, QC, OBC

As Canada's first and only female Prime Minister, Kim Campbell's life has been a life of firsts. From the age of 16 when she became the first female student body president of her high school, until 30 years later as the 19th Prime Minister of Canada at the age of 46, Ms. Campbell has spent much of her life breaking barriers for women.

Through her deep and lengthy political career, Kim knows what it's like to make it in a man's world, and is widely regarded as one of the foremost thinkers and speakers on gender issues.

Ms. Campbell is also the first Canadian Prime Minister to have held office in all three levels of government: Municipal, Provincial and Federal. She has held many cabinet portfolios including Canada's first female Minister of Justice and Attorney General and Minister of National Defence-the first woman to have held such a position in any NATO country.

After her tenure as Prime Minister, Ms. Campbell continued to serve Canada as a diplomat, and was a Fellow at the Institute of Politics (Spring 1994) and the Joan Shorenstein Center for the Study of Press and Politics (1994-1995) at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. Then, she served as the Canadian Consul General in Los Angeles from 1996-2000. In 2001.

From 1999 to 2003, she chaired the Council of Women Leaders a network of women who hold or have held the office of president or prime minister. She was a founding member of the Club de Madrid an independent organization whose main purpose is to strengthen democracy in the world. Its membership is by invitation only, and consists of former Heads of State and Government. She is currently the Founding Principal of the Peter Lougheed Leadership College at the University of Alberta.

In addition to the Order of Canada and the Order of BC, Ms. Campbell holds numerous honorary degrees.



Linda Bray Chanow

Linda Bray Chanow is the Executive Director of the Center for Women in Law at the University of Texas School of Law. A lawyer and a nationally-recognized authority on gender equity in the United States legal profession, she has authored or co-authored numerous reports on the advance of women lawyers including the widely acclaimed publication, *Power in Law*. Linda currently acts as a liaison to the American Bar Association Commission on Women in the Profession.

In her role as executive director, Linda facilitates the Women's Power Summit on Law and Leadership and the Consortium for Advancing Women Lawyers, both of which bring together senior industry leaders and thought leaders from across the United States to collaborate on ways to advance women in the profession and critical issues such as compensation parity and C-suite advancement. She also conducts ground breaking research, consults with legal institutions, designs and conducts workshops and frequently speaks and writes on matters affecting women lawyers, Linda also teaches a course on women in the legal profession at Texas Law.



Lauren Cook

Lauren's practice includes regulatory law, administrative law and commercial litigation, with a particular focus on environmental law issues. She has appeared as counsel in all levels of court in British Columbia, as well as before the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench, the Ontario Court of Justice and the Ontario Court of Appeal.

In her regulatory practice, Lauren has experience advising clients in the forestry, mining, real estate development, aquaculture, power generation and clean energy industries on environmental compliance, environmental assessments, environmental auditing and due diligence.

She also advises clients on matters related to the remediation of contaminated sites, including cost recovery actions for contaminated sites. Lauren has successfully defended clients in regulatory prosecutions and has advised clients under investigation for regulatory and environmental offences.

In her commercial litigation practice, Lauren has experience in a broad range of cases involving environmental issues, aboriginal law, commercial disputes, shareholder remedies, real estate issues, and construction disputes.

Prior to joining Lawson Lundell LLP, Lauren served as a judicial law clerk at the British Columbia Court of Appeal.



The Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay, PC, QC

Kerry-Lynne is a lawyer and graduate of UBC Law School as well as a certified mediator trained at Harvard Law School. She practiced law in Vancouver and served as a member of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal before being elected as the MP for Delta Richmond East in May 2011. She served as Minister of National Revenue from 2013 to 2015 and was previously Associate Minister of National Defence and a Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice.

During her legal career, Findlay has been active in both the national and B.C. Canadian Bar Associations serving as BC CBA President in 1996-97. She was the founding Chair of the BC WLF in 2002 and travelled across Canada to encourage the formation of Women Lawyer Forums in other provinces. She advocated for a national WLF and was the founding national WLF Chair.

Kerry-Lynne was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1999. She received the Vancouver YWCA Woman of Distinction Award in 2001 and the national WLF Cecilia I. Johnstone Award in 2011 that recognizes women who have opened doors for other women.



Catherine Gibson

Catherine Gibson is a partner in the Vancouver office of DLA Piper (Canada) LLP, where she practices corporate/commercial law with an emphasis on real estate. She is a member of the firm's National Executive Committee, its Steering Committee for the Leadership Alliance for Women (Canada) and is the Canadian liaison to the Leadership Alliance for Women (Global).

She has her law degree from UBC and was a judicial clerk at the BC Court of Appeal prior to joining Davis (now DLA Piper) in 1996.

Throughout her 20 years of practice, Catherine has been a strong supporter and contributor to the firm's initiatives in recruitment, training and mentoring of associates.



Janet Grove

Janet Grove is a partner in Bull Housser's Technology, Health Care and Business Law Groups. Janet is experienced with complex license, research and development, service and collaboration agreements in the technology sector, focusing on the biotechnology, IT and clean-tech industries. Janet also regularly advises healthcare authorities, hospitals and research institutions throughout BC on contracts related to the provision of various medical services, collaborative care arrangements, clinical trials or research programs.

Janet has a broad and in-depth understanding of both the legal and business aspects of the technology sector. Janet originally joined Bull Housser in 1992 focusing on business and technology transactions. In 2000, Janet moved to QLT Inc., a global biopharmaceutical company listed on the TSX and NASDAQ. Prior to rejoining Bull Housser in 2008, Janet held the position of Vice-President and Corporate Counsel, Corporate Secretary and Business Ethics Officer of QLT. During her years at QLT, Janet provided legal advice to the board and management of QLT on all aspects of QLT's business, including corporate and technology acquisitions and divestitures, issues related to research, clinical and pharmaceutical manufacturing projects and agreements. During her years at

QLT, Janet was also Senior Director of Corporate Development and so gained experience from both a business and legal perspective in sourcing and negotiating technology transactions.

Janet received her Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Victoria. Prior to receiving her law degree, Janet received her Bachelor of Science majoring in biochemistry and worked in research laboratories at both the University of Victoria and the Institute of Parasitology at McGill University in the areas of protein biochemistry and immunology.



Kathleen Keilty

Kathleen is a partner at Blakes LLP in Vancouver. Her practice has an emphasis on mergers and acquisitions and corporate finance with extensive experience acting for public and private issuers and investment dealers in a broad range of industries, including mining and mineral exploration, forestry, retail, financial services, technology, and manufacturing.

Kathleen advises issuers and underwriters on public offerings and private placements of equity and debt securities. She also advises public and private companies and their boards of directors and special committees in connection with mergers and acquisitions, including take-over bids, plans of arrangement, going-private and spin-out transactions, and joint venture and shareholder agreements.

She has been recognized by Best Lawyers in Canada in 2014 and 2015 in Mergers and Acquisitions Law, Mining Law and Securities.



Patricia Lane

Patricia Lane is one of the four managing partners at the Winnipeg 65 lawyer firm of Taylor McCaffrey LLP. She has a background in human rights and civil litigation, but now practices exclusively in the area of family law, both as litigation counsel and as a collaborative practitioner. Pat graduated from the University of Alberta in 1982 and obtained her call to the Bar in both Manitoba and Ontario.

She taught the third year clinical family law course at the Law School for ten years and she continues to guest lecture on the topics of non-defensive communication, collaborative law process and some substantive law subjects. She has presented at national conferences on the topics of "Family Law Lawyers

as Agents of Reason", "Law Firm Management: Practicing Inclusive Leadership"; "The Use of Gender Inclusive Language" and "Creating Change".

Pat has a long history of promoting women's issues both in the profession and in society, nationally and internationally. She is the past national chair of the CBA's Women Lawyers Forum and during her tenure co-chaired the conference committee for the CBA's first national conference for women lawyers in Toronto in January 2011. Pat spent four years as the Canadian representative on the American Bar Association Commission on Women in the Profession and then on the Board of the American National Conference of Women Bar Associations. She remains active on the executive of her provincial Women Lawyers Forum. Amongst other awards for her work in promoting equality in the legal profession and in the wider community, Pat has been named 2015 Lawyer of the Year for Family Law in Winnipeg by Best Lawyers, and has received the Lexpert Zenith Award: Celebrating Women Leaders in the Legal Profession (2013), the MBA Isabel Ross (MacLean) Hunt Award (2013), the University of Alberta Alumni Honour Award (2012) and the CBA SOGIC Ally award (2010).



Lisa Martin

Lisa Martin is the author of five books (including the bestselling Briefcase Moms), a seasoned executive coach with 15 years of experience and frequent speaker for corporations, international conferences and universities. She has made it her mission to help companies keep and cultivate leaders. Lisa has coached thousands of people on the art of thriving and counselled companies on building leadership cultures. Her Lead + Live Better Program along with her book Lead + Live Advanced: 6 Practices to Master the Art of Thriving has been presented in many law firms and corporations. Her goal is to help as many people as possible thrive and make an impact by making leadership development fun and accessible.



Charlene Ripley

Charlene Ripley was appointed Executive Vice President, General Counsel at Goldcorp in 2013. Prior to Goldcorp, Ms. Ripley served as SVP & General Counsel at Linn Energy in Houston where she was responsible for leading the legal, information technology, corporate governance, compliance, government affairs, insurance and risk management departments, as well as supporting several multi-million and billion dollar growth transactions. Ms. Ripley holds a Bachelor of Arts, with distinction, from the University of Alberta and earned her law degree from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She is

a member of The Law Society of Alberta, Texas State Bar and Canadian Bar Association. Charlene is a passionate philanthropist who also serves on numerous non-profit boards. She was honored in 2012 by the Greater Houston Women's Chamber of Commerce as the Breakthrough Woman for the Energy Industry and received The Association of Women Attorneys 2013 Premiere Women in Law award.



Linda Robertson

Linda is a non-practicing lawyer, certified executive coach and consultant with a particular passion around leadership coaching and training for women lawyers and working with law firms and legal departments on the retention and advancement of women. She has a long history working on equality issues starting as a student volunteering at the Women's Legal Aid Clinic at UBC then helping found the

National Association of Women and the Law in Ottawa as a summer student in 1976.

Linda practiced for over twenty years as a corporate solicitor then General Counsel and finally as the Senior Vice President Law and Human Resources at ICBC. She left the practice of law in 2002 and trained as an executive coach in the United States. She has coached lawyers – both men and women - all across Canada for the past 12 years.

She started volunteering with the WLF the same year it was founded in 2002 in BC and helped design and run the highly successful WLF Mentoring Program. She has served for the past ten years on both the BC and national WLF executive as BC WLF Chair (2008 – 2010) and national Co-Chair (2013 – 2015). She continues on the national WLF executive as the immediate Past Chair and is chairing the national WLF Leadership Conference in Vancouver in November 2015.

She has sat on the Law Society's Education Committee and Equity and Diversity Committee and as a director on the National Conference of Women Bar Associations in the United States. She wrote a column for the national blog SLAW.ca for five years on issues affecting women lawyers. She is the recipient of the 2008 CBA BC Community Service Award and has an LL.M from the London School of Economics.

She says that the single best thing that ever happened to her in her legal career was joining the WLF.



Diane A. Ross

Diane Ross is a non-practicing lawyer, professional speaker, author (including *The Elephant in the Office: Super-Simple Strategies for Difficult Conversations at Work*), facilitator and executive coach who is passionate about inspiring others to gain the confidence and the skill to successfully have difficult conversations. She practiced civil litigation for 14 years and trained in mediation at

Harvard Law School before launching her successful consulting and speaking practice.

www.elephantconversations.com



Lisa Skakun

Lisa Skakun was the first General Counsel at Coast Capital Savings. She recently joined Mogo Finance Technology Inc., an online consumer financial services company as the Chief Legal and Administrative Officer.

Previously, Lisa practiced law at Farris in Vancouver and then moved in-house as the sole legal counsel to Xantrex a renewable energy solutions company.

She is currently a cabinet member for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation: the past Chair of the BC CBA Business Law Section , and was a member of the Securities Law Advisory Committee for the BC Securities Commission.

Lisa holds a LLB from the University of British Columbia, as well as a Master of Laws degree in business law from Osgoode Hall Law School at York University. Having also studied at Harvard Business School, Lisa is a lifelong learner and course junkie who rarely meets a program she does not enroll in. She is a recipient of the Rising Star Award.



Reva Seth

Reva Seth, a former lawyer, is now an author, strategic communications consultant, speaker, coach and entrepreneur based in Toronto. She is a frequent media contributor on issues related to the new world of work, women's leadership as well as cultural commentary on broad range of personal, parenting political topics. She has been featured on ABC's 20/20, CBS Sunday Morning, CTV's

Canada a.m. and her articles have appeared in Fast Company, The Atlantic, Maclean's and many other publications. Her latest book, MomShift: Women Share Their Stories of Career Success After Children spent over two months as Chapters/Indigo best-seller.

She also speaks and coaches on career development and followed 500 individual and their careers for five years with a focus on the changes and adjustments individuals were making to successfully navigate professional paths that were often quite different than what they had anticipated.



Andrea Verwey

Andrea practiced law for almost ten years in Vancouver and then at two large national firms in Australia. Her love of teaching and workshop design, led her to become a Professional Development Manager for Baker and McKenzie's Australian offices. The programs she and her team developed soon became known as one of the leaders among Baker and McKenzie's global network of 69 offices.

Andrea returned to Vancouver in 2009 where she coaches, consults and offers training to law firms in career development and practice management. Her workshops and one-on-one sessions help people strengthen their personal productivity and build influential communication skills.



Annelle Wilkins

Ms. Wilkins is currently Senior Vice-President and General Counsel at HSBC Bank Canada. She obtained her MBA and LLB from the University of Alberta, and then articulated and practiced at a national law firm in Vancouver before joining HSBC. HSBC Bank Canada is a member of the HSBC Group, one of the world's largest banking and financial services organizations, with approximately 6,100 offices in 72 countries and territories in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa, North America and Latin America. HSBC Bank Canada and its subsidiaries leverage this international presence while providing a full range of Canadian financial products and services to businesses, institutions and individuals. Since joining HSBC in 1995, Ms. Wilkins has been involved in legal and compliance matters for the bank and its various subsidiaries, and in providing advice to HSBC Group companies in other jurisdictions on the applicability of Canadian laws.



Allison Wolf, C.E.C

Allison Wolf is a Certified Executive Coach with over a decade of experience coaching lawyers. She works with lawyers and law firms from across Canada and the United States. Her clients range from sole practitioners to lawyers at large national firms. Her coaching practice is focused on four main areas: practice management, marketing & business development, career development and leadership.

Allison is frequently asked to write for US and Canadian journals and to present to professional associations and law firms. She is the publisher of a resource website for lawyers, Attorney With A Life (attorneywithalife.com), and has a bi-monthly practice management column with the law blog Slaw.ca.
www.thelawyercoach.com