

Banack's Bencher News #84

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CELEBRATION OF ACCOMPLISHMENT!

Convocation has recognized the following Ontario lawyers whose accomplishments will be celebrated in a Law Society ceremony on September 23, 2009:

LAW SOCIETY MEDALS: The medal has been awarded each year since 1985 to distinguished members of the legal community who have made significant contributions to the profession. The recipients are:

Nicholas Bala

James Douglas Grenkie, Q.C.

Susan Vella

George Biggar

Peter Hrastovec

Elizabeth Goldberg

Patricia Jackson

LINCOLN ALEXANDER AWARD: **Sandra Thomas** has been awarded this distinction which recognizes an Ontario lawyer who has demonstrated a commitment to the public and its well-being through community service.

LAURA LEGGE AWARD: **Janet Leiper** has been honoured with this award which recognizes women lawyers from Ontario who have exemplified leadership within the profession. The award was established in 2007 in honour of Laura Legge, the first woman ever elected as a Bencher of the Law Society and the first woman to serve as Treasurer.

TREASURER MILLAR: **Derry Millar** has been elected to a second one-year term as Treasurer. Under his leadership, Convocation has proceeded at a deliberate pace facing a number of complex issues. Many challenges remain outstanding for the coming year. Politics being what they are, quiet discussions are already under way as potential candidates begin to jockey for position, to assume the job next May. Most Benchers have learned not to commit support too early in the process before all interested Benchers have declared their intentions.

LAW SOCIETY BUDGET: The budget review process for 2010 has now commenced. Next year's budget must be prepared in the context of deteriorating economic conditions affecting the Law Society's investment income and the ability of Law Society members to earn a livelihood. Having regard for priorities established at a Bencher planning session in 2007, the rotational systemic review of programs will be continued to promote discipline in budget development and accountability in respect of funded programs. Typically, Convocation adopts the annual budget at its October meeting.

ARTICLING ALERT: A recent survey of articling opportunities in Toronto has disclosed a disturbing trend. Only a small number of well-known firms are committed to hiring external candidates and accepting applications for articling positions. Most of Toronto's major law firms including those with offices across the country have disclosed that they do not anticipate hiring any external articling students for 2010/2011 and will not be participating in the July/August articling recruitment drive. It appears the firms anticipate meeting their articling needs through the hiring of second year summer students which is initiated with on campus Fall interviews of law students beginning their second year of study. Second year summer jobs have become the rule and not the exception, thus increasing the pressure on law students. While this will likely be a more efficient, unified hiring process for the law firms, it is an unfortunate collateral consequence arising from the evolution of hiring second year summer students. Hopefully new opportunities may be created by other firms to expand the pool of available articling jobs.

"EXPERT" LAWYER: Current Law Society rules permit a lawyer to advertise that he/she is a specialist in a specified field only if so certified by the Law Society. There have been inquiries as to whether lawyers are permitted to also use the word "expert" when describing their qualifications. Upon review of the implications and having considered input from the Law Society's Complaints Resolution Commissioner the Professional Regulation Committee concluded that a lawyer may use the word "expert" unless it can be shown to be untrue or misleading as prohibited by Rule 3.02 of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY SUMMER!

CONVOCATION REPORTS: All reports to Convocation can be viewed at <http://www.lsuc.on.ca/news/>. In order to more fully understand the issues facing Convocation, you may wish to review previous editions of Banack's Bencher News at <http://www.kmlaw.ca/Publications/Type/?rid=1>

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