



BENCHER ELECTION: Make sure you vote. 97 lawyers are running for election. This is an important election as many incumbent Benchers are not seeking re-election so we have a significant opportunity to alter the composition of Convocation. Convocation deliberations and how benchers voted in roll call votes can be viewed in Convocation minutes at www.lsuc.on.ca. Find out how candidates stand on issues of importance to you. Important issues coming up include Articling, LLP, ABS, Access to Justice, Governance Reform, Diversity in the Profession, Small Firm Sustainability.

Voting begins during the week of April 13th and will conclude April 30th. The electronic vote will again be conducted by Computershare which will send each of us an email and letter with voting instructions. More election information is available at www.lsuc.on.ca/bencher-election-2015.

LAWYER ADJUDICATORS: Convocation has added another four non-bencher lawyer adjudicators to the hearing panel. This is consistent with the previously adopted principle that it is good for there to be cross-pollination of different perspectives that bencher and non-bencher adjudicators bring to the process. The appointment process allows for the introduction of specialized areas of expertise and to increase the panel's ability to conduct French language hearings as well as to more readily handle long hearings. This progress erodes the long held view that adjudication of discipline matters is the exclusive purview of elected benchers. We now recognize that mere election as a bencher does not make a person a qualified adjudicator. The objective must be to have the best possible panel of adjudicators which will allow the legal profession to remain a self-disciplining profession.

MARCH 31 DEADLINE: Annual reports are due March 31st and must be filed through the Law Society Portal at <https://portal.lsuc.on.ca>. A failure to file by May 30, 2015 will result in a \$100.00 late fee and may result in an administrative suspension from practice.

LAW PRACTICE PROGRAM: The students enrolled at the Universities of Ottawa and Ryerson as an alternative to articling have completed the four month virtual office training course and are now in the four month work placement phase. Unfortunately, a large percentage of the available jobs are unpaid. Anecdotal information is that lawyers are finding these students as well prepared and able to contribute to law office work as previous articling students. This first cohort will be called to the bar in the Spring when the real test will be faced in the employment market.

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT HELPLINE: This is a confidential service to help lawyers better understand and comply with the Rules of Professional Conduct and other Law Society regulations. Initial inquiries, planned to be answered within 24 hours, are handled by a representative who provides initial information but where needed the call can be escalated to counsel. At that level counsel discuss ethical issues, applicable legislation and potential options. In 2014 the service received over 6000 calls with more than half of them coming from small law firms with up to 5 lawyers. Call 416.947.3315 or 1.800.668.7380 extension 3315.

TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY: Its challenge of the Law Society decision to not accredit its law school will be heard in Ontario in June, 2015. The University has had initial success in the Nova Scotia Supreme Court which ruled that its law society exceeded its statutory authority by deciding that the Trinity Western law graduates could not practise in Nova Scotia. The decision did not address whether the program should be accredited in the first place. That is a question for the B.C. government which revoked its earlier approval of the law school.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR COLLEAGUES:

Convocation has recognized the following Ontario Lawyers whose accomplishments will be celebrated in a Law Society ceremony on May 27, 2015:

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:

Craig R. Carter. CS

John B. Laskin

Prof. Adam M. Dodek

H. J. Stewart Lavigueur

Susan Eng

E. Patrick Shea, CS

Faisal Joseph

Chantal Tie

LINCOLN ALEXANDER AWARD: **Paul Le Vay** 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: **Kimberley Murray** 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 to the Law Society and the first woman to serve as Treasurer.

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