

Energizing. Educational. And Empowering!

CELEBRATING OUR BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The BCLMA's 2024 conference aimed to 'Empower YOU' and bring innovative ideas and leading practices to help you, your teams, and your firm thrive. Gathering for two days at the Vancouver Convention Centre in April, BCLMA delegates, sponsors, and exhibitors shared, learned, connected, and got empowered!



OPENING KEYNOTE | OVERCOME YOUR FIRM'S BARRIERS WITH COLLABORATIVE GROWTH

» Clinton Gary, Founder; CREDO Consulting LLC

Anyone could feel the buzz in the air as the conference kicked off with the opening keynote session. Clinton Gary, a consultant who specializes in guiding law firms and their professionals to incorporate “smart collaboration and disciplined growth”, shared his expertise and leading practices on these topics.

After this valuable opening session, 125 energized delegates split off into focused breakout sessions.

Photos by Anna Beaudry, MPA CPP
Business Photographer & Brand
Consultant
annabeaudry.com

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LOOKING FOR AN OPPORTUNITY?

The TOPICS Editorial Committee welcomes new volunteers to help us connect with association members through our informative newsletter! Our fun and collaborative group seeks BCLMA members to suggest ideas and help source thought-provoking articles that will benefit all subsections.

We meet formally at four lunch-hour planning meetings per year (lunch provided) to plan the next edition. We also host meetings virtually for volunteers who live and work in the valley or the interior, or on the island or the coast!

Don't miss this rewarding opportunity to build valuable relationships, and contribute to the BCLMA and to our legal community across the province.

No business writing skills required – just your enthusiasm!

Contact Committee Chair Heather Orchison at general@bclma.org if you have any questions, need additional information, or feel ready to join!

Who We Are

Founded in 1972, the BCLMA is a non-profit organization with 185 member law firms represented by 595 representatives and affiliates across BC. The BCLMA's goal is to provide educational and networking opportunities, enhance skills as legal administrators and managers, and provide professional and personal benefits to its registrants.

Member Services

The BCLMA provides opportunities to network with other law firm administrators and managers at annual spring and winter socials, and monthly subsection meetings. We host an annual Managing Partners Event, and a large conference every other year.

Newsletter Services

TOPICS is a public newsletter. Contact the Editorial Committee to provide comments on articles, to offer suggestions for articles in future issues, or to augment the circulation list. We welcome your feedback! Please send comments to general@bclma.org.

Submissions

If you have an article or story idea you would like to submit, please email Heather Orchison at general@bclma.org. Please note that our prescribed article length is 1000 words. All submissions will be subject to review by the editorial board.

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SESSION 1 | BUILDING SAFETY AND INCLUSION THROUGH COMMUNICATION

- » Tracey Charette, MBA, Certified Organizational Coach & Master Facilitator
- » Sarah Dawn Pledge, Professional Actor and Faculty; Tightrope Improv Theatre

Tracey and Sarah explored communication concepts to improve firms and everyone working in them. They made the session interactive and energetic, leveraging the principles of improv to enhance the inclusion of others.

SESSION 2 | FROM MANAGERS TO ENTREPRENEURS: EMPOWERING MANAGERS TO THINK LIKE CLIENT-CENTRIC BUSINESS OWNERS

- » Jane Iannacone, Owner/ Founder; Jigsaw Performance Inc

Jane encouraged attendees to tap into their entrepreneurial selves to become more proactive, assertive, and willing to take risks to unleash their full potential in the workplace.

SESSION 3 | ESG AND RECONCILIATION

- » Larissa Maxwell, CEO, Principal Consultant; Maxwell Consulting Group
- » Angela Kermer, Principal, Good Way Consulting and Collaborator; Maxwell Consulting Group

Larissa and Angela heightened everyone's awareness and understanding of Environmental, Social, and Governance principles and how to begin to integrate ESG into their work. An added dimension exploring Indigenous reconciliation was passionately shared with the audience by Angela.



MODERATED PANEL DISCUSSION: HYBRID WORK

- » Moderator: Lejla Pekaric; Kolibri Consulting
- » Sara Forte, lawyer, mediator, workplace investigator
- » Shalisha Senkow, Collier Workplace Advisory Team
- » Chad Garrod, COO & CFO; Whitelaw Twining

After lunch, delegates attended a panel discussion about hybrid work and how it has evolved. This dynamic panel offered a balanced and thought-provoking exploration of how hybrid workplaces impact employee wellness.

MARKETPLACE

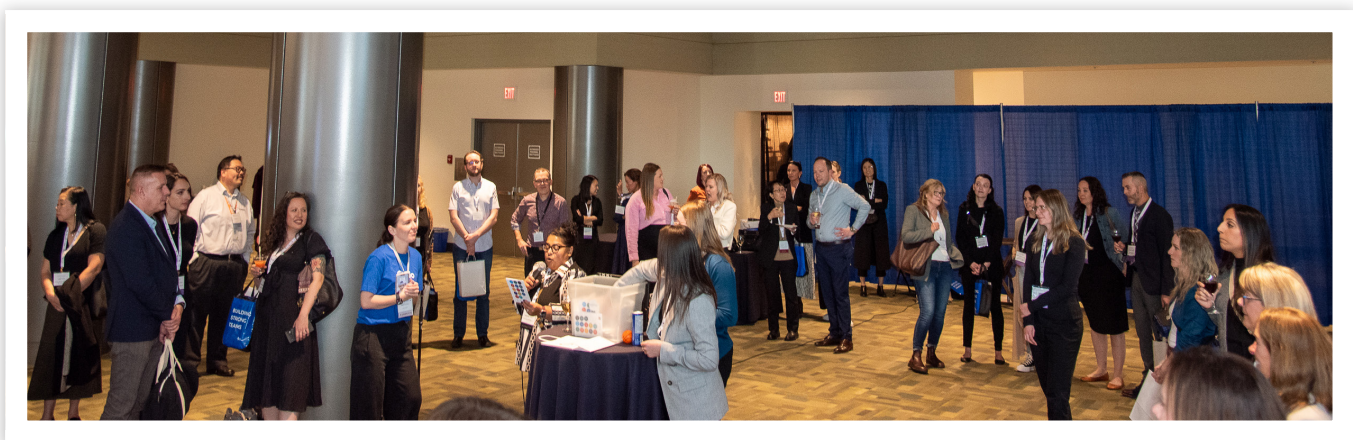
The conference Marketplace is always a highlight! It allows delegates to meet vendors one-on-one and learn more about products and services relevant to the legal industry. This year, 29 exhibitors brought their businesses to the exposition. The BCLMA thanks all the amazing vendors and sponsors for supporting Marketplace and for donating such fantastic prizes!

DINING IN

A dinner comprised of delectable food stations took place in the Crystal Ballroom at the Pan Pacific. Among the takeaways, delegates were delighted to find a seed paper place card to plant at home and watch wildflowers grow.

Day 2 began with the **Annual General Meeting**. See page 24 of this newsletter for new board members!

Delegates then attended alternate breakout sessions offered on Day 1.





CLOSING KEYNOTE: WHAT MATTERS MOST

- » Tanis Frame, MSc, CAPP; Thrive-catalyst, Possibilitarian, Leadership Coach, Luminous Leadership

Using her fun and engaging style, Tanis encouraged delegates to think about what matters most, providing clarity from their conference experience to carry forward into their work and their lives.

SPONSORS HELP MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE

We extend hearty thanks to all the generous and enthusiastic sponsors. We appreciate you!

- » **Change-Maker:** NetDocuments
- » **Visionary:** Axis Insurance, Ricoh Canada
- » **Innovator:** Com Pro Managed Business Solutions; Dye & Durham, Forge Recruitment; Hunter West Legal Recruitment, Optinet Systems Inc.
- » **Champion:** Aura Office Environment; BMC Networks, RecordXpress

SHOUT OUT TO:

- » DLO Move Support Services for providing the lanyards
- » Wright CPA for sponsoring the Wright's Way cocktail at the Marketplace!

THREE CHEERS FOR THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE!

- » Lorraine Burchynsky
- » Natalie Egger
- » Marissa Fyles
- » Jane Kennedy
- » Priscilla Martindale
- » Yasaman Mohandesi
- » Heather Orchison
- » Marketa Rumlana

The 2024 committee worked for months to bring an innovative and dynamic conference experience to everyone. Please thank these exceptional individuals the next time you see them!

Last but not least, thank you to everyone who travelled from near and far to attend this special event!



L TO R: JANE, YASAMAN, NATALIE, LORRAINE (CHAIR), MARISSA, PRISCILLA, MARKETA, (MISSING HEATHER)



BCLMA gratefully acknowledges our
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Change Maker



Visionary



Innovator



Champion



Supporter





BC Human Rights Tribunal – Update

PRESTON PARSONS, Partner, Overholt Law LLP

Shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic upended life here on the west coast, the BC Human Rights Tribunal was overrun with complaints. More than four years later, the Tribunal continues to wrestle with a backlog, while also trying to manage a higher average level of filings each year than before the pandemic. While the Tribunal received a recent funding boost intended to significantly expand its internal capacity, only very recently has that increased capacity come online. This means that a long road remains ahead for the Tribunal to get on top of its caseload and to minimize the backlog, leaving both complainants and respondents with, candidly, a nearly inaccessible forum when compared to the Tribunal's pre-pandemic functioning.

For prospective complainants, significant patience is required to await the initial response from the Tribunal acknowledging acceptance of a complaint for filing, much less the adjudication of a complaint on the merits. Respondents are equally disadvantaged by not even finding out about a complaint until nine months or more after it was filed, during which time documents or witness evidence may have dissipated, or the underlying problem may no longer be capable of being resolved amicably, if at all. If a complaint goes the distance, it could take five years from filing the complaint to reach a decision on the merits under current timelines.

For those complainants with the resiliency, patience, and resources to be able to persevere to a successful adjudication of their complaints, however, the continued upward trend in non-taxable injury to dignity damages is in their favour.

The Tribunal's last injury to dignity "high-water mark" award in the decision *Francis v. BC Ministry of Justice* (No. 5), 2021 BCHRT 16 was \$176,000.00. That is the highest injury to dignity award in British Columbia's history across all prohibited grounds of discrimination and involved an extreme case of racial discrimination in employment. Even that record-setting figure was discounted; the Tribunal first

agreed that \$220,000.00 was appropriate, before applying a 20% contingency reduction on the basis of intervening events unrelated to the contraventions found.

Recently, the Tribunal awarded \$100,000.00 for injury to dignity in a sex and disability discrimination case involving extreme allegations of sexual harassment and assault. This is now the highest injury to dignity award in BC's history centred upon sexual harassment and assault, doubling the previous high-water mark for this sub-category of employment discrimination cases.

In Ms. L v. Clear Pacific Holdings Ltd. and others, 2024 BCHRT 14, the complainant worked as a personal executive assistant. The Tribunal found that she was sexually, emotionally, and physically abused, harassed, and assaulted during her 21-month employment. The discriminatory conduct directed at the complainant was so frequent that the Tribunal described it as “rampant” (para 64) and the impact on her “profound” (para 67). She had her wages withheld, was abandoned in a foreign country, and her boss knowingly exploited her disability – a substance use disorder – to control her. The discrimination and impact upon her cumulatively were severe enough to result not only in the loss of her employment, but her total inability to work in any capacity for years afterward. Ultimately, the Tribunal accepted evidence that the complainant will have lifelong impacts on all aspects of her life from the trauma endured.

Notably, in deciding on the injury to dignity amount, the Tribunal expressly noted “the award is consistent with the upward trend of the Tribunal’s awards, and with awards made in Ontario” (para 74). The latter part of this quote

is underlined for emphasis as Ontario has for many years had greater injury to dignity high-water mark awards than BC, while also being more bullish in increasing its awards. The Tribunal’s rationale in this decision – written by the Tribunal’s Vice Chair – should be viewed as a strong signal that the Tribunal’s upward trend in injury to dignity damages is likely to continue as the gap narrows between it and the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.

In addition to injury to dignity damages, the Tribunal also awarded Ms. L \$61,541.90 in lost wages, pre-and-post judgment interest, and \$8,699.84 in reimbursement of expenses. The latter consisted of medical expenses to recover from the impact of the discrimination on her, as well as disbursements she had to pay her law firm to advance her case.

Most complaints against employers do not involve facts as extreme as those in *Ms. L*. However, the Tribunal setting a new high-water mark in this area provides an opportunity for claimants alleging sexual harassment or assault in the workplace to push for a proportionate rise in the injury to dignity award sought for their own specific facts. Respondents currently facing claims before the Tribunal should be mindful of this, particularly if delay is a tactic that they believe favours them. It might just be that further delay only increases the potential financial hit of an injury to dignity award.



Preston Parsons is a partner at Overholt Law, practicing in the areas of employment and labour relations, human rights, and privacy law. Overholt Law is a boutique employment and labour relations firm located in downtown Vancouver, British Columbia. For more information regarding Overholt Law, please visit overholtlawyers.com.



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MEMBER SNAPSHOT

ARJUN SUMRA



Q
&A

Where do you work?

Marketing Manager, Hamilton Duncan Law Corporation

Describe your current role at your firm/organization.

As the sole marketing professional at the firm, I do it all! This includes graphic design, copy writing, event planning, website management, social media, and much more!

What do you enjoy the most about your role?

The variety. My position at Hamilton Duncan is one that I have enjoyed the most in my career.

When did you join the BCLMA?

November 2023

What is the greatest value you receive from the BCLMA?

Having just entered the legal industry, the BCLMA provides immense value through networking. I have met other marketing managers, vendors, and even made new friends. It helps to know that I can reach out to anyone to test an idea or get clarity on something.

What advice would you give to young professionals developing their legal career?

Join an organization with opportunities to grow, and that makes you feel comfortable asking questions and getting guidance to help fuel your career.

If you could pick a movie title or song title to describe your legal career, what would it be?

Insomnia

My dream vacation:

A year off in Europe!

I'm hosting an exclusive dinner party, and I can invite ANYONE – living or dead, famous, or not. My guest list includes:

Lionel Messi, Michael Schumacher, and my grandfather.

For about \$25 a bottle, I recommend this wine:

Toscana – Tenute Rossetti Governo. With mostly Sangiovese grapes, it's a medium-bodied, dry red that pairs well with wild boar ragu!

My favourite restaurant – anywhere:

Flax and Kale in Barcelona

In my spare time, I like to:

Race cars, travel (Tomorrowland 2025!), and explore new experiences.

WELCOME & KUDOS

New Member Firms and their Representative

Joanne Martin **Align Family Law** Victoria
Stephanie Lintunen **BTM Lawyers LLP** Port Moody
Tammy McLaren **GoodWin Law** Kamloops
Janet Hodson **Johns Southward LLP** Victoria
Kevin Shano **Koskie Glavin Gordon** Vancouver
Laura Raposo **Labour Rights Law** Coquitlam
Karen Meireles **Pier Law & Mediation** White Rock
Lisa Ross **Pulver Crawford Munroe LLP** Vancouver

New Representatives for Existing Member Firms

Taylor Critchley **QA Law** Vancouver

New Individual Members

John Cronin **Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP** Vancouver
Michael Macapagal **Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP** Vancouver
Elliot Baker **Cassells Brock & Blackwell LLP** Vancouver

Raj Sidhu **Clark Wilson LLP** Vancouver
Kathryn Schultz **Clark Wilson LLP** Vancouver
Nadia Sayenko **Clark Wilson LLP** Vancouver
Alissa Wunder **Fasken LLP** Vancouver
Carolyn Janusz **GoodWin Law** Kamloops
Joachim Wu **Guild Yule LLP** Vancouver
Leslie Lee **Kahn Zach Ehrlich Liethwick LLP** Richmond
Eva Tong **Kovacs & Norell** Vancouver
Janiene Chand **McEwan Partners LLP** Vancouver
Fiona Yee **McQuarrie Hunter LLP** Surrey
Justin Wood **Pattison Food Group Ltd.** Langley
Emily Sugerman **PLLR Lawyers** Richmond
Eduardo De Souza **Richards Buell Sutton LLP** Vancouver
Farah Tozy **Watson Goepel LLP** Vancouver



IN MEMORIAM ROB WALLS

The BCLMA remembers Rob Walls of Boughton Law Corporation in Vancouver. Rob passed away this spring.

Rob served as the Chair of the BCLMA's IT subsection for several years in addition to serving on the Board as a Director from 2017 to 2019.

Former BCLMA President, Lorraine Burchynsky, worked with Rob at Boughton for almost 18 years. "We became very good friends. Rob, as Manager of IT, and I, as Manager of Administration, worked on numerous firm-wide projects together. We didn't agree on everything (our former COO would sometimes referee our debates!), but Rob and I always respected each other's opinions, and we would ultimately agree on how to proceed. When my limited IT knowledge would crop up, Rob would say: 'LB,' (what he called me), 'you need to learn this stuff,' and he'd roll his eyes. I will miss that."

Rob will be remembered for his quick wit, innovative ideas, get-it-done attitude, and collaborative spirit.

YOUNG PROS DOUBLE DOWN

ANNUAL EVENT GAINING POPULARITY

The BCLMA ushered in the first day of spring with an exciting Young Professionals Event – Vegas style!

Guests placed their bets in the Harper Grey ‘casino’ in downtown Vancouver at the BCLMA’s third annual affair. Everyone enjoyed canapés, cocktails, and conversation while they tried their luck at games like roulette, poker, and blackjack.

With more than 45 attendees, this was our largest young professionals group to date!

Special thanks to event sponsors **Axis**, **ComPro**, and **Ricoh** who helped make this fun evening possible. **Houle Games & Entertainment** provided a sophisticated casino vibe, and **The Rooted Table** served up delicious charcuterie.

Thank you to all who attended. You made this event a great success! We hope to see you at this popular event next year!





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Secrets to Leading a Successful Law Firm

RENATA DRAG, Chief Operating Officer; Edwards, Kenny & Bray LLP

Winning cases is no longer sufficient to ensure the success of the law firm. In today's rapidly evolving legal landscape, sustainable success depends on embracing strong leadership, leveraging practice management tools to drive efficiency, emphasizing client satisfaction, and investing in the development and retention of talent.

As with any other business, law firms go through many twists and turns on their way to success. A successful firm does not get built in one day; it evolves through years of hard work and dedication inspired by strategic leadership.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Leadership is not about a title. Leadership is about inspiring others to follow a strategy to achieve a specific goal. A strategy is a plan that enables a firm to prioritize its objectives, remain competitive, and optimize financial performance. A strategic leader is capable of articulating a future direction, creating a plan for how to get there, and motivating others to participate in achieving that plan.

The role of the law firm leader is transforming. The traditional, partner-dominated decision-making model does not always deliver expected results. Many firms have started moving towards a corporate governance model with a business-minded COO/CEO at the decision table whose main responsibility is long-term business planning and strategic leadership.

When hiring for a leadership position, consider those with well-developed integrity and even greater vision. Leaders who lead strategically know how to get the best from a situation and its people. While integrity and a strong work ethic provide daily motivation to complete ongoing projects, a clear vision serves as inspiration, purpose, and an invitation to participate.

LEVERAGING PRACTICE MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Experienced leaders know that profitability matters. They constantly look for ways to increase the quality and quantity of services provided while minimizing and aligning costs.

The continuous advancements in technology and increased functionality of artificial intelligence offer many opportunities and challenges. By anticipating potential challenges and capitalizing on opportunities that arise, law firms ultimately position themselves for success.

With the uncharted impact of hybrid work, and mounting pressures to fine-tune every process with less time and fewer resources, technology has emerged as a formidable instrument enabling firms to optimize their resources, improve client satisfaction, and maintain competitiveness while addressing evolving market demands.

A comprehensive practice management system can address multiple inefficiencies at once. It can reduce document creation time, streamline billing and payment practices, and improve collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Another significant advantage is in the area of data collection. The ability to collect and analyze data can yield significant advantages when it comes to data-based decision-making and client satisfaction.

EMPHASIZING CLIENT SATISFACTION

Providing basic legal advice will likely not guarantee success given the increasing competition and continuously evolving legal landscape. Hence, law firms must prioritize value creation and offer personalized services that encourage authentic relationships. Personalized engagement drives loyalty among high-value clients who seek expertise capable of delivering tailored solutions aligned with their goals and needs. While firms can leverage technology to gather client data, facilitate regular communication, and provide transparency into the status of their legal affairs, nothing will replace experience, dedication, and relationships based on trust. Law firms that continue adapting to the changing environment and emphasizing client satisfaction will ultimately succeed.

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DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION OF TALENT

Since client loyalty largely depends on the quality of the legal team, law firms need to be aware that finding and keeping the right people is crucial to their success. By investing in the development and retention of their legal talent, firms ensure they have a team of skilled and dedicated employees. Offering growth opportunities, competitive compensation, and fostering a culture of respect and collaboration are critical. Furthermore, technology can serve as an advantage in the battle for talent. You cannot attract or retain young legal talent unless you provide them with the best tools.

Successful firms tend to be very discerning when choosing their talent. While every person matters, sentiment must be put aside when selecting the legal team. Without the right partners, associates, paralegals and support teams, law firms will find themselves working harder just to stay afloat.

CONCLUSION

Despite the pandemic and resulting economic turbulence, law firms have continued to grow in operational complexity while delivering exceptional client services. Strategic and operational leadership, investment in technology and human capital, and enhanced client relations have become top priorities for many firms. The future for law firms looks bright, but there will be no success without continued hard work, sustained commitment to a viable strategic plan, and the right tools and people to support them.



Renata Drag, COO, is a seasoned professional with more than 20 years of experience leading complex projects in the construction, mining, manufacturing, engineering, and business law industries. Throughout her career, she has worked closely with senior leaders to increase brand recognition and profitability by building and motivating teams of highly effective professionals.

A large advertisement for RICOH. On the right side, a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a dark blazer over a light blue top, is smiling and holding a white tablet. The background is a solid dark purple. On the left side, the word "RICOH" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below it, the phrase "Unleash your inner legal eagle" is written in a larger, white, sans-serif font. Underneath that, the text "Modernize workflows and get back to the business of law" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom left, there is a white rectangular box with a purple border. Inside the box, the words "Learn more" are written in white, and below them is a black and white QR code. Two thin, curved lines, one orange and one purple, sweep across the bottom of the advertisement from left to right.

Save the Date

BCLMA Educational Event

Date: Thursday, October 3, 2024

Time: 11:45 am – 1:30 pm

Location: Terminal City Club

Topic: The Science of Success

Speaker: Dr. Catherine Sanderson, PHD

bclma
BC Legal Management Association

BCLMA Annual Winter Social

Date: Thursday, November 7, 2024

Time: 5:15 pm – 9:00 pm

Location: Sutton Place Hotel

For more information and to register visit bclma.org

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MEMBER SNAPSHOT

MEGAN STRATIKOPOULOS



Q
&A

Where did your legal career begin?

After initially attending university to become a journalist, I decided that a typical bachelor's degree was not for me. I then took an online legal administrative assistant certification, then my paralegal certification and when an emergency left my firm without an office manager, I jumped in. It evolved into a larger, more involved role over time and here I am today!

Tell us about your current role.

My role at Forward Law LLP is broad: I act as our human resources lead, which includes payroll, training, staffing and benefits. I perform all of the in-house accounting and bookkeeping, including budgeting and forecasting. I also assist with practice management and policy development. Whenever there is a gap to fill, I am available to fill it – from answering phones at the reception desk to small plumbing repairs!

What do you enjoy the most about your role?

I enjoy watching people grow in their roles and practices.

When did you join the BCLMA?

2021.

What is the greatest value you receive from the BCLMA?

I love the webinars that BCLMA offers, as well as the forums. I have created many great connections via the forums. It's nice to see what other firms are doing.

What advice would you give to young professionals developing their legal career?

See the trees, not just the forest. Always keep in mind how your decisions will affect others you work with. Don't feel afraid to ask questions.

If you could pick a movie title to describe your legal career, what would it be?

Legally Blonde.

My dream vacation:

I love Greece and would go back a million times. Spain and Portugal are high on the bucket list.

I'm hosting an exclusive dinner party, and I can invite ANYONE – living or dead, famous or not. My guest list includes:

My Grandpa Dave, although he was mild-mannered, so I am not sure he would appreciate the conversation that usually comes up at most of my dinner parties.

THE SOUNDING BOARD

YOUR BCLMA.
YOUR NEWS.

Lorraine Burchynsky led the 2024 Conference Committee to successfully design and direct the BCLMA's bi-annual conference: **Empowering YOU**. Thank you to Lorraine, the committee, delegates, our roster of facilitators, and our ever-generous sponsors. We couldn't do it without you!

The Board hosted the **Annual General Meeting** on April 19. We thank departing Director Kirsten Whitley for her many important contributions, and welcome new Director Priscilla Martindale to the Board.

The annual **Summer Social** took place on June 6 at the D6 Lounge. This social gathering remains a popular mix 'n' mingle! Watch for fun photos in the Fall TOPICS.

Two **BCLMA surveys** will be issued over the summer: 'Business Services Compensation & Benefits' and 'Charge-out Rates' will be distributed on July 24. Recipients will have until September 23 to respond.

Save the date! The annual **Winter Social** will take place on November 7 at the Sutton Place Hotel.

Visit the Events page at bclma.org for all event details and new announcements. Enjoy the full President's Message [on our website](#).

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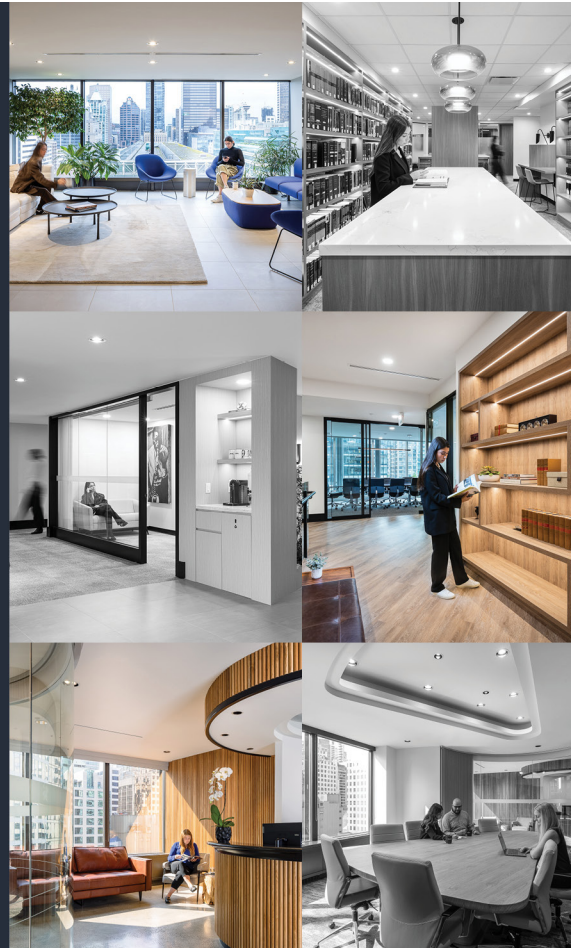
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RECIPE

Conference Signature Cocktail

INGREDIENTS: Serves One

Over ice add:

1.5 oz tequila

1 oz. triple sec

½ oz simple sugar

1 oz lime juice

2 ½ oz blood orange or mandarin juice

Add sparkling water if desired.

DIRECTIONS

1. Fill the cocktail glass with ice. Pour in the tequila, triple sec, simple sugar, lime then the juice. Stir and garnish.



ABOUT SIMPLE SUGAR

Besides the alcohol, simple sugar is integral to cocktails. It acts as a neutral sweetening agent and allows sugar to be evenly mixed throughout a drink, particularly one served cold, by pre-dissolving the granulated sugar in water ahead of time to avoid clumping. You can also infuse your simple syrup with countless ingredients—including spices, herbs and fruit—based on the flavour profile you want to achieve.

HOW TO MAKE SIMPLE SUGAR

INGREDIENTS

½ cup granulated sugar

½ cup water

DIRECTIONS

1. Add the sugar and water to a small saucepan over medium heat.
2. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Let cool, then pour into a glass jar and seal tightly with a lid.
3. Simple syrup will keep, refrigerated, for about one month.

BCLMA Ask a Coach?

DEAR COACH:

I used to love my role as a law firm manager. I am now finding myself not as excited about my work as I used to be, but there are great things about my firm.

Signed,

Do I stay or do I go?

DEAR 'DO I STAY OR DO I GO',

Firstly, good for you for paying attention to how you feel. Work makes up a huge part of our life, and your (lack of) excitement about your role cannot only affect your performance, it can also impact your overall well-being and enjoyment of life. It's not something to sweep under the rug.

A few questions to reflect on:

How long have you felt this way? No role is perfect, and ups and downs in our career are expected. However, if there are more downs than ups, and you've felt this way a long time, then it's worthwhile to do some deep thinking on whether this is actually the right role for you.

What if nothing changes? What will be the impact on your career and life in one year, three years, or five years? Oftentimes we make decisions (or we stay stuck in the status quo) based on the present. But if we take a step back and consider our bigger picture, decisions and choices we need to make become clear.

What about your work situation is in your control?

What is out of your control? There are probably aspects of your work life that you don't have much – if any – control over. But I would bet there are many areas where you have more control and influence than you think. Can you have that difficult conversation with your manager, even if you feel nervous about it? Perhaps you can identify small ways to establish boundaries and generate new habits that promote work-life integration.

Staffing Issues?

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How often do you (get to) use your strengths? Data shows that people who use their strengths more often than not have higher engagement, higher performance, and less intention to leave the organization they work at. It makes sense, right? When we engage in activities that come naturally to us and we are good at, it makes us feel better at our work.

Does your work align with your core values? Do you know what your values are? Core values represent the things we hold most dear. They can act as a guide and compass in our life. When our work aligns with our values, this drives engagement. Conversely, we can experience disengagement and burnout when our core values conflict with our professional experience.

What season of your life and career are you in? Some seasons, our focus is on life outside of work and we prioritize job security. Some seasons focus on professional growth, and we prioritize making intentional decisions about our career. Consider what season you are in, and how that might impact your decision.

What I already know about you is that you have self-awareness; you pay attention to how you feel. These are the first steps to making empowered decisions in your career. Best of luck!



Megan (Meegan) McAllister is a professional coach and leadership development facilitator and strategic workplace culture consultant, specializing in the legal industry and law firm management. She is on a

mission to create a ripple effect of better workplaces, leaders, careers and lives.

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BCLMA welcomes the Fraser Valley

FORMER FVLA GROUP JOINS BCLMA AS A NEW SUBSECTION

You might know that the Fraser Valley has had an independent legal administrators group for several decades. What you might not know is that it recently merged with the BCLMA!

Cheryl Scott of CBM Lawyers, LLP and Tim Wurtz of Baker Newby LLP have co-led a small group of legal professionals in the valley since 2019 (though the group started in the 1990s). Meeting regularly throughout the year, members of the Fraser Valley Legal Administrators have participated in lively roundtable discussions, shared pain points and successes, learned from one another, and supported each other. They have also enjoyed annual summer and winter socials, appreciating opportunities to interact and celebrate.

Identifying an opportunity for the group to expand, BCLMA Director Ronda Smyth reached out to Cheryl and Tim and suggested joining the BCLMA as a new subsection.

“Now, with the BCLMA, we can do precisely that with a broader network,” said Cheryl. “It’s very exciting to think about the outreach capability we will have to connect with other firms across the valley.”

Tim agrees. “The infrastructure of the BCLMA opens the Fraser Valley up to greater opportunities and relationships. This new convergence can rekindle that very active, large, and close group of the generation of administrators before us.”



CO-CHAIRS CHERYL SCOTT OF CBM LAWYERS LLP, AND TIM WURTZ OF BAKER NEWBY LLP.

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Teaming up – again! – to lead the Fraser Valley subsection, Cheryl and Tim hosted the inaugural meeting on March 14 at Hamilton Duncan and welcomed six firm representatives to the kickoff.

“In our initial conversations”, Tim noted, “we all agreed: merging with the BCLMA brings a new level of legitimacy to our group. It simply felt like the right time.”

Cheryl and Tim share an ambitious and attainable goal for the subsection: growth. “I would love to fill a boardroom with members!” Tim said.

Cheryl agrees. “We are in building mode. We welcome all valley firms to join us, including managers and leaders new to the legal industry. Bring your ideas, thoughts and perspectives. Bring your problems too! We have a wealth of experience, and we can’t wait to share it with you.”

The Fraser Valley subsection will meet up to six times per year. Contact info@bclma.org for more information, or contact Cheryl Scott (cscott@cbmlawyers.com) or Tim Wurtz (TWurtz@bakernewby.com) directly.

THE FIRST MEMBER ROUNDTABLE! CHERYL AND TIM WELCOME LAW FIRM PROFESSIONALS TO THE INAUGURAL BCLMA FRASER VALLEY SUBSECTION MEETING.



IN ATTENDANCE: LESLIE GREEN, DRYSDALE BACON MCSTRAVICK LLP; HEIDI BLAKER AND CRYSTAL WEISS, BOTH OF WATERSTONE LAW GROUP LLP; CHRISTINA BARSZCZEWSKI, BKS LAW CORPORATION; CARMEN ARNDT AND BREANNE ROLFE, BOTH OF HAMILTON DUNCAN LAW CORPORATION.

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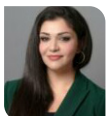


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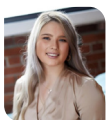


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