

FALL 2017



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN  
College of Law  
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# OF NOTE

COLLEGE OF LAW MAGAZINE

## Palbinder Kaur Shergill:

Her inspirational journey  
to British Columbia's  
Supreme Court

**College launches  
Nunavut Law Program** ■

**The mighty Hughes returns** ■

**Student Siera Bearchell's  
commitment to helping others** ■



Published by the College of Law at the University of Saskatchewan, *of NOTE* contains news and updates from the college as well as information relevant to our alumni and all of our college community.

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# Home for a half-century 7



## College launches Nunavut Law Program

The program brings a law degree to the territory for the first time in over a decade.



## Palbinder Kaur Shergill

Her inspirational journey from the College of Law to British Columbia's Supreme Court.



## Mighty Hughes

Alumnus Ted Hughes (BA'48; LLB'50) returns to the college for a book signing in his honour.



## Dean's Message:



I celebrated my first birthday as dean of the college on July 1, 2017, and although there was no cake, it was a great opportunity to reflect on what a fantastic year it has been!

With a fresh academic year, we welcomed two new faculty to the college. Assistant Professor Jason

MacLean, whose research expertise includes environmental law and climate change policy, joined us from the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law at Lakehead University. We were also very fortunate to welcome Professor Larry Chartrand as Academic Director of the Native Law Centre. Professor Chartrand is one of Canada's leading Indigenous law academics and earlier this year was awarded the Law Society of Upper Canada Medal. We are also proud of the fact that he is a graduate of the Native Law Centre's Program of Legal Studies for Native People.

Now the fall term is upon us, which brings new students, changing weather, and a full calendar! One of the college's proudest achievements to date, was the launch of our Nunavut Law Program. On September 11, I had the privilege of travelling north to attend the First Year Welcoming Ceremony in Iqaluit, to bring greetings to the program's 25 new students.

It was truly a special occasion, with over 150 community members attending. I was touched to see the number of family, friends and dignified guests (including Madame Justice Côté from the SCC) who joined us to wish the students well. The program is a partnership between the college, Nunavut Arctic College and the Government of Nunavut, and represents further evidence of the college's continuing commitment to creating opportunities in Indigenous legal education.

News from Iqaluit is that our students are doing very well; they visited the Nunavut Legislative Assembly in September to be recognized by the MLAs, and have formed the Nunavut Law Students Society. They also recently organized an all candidates forum in the Nunavut election.

The program has welcomed a number of distinguished guest speakers so far, including Senator Dennis Patterson, former premier of the

Northwest Territories, and Paul Okalik, the first Inuk lawyer to be called to the Nunavut Bar. Stay tuned for updates!

With the launch of the Nunavut Law Program, the college had the honour of holding two first year welcoming ceremonies this year. On September 19, we gathered in Convocation Hall to celebrate the 129 students joining the college here in Saskatoon. I am delighted to say this means the college has 154 new students this year - by far the largest class we have ever had! We look forward to uniting these two cohorts in every way we can, so they can share their experiences as they go through law school together.

I hope you will enjoy catching up on what's been happening at the college over the last few months. Featured in this edition, we have stories on two of our distinguished alumni. Ted Hughes (LLB '50) and his family travelled to the college in October to attend a special reception to mark the Saskatchewan launch of a biography in Ted's honour, *The Mighty Hughes*, which is a detailed account of his life, his work as a Saskatchewan judge and BC conflict-of-interest commissioner, and his significant achievements during his career. Our cover story is a feature on Justice Palbinder Kaur Shergill (LLB '90), who was recently appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of British Columbia. Justice Shergill, who also visited the college in October to co-deliver the Saskatchewan Law Review Lecture, is the first turbaned Sikh Supreme Court judge in the country.

As always, we are delighted to be sharing our alumni's extraordinary achievements. Our alumni are key to the future success of the college, and I encourage you to stay connected with us. I was delighted that many of you could join us for our 2016-17 alumni receptions across the country, and I look forward to seeing faces new and old in the coming year. I thoroughly enjoyed visiting our Edmonton alumni for the first time as dean on October 30, and I eagerly anticipate my visits to Calgary and Toronto in 2018 (details on page 13).

Stay in touch...

Sincerely,

**Martin Phillipson**  
Dean, College of Law



# Around the College

Plains/ Woodland Cree singer and songwriter Joseph Naytowhow performs a blessing and traditional song at the reception for alumnus Ted Hughes on Oct 12, 2017.





Student prize winners with Dean Martin Phillipson at the 2017 convocation reception on June 7.

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Students chat at orientation.



Students at the 2017 Canadian Bar Association Saskatchewan Branch reception.



Lawyer, college alumnus and One Bad Son drummer Kurt Dahl guest lectures in the entertainment law course on Sept 29, 2017.



College of Law students take part in the U of S Graduation Powwow on May 31, 2017, to celebrate the academic achievements of graduating Métis, First Nations and Inuit students.



Guests come together in the Native Law Centre for a book gathering and conversation.



# College launches Nunavut Law Program

Program Director Stephen Mansell speaks at the welcoming ceremony

The program, which brings a law degree to the territory for the first time in over a decade, officially welcomed 25 new students at a unique First Year Welcoming Ceremony on Sept. 11.

Over 150 community members attended the ceremony in Iqaluit, Nunavut, which was conducted in Inuktitut and English.

For the students, it was a chance to celebrate their entrance into law school, and the beginning of a highly anticipated four-year journey in legal studies.

The ceremony opened with a traditional blessing and Qulliq lighting ceremony, and dignified guests brought greetings to the class. Speakers included Nunavut Minister of Education Paul Quassa, Supreme Court Justice Susan Côté, Senior Judge of the Nunavut Court of Justice Neil Sharkey, University of Saskatchewan Chancellor Emeritus Tom

Molloy, formerly the Government of Canada's chief negotiator for the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, and College of Law Dean Martin Phillipson.

Reflecting on the success of the ceremony, Program Director Stephen Mansell said "I am very excited to be working with 25 amazing Nunavut students over the next four years as they progress through their legal studies. The potential for these students, and this program, to shape the future of the legal profession and access to justice in our territory is immeasurable."

On Sept. 13, the program's students, faculty, and Elder were invited to the Nunavut Legislative Assembly to be recognized by the MLAs. Each student was acknowledged and congratulated for their success in entering the law program, and the faculty were thanked for their role in delivering it.

Just a few months into the program, and there is much to report from Iqaluit.

Inuit scholar and advocate Aaju Peter, graduate of the Akitsiraq Law School and Order of Canada recipient, joined the program as cultural advisor. Peter is also lecturing on Inuit law, culture and perspectives in the first-year courses.

The program has also welcomed a number of distinguished guest lecturers, including Dennis Patterson, senator for Nunavut and former premier of the Northwest Territories, and Paul Okalik, the first Inuk lawyer to be called to the Nunavut Bar, and the first premier of Nunavut.

Students have taken opportunities to extend their learning experience by connecting with lectures and events happening at the College of Law via livestream. They have also formed the Nunavut Law Students Society, which organized a forum to question candidates from the four ridings in Iqaluit running in the Oct. 30 Nunavut general election.

Finally, two Inuit students, Alanna Copland and James Takkiruiq, received funding to attend the Indigenous Bar Association's annual conference in Halifax. At this meeting, Copland was elected Inuit vice-president of the National Indigenous Students Association.

The Nunavut Law Program was born in August 2016, when the Government of Nunavut awarded the design and delivery of a law degree for the territory to the College of Law.



The Nunavut Law Program students with Stephen Mansell (right) and Dean Martin Phillipson (left)

Developed in partnership between the college, Nunavut Arctic College and the Government of Nunavut, the program is specially designed to meet the needs of Nunavut students, incorporating Inuit legal traditions and teachings. With classes taught in Iqaluit, students can remain in their home territory while completing their law degree.

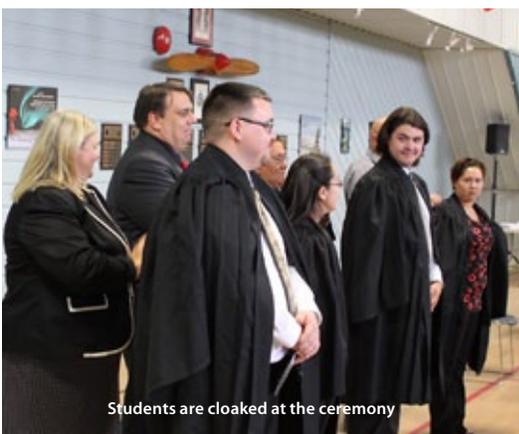
The program aims to increase the number of practicing lawyers in Nunavut, with particular demand for those with knowledge of Inuit culture and languages. It is hoped that addressing the shortage of lawyers in the territory will ultimately improve access to legal services for Nunavummiut.

For the U of S, the program represents a renewed commitment to Indigenous and northern education.

"Building educational partnerships such as this serves to provide opportunities that will benefit the entire territory of Nunavut in the future," said Phillipson.

"I am delighted to see the program come to fruition, it is the culmination of a lot of hard work by dedicated people from these three organizations."

The students now face four years of hard work. While the program prepares them for legal studies in the first year, it will follow the same rigorous curriculum as the College of Law over the remaining three.



Students are cloaked at the ceremony

Those who successfully complete the program in 2021 will receive a U of S Juris Doctor (JD) degree, and join the college's community of distinguished alumni.

## McKercher LLP Lecture Series: Winter 2017 Highlights

The 2016-17 McKercher Lecture series concluded with five lectures covering a diverse range of topics, from the role of law in storytelling, to designing new court systems around family violence cases.

The Wunusweh lecture in Aboriginal law was delivered by college alumnus Grand Chief **Derek Nepinak (LLB '08)**, of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, to a full house in the Gordon Oakes Red Bear student centre on Jan. 16, 2017.

Raised in Pine Creek First Nation, on Treaty 4 territory, Chief Nepinak reflected on the significant ways in which his and other communities have been impacted by western culture, including that he was the first generation not to attend residential school. He presented on the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation



Grand Chief Derek Nepinak delivered the Wunusweh lecture at the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre on Jan. 16, 2017.

Commission, and how to return to the original intent of the treaty relationship with the federal government.

Free and open to the public, the McKercher lectures engage a wide range of audiences from both legal and non-legal backgrounds on a multitude of topics.

**Videos of past lectures can be found at [youtube.com/CollegeOfLawUsask](https://www.youtube.com/CollegeOfLawUsask).**

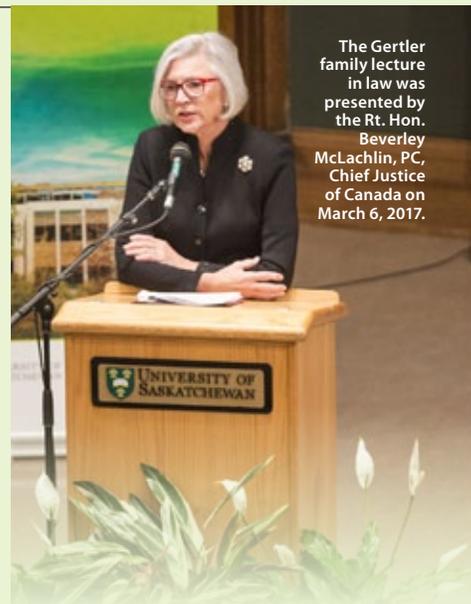


The Hon. Judge Anne Dugas-Horsman, alongside Linda Neilson, spoke on building a new court model for use in family violence cases.

The college welcomed Shannon Salter, Chair of the Civil Resolution Tribunal, for an interactive session to explore the digital side of dispute resolution.



Hollywood screenwriter Justin Winters at the college on Feb. 6, 2017, talked about the representation of lawyers in popular culture and the role of law in storytelling.



The Gertler family lecture in law was presented by the Rt. Hon. Beverley McLachlin, PC, Chief Justice of Canada on March 6, 2017.



# Public, justice, healthcare and library sectors come together for access to justice

On Oct. 16, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice officially proclaimed Saskatchewan's Second Annual Access to Justice Week.

A pop-up presentation on improving access to justice for people with disabilities kicked off the week of events, which brought together law students, those in legal and other diverse professions, and members of the public, to continue discussions on improving access to justice in the province.

The week's activities engaged a wide range of organizations, including the Law Society of Saskatchewan, Pro Bono Students Canada, Saskatchewan Public Libraries, and CLASSIC (Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City), and the variety of events sent a clear message: access to justice is an interdisciplinary topic.

"Access to justice is a hugely diverse issue, and different communities face different barriers," said Brea Lowenberger, director of



A pop-up presentation with Prof. Archie Kaiser kicked off the Second Annual Saskatchewan Access to Justice Week.

CREATE Justice at the College of Law, and Saskatchewan's access to justice coordinator. "It is complex to solve, and for this reason, we must engage a wide range of stakeholders, including the public, and work together to move the conversation toward solutions."

Access to Justice Week highlighted the importance of collaboration, including the developing relationship between healthcare and justice. Partnerships between health and justice organizations are being hailed as a potential solution to alleviate negative health issues caused by legal concerns, and vice versa. A lecture by Michele Leering, executive director of the Community Advocacy and Legal Centre in Belleville, Ont., reflected on the topic.

Leering spoke of justice-health partnerships as a proactive approach in communities to relieve the health disparities caused by legal problems. While these partnerships are common in the United States and Australia, they are just beginning to appear in Canada, but they have huge potential to impact access to justice in Saskatchewan.

The lecture was a continuation of discussions on expanding engagement between justice and health services in Saskatchewan, initiated in March at the College of Law's Dean's

Forum on Access to Justice and Dispute Resolution, which engaged the U of S College of Medicine.

"More research is needed into the potential benefits of health-justice partnerships," explained Lowenberger, "however, we have already engaged provincial health partners in the discussion, so it is an exciting example of the importance and promise of collaboration in solving access to justice issues."

The week also marked the first birthday of the College of Law's CREATE Justice research centre, established in response to calls for increased research and understanding of the barriers people face in accessing Saskatchewan's justice system. CREATE addresses known gaps in research data and develops a clear view of access to justice challenges, and has played a key role in bringing justice partners together to work on solutions.

In response to the recent events, Lowenberger is delighted with the level of engagement. "I am particularly pleased with the interest shown in events aimed at the public," she said. "It is extremely encouraging and I have no doubt that we will build on the input we have received so far, to continue working towards access to justice solutions."



Madam Justice Karakatsanis (far left), Supreme Court of Canada, with members of the Western Canada Moot Team: Ashley Smith (coach); Sarah Loewen; Zachary Carter; Anita Yuk; and Brady Knight.)

# Western Canada Moot team victorious at 2017 Sopinka Cup

This is the third time the team from the College of Law has won the national title in the last seven years, and the fifth time it has placed in the top three in the last seven years. The U of S is now tied for the most Sopinka Cup wins by any school in the history of the competition.

The winning team comprised law students Zachary Carter, Brady Knight, Sarah Loewen and Anita Yuk, with

Ashley Smith serving as coach. In addition to the team accolades, Yuk won best opening address and Carter won best examination in chief.

The Sopinka Cup is a bilingual jury trial moot sponsored by the American College of Trial Lawyers and established to honour the memory of the late Mr. Justice John Sopinka, Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada.

# Home for a half-century

The historic 'old' part of the Law Building celebrates its half-century birthday this year.

The building was officially opened during Canada's centenary year on Sept. 22, 1967.

The opening ceremony was the focus of a two-day gathering, which included guided tours of the building, alumni and class reunions, and panel meetings with respected legal professionals from across Canada.

Notable guests present at the celebrations included U of S Chancellor Chief Justice Edward M. Culliton, who opened the building, Dean Emeritus Walter Cronkite, former Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker, and U of S President John W.T. Spinks.

It was a momentous occasion, with the college finally able to move in to its own building.

Over its almost 50-year history, the college's facilities had changed dramatically, having been located in downtown Saskatoon office buildings in its early years, to accommodate the workday schedules of students who were articling while they studied.



Exterior of the Law building circa. 1967

J. W. T. Spinks, President of the University of Saskatchewan speaking at the official opening of the Law Building.



From there, the college moved on campus to the College Building (now Peter MacKinnon Building), then to Qu'Appelle Hall, and finally to the Murray Memorial Library in the 1950s. Through the decades, and with the growth of the college, deans and faculty complained of inadequate space and library resources. By 1967, student enrolment had grown to 185, so the opening of a building to house the college was a triumph.

Part of the law and commerce complex designed by Holliday-Scott Desmond Paine construction, and taking around two years to build, the Law Building was constructed in a cubist style popular at the U of S during the 1950s to 70s.

The building had interesting features including a cupola on the roof to draw light into the library, in a manner reminiscent of medieval cathedrals, and a moat running around its perimeter (which was later filled in).

On opening, the Law Building included four classrooms, four seminar rooms, a dean's office, administrative space, a student lounge, a library, and offices for graduate students, the student society, and the college's journal, the Bar Review.

A U of S press release from Sept. 22 described the building as 'designed to express structurally the majesty of the law', and 'one of the most striking buildings on campus'. Then dean of the college, Otto Lang, described the library as "the centre and heart of the structure, around which everything else is built."

At the time, the library had stack space for 60,000 books, basement storage capacity for another 30,000 books, and seating for 150 students.

The building welcomed its first occupants in the spring of 1968.

*Information courtesy of University of Saskatchewan, University Archives & Special Collections, A-4267.*

## College hosts Second Annual Commercial Law Symposium

On Sept.30, the college welcomed around 50 alumni, students and legal professionals for the Second Annual Commercial Law Symposium.

The event was organized by a group of professors from the universities of Saskatchewan and Alberta, and coordinated by Distinguished Professor Ron Cuming and Professor Clayton Bangsund of the College of Law. It was the second in a series of annual events designed to facilitate sharing of work and exchange of ideas in the area of commercial law.

The one-day meeting involved a series of paper presentations and discussion on a variety of relevant topics including bankruptcy, sale of goods, secured transactions, insolvency and judgment enforcement.

In addition to Cuming and Bangsund, guest speakers included Roderick J. Wood, Anna Lund, and Tamara Buckwold from the University of Alberta, and Elizabeth Edinger from the University of British Columbia.

The first symposium in the series, held in 2016, was hosted by the College of Law to honour Cuming's 50 years of teaching and scholarship at the University of Saskatchewan. Future symposia will be held annually in the fall, hosted by willing law schools on a rotating basis.

The final form of the papers presented at the 2017 symposium will be published in the Canadian Business Law Journal.

# News-in-brief

**Clayton Bangsund** received the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan Faculty Research Fellowship for 2017-18. The \$10,000 fellowship can be used to both support research and to pay for up to one course teaching release.

Professor Emeritus **Ken Norman** has been appointed to the Panel of Human Rights Experts under the Moscow Mechanism of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), for a five-year renewable term. With 57 participating states in Europe, North America and Asia, the OSCE works for stability, peace and democracy for more than a billion people, through political dialogue about shared values.

**Dwight Newman** has been named as a MacDonald-Laurier Institute (MLI) Munk Senior Fellow in Constitutional Law. The Munk Senior Fellows program brings together the best academic minds in Canada on issues that are vital to the country's security, prosperity and freedom. Newman is a regular contributor to MLI, publishing extensively on Indigenous legal issues. In addition to being a professor at the College of Law, Newman holds the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Rights in Constitutional and International Law.

## Videos highlight faculty research

The college has developed a 'Discover our Research' series of videos, which highlights some of the timely and relevant legal issues College of Law faculty are exploring. There are four videos in the series:

**Community-Engaged Research**  
featuring Prof. Sarah Buhler;

**Natural Resource and Development Contracts**  
featuring Prof. Ibironke Odumosu-Ayanu;

**Mortgage Law Reform in Saskatchewan**  
featuring Distinguished Prof. Ron C.C. Cuming; and

**Simple Framework for Risk Analysis**  
featuring Profs. Heather Heavin and Michaela Keet.



We invite you to watch the videos and learn more about our research at <http://law.usask.ca/research/faculty-research/research-highlights>.

## Larry Chartrand appointed Academic Director of Native Law Centre

As a former graduate of the Native Law Centre (NLC) Program of Legal Studies for Native People, Chartrand's appointment, effective July 1, 2017, renews a significant personal connection with the NLC and the college.

"Professor Chartrand is one of the leading Indigenous law academics in Canada and brings an outstanding record of scholarship and teaching to the NLC," said Dean Martin Phillipson. "I am delighted to welcome Larry back to the NLC and look forward to working with him to help shape the next evolution of the NLC and the College of Law's efforts to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action."

Chartrand is currently on leave from the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa, where he has been a faculty member since 1994, and assumed the role of full professor in 2013.

His research interests include Indigenous law and Constitutional law, particularly Métis rights and Indigenous peoples' laws.

In 2017, Chartrand was awarded the distinguished Law Society Medal of Upper Canada, in recognition of outstanding service in accordance with the highest ideals of the legal profession.



## College names Northern Director for Nunavut Law Program

College of Law alumnus **Stephen Mansell (JD '07)** was appointed to the role of northern director for the Nunavut Law Program effective May 8, 2017.



Stephen Mansell

Mansell has a strong record of leadership within the legal profession in Nunavut, as past president of both the Law Society of Nunavut and the Nunavut Branch of the Canadian Bar Association. Outside the legal realm he has a strong record of public service in Iqaluit, including serving as a city councillor and chair of the Iqaluit Public Safety and Finance committees. Mansell spent much of his childhood in Nunavut having attended

elementary and high school in Iqaluit.

As an alumnus, Mansell is familiar with the college's approach to legal education, and he brings significant experience in legal and government issues in Nunavut and Canada's north.

Prior to his appointment, Mansell was director of the Policy and Planning Division with the Government of Nunavut Department of Justice. He has served in many legal and policy roles within the Department of Justice since joining the government in 2009, and previously practiced law in Yellowknife.

## Professor MacLean joins faculty

Assistant Professor Jason MacLean joined the College of Law on July 1, 2017. Prior to joining the college's faculty, MacLean was an assistant professor at the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law at Lakehead University.

MacLean began his legal career as a corporate and commercial litigator with the Wall Street firm Shearman & Sterling LLP in New York, and later joined the Bay Street firm Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP in Toronto.

As a practicing lawyer, he has appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice,



and the Supreme Court of the State of New York, among other courts and administrative tribunals. He is called to the Bar in Ontario and the State of New York.

Primarily focused on interdisciplinary approaches to Canadian climate change and sustainability law and policy, MacLean's research has been published in a number of leading academic journals, including the *McGill Law Journal*, *Dalhousie Law Journal*, *Journal of Environmental Law and Practice*, and *Canadian Business Law Journal*, among others.

## Professors Heavin and Keet develop risk assessment methodology for lawyers

The tool, called 'a simple framework for risk analysis', allows lawyers to communicate a comprehensive risk analysis to clients and give a clear indication of the risks associated with a particular legal course of action.

"In today's justice climate, where the costs of getting to a trial are higher now than ever, it is even more important for lawyers to be open – and precise – about the risks in a legal action," said Keet.

In consulting with practitioners, Heavin and Keet found that the complexity of risk analysis was a deterrent for many lawyers, and for this reason, they decided to develop a more accessible approach.

The tool aims to make lawyers more efficient in their work, so they can easily identify the strengths and weaknesses in their case, evaluate and prepare settlement proposals, and concentrate their efforts while negotiating and managing litigation steps.

"We believe our simple framework for risk analysis provides a transparent way to communicate risk and valuation to the client," said Heavin. "It makes them part of the decision-making process, and gives them the information they need to be able to make good decisions about how time and resources should best be spent within the litigation framework."

The research has been of direct benefit to College of Law students, as the tool has been used in negotiation courses. With negotiation increasingly at the centre of a lawyer's work, the ability to perform risk analysis equips students to be better negotiators in the profession.

Learn more about Heavin and Keet's work in the **Discover our Research** video series.



Heavin



Keet

FEATURE:

# Palbinder Kaur Shergill:

## Her inspirational journey to British Columbia's Supreme Court

By Cat Bonner

**Returning to the College of Law, and Saskatoon, for the first time in 12 years, Justice Palbinder Kaur Shergill marvelled at how much has changed.**

Back on campus to co-deliver the Saskatchewan Law Review lecture, the class of 1990 graduate joked about how she barely recognized the college as she posed for photos in the Law Society of Saskatchewan wing, opened in 2008.

Fresh from her June 2017 appointment to the British Columbia Supreme Court in New Westminster, Shergill's visit was a chance to reflect on how much things had changed since her student days.

Her call to serve as a Supreme Court justice signalled the first for a turbaned Sikh judge in Canada, an achievement which was widely celebrated by the Sikh community in both India, where she was born, and Canada, which she has called home since the age of four.

Raised in Williams Lake, BC, by parents with a strong social conscience, Shergill was taught to advocate for those in need from an early age, and her decision to study law seemed like a natural path.

"My mother, who had never gone to school herself, was committed to seeing her daughters get a good education," she said. "I think my parents were just relieved that I had found a positive outlet for my 'debating' skills, which had gotten me into trouble more than a few times!"

In September 1987, Palbinder Kaur Sandhu took her place at the College of Law. An interest in international studies and a recommendation from her UBC honours professor had drawn her to the college.

Cover and article photo by David Stobbe  
Official headshot by Roger Mahler



Despite troubles adjusting to the ‘shockingly cold’ Saskatchewan winter, a challenge for any BC native, Shergill recalled the warm welcome from the college’s students, professors and staff.

With a first-year class just over 100 strong, the intimate atmosphere of the small college soon made her feel at home. She and her classmates bonded over favourite courses and professors.

“Professor Howard McConnell was a favourite for all the students,” she said. “We were also fortunate to have Professor An-Na’im as the Sallows Chair in Human Rights. His courses on international human rights law were very enlightening and popular.”

The Saskatchewan charm peaked in her final year at the college, when she finally saw the northern lights. “They were even more magnificent than I had imagined,” she said.

Graduating from the college in 1990, Shergill returned to her home province, and was called to the BC Bar in 1991.

During law school, Shergill had developed a passion for academia. With a love of writing and teaching, she aspired to pursue a graduate degree in law and become a professor.

However, her first job practicing law brought a dramatic change of heart. “Early in my career, I was fortunate to be surrounded by some of the best lawyers in BC,” she said. “Through them, I learned to love the practice of law, and quickly lost any desire to go back to school to teach.”

With her career in its infancy during the early nineties, Shergill faced both opportunity and challenge at a time when the number of practicing female lawyers, and those from visibly different cultural backgrounds, was still growing.

“I was fortunate to arrive on the cusp of change,” she said. “Law firms were increasingly moving towards greater inclusivity, so I never had difficulty finding work.”

Reflecting on her time as a criminal defence lawyer, Shergill said her clients never cared that she was a woman – they were always grateful to have someone in their corner. However, convincing corporate clients to take on a female lawyer was altogether different.

“The corporate culture had a harder time keeping up with changing times,” she said.

“Because of this, on more than one occasion, I had to prove myself before business clients would agree to having a woman represent them.”

As female lawyers became more prevalent, attitudes changed, and gender became less of a concern. Shergill’s professional challenges shifted to personal ones, and how to balance a busy legal career with parenthood.

“Being a full-time lawyer, mother of three, and running my own firm, meant that I had to learn to juggle work and family life,” she said. “I may not have always got it right, but fortunately, I have been able to lean heavily on my husband, who has been more than an equal partner in raising our children.”

Challenges notwithstanding, Shergill’s journey from law student to Supreme Court justice has been an impressive one.

A dedicated human rights lawyer renowned for her pro bono work with the World Sikh Organization of Canada, Shergill has played a pivotal role in shaping Canadian human rights and religious accommodations law. Prior to her Supreme Court appointment, she was a lawyer and mediator with the firm she founded, Shergill and Company, in Surrey, BC. In 2002, she received the Queen’s Jubilee Medal for Community Service, and she was appointed Queen’s Counsel in 2012.

With her appointment as the first turbaned Sikh Supreme Court judge in Canada hailed as a victory for diversity, Shergill is quick to point out that while her cultural background and personal experiences have shaped her identity, in her role as a judge, she has a duty to remain impartial.

“As judges, we are required to make our decisions based on the evidence and the issues before us,” she said. “While I may bring some unique perspectives and experiences, as do others, I am ultimately required to do what every judge in a trial does – listen carefully to the evidence before me, and then make my ruling based on the evidence and the applicable law.”

Shergill’s Oct. 3 lecture reflected on the role of diversity in Canadian law, including the importance of striking a balance between a more representative bench, and ensuring an independent and impartial judiciary.

Diversity is no longer a big-city issue in Canada – it has reached smaller, rural

**“ I think my parents were just relieved that I had found a positive outlet for my ‘debating’ skills, which had gotten me into trouble more than a few times!”**



communities, where people from all types of background are living together. And according to Shergill, Canada is fortunate to have a justice system that has evolved with its society.

“Diversity in its many forms has long been recognized as part of the fabric of this country,” she said. “Canadians have recognized the need for our institutions to reflect a broader spectrum of our communities. This is healthy, and important for all of our institutions.”

Her Supreme Court appointment serves as an inspiration to many in her community and beyond, but Shergill remains humbled by the warm and supportive response to her new role.

And her advice to the law students who sit where she once sat? Pursue what you love, rather than what is marketable. “If you enjoy it, you will do well at it,” she said.

# Catching up

**We are always happy to see our alumni re-connect!**

We welcomed the class of 1987 and the class of 1992 to the college for class reunions over the summer, and we hosted alumni receptions in Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver in the spring (see page 13 for upcoming reception dates!).

If you're planning a reunion, please get in touch – we can help arrange tours of the college facilities, organize meeting space, and connect you with our dean.



The class of 1992



Class of 1987



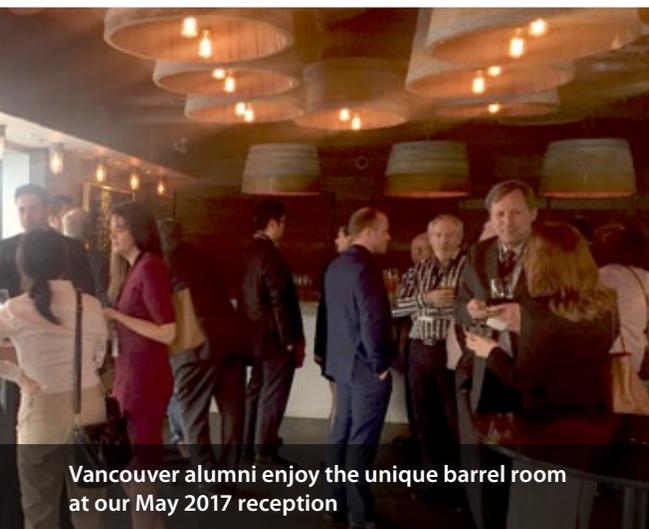
Ron Franklin (JD '10) wins the coveted Riders jersey at the Calgary reception



Toronto alumni reception, March 2017



Dean Phillipson addresses alumni at the Toronto reception



Vancouver alumni enjoy the unique barrel room at our May 2017 reception



Class of 2016 alumni enjoy the Calgary reception



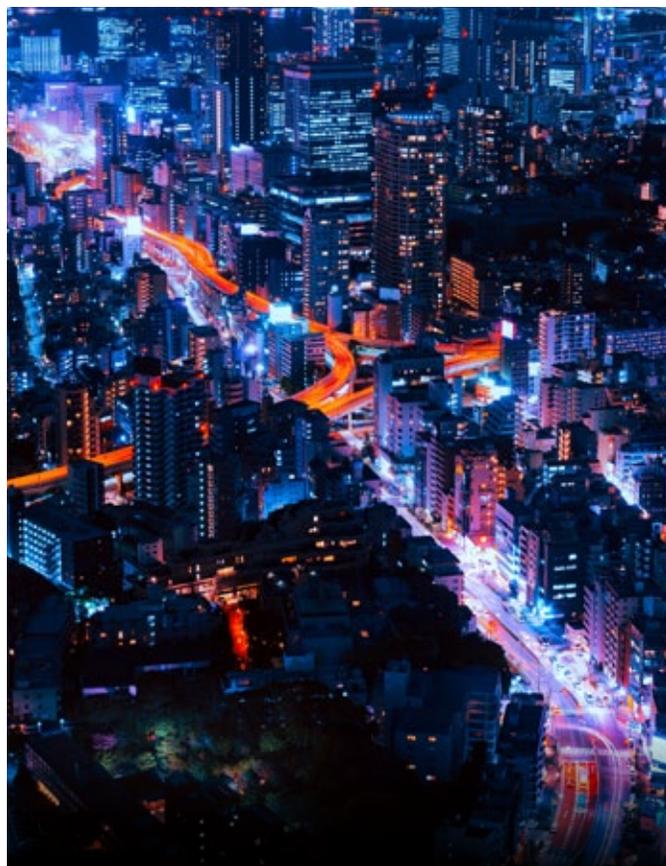
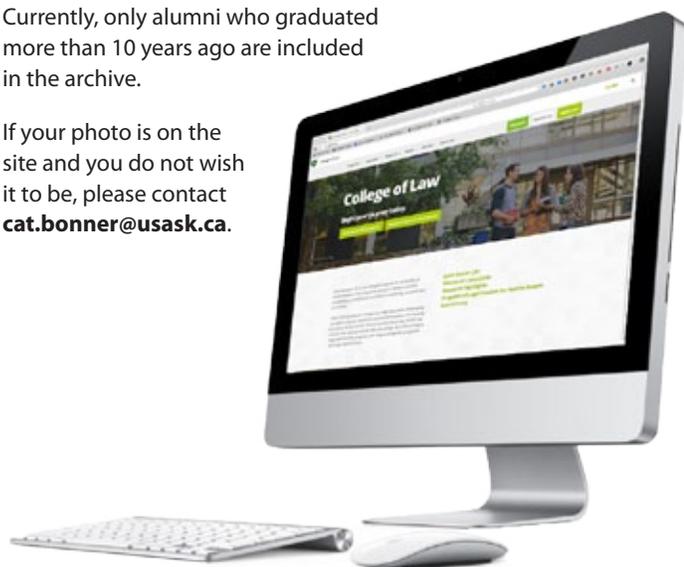
# Find your grad photo on our website

Throwback to your College of Law days by visiting <https://app.oglen.ca/usasklaw/> to find your individual and class graduation photo!

Our digital archive allows you to search for photos by year, program, initials and last name, or browse through photos by graduating year.

Currently, only alumni who graduated more than 10 years ago are included in the archive.

If your photo is on the site and you do not wish it to be, please contact [cat.bonner@usask.ca](mailto:cat.bonner@usask.ca).



## Save the date

Join us at one of our upcoming alumni events!

Calgary – Feb 28, 2018

Toronto – Apr 19, 2018

Venues to be determined – watch your inbox or visit [law.usask.ca](http://law.usask.ca) for more details!

## In Memoriam

It is with sorrow that we note the passing of the following College of Law alumni:

**Justine J. Batten** (LLB '80)  
d. March 5, 2017

**William Z. Brown** (BA '53, LLB '56)  
d. June 9, 2017

**Barbara J. Cram** (BA '73, LLB '79)  
d. April 10, 2017

**Bruce A. Gordon** (BA '96, JD '16)  
d. Sept. 29, 2017

**Patrick C. Hengen** (JD '65)  
d. Aug. 23, 2017

**Eugene A. Lewchuk** (BA '55, LLB '57)  
d. May 11, 2017

**Leonard H. Legault** (BA '57, LLB '59)  
d. March 17, 2017

**Edward Plasta** (BA '57, LLB '59)  
d. Aug. 1, 2017

**Niall G (Garrett) Wilson** (BA '53, LLB '54)  
d. Aug. 15, 2017



## Alumni Notes

**Anthony (Tony) Gerein (BA '86, LLB '89)** was appointed Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Prosecutions in the SK Ministry of Justice on March 13, 2017. Tony also received the Queen's Counsel designation on May 17, 2017.

**Lorna Hargreaves (BA '82, LLB '85)** was appointed chief coroner of Saskatchewan on Tuesday, Aug 1, 2017.

On July 12, 2017, **Robin Fowler (JD '99)** was appointed a Provincial Court Judge in Grand Falls-Winsor, Newfoundland and Labrador.

On July 1, 2017 **Benjamin Kormos (JD '08)** was elected President of the Rotary Club of Calgary West. In this role, he is a leader of fellow Rotarians undertaking numerous local and international projects and initiatives to make a difference in the world.

**Lian M. Schwann (LLB '80)** was announced as a judge of the Court of Appeal for Saskatchewan on Aug 17, 2017.

**Michele Hollins (LLB '92)** was appointed to the Court of Queen's Bench in Alberta in March 2017.

**Palbinder Kaur Shergill (LLB '90)** was appointed to the Supreme Court of British Columbia, New Westminster, on June 23, 2017.

**Richard (Rick) McHardy (BComm '90, LLB '93)** was named Oilman of the Year in the Saskatchewan Oil Patch Hall of Fame. The Saskatchewan Oilman of the Year recognizes an individual or team currently working in the Saskatchewan oil and gas sector and making a significant contribution to the growth and success of the industry in the province.

**Scott Bell (BA '87, LLB '91)** and **David Piche (BA '09, JD '15)** were recognized by MD Ambulance at the 2017 Badge, Shield and Star Dinner for saving the life of woman who had gone into cardiac arrest.

On June 5, 2017, **Sylvia Domaradzki (CBA '94, LLB '02)** was appointed a Crown Attorney in the Special Prosecutions section of the Government of Nova Scotia Public Prosecution Service.

**Chika Onwuekwe (LLM '02, PhD '04)** was appointed Vice-President of Legal Counsel for Trican Well Service in March 2017.

On June 1, 2017, **Philip Bondzi-Simpson (LLM '87)** was inducted as rector of the Governing Council of the Ghana Institute of Management.

On Sept. 7, **Brent Clark (LLB '99)** was named a partner at Fasken Martineau LLP.

**Bronwyn Eyre (BA '93, LLB '96)** was appointed Government of Saskatchewan Minister of Education on Aug 30, 2017.

**Donald Morgan (LLB '78)** was appointed Government of Saskatchewan Minister of Justice and Attorney General on Aug 30, 2017.

**Daniel Price (LLB '01)** was appointed head coach of the Victoria Royals ice hockey team in June 2017.

The law office of **Cameron Kemp (LLB '03)** received the 2017 Business Ethics Award from the Better Business Bureau, presented annually by the Medicine Hat and District Chamber of Commerce.

**Doug Surtees (LLB '87)** was re-appointed to a five-year term as Associate Dean, Academic, for the University of Saskatchewan College of Law, effective July 1, 2017.

On Oct 20, 2017, **Vikas Khaladkar (BA '72, LLB '76)** was appointed a judge of the Trial Division of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador in St. John's.

In June 2017, **Michelle Baldwin (LLB '06)** was appointed a Saskatchewan Provincial Court Judge in Meadow Lake.

*Submissions: Send your news for our Alumni Notes column to law\_ofnote@usask.ca.*

## Law alumni profiled in U of S Nation Builder list

Canada's 150th birthday was an opportunity to reflect on the significant role individuals from Saskatchewan have played on the national stage and beyond, in championing human rights and social justice, and their contributions to building a nation.



### Tom Molloy (LLB'64)

Over the past three decades, Molloy has played a leading role in concluding several key treaty settlements that changed the face of the country.

### William Deverell (JD'63)

Deverell is founder of the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, which has played a prominent role in fighting for human rights and against censorship since its formation in 1962.

### Ken Norman (LLB'65)

Norman served as the first chief commissioner of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission from 1979 to 1983 and was the principal author of the 1979 Saskatchewan Human Rights Code.

### Raynell Andreychuk (LLB'67)

Andreychuk is the first woman from Saskatchewan to be appointed to the Senate, and is an ardent promoter of human rights nationally and internationally.

### Ralph Goodale (LLB'72)

Goodale's nine years as an MP heading up numerous portfolios have contributed significantly to building Canada. His achievements in the areas of human rights and social justice include expediting the compensation process for residential school survivors.

### David Arnot (JD'75)

Arnot served for a decade as Saskatchewan's treaty commissioner, and was named chief commissioner of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission in 2009.

Read more about these individuals and their role in creating, promoting, and defending the laws that safeguard the fundamental rights of Canadians at <http://canada150.usask.ca/nation-builder/index.php>

### Many College of Law alumni were recognized in the U of S Nation Builder list:

#### John Diefenbaker (LLB'19)

As Prime Minister, Diefenbaker introduced Canada's first federal Bill of Rights in 1960 and amended Canada's Elections Act to extend the franchise to Indigenous peoples.

#### Emmett Hall (LLB'19)

Hall is widely recognized as the father of Canada's medicare system.

#### Ted Hughes (LLB'50)

Hughes is well-known for his hard work and achievements as chief adjudicator in the Indian residential school settlement claims.

#### Ellen Schmeiser (LLB'57)

Schmeiser's recommendations as a special advisor to the Saskatchewan Attorney General's Department led to the 1980 Matrimonial Property Act, a law which transformed the legal principles of property ownership in the context of marriage.

#### Walter Tarnopolsky (LLB'57)

A pioneer in Canadian human rights law, Tarnopolsky gained a national reputation for his advocacy and as a champion of civil liberties.

#### Roy Romanow (LLB'64)

Current U of S Chancellor and former Saskatchewan Premier Romanow drew national attention to the value of public health care in 2001-02 as head of the Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada.

# The Mighty Hughes Returns



Ted Hughes and *The Mighty Hughes* author Craig McInnes sign copies of the book at the event

By Lindsay Royale

As the leading institution in Canada for building reconciliation, it was a natural fit for the University of Saskatchewan to host one of Canada’s foremost advocates in the court systems concerning colonization.

Alumni of Influence Ted Hughes (BA’48; LLB’50) and author Craig McInnes visited the College of Law for a book signing and public talk as part of the U of S Canada 150 Book Series. The biography, *The Mighty Hughes: From Prairie Lawyer to Western Canada’s Moral Compass*, details the life and career of Hughes, and as the title implies, there is no space for mediocrity between its pages.

Hughes’ career has spanned an impressive 60 years in the Canadian judicial system. As a respected senior judge in Saskatchewan, and as deputy attorney general and conflict of interest commissioner for British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, Hughes earned a reputation as someone who would deliver the right resolution. Noted for defending

principles that underpin the best of our society, his career carried the weight of mending unethical politicians; advocating for children in care; defending equal rights for women in the legal system; and drawing attention to what Hughes believed were the disastrous effects of colonization on Indigenous peoples.

When asked about the grandiosity of the title—of his life—his response is, unsurprisingly, fair. “I never felt any pressure with the moral compass designation because I’ve always enjoyed my work,” he says. “Any judge that has the ability to take away the freedom of his fellow citizens understands that that is a pretty onerous piece of responsibility that no judge takes lightly.”

*Mighty Hughes* touches on a moment of great impact for the legal legend—a day in court that redefined his understanding of the legal system.

Hughes was presiding over a murder case where the defendant was taking the stand in his own defence. It was apparent, Hughes recalls, that the defendant was very frustrated with the process.

“I asked him if he would like to voice what was bothering him,” he explained. Hughes said the man’s words hit him hard as he explained that within his own culture, the offence he was accused of would not have been dealt with in the same manner as in the “white man’s court.”

“It made me realize what a difference it had made in the lives of these people to have the European system thrust upon them by the settlers as they had arrived. I came home that day and told Helen (Hughes’ wife) about this experience, and that she should get involved and see what could be done to ease the road for the Aboriginal community who had their culture taken away from them,” Hughes explained. “Of all my time in the court room, 18 years, that was the day that stands out in my mind that I had to rethink my whole objectivity on that issue.”

The case also served as the catalyst for his wife, Helen Hughes (BSHEC’54), to go into politics and for the couple to become advocates for Indigenous matters. Helen went on to join City Council and the two worked together in their respective areas of influence to create change and raise awareness of the effects of colonialism in the community. Hughes believes progress is being made, but that there are still improvements needed to help the Indigenous community, particularly when navigating the judicial system.

“Lots of good is going on in universities and education, but our prisons are disproportionality represented and the number of children taken into care from Aboriginal families has not moved since the ‘60s,” Hughes said. “There are some wonderful long-term things taking place but I’m concerned for the short term and the suffering that is going on for Aboriginal peoples.”

Now in their late 80s and early 90s respectively, Helen and Ted are still advocating for change in their communities and encourage students in higher education

to consider how their influence in the world can enact change. “Educate yourself. Become qualified in some way. I could have never done what I had done without getting that paper from the university. Stick with it—it’s worth it at the end of the road,” he said.

Proceeds from *Mighty Hughes* are being donated to the *Ted and Helen Hughes Prize for Excellence scholarship fund*, which was established to recognize and reward a Juris Doctor

or Masters of Law student for their work concerning Indigenous children or youth and the law.



Ted and Helen Hughes

If you are interested in contributing to the Hughes scholarship, please contact Megan Cantwell, Major Gifts Officer, at [megan.cantwell@usask.ca](mailto:megan.cantwell@usask.ca).

# Law student Siera Bearchell: Committed to helping others



**By Cat Bonner**

As a pageant queen and lawyer-in-training, Siera Bearchell is using her voice to advocate for those who are not always heard.

To Bearchell, participating in beauty pageants has always been more about a platform for positive speech than the stereotypical glitz, glam, and fake tan.

The first Métis woman to be crowned Miss Universe Canada in 2016, Bearchell has used her pageant success to champion the rights of women and Indigenous peoples through public speaking.

Losing her family home to fire at age 16, spurred a young Bearchell's passion for advocacy.

"I could have gone down a path of self-pity," she explained. "Instead, I used it as an opportunity to reach out to people."

She began volunteering with the Canadian Red Cross, choosing to share her own devastating life experience to help others overcome theirs. Shortly after, and wishing to further spread her positive message, she came across the Miss Teen Saskatchewan pageant.

"I didn't enter the pageant for the typical reasons. There was a glamorous side to it for sure, but for me, it was more a way to see if I could raise my voice a little bit," she said.

Proudly Saskatchewanian, hailing from Moose Jaw, Bearchell has never let being from a small community stand in the way of chasing big dreams.

"I've always had that pride that you can be from somewhere small, and still do great things," said Bearchell.

And winning pageants, including her victory at the 2016 Miss Universe Canada, has given her a golden opportunity to reach out to vulnerable groups on a global scale. A passionate advocate for women and Indigenous youth, two groups that are close to her heart, Bearchell has done a lot of public speaking to high school-aged young women, and has been a keynote speaker at the youth-focused WE day in Saskatoon.

En route to her crown, Bearchell dealt with her fair share of criticism.

Answering her critics, she said, "There is beauty beyond size. There is beauty beyond looking a particular way. It's time to realize that true beauty, self-worth and validation start from within."

It is this type of message that Bearchell is keen to impart—for women to free themselves of the stigma that they can't achieve the things they want to, because of what they are, or are not.

"Women need to empower women, and that is the greatest challenge we face," she said "As women, we can be hard on ourselves, and on others. We are consumed by criticism, and we need to overcome this, to be kinder to ourselves."

For all the opportunity and world travel her Miss Universe Canada title has afforded her, Bearchell is ecstatic to be back home in Saskatchewan and returning to school full-time.

When asked why she pursued law, Bearchell explained that it seemed like a natural next step in her advocacy journey.

"When you're in law, whether you're a practicing lawyer or not, you're an advocate for others," she said.

Set to graduate from the College of Law in spring 2018, Bearchell's commitment to reconciliation, and improving access to justice for Indigenous peoples, has focused her study on Indigenous law.

"I noticed in my travels across Canada, that there is still a sense of ignorance for Indigenous issues," she said. "I would like to see more education, particularly in high schools, drawing attention to and understanding the First Peoples of Canada. The issues Indigenous peoples face should not be ignored."

Bearchell was recently named a U of S Canada 150 Citizen in recognition of the significant impact her volunteer work and public speaking has had in promoting a culture of inclusivity and diversity on campus and across the country.

"It's wonderful to think that my actions and messages have had a positive impact on people," she said of the honour. "It shows that one person can make a difference in the lives of others, and it encourages me to keep doing what I'm doing."

## Spring 2017 Convocation

On June 7, 121 students graduated from the College of Law at the U of S Convocation ceremony. Included in the graduates was Jasmine Lothian, who left the college as the most distinguished graduate of her class, which earned her a gold medal award and the Honourable Donald Alexander McNiven Prize in Law.

# Students negotiate their way to victory

Third-year students Christina Judge and Jacey Safnuk claimed first place in the College of Law's 2017 negotiation competition on Oct 27.

Reflecting on their victory, Judge and Safnuk said it was an honour to win the competition, and a definite highlight of their law school careers.

The greatest benefit of the experience for the pair was the opportunity to engage in negotiation without risk to a client, and get real-world experience that can't be replicated in a classroom.

Judge and Safnuk's team was one of 20 that took part in the competition, sponsored by Dentons and Cameco, which saw students tackle a plausible legal scenario for a taste of what they would be expected to do as business lawyers.

Joining Judge and Safnuk on the victors list were Antonela Cicko and Kaylee Mitchell, who placed second, Mason Scott and Landon Squires, who were third, and fourth place went to Lindsey Knibbs and Cheryl Giesbrecht.

On the night, teams of two students were paired off, and given opposing clients in a business partnership agreement. They were asked to negotiate the terms of the agreement, with the simple objective of obtaining the best possible result for the people they were representing.

A panel of three judges\* assessed the teams' performances against seven criteria; preparedness for the negotiation, ability to adapt



The four winning teams with Liam Mooney of Cameco (far right) and Gord Tarnowsky of Dentons LLP, Calgary (far left)

strategy during the negotiation, how well the outcome served the client, how well the team worked together, relationship with the opposing team, and, following the negotiation, the team's self-assessment of its own performance. The winning team's negotiation had the best combination of all these criteria.

"This competition was a unique chance for students to get feedback on their negotiation performance from experienced, successful lawyers," explained College of Law Prof. Michaela Keet, who coordinated the competition. "We were fortunate to have as judges a great mix of lawyers working in the corporate sector and in private practice, some with over 30 years of experience, who shared their perspectives with our teams."

Law school students from across the country have been competing in similar competitions, which will culminate in national finals sponsored by Dentons and Cameco, at the College of Law on March 2 and 3, 2018.

Cicko and Mitchell will join Judge and Safnuk as the two Usask Law teams competing against winners from fellow law schools when the college hosts the finals next year.

\* The panel of judges was as follows:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>George Antonopoulos</b> ,<br>Dentons LLP             | <b>Rob McKinnon</b> ,<br>Federated Co-op                               | <b>Arjun Shankar</b> ,<br>Bergerman<br>Smith LLP    |
| <b>Jamie Dickson</b> ,<br>Des Nedhe<br>Development      | <b>Liam Mooney</b> ,<br>Cameco   | <b>Gord Tarnowsky</b> ,<br>Dentons LLP              |
| <b>Joe Fingerote</b> ,<br>TKB Law                       | <b>Serena Palmer</b> ,<br>AREVA  | <b>Patrick Trumpy</b> ,<br>Pembina<br>Pipeline Corp |
| <b>Kathryn Ford</b> ,<br>retired lawyer<br>and mediator | <b>Charmain Panko</b> ,<br>Panko<br>collaborative law<br>and mediation | <b>Grace Waschuk</b> ,<br>Dentons LLP               |
| <b>Cameron Klein</b> ,<br>WMCZ Lawyers                  | <b>Bernie Roth</b> ,<br>Dentons LLP                                    | <b>Clint Weiland</b> ,<br>PotashCorp                |

## LAW STUDENT RECEIVES ABORIGINAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Leon Thompson received the award for his leadership at a special ceremony during U of S Aboriginal Achievement Week.

A third-year nehiyaw law student and president of the college's Indigenous Law Students Association (ILSA) at the time of receiving his award, Thompson was the first Indigenous University of Saskatchewan Students' Union executive member in its 101-year history.

Born and educated on the Prairies, Thompson strives to blend Indigenous and non-Indigenous theory and topics in the broader Canadian context while learning about contemporary Canadian, digital, and international Indigenous issues. He follows a First Nations worldview and Seventh Generation teachings.

A compelling and vocal advocate for ILSA, Thompson has worked hard on administrative matters ensuring his successors inherit a strong and vibrant organization.

Thompson graduated from the college in June 2017.



Thompson and his award



Spring 2017 grad Jasmine Lothian

## Q and A with students of the Program of Legal Studies for Native People (PLSNP)

The PLSNP is an eight-week summer course offered through the University of Saskatchewan's Native Law Centre that provides Aboriginal students from across Canada an opportunity to study first-year Property Law before beginning law school in the fall. Many students take this course as a condition of their acceptance to law school.

### RHEANA WORME

**HOMETOWN/TERRITORY/RESERVE:** Hometown, Saskatoon; Territory, Treaty 6 and Treaty 4; Reserve is both Kawacatoose First Nation and Poundmaker Cree Nation.

**AGE:** 30 years young

**TALK ABOUT YOUR PREVIOUS EDUCATION OR CAREERS:**

Before coming to law school I was at Edwards School of Business where I received a Bachelor of Commerce with a major in marketing.

Before that I was in the Aboriginal Business Administration Certificate Program.

**WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO STUDY LAW? I**

decided to study law when I was in my second last year of my commerce degree. Both of my parents are lawyers and they supported me throughout all my education but were especially supportive when I decided to pursue a legal education.

**WHO ARE YOUR ROLE MODELS? My parents. My dad**

graduated from U of S Law school in 1985 and my mom graduated in 1995. They have introduced me to so many inspiring Indigenous legal minds but my parents still take the cake for raising five kids together while obtaining law degrees and running a successful practice together.

**WHERE DO YOU PLAN TO ATTEND LAW SCHOOL? WHY? I am attending the U of S Law school. I'm attending University of Saskatchewan because this is my home territory. My whole support network is here!**

**WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE ONCE YOU HAVE A LAW DEGREE? I hope to utilize my undergraduate degree in commerce somehow. Whether that means going into business consultations or politics I'm not entirely sure yet.**

**WHAT HAS BEEN THE BEST PART ABOUT YOUR PLSNP EXPERIENCE? The other students and teaching staff. We could not have had better Teacher Assistants and I've made life-long friends.**

**WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF THE PLSNP PROGRAM? Figuring out how you learn best is the biggest challenge, especially when it comes to new material and the gruelling schedule the program demands to succeed, but it's so worth it!**

**ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD:**

I'm so grateful that this program is still continuing. My parents went through this program in 1981 and 1991 respectively, and if it wasn't for this program I don't think either of them would be as successful as they were in law school. The fact that this program is still here to change my life as well is so amazing. I'm so happy to have been a part of it.



### CONNOR STANDING READY

**HOMETOWN/TERRITORY/RESERVE:** White Bear First Nation, Saskatchewan. Treaty 4 territory.

**AGE:** 24

**PREVIOUS EDUCATION & CAREER:** I have a Bachelor of Arts from the First Nations University of Canada and the University of Regina. I have a major in Political Science and minors in Indigenous Studies and English. I graduated in the spring of 2016 with distinction and as the valedictorian for the First Nations University of Canada. After graduation, I worked for Regina Treaty Status Indian Services for one year as an Administrative Assistant.

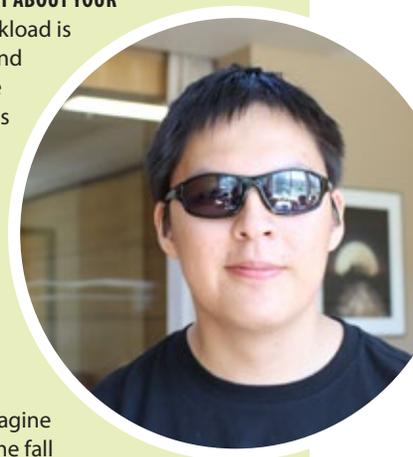
**WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO STUDY LAW? When I was in high school, I received a 98 in Law 30. Back then, I had no desire to study law. Throughout my undergraduate studies, however, the idea of law school became more and more appealing to me. With the support of my parents and family, I came to the conclusion that it was the logical career path for me to follow.**

**WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE ONCE YOU HAVE A LAW DEGREE? As an Aboriginal person with a visual disability, I hope to become an advocate for Aboriginal and human rights.**

**WHAT HAS BEEN THE BEST PART ABOUT YOUR PLSNP EXPERIENCE? The workload is**

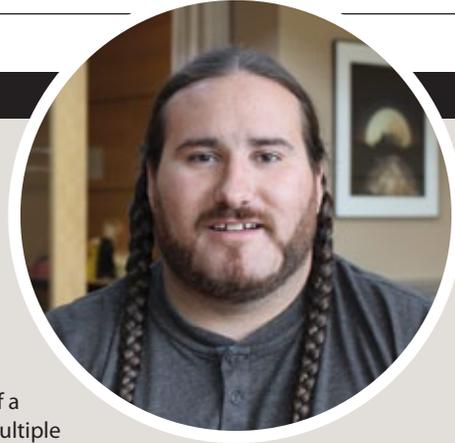
very challenging for me and I love challenges. I believe hard work definitely builds character. It's also an honour to spend this time with the future Aboriginal lawyers of Canada as well.

**ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD? I am just so grateful that I have this opportunity to pursue a legal education. I can't imagine beginning law school in the fall without the skills and knowledge I've gained since the beginning of the program.**





## TYLER GERVAIS



### HOMETOWN/TERRITORY/RESERVE:

I was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan. However, my Métis homeland is northern Saskatchewan, specifically Green Lake and Meadow Lake area.

**AGE:** I am 32 years old.

### TALK ABOUT YOUR PREVIOUS EDUCATION OR CAREERS:

I have been employed at Casino Regina as a dealer since 2006. For many of those years I was an acting supervisor and union departmental VP, which helped me develop leadership and public relation skills. I started my undergrad in education in 2012 as a part-time student at the University of Regina, later transferring to the First Nations University of Canada, where I recently graduated with my Bachelors of Indigenous Education Degree.

### WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO STUDY LAW?

At the age of 12, I began to watch legal documentaries with my mother and I always found them quite interesting; specifically the segments that displayed the lawyers negotiating behind the scenes. More recently, I attended a national political convention where I actively participated in governance and policy workshops. I soon discovered through my many conversations with Members of Parliament and governmental ministers that if I wanted to be an agent of change in my Métis community, that the field of law was an excellent vehicle for this. It was also during this time that the Daniels Decision was finalized, creating unique opportunities for the Métis people of Canada to redefine their place in Canadian history and ensure that their rights are entrenched within Canadian Constitution.

### WHO ARE YOUR ROLE MODELS?

Growing up as an only child of a single mother, who worked multiple jobs while completing her Bachelors of Education degree from the U of R, I was inspired by her perseverance, dedication, and determination. My oldest cousin also became one of my most powerful role models. He struggled his whole life with Cerebral Palsy, but as he set goals for himself he never allowed anything to get in the way of achieving them, which led him to complete a bachelor's degree in Computer Science.

### WHERE DO YOU PLAN TO ATTEND LAW SCHOOL?

**WHY?** I have chosen to attend the U of S College of Law first and foremost because it is close to home for me, and I am aware that a strong support network will be necessary to be successful. I also chose the U of S based on information and testimonials that I read during my research of law colleges, as my desire is to study Indigenous law.

### WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE ONCE YOU HAVE A LAW DEGREE?:

I plan on working within my Métis community. There are several areas that I would like to focus on; I am eager to help my fellow Indigenous community members weave their way through a justice system that often does not understand nor care to understand our community history or the needs of our people.

### WHAT HAS BEEN THE BEST PART ABOUT YOUR PLSNP EXPERIENCE?

One of the best and most challenging parts is the course content. Although I am coming into the program with an undergraduate degree in Education, any formal education that I have experienced so far has not been as challenging nor as rewarding as this course.

### WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF THE PLSNP PROGRAM?

Moving away from friends and family back home and being here alone; learning content and curriculum that you are so far removed from right down to the navigation of the city and campus adds a factor of difficulty to your daily existence. However, the difficulty level and high expectations makes this program the most challenging event of my life. The PLSNP has humbled and inspired me to keep challenging myself as an Indigenous man and mentor to our youth.

## LLM News

**Christina Abbott** successfully defended her thesis *Street Checks and Canadian Youth: A Critical Legal Analysis* on September 8, 2017. Supervisor: Sarah Buhler.

**Antwi Frimpong** successfully defended his thesis *Using Technology for Access to Justice in Ghana and Canada: Examining the Digital Divide* on August 24, 2017. Supervisor: Sarah Buhler.

**Molla Abey** successfully defended his thesis *Anomaly of Existing Intellectual Property Protection for Software* on May 26, 2017. Supervisor: Martin Phillipson.

**Clayton Miller** successfully defended his thesis entitled *Judicial Mediation in British Columbia: Moving Towards a More Effective Process* on March 16, 2017. Supervisor: Beth Bilson.



“I want to give back to my community to help First Nations people. I want to help people in any way I can.”

## THE GIFT OF SUPPORT THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES

By Jessica Elfar

For Kellie Wuttunee, family is everything. The University of Saskatchewan graduate credits the support of both her immediate and extended families for being able to achieve her challenging educational goals while also balancing the demands of being a single parent. She’s raising three children under the age of 13, all while obtaining two degrees—her master’s in social work from Wilfrid Laurier University in 2012, and now a law degree from the U of S.

“The biggest challenge has been learning to manage my time and energy well,” Wuttunee said of the long road she’s travelled to get to her 2017 convocation. “There were some really tough times. My family, friends, culture and spirituality helped me and got me through it.”

Growing up an hour west of Saskatoon, on Red Pheasant First Nation, the Nêhiyawak Cree woman said she couldn’t imagine pursuing her law degree anywhere but the University of Saskatchewan. “This is home for me—I wanted to be close to my family,” she noted. “My children have been by my side the entire process of obtaining my higher education.”

Wuttunee was also attracted to the Program of Legal Studies for Native People at the U of S. “It’s a one-of-a-kind program in Canada, and I was so grateful to be selected,” she said.

The pre-law course provided her with a solid foundation for her Juris Doctor, a degree that holds a significant family connection. Her uncle William Wuttunee, who graduated from the U of S College of Law in 1952, was the first Cree lawyer to be called to the bar in Western Canada.

Wuttunee is now pursuing an articling position, and aims to work in a general practice that focuses on Aboriginal law, administrative law and constitutional law. She hopes that by combining these interests with her background in social work, she can help make societal changes through law, admiring the work of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. The national non-profit organization provides policy support on legal issues affecting First Nations children and families.

She said she has been inspired by her children in choosing this career path. “Every parent and family has unique needs,” she said from experience. “My youngest son has a disability, so I have had to become an advocate for him in accessing medical and therapy services. Having to move off of my First Nation to access these services in an urban centre, I’ve seen first-hand the inequities Indigenous children face in Saskatchewan and across Canada.”

Becoming a change-maker is high on Wuttunee’s list of goals after graduation, but she said she couldn’t get to where she is now without the support of generous donors. She received numerous scholarships to help her complete her law degree, but one that stands out for her is the Dr. Grace E. Maynard Bursary, which provided her with much-needed assistance during her second year of studies—which she said was “the most challenging time of my legal education.”

The bursary, which supports new students each year in programs across campus, was created by Dr. Grace Maynard through a gift in her will. Wuttunee said that being selected was especially meaningful to her because it was awarded based on not only financial need, but also academic performance.

When she found out she had received the support, Wuttunee said she felt “so much happiness”, because it helped her continue in her program and become more ambitious with her goals. “Receiving this award meant a lot to me personally, because I was able to focus on my studies and achieve good marks,” she shared.

Dr. Maynard’s support also helped her take care of herself and her children. “I am so grateful for the financial assistance because I do not come from privilege. Without bursaries and scholarships I don’t know if I could have done it—it helped me with the everyday stresses of being a full-time student and raising three children.”

Now Wuttunee stands at the beginning of a whole new chapter in her life, but she said she still has family and community on her mind. She’s excited to support her children with her new career, but she also has her sights set higher. “I want to give back to my community to help First Nations people. I want to help people in any way I can.”

Please let us know if you have or are considering leaving a gift to the U of S in your will. Talking to us now is an opportunity to clarify your future wishes and ensure they can be carried out. It also gives us a chance to thank you personally for your thoughtful consideration.

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## College of Law announces refugee scholarship

The college will fully fund the tuition, student fees and textbooks of one Juris Doctor (JD) student, who has claimed or is claiming refugee status in Canada, for the duration of their three-year law degree.

Eligible students who apply to the college's JD program through the regular process, and secure a place for Sept. 2018, will be able to apply for the scholarship. The recipient will be decided by a specially appointed committee at the College of Law.

Though the college offers a range of financial awards and support to its students, including a number of entrance awards which recognize first-year students, the refugee scholarship is a first.

"We saw this as a unique opportunity to make a difference to a refugee student. Though many university students know only too well the financial burden of tuition and fees, this is a chance for us to help someone who, as a refugee to this country, faces significant cultural, financial, and educational roadblocks," said College of Law Associate Dean, Academic, Doug Surtees. "The scholarship goes some way to removing a barrier that might otherwise prevent this person from realizing their goal of attending law school."

In a show of generosity and support for their future classmate, the college's students have pledged a portion of the ticket sales from their student association's most highly-attended event to the scholarship.

Law Students Association (LSA) President Lindsey Knibbs was enthusiastic when she first heard about the initiative.

"I was excited to bring the idea back to the LSA executive and general council. We unanimously agreed that this was a worthy cause, and decided to donate \$5 from each ticket sold for our First Year Formal," she said.

In so doing, a majority of the college's student body contributed to the cause, despite busy schedules and tight budgets.

"This is a very exciting opportunity and the students are proud of the impact we were able to make," said Knibbs. "The LSA thanks the college for allowing us to be a part of this student's journey, and our classmates for their generosity in joining us to support this amazing initiative."

The college has also pledged funding towards the scholarship and is asking donors and alumni to join the cause.

"Our alumni and donors are a generous community. They continually support our students and our college, and we hope that this award will encourage people to support a student who hasn't had the same opportunities as others," said College of Law Dean Martin Phillipson.

The college is hopeful this scholarship will highlight the need to create opportunities for less advantaged groups such as refugee students, and that it will encourage similar initiatives.

"As a college training future lawyers, we have a vital role to play in helping people, and encouraging our partners, students, and community to do the same," said Surtees. "We also need to ensure that the opportunity to undertake a legal education remains open to as many groups as possible."

Applications for the JD program are now open - those who wish to apply can find details at the college's Applying to Law page.

**If you are interested in contributing to the College of Law refugee scholarship, please contact Megan Cantwell, Major Gifts Officer, at [megan.cantwell@usask.ca](mailto:megan.cantwell@usask.ca).**

## ANTWI FRIMPONG: Profile of an LLM graduate

*I am Antwi Frimpong, and I recently defended my Master of Laws thesis Using Technology for Access to Justice in Ghana and Canada:*

*Examining the Digital Divide to become a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan College of Law. My experience at the U of S has been remarkable, and has given me a real boost to my academic and social development. The College of Law is a welcoming place, and from day one, I felt at home. I learned and experienced so many new things in a short period of time.*

*My LLM supervisor, Professor Sarah Buhler, has played a pivotal role in my academic development and throughout my studies. Her dedication, direction, and constructive criticism have helped me a great deal, and are worthy of acknowledgment.*

*Participating in a research poster competition that was organized during the 2017 Dean's Forum on Dispute Resolution and Access to Justice also enriched my academic and social life. It was my first time participating in such an event, and gave me an opportunity to learn how to visualize a paper to highlight the important aspects of research. I also built my communication skills through engaging the audience in a presentation and discussion of my work. I met and shared ideas and experiences with different people from various institutions in*

*Saskatchewan, and I was very happy to have been named a winner in the Access to Justice category.*

*I was also happy to have participated in the inaugural Saskatchewan Access to Justice Week in October 2016. There, I learned of initiatives aimed at improving access to justice for Saskatchewan residents. It was a great experience to have volunteered for the Community Legal Assistance*

*for Saskatoon Inner City Inc (CLASSIC) as a research assistant during summer 2017. During my time there, I was impressed with how College of Law student advocates were providing basic legal services to clients, under the supervision of practicing lawyers. I plan to promote such an initiative in my home country, Ghana.*

*My convocation is slated for October 28, 2017, and I am very happy to be a part of the graduating class of 2017. My family and friends are delighted for my success, and I am happy to say that my siblings will join me at the ceremony. I look forward to pursuing my doctorate program on pro bono legal services in the Ghanaian criminal justice system, and then I plan to return to*

*Ghana and become a university professor there. I am sanguine that the knowledge, skills, and experience I acquire in Canada will prepare me to become a law professor, and serve Ghana and the world at large.*

*I will forever miss the walkway along the South Saskatchewan River in the university area, where good friends and I used to take a stroll after long hours of studies at the Law library.*



# OF NOTE

COLLEGE OF LAW MAGAZINE

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40064048  
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:  
College of Law, University of Saskatchewan  
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Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 5A6

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