

Estey Symposium on Business Law

Economic Development With and By Indigenous Entities – Opportunities, Issues and Solutions

Thursday, November 6, 2025



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Law
LAW.USASK.CA

Hosted by
Prof. Michael Milani, KC,
Estey Chair in Business Law
University of Saskatchewan College of Law



Estey Chair in Business Law

About the Chair

The Estey Chair in Business Law was established in 2012 by John Estey and Bill Estey in honour of their father, the late Honourable Willard “Bud” Estey, former Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. Their donation of \$2 million is the largest-ever private donation to the college. The Estey Chair in Business Law is intended to attract outstanding scholars in the area of business law. Chairholders will be expected to teach business law courses within the college, conduct world-class research in their field, as well as share their expertise and engage in outreach activities with the wider legal community.

Current Chair

Michael Milani, KC

July 1 - Dec. 31, 2025

Michael Milani is currently chair of the executive committee of McDougall Gauley LLP. He has a wealth of experience from his banking law, insolvency, and commercial practice, including related litigation, and has appeared before all levels of court in Canada including the Supreme Court of Canada. His research has appeared in peer-reviewed journals in Canada and internationally. He is recognized in peer-ranking directories in a variety of practice areas. He is a former president of the Law Society of Saskatchewan, and a former president of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada. He is the chair of the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan and is a Fellow of the Insolvency Institute of Canada and a Fellow of the American College of Mortgage Attorneys. He was appointed King’s Counsel in 2001.



Michael Milani is serving his second term as Estey Chair.

Past Chairs

Professor Virginia Torrie: August 2023 - July 2024

Professor Anna Lund: January 2023 - June 2023

Michael W. Milani, KC: July 2022 - December 2022

Professor Cally Jordan: August 2015 - June 2017

Professor Roderick Wood: July 2014 - June 2015



Symposium Agenda

8:25AM

Welcome Remarks

Dean Martin Phillipson, Faculty of Law, University of Saskatchewan & Michael Milani, KC, Estey Chair in Business Law, College of Law, University of Saskatchewan

8:30-9:45AM

Challenges for Reform

Presenters: Thomas Isaac, Partner at Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP & Dr. Dwight Newman, KC, College of Law, University of Saskatchewan

Moderator: Chris Lafleur, Director, Indigenous Law Centre, College of Law, University of Saskatchewan

Break (coffee provided)

9:50AM-11:05AM

Receivers and Section 89 of the Indian Act

Presenter: Anna J. Lund, F.R. (Dick) Matthews Professor of Business Law, Faculty of Law, University of Alberta

Panelist: Joseph Healey, CA, CPA, FCIRP, LIT, ICD.D, Healey Consulting Services Inc.

Moderator: The Honourable A.R. Rothery, former Justice of the Saskatchewan Court of King's Bench and former Chair of the Court's Insolvency Panel

11:10AM-12:35PM

Power, Partnership, and Protection: Engaging in Renewable Energy Development from a Developer and Indigenous Lens

Presenters: Lorne R. Fagnan & Christopher J. Masich, Partners at McKercher LLP

Panelists: Mark Peters P Eng, MSc SaskPower | Director – IPP Generation & Commercial Products

Moderator: Michael Milani, KC, Estey Chair in Business Law, College of Law, University of Saskatchewan

12:30-1:30PM

Lunch (provided)



Symposium Agenda *cont'd*

1:30-2:45PM

Urban Reserves – Reconciliation: One City Block at a Time

Presenter: Koren Lightning, KC, City of Edmonton

Panelist: Candice Grant, Partner at Robertson Stromberg LLP

Moderator: Mark N.D. Yemen, Partner at McDougall Gauley LLP

Break (cookies provided)

2:50-4:05PM

Bill C-5: King Henry VIII Collides with Indigenous Inherent Rights

Presenters: Sonia L. Eggerman, Partner at MLT Aikins LLP & Tyson Acoose, MLT Aikins LLP

Panelist: Sacha R. Paul, Partner at Thompson Dorfman Sweatman LLP

Moderator: Jamesy Patrick, College of Law, University of Saskatchewan

Closing Remarks

Panel: *Challenges for Reform*



Thomas Isaac, Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP

Thomas Isaac is Chair of the firm's Aboriginal Law Group. A nationally recognized authority in Aboriginal law, Tom advises business and government clients across Canada on Aboriginal legal matters and related regulatory, environmental assessment, negotiations and constitutional issues. Tom has extensive national experience advising energy, oil, gas, pipeline, mining, forestry, real estate and transportation companies, and federal, provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments and agencies on Aboriginal, regulatory and constitutional matters. In recognition of his work in this area, Tom was honoured as one of Canada's Top 25 Most Influential lawyers by Canadian Lawyer magazine in 2018. Tom has published extensively in Aboriginal law, including 16 books, the most notable being *Aboriginal Law*, 6th Ed. His published works on Aboriginal law have been cited with approval by Canadian courts, including the Supreme Court of Canada and the Federal Court of Appeal. His new book co-authored with Grace Wu titled *Canada & the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* is being published this month.



Dr. Dwight Newman, KC, USask College of Law

Dwight Newman, KC, BA, MATS, JD, MSc, BCL, MPhil, DPhil is Professor of Law and Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Rights, Communities, and Constitutional Law at the University of Saskatchewan College of Law, where he has been on faculty since 2005. He previously served the maximum two terms in a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Rights in Constitutional and International Law. He is a member of the bars of Ontario and Saskatchewan. He has over 200 publications of various types, including 15 books, and his writing is regularly cited as an authority in judicial decisions. He is being inducted as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (FRSC) this fall in recognition of his scholarly contributions.



Chris Lafleur, Indigenous Law Centre, USask College of Law

Chris Lafleur was previously General Counsel with the federal Department of Justice in Saskatoon. During his 30-year career with Justice, he was involved with various files dealing with Indigenous Economic Development, including lead counsel for Justice on the First Nations Fiscal Management Act; the Muskowekwan First Nation Solution Potash Mining Regulations and the addition of the First Nations University of Canada to urban reserve land. He also worked on numerous Comprehensive Claims, as well as litigation and self-government negotiations across Canada. Chris also acted as lead counsel on the Cowessess First Nation Child and Family Services Coordination Agreement, the first under An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families.

Panel: Receivers and Section 89 of the Indian Act



Anna J. Lund, F.R. (Dick) Matthews Professor of Business Law, University of Alberta

Anna Lund is the FR (Dick) Matthews QC Professor in Business Law in the Faculty of Law at the University of Alberta. She researches in the areas of bankruptcy and insolvency, debtor creditor law, and civil procedure. Her work on corporate-commercial law and Indigenous peoples includes a co-authored article with Dr. Frankie Young in the Canadian Business Law Journal (70:2) entitled "The Uses and Limits of the Oppression Remedy in Indigenous Organizations," and a solo authored article entitled "Judgment Enforcement Law in Indigenous Communities: Reflections on the Indian Act and Crown Immunity from Execution" which appeared in the Supreme Court Law Review (83, 2nd series). A member of the Law Society of Alberta, she continues to practice on a pro bono basis through the Edmonton Community Legal Centre.



Joseph Healey, Healey Consulting Services Inc.

Joe is the president of Healey Consulting Services Inc, undertaking strategic finance projects for clients, including fractional CFO, financial advisory, and financial distress workout services. He was previously the managing partner of a Big Four professional services firm in Winnipeg, MB. Joe has over 29 years of experience restructuring, operating and selling companies, including mandates on a going concern basis and via formal insolvency proceedings. Joe has advised clients across a wide range of industries, including agriculture, transportation, construction, aviation, oilfield services, pipeline and facility construction, manufacturing and distribution, real estate, aquaculture, forestry, food processing, technology, and retail.

The Honourable A.R. Rothery, former Justice of the Saskatchewan Court of King's Bench and former Chair of the Court's Insolvency Panel

Prior to her mandatory retirement in November 2024, Allisen Rothery had been a judge of the Court of King's Bench for Saskatchewan, having been appointed November 1994. Prior to her court appointment, she practised law in Saskatoon, mainly in the areas of commercial litigation and insolvency. When the Insolvency Panel of the Court was instituted in Saskatchewan in 2003, she was appointed its chair and remained in that position until her retirement.

Panel: Power, Partnership, and Protection: Engaging in Renewable Energy Development from a Developer and Indigenous Lens



Lorne R. Fagnan, McKercher LLP

Lorne is a Partner in the McKercher LLP Saskatoon office with the Indigenous Practice Group. His experience includes Indigenous governance, First Nations land management, partnerships, project development, and child & family services policy and legislation. His practice centres on the areas of Indigenous governance and economic development, corporate/commercial, employment, estates and real estate law and has advised First Nations and their related entities, renewable energy developers, non-profits and large corporations. Lorne is called to both the Saskatchewan and Manitoba bars. Lorne is a member of the Pine Creek First Nation in Manitoba.



Christopher J. Masich, McKercher LLP

Christopher Masich is a partner with McKercher LLP and leads the firm's Resources and Energy Practice Group. Chris has acted as counsel on nearly every Saskatchewan renewable energy project, primarily representing independent power producers on wind and solar generation facilities. His practice focuses on all aspects of renewable energy development, from structuring Indigenous partnerships and procurement through project financing, construction, and operation. Chris has also served as counsel to several project lenders on multiple wind and solar projects, giving him unique insight into both developer and lender perspectives. Chris was honored with the Lexpert Rising Star Award in 2023 and is recognized in Lexpert, Best Lawyers, and Chambers Canada for his work in energy, M&A, and corporate work.



Mark Peters, SaskPower

Mark Peters joined SaskPower in 1997 and currently serves as the Director of Independent Power Producers Generation and Commercial Products. He holds a Master of Science in Hydrotechnical Engineering from the University of Saskatchewan, graduating in 1989. Mark's career began in consulting, working in Saskatoon and Toronto, before he joined SaskPower. His career has been marked by significant project development work, including refurbishing hydroelectric power stations in Ontario, developing and operating two wind power projects for SaskPower, and leading initial design work for a hydroelectric power project on Black Lake First Nation land in northern Saskatchewan. Currently, Mark focuses on securing power for Saskatchewan by collaborating with private sector power producers through competitive procurements and unsolicited proposals to meet the province's growing power needs.

Panel: Urban Reserves – Reconciliation: One City Block at a Time



Koren Lightning, KC, City of Edmonton

Koren Lightning, KC, LLB, LLM, CIC.C, Blue Thunderbird Woman, is a Cree lawyer from Samson Cree Nation. She is the owner and operator of Thunderbird Law. She is also the Indigenous Legal Advisor, Legal Services Branch, City of Edmonton. She serves as a Board Member for the First Nations Caring Society, Peace Hills Insurance, and the Co-chair of Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF). Koren's work focuses on supporting Indigenous clients and revitalizing Indigenous laws. She provides legal counsel in Indigenous governance, Indigenous child welfare, and Indian Act matters. She was awarded the Pringle/Royal Sessional Teaching Excellence Award from the University of Alberta Faculty of Law for 2021/2022. In 2019, she received the Tomorrow's Leader Award from the Women in Law Leadership Awards, and in 2017, she was honored with the Alumni Horizon Award from the University of Alberta.



Candice Grant, Robertson Stromberg LLP

Candice Grant is a partner with Robertson Stromberg Barristers & Solicitors. She has a broad range of civil litigation experience, focusing on employment matters and municipal law. Candice represents all parties to employment disputes including employees, employers, management and unions. She has extensive experience in wrongful dismissal and human rights cases, with a focus on real and practical solutions. Candice regularly works with municipal governments on a broad range of legal issues, including bylaws, regulatory and administrative matters. Candice chaired the Meewasin Valley Appeal Board for a three-year term. She is also a member of the Canadian Bar Association and serves as an executive of the Saskatoon Bar Association.



Mark N.D. Yemen, McDougall Gauley LLP

Mark Yemen obtained both his Bachelor of Commerce (Distinction) in 2004 and his Bachelor of Laws in 2005 from the University of Saskatchewan. He was called to the Saskatchewan bar in 2006. Following his articles, Mark has carried on a general corporate commercial practice with time spent as in-house counsel at the City of Regina and is currently at McDougall Gauley LLP where he currently practises with a focus on municipal law, mergers and acquisitions and infrastructure project development. Mark regularly advises corporate commercial clients, municipalities, First Nations and government entities on infrastructure projects, planning and land development, financing and secured transactions, procurement and construction works. Mark has been selected for inclusion in the Best Lawyers in Canada in the field of Municipal Law, Public Procurement Law and Mergers and Acquisition Law.

Panel: Bill C-5: King Henry VIII Collides with Indigenous Inherent Rights



Sonia L. Eggerman, MLT Aikins LLP

Sonia has extensive experience in Aboriginal law on various matters including Aboriginal and Treaty rights, governance issues, land use planning, on-reserve economic development, regulatory, and other constitutional issues. Sonia enjoys creative problem solving through negotiated solutions that can be supported with litigation strategy.

Sonia served in a senior capacity with the Government of Saskatchewan for nearly a decade and has a deep understanding of provincial and federal processes. This experience in the public sector is instrumental in providing clients with sound strategic and legal advice when dealing with the Crown. In addition to her practice, Sonia enjoys teaching constitutional legal issues at the University of Regina as a sessional lecturer.



Tyson Acoose, MLT Aikins LLP

Tyson advises clients on matters related to economic development, lands, renewables, corporate governance and finance. His experience includes drafting and negotiating partnership agreements, shareholder agreements, purchase and sale agreements and credit agreements. Tyson also has experience guiding clients through on-reserve project development, land management and infrastructure financing. Tyson obtained his Juris Doctor from the University of Saskatchewan in 2021 and has been called to both the Saskatchewan and Alberta bars. Tyson is the chair of the CBA Aboriginal Law Section (SK) and serves on the board of both the Pembina Institute and CLASSIC Law. Tyson is a proud member of Zagime Anishinabek First Nation.



Sacha R. Paul, Partner at Thompson Dorfman Sweatman LLP

Sacha is a member of the English River First Nation, a Dene community located in Northern Saskatchewan. He is a partner with Thompson Dorfman Sweatman LLP and has been a lawyer for over 20 years. Sacha practices primarily in two areas of law – Aboriginal law and Public/Administrative law. He is a member of the bar in Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon, and Saskatchewan. During his career, Sacha has appeared in many different courts from the Supreme Court of Canada, to various Courts of Appeal (Manitoba, Federal, Saskatchewan, NWT, Yukon), and trial level courts (Manitoba, Federal, Saskatchewan, Yukon, Nunavut, and NWT). In addition, Sacha has appeared before a number of administrative tribunals such as human rights tribunals, workers' compensation appeal tribunals, environmental regulatory boards etc.

Panel: *Bill C-5: King Henry VIII Collides with Indigenous Inherent Rights* cont'd



Jamesy Patrick, Faculty of Law, University of Saskatchewan

Jamesy is an Assistant Professor at the College of Law, with a research focus on child protection law. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree Cum Laude in Dance (2006) from York University, and both a Juris Doctor (2012) and a Master of Laws (2017) from the University of Saskatchewan. Before joining the College of Law, Jamesy practiced law in Saskatchewan, specializing in child protection matters and Indigenous governance related to child welfare. She is deeply committed to policy development and governance that support Indigenous communities and organizations. Jamesy frequently appears in the media and presents nationally on child protection issues. She is honoured to collaborate with the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations and Legal Aid Saskatchewan on a Child Protection Practicum course, aimed at building professional capacity and improving outcomes for families in the community. She is the past Board Chair of the Elizabeth Fry Society. Jamesy's teaching areas include Property Law, Child Protection Law, and Entertainment Law.

**Thank you for attending
the Estey Symposium
on Business Law**



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Law
LAW.USASK.CA

