

TAKING ACTION ON RECONCILIATION

The new [CBABC Reconciliation Action Plan](#) was finalized in February 2023 and guides our Branch in establishing priorities and delivering on initiatives each year. Just a few of the highlights:

Opening the Door Wider for Indigenous Lawyers

The new [Indigenous Lawyers Waivers of Dues Program](#) seeks to make membership more accessible to Indigenous lawyers who would otherwise not be able to afford membership. Launched in May 2023, the program supports an environment where more Indigenous lawyers feel welcome and supported.

Advancing Reconciliation Through Learning

In honour of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, CBABC continued our annual [Truth & Reconciliation Series](#) to help members build strong, symbiotic relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities. *Indigenous Laws in Practice* explained how Indigenous laws, legal orders and principles intersect with everyday practice. *Working with Clients and Community in Practice* shed light on the impact of trauma when working with Indigenous clients in family and criminal law matters. The series culminated with a session that taught lawyers how to work with Indigenous governance structures and decision-making processes to build allyship.

Meaningful Change

CBABC was pleased our recommendations to overhaul the child protection system and address the overrepresentation of Indigenous children were reflected in the historic *Indigenous Self-Government in Child and Family Services Amendment Act*, passed by the provincial government in November 2022. We applaud government for further funding the BC First Nations and Métis Justice Strategies – which we've continually advocated for – as evident in the creation of a new cross-ministry Indigenous Justice Secretariat. Our Indigenous Justice Advocacy Committee developed recommendations to strengthening the maintenance and support of Indigenous languages across the legal and justice systems, including establishing an Indigenous languages program and holding related training.

Celebrating our Indigenous Colleagues

In June, the Aboriginal Lawyers Forum held their sold-out **11th Annual Retreat, Honouring the Past, Foundations for the Future**. Topics spanned from advancing Indigenous laws and legal orders to tips on how to become a judge. The retreat featured the Honourable Judge Karen Whonnock, Bruce McIvor, Carrie Reid and more outstanding guests.

The Aboriginal Lawyers Forum broke their fundraising record at the **16th National Indigenous Peoples Day Online Auction**, raising \$17,579. The auction supports the [Warrior Project](#), which helps fund articling positions for Indigenous law students in BC.

