



Summer 2018



## Connecting Women in the Law

**CBABC WLF BC  
Upcoming Events  
Save the Dates!**

**WLF Mentoring Potluck  
Thursday, August 16  
Location: Stanley Park**

**Ovarian Canada  
Cancer Walk of Hope  
Sunday, September 9  
Location: Queen Elizabeth Park  
Sign up: <https://bit.ly/2MyCCpV>**

**Fall Launch Event:  
Hot Tips from Hot Mentors  
Stay tuned for more details!**

### Remarks of the Chair

By Kathryn Sainty, QC

Greetings. It is with a sense of sadness tinged with a sense of joy that I author this, my last message to you all as the Chair of the WLF BC. I have been involved in the WLF almost since its inception in one capacity or another. It seems a large chapter in my life is coming to a close. I will miss leading this extraordinary group of women but I leave you all in excellent hands. Daria Batkin (your incoming Chair), Rose Keith (our current Secretary) and Cherisse Friesen (our treasurer) have been wonderful to work with and incredibly supportive of me as the Chair. I want to thank them, and all the members of the executive, for an extraordinary two years. I'm not leaving completely as I will continue to be a member of the executive as the "Past Chair" but I am hoping simply to pass on sage advice, not necessarily play an active role in the inner workings of your WLF.



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**THE CANADIAN  
BAR ASSOCIATION**  
British Columbia Branch

*Above photo: WLF Fraser Valley Spring Mingler at the Glass House Estate Winery*



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I had the pleasure of attending the WLF Retreat at Sparkling Hill Resort, which was put together by an intrepid group of women from all four of the WLFs in BC: the WLF BC, Kamloops WLF, WLF BC North and WLF Vancouver Island. What a fantastic opportunity to share networking and CPD opportunities with other women lawyers. I was particularly inspired by the speech by Kerry Simmons, QC, the current CBA National President. Kerry's topic was "Building Resilience" – something I think every woman lawyer needs to make it in this profession. Her five tips to build resilience were:

- a. Build a team around you – it could be family, friends or even colleagues but has to be people whose opinions you trust to provide you perspective about yourself;
- b. Be optimistic and energetic (a positive realist!). Make sure to conduct yourself in a manner that makes others want to be around you.
- c. Nurture yourself. Be sure to look after yourself by thinking positive thoughts and practicing affirmations ("I/we can do this!"). Get some exercise. Be sure to set aside some "me time".
- d. Learn how to have the hard conversations. Be sure to set boundaries and speak for yourself – no one else is going to do it.
- e. Learn to lead/develop your own brand of leadership. Put others first.

The purpose of the WLF is to promote, support and advance the stature and influence of women in the legal profession. Building resilience is key to achieving those goals. The WLF offers regular opportunities to (a) help you build a team (our mentoring program); (b) be around others in a positive space (our Fall Launch and AGM); (c) nurture yourself (the retreat); (d) learn how to have the hard conversations (our education events); and (e) learn to lead (our education events and the bi-annual leadership conference – in Halifax in the Fall of 2019 – put on by the National WLF). I know the WLF will continue to provide these opportunities and I look forward to participating myself and meeting up with many of you.

### WLF Newsletter Summer 2018 Edition

Editor Janine F. Jones | Editorial Board Daria Batkin, Elisabeth Sadowski, Janine F. Jones, Deborah Taylor, Kathryn Sainty, QC



## Being a Working Parent: Returning to Practice After Maternity Leave

By Lindsey LeClair, Melissa Mitchell and Justina Driedger

In April 2018, the WLF BC Mentoring Committee held a panel discussion on returning to work after parental leave. The panelists were three WLF members who recently returned from maternity leave. The panelists talked about their experiences and offered some tips, both for those contemplating parental leave and for those looking to support colleagues and employees coming back to practice.

Panelist Lindsey LeClair is in-house counsel at First West Credit Union. Lindsey works full time and works from home two to three days per week. Panelist Melissa Mitchell is a Solicitor Associate at Farris, Vaughan, Wills & Murphy LLP. Melissa works four days a week and spends Wednesdays at home with her son. Justina Driedger is a Litigation Associate at DLA Piper (Canada) LLP. Justina works full time and works from home on Friday or Saturdays, depending on her work schedule.



The panel led an informal discussion on a variety of issues and offered the following tips on returning to work:

- Give yourself time to figure what your new normal is. It doesn't have to be perfect! Balancing a child or children and a legal career will, by its nature, force you to make serious decisions about how you want to spend your time;
- Be forthright with your employer about how you want to work upon your return from maternity leave;
- Use your time away as a "fresh start" at the office—it can be a good opportunity to try a new area of practice or to specialize in an area that you're interested in;
- Communicate at home, at your workplace, and with yourself on an on-going basis. Check in from time to time to evaluate what is working and what is not;

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The WLF BC is looking for volunteers and encourages anyone interested in volunteering to contact Sara Li or any of the Committee Co-Chairs listed above.





## A Review of WLF BC 2018 Events

WLF BC hosted a Junior Women Lawyers Networking Event in Vancouver on February 20, 2018, generously hosted by Charest Reporting Inc. with proceeds going to Ovarian Cancer Canada.

The Senior Women Lawyers Dinner followed on February 22, 2018 at the Water Street Café, where guests heard from anti-poverty activist, Jean Swanson.

The BC WLF Conference: Tackling Change in Your Practice and Beyond was held on April 6-8, 2018 at Sparkling Hills Resort and Spa in Vernon. Speakers included Madam Justice Donegan, Honourable Judge Stella Frame, Honourable Judge Carmen Rogers, Kerry Simmons QC and practice consultant Andrea Verwey Rayment.

On March 8, 2018, WLF BC celebrated International Women's Day at a potluck in New Westminster which featured a representative of WLF BC's chosen charity, Ovarian Cancer Canada.



WLF BC's Mentoring Committee held their own event on April 17, 2018 entitled, "Being a Working Parent: Returning to Practice after Maternity Leave" which featured a panel of speakers that included Justina Driedger, Melissa Mitchell and Lindsey LeClair.

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- Be flexible with trying new arrangements, and don't be afraid to ask for those things that are important to you in order to make this all work for you and your family; and
- Build a network and a support system while on maternity leave. These people will become your best friends... and your lifeline! Not to mention, a resource for emergency child care when you have a deadline, the nanny is sick, or daycare is closed.

The panel also invited comments from Jennifer MacGregor-Greer at Kornfeld LLP. Jennifer offered insights on the important and sometimes still stigmatized issue of post-partum depression and how this can impact the back-to-work transition. Jennifer talked about how to recognize symptoms in yourself and others, where to find support, and how to be supportive of your colleagues.

All of us are looking to balance a busy practice with life's many other demands. We hope that this panel and other events like it will encourage flexibility, communication, and support in the work place.

## The Women Lawyers Forum BC Welcomes Incoming Chair: Daria Batkin

Meet the new Chair of the WLF BC Daria Batkin whom you have now likely met over the last 10 years as one of our passionate volunteers and member of the Executive Board. Daria has served as a volunteer, co-chair of the events planning committee, as our Treasurer and most recently our Vice-Chair.



Daria's passion for the WLF no doubt stems from her roots. She was born and raised in St. Petersburg, Russia and immigrated to Canada in 2005. While the only physical possessions she brought with her were her letter of acceptance into UBC Law and two suitcases, she also brought a Masters of Law degree from Russia that she obtained at age 21 and an irrepresible drive to succeed and ensure that other women lawyers do as well.

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As a newcomer to Canada and first year law student, Daria encountered a massive culture shock. But if you ask her about her experiences in her early days in Canada, she will tell you that, once she got started in law school, she never looked back.

Putting her “can do” attitude into practice, she quickly learned to type in a foreign language (English), engage in small talk (an art unknown in Russian culture), and see familiar legal concepts from an entirely new perspective.

Daria credits the Women Lawyers Forum as a significant factor in her success. She was first introduced to the WLF in 2008 when, as an articling student, she attended a Fall Launch event. Inspired by listening to mentors give their “hot tips” to the attendees, and recognising what the WLF had to offer, Daria decided to volunteer at our next event – the Fall potluck. Not too long after her first volunteer experience, Daria became part of the Executive (as Events committee co-chair). She has been an invaluable member of the Executive ever since. In 2012, Daria was nominated for the Treasurer position, and, in 2016, she became the Vice-Chair of the Forum.

In reflecting on how she has grown over her years in practice, Daria commented that her career and enjoyment of the practice of law really took off once she found the confidence to be herself at work. In her early years of practice, Daria says she focussed on fitting in and felt she needed to be a “standard issue” lawyer to be effective and successful. However, once she found her own voice as a lawyer, she became more comfortable and confident, and therefore more effective for her litigation clients. Daria’s message to women starting out in the practice of law is a simple one: “be yourself.” If you are yourself, no doubt you will have more fun and achieve greater success. And, of course, Daria also would encourage you to join the CBA and, especially, the WLF BC. It worked for her; it could work for you.

**WLF BC North Report**  
 Women lawyers in Northern British Columbia are separated by thousands of kilometers from one another and face unique challenges in their practices. Over the course of the past few years we have tried to assemble a ‘WLF-North’ section with the CBA but faced some obstacles with forming an Executive that is representative of the communities across the North. Accordingly, we are asking all of those who are interested in keeping this section alive to come forward and volunteer for an Executive position. If you would like more information, please contact Nina Purewal at the Crown Counsel office in Smithers, BC (250-847-7364).



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The WLF BC Section Meeting Book Club Meeting: “We Can Do This!: 10 Tools to Unleash Our Collective Genius” was held on May 8, 2018. The discussion was guided by the book’s author and executive coach, Kate Sutherland.



The WLF BC had another successful education event at the Law Courts Inn on May 30, 2018 on Strategic Networking which featured speakers: Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay, Q.C., Nicole Howell and Claire Walker.

On June 7, 2018, WLF BC hosted a successful Fraser Valley Spring Mingler at the Glass House Estate Winery. Over 50 attendees enjoyed our second Fraser Valley event with plans for more events in 2018-19.



The 2017-18 year concluded at the AGM at the Law Courts Inn on June 12, 2018. The evening featured a talk by recently appointed to the bench and long-time supporter of the WLF BC, Madam Francesca Marzari.





## Upcoming Events

### WLF BC Mentoring Wrap-Up Event

The WLF Mentoring Program will be wrapping up its 2017/2018 year with a potluck for program participants on the evening of Thursday, August 16, 2018 at a convenient location at the foot of Stanley Park. Space is limited to the program matched 79 mentoring pairs this year, so if you're in a mentoring pair, keep your eyes peeled for an event notice and make sure you and your mentor or mentee both register before it's full!

It will be a great opportunity to reconnect during a busy summer and to meet other pairs in a relaxed, fun atmosphere. If you aren't in the program this year, watch for the invitations to apply for the 2018/2019 mentoring program towards the end of the summer!

### Ovarian Cancer Walk of Hope

WLF BC members and executive will also be participating in the Ovarian Canada Cancer Walk of Hope on September 9, 2018.

The Walk of Hope, is a family-friendly event and raises vital funds to provide support, raise awareness and fund much-needed research into prevention, improved treatments and ultimately, a cure for ovarian cancer.

If you would like to join the WLF BC team please sign up at (friends, family, colleagues and clients are also welcome to join us): <https://bit.ly/2MyCCpV>

### WLF BC Fall Launch

WLF BC 2018-19 year will formally be kicking off with the Hot Tips from Hot Mentors event. Stay tuned for more details.

## Want to shift stuck systems? Become a "Barefoot Facilitator"

By Kate Sutherland

Many of us confuse authority and influence, believing our potential to foster positive change is much less than it actually is. Because we're not the boss, we feel our hands are tied.

Yet lawyers, and especially (more relational) women lawyers, bring important skills to systems change work and have access to the inner workings of many human systems.



What if we shifted our perspective: seeing the glass of our potential influence as half-full, rather than half-empty?

One of the ways I've helped myself and others make this shift is by naming the concept of "barefoot facilitator".

A **barefoot facilitator** is to a **professional facilitator** what a **paramedic** is to a **doctor**: a person with a basic and versatile tool kit and enough savvy to skillfully support what is needed 80% of the time, and for a fraction of the cost.

Humanity is going through a massive transitional period, shifting from an industrial growth society to a life-sustaining civilization. This "[Great Turning](#)" is calling for collective intelligence, collective wisdom and collective capacity as never before. We are being asked to revolutionize how we work together.

For inspiration, we can look to the transformative impact of the "barefoot doctors" of Mao's China. In the mid-'60s, there was little access to medical care in rural areas, and not enough resources for fully trained doctors. Instead, 30,000 villagers were trained in basic Western and Chinese medicine — enough to treat common ailments, and to share information about hygiene, family planning, and preventing epidemics.

They were called "barefoot doctors" because when they weren't tending to basic medical needs, these people continued to farm barefoot in the rice paddies alongside their neighbours. *Continued on the following page*



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Almost overnight, this important innovation revolutionized health outcomes in rural China.

By analogy, we do not have the resources to supply professional facilitators to all the meetings and group endeavours supporting the great shifts underway. There are, however, thousands of people in all walks of life already up-skilling their ability to facilitate deep and lasting change in the human systems of which they are a part.

Perhaps you already know that you are a “barefoot facilitator”.

Perhaps you welcome the invitation to serve as such. Either way, I hope you step up and offer your skills and awareness in the groups you have access to, and I hope you find ways to continue deepening your capacity to understand group dynamics.

If you are interested in co-creating a movement to revolutionize how we work together, including spreading the idea of “barefoot facilitation”, I’d love to hear from you.

*Kate Sutherland is Co-Faculty and Executive Coach for SFU’s Social Innovation Certificate. Her latest book, [We Can Do This! 10 Tools to Unleash Our Collective Genius](#), introduces 10 frameworks used by professional facilitators and consultants.*

## Law Society of BC Equity Ombudsperson Information

The Law Society of British Columbia provides the legal profession in British Columbia with the services of an Equity Ombudsperson, who can assist with resolving concerns about discrimination and discriminatory harassment. Lawyers, articulated students, law students and support staff of legal employers are all free to contact the Equity Ombudsperson. The service is voluntary, confidential and free to participants.



Equity Ombudsperson Claire Marchant is an employee of the Law Society of British Columbia in the Practice Advice department. Calls to her will remain strictly confidential, protected by the same measures that safeguard the confidentiality of all calls to Practice Advisors. You can reach Claire at [equity@lsbc.org](mailto:equity@lsbc.org), 604-605-5303, or 236-888-2133.

“I think there are good reasons for suggesting that the modern age has ended. Today, many things indicate that we are going through a transitional period, when it seems that something is on the way out and something else is painfully being born. It is as if something were crumbling, decaying, and exhausting itself, while something else, still indistinct, were arising from the rubble.”

– Vaclav Havel





## CBA National WLF Newsletter

CBA National WLF Newsletter - The Common Room is available at [cba.org/Sections/Women-Lawyers/Articles](http://cba.org/Sections/Women-Lawyers/Articles)

The CBA National WLF is seeking articles for its newsletters. If you would like to contribute, please contact [news@cba.org](mailto:news@cba.org).

### Get Connected!

Forum membership is open to CBA members only. For membership information call the CBABC at 604.687.3404, toll free in BC at 1.888.687.3404, or visit [cbabc.org/sections/enroll](http://cbabc.org/sections/enroll) for a Section enrolment form.

We hope you will make the Forum!

### Write Us

Are you interested in writing an article for the WLF BC Newsletter or do you have any comments or feedback? If so, please contact the CBABC WLF Marketing and Communications Committee Co-Chair: [Sarah Walker](#).

## WLF Retreat & Conference



## WLF Retreat & Conference

### Summary by Rachel Lammers:

The various subsections of the Women Lawyers Forum in British Columbia had a unique opportunity to gather together at the WLF Retreat and Conference which took place on April 6-8, 2018 at the idyllic Sparkling Hill Resort and Spa in Vernon, BC. This year's conference was a sell-out event and attracted lawyers from around the province. The theme "Tackling Change in Your Practice and Beyond" was showcased by venerable speakers Madam Justice Sheri Donegan, Judge Carmen Rogers, Judge Stella Frame, lifestyle coach Andrea Rayment, and CBA president Kerry Simmons, QC. Participants enjoyed the incredible venue, delicious food and wine and the warm collegiality of their colleagues in this wonderful annual event. Interested participants for next year's event should remember to book early!

### Retreat perspectives from attendee Priscilla Wingebach:

I was fortunate to attend the WLF Conference & Retreat at Sparkling Hills Resort. What an opportunity to take a weekend away to connect with other female lawyers and relax in a beautiful setting. My best friend (who is also a lawyer) and I flew up on Friday morning, arrived at the resort and were immediately impressed by the idyllic scenery, which was complemented by Swarovski crystals. After spending time at the peaceful spa, we met in the ballroom and chatted with other lawyers ahead of the big conference. It was incredible to be surrounded by so many successful women. Hearing from the Honourable Judge Carmen Rogers, Madam Justice Sheri Donegan, and the Honourable Judge Stella Frame was an honour. As a junior lawyer, learning from women who were once in my shoes and have gone through similar challenges and experiences and have reached such great success was truly inspiring.

The President of the CBA, Ms. Kerry Simmons, QC, held the attention of everyone in the room as she shared the story of her rise in the legal field. Ms. Simmons spoke about rejection, resilience, and ultimately success. Ms. Andrea Rayment spent an afternoon teaching us about how to find our focus, especially in an era where cell phones, social media, and chatty co-workers can present many distractions.

It was wonderful to connect with female lawyers from all over B.C. with various backgrounds and encouraging stories. I left the retreat feeling truly inspired, motivated, and rejuvenated.

