

Women Lawyers Forum

Connecting Women in the Law

A Message From Jennifer Conkie, Chair

WINTER 2004

Dear Members,

Professional women today face life in the fast lane. We are so busy with client, family and long-term career demands, that making time for colleagues is both a deep-seated need and a challenge to achieve.

Our vision is to connect women in the law by providing education and mentoring programs that foster the stature and influence of women in the legal profession while helping women lawyers develop professional confidence.

We're delighted you've decided to join a forum dedicated to giving women lawyers an opportunity to liaise with each other and with women in other legal jurisdictions, in the judiciary as well as other professions and organizations. Our members will offer you a warm, welcoming network.

At our launch this fall, held in October at the Law Courts Inn, Madam Justice Sandra K. Ballance inspired and entertained with her down-to-earth wit and wisdom. More than 100 women lawyers, from Vancouver and by audio conference in Kelowna and Victoria, enjoyed fabulous food and the opportunity to meet and greet friends and associates.

I hope you'll take the time to read about our events and programs, as well as our committees. One of our new ventures this coming year is our proposal to the Canadian Bar Association that a national Women Lawyers Forum be created to serve women lawyers across this country. We'll keep you posted about our progress and hope you'll keep in touch to learn more about this exciting development.

You'll find more information about how to join in the following report. Come be a part of a powerful network and grow your strategic and personal alliances!

Women Lawyers Forum Program and Events

We offer programs designed to encourage and support women lawyers in the areas of practice enhancement, professional and personal development.

This past year members from Vancouver, Victoria and Kelowna attended a variety of mentoring, educational, leadership and networking events.

Please check this site regularly for event and program updates... we're planning for more in Spring 2005!

Get Connected!

To join the Forum you must be a member of the Canadian Bar Association. For membership information contact the CBABC office at 604-687-3404 or visit www.bccba.org for a Section enrolment form.

We hope you'll make the Forum your meeting place of choice. Ask your friends to join and we'll see you in 2005!



We welcome and encourage women lawyers into our membership. Please feel free to contact:

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Mentoring Committee

Our mentoring program matches women lawyers through all levels of practice and has enjoyed tremendous success with more than 100 placements in Vancouver, 24 in Victoria and 24 in Kelowna last year.

Mentees get the benefit of a mentor's experience and wisdom and an opportunity to establish lifelong relationships and alliances within the profession. Women at any stage of their careers can enjoy peer-mentoring arrangements.

Our end of year celebration event was a tremendous success: everyone enjoyed the wonderful entertainment provided by our own Michelle Pockey and her band. Sharon Matthews from the CBABC Branch Executive Committee shared her words of encouragement and our links with the CBA are very much appreciated. We are off to a great start for 2005. Thank you to all those talented women who give so generously of their time to make our program a success.

Our mentoring cycle follows the calendar year. If you're interested in participating in 2005, please enrol as soon as possible by downloading and completing the enrolment form, which is available from the B.C. Branch website (www.bccba.org).

Education Committee

Last year our series of professional and personal development workshops enjoyed an enthusiastic response from women in all walks of the "law life," from sole practitioners to corporate, from crown counsel to non-practising members looking for a legal "connection."

In 2005, we'll again host our popular Lunch and Learn workshops. Please visit www.bccba.org for more detailed information in the new year.

On December 3rd we hosted a very well attended lunch workshop at Vancouver's Opus Hotel where Susan Van Dyke spoke on Effective Marketing: Networking and Beyond. A companion lunch workshop is scheduled for January 12, 2005 and will feature speaker Alison Wolf on Marketing Plans.

Finally, our Leadership Institute will be repeated in Spring 2005, featuring advanced skills-training sessions over two days. We welcome your suggestions for topics and look forward to your suggestions.

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Networking and Events

Many of you have contacted us with ideas about networking and new events. And we weren't really surprised to learn that many WLF members enjoy informal easy-to-access opportunities to unwind, meet new contacts, and eat great food. We hear you! We're currently busy working on our events calendar for 2005. Stay tuned ... we're planning a series of informative and fun events. New committee members will be warmly welcomed; so if you have a flair for event planning, we'd love to hear from you.

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Communications Committee

Our monthly meetings are held at the CBA Boardroom. Come share your interest in communications and get creative about how best to connect with women lawyers. We're looking forward to working with CBA staff to create web and print information resources that will benefit women lawyers across B.C.

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Snapshots

Members of the Women Lawyers Forum gathered in December at the Opus Hotel to hear guest speaker Susan Van Dyke speak on "Effective Marketing: Networking and Beyond."



R-L: Sandra Aply (RBS Lawyers) and Daniela Fisher (Edwards, Kenny & Bray)



R-L: Suzan Beattie (Arbitrator, Mediator, Coach), Lisa Holmes Wyatt (Pushor Mitchell) and Barbara M. Young (Berge Horn)