



# Keeping Tabs

News from The Young Advocates' Standing Committee

Chair Chat | YASC Photo Gallery | YASC Report | Advocacy Health | YASC Community  
In The News | Interview



## CHAIR CHAT

**Ben Kates, *Stockwoods LLP***



Among the Young Advocates' Standing Committee's most important objectives is to foster a sense of community among our membership. YASC Pub Nights and student minglers give young lawyers and students a chance to develop relationships with peers. Mentoring Dinners and Fireside Chats expand

the circle to include senior members of the bench and bar. All of this serves to make the bar a little smaller.

March showcased some of the best that YASC has to offer. To kick off March Madness, Windsor held its annual Pub Night, following the local Court House program. On March 8, in Vancouver, a panel of young advocates shared insights on preparing for summering, clerking and articling with students at the University of British Columbia. Kingston's students, lawyers and judges met for wine and cheese the following week. On March 22, YASC's

7th Annual Trivia Challenge for Charity raised **\$7,000** for Lawyers Feed the Hungry. To close out the month, YASC held its first (very successful!) Pub Night in Montreal and inaugural (and sold out!) Fireside Chat in London, Ontario.

Of special note, on March 14, 2018, former Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin joined us for a Fireside Chat in Ottawa that was held exclusively for 40 Advocates' Society members under 10 years of call. Sanam Goudarzi provides us with details in this issue. YASC is grateful to former Chief Justice McLachlin for volunteering her time and thanks YASC members Max Binnie, Tara DiBenedetto and Erin Durant for making it happen.

YASC is involved in nearly every aspect of The Advocates' Society. We do our best to make use of our seat at the table by voicing perspectives of young advocates, and, recently, YASC has made headway on two issues that are of significant importance to its cohort: mental health and diversity.

On March 13, the committee hosted a Fireside Chat dedicated to the issue of mental health in the profession. Guy Pratte and renowned psychologist Dr. David Goldbloom confronted this old taboo in way that would have been unthinkable not long ago. I urge you to read Lindsay Board's summary of YASC's inaugural event

Editor: David Campbell, *Rayman Beitchman LLP* | [david@rbllp.com](mailto:david@rbllp.com)  
Assistant Editor: Caroline Youdan, *Fasken Martineau* | [cyoudan@fasken.com](mailto:cyoudan@fasken.com)

The Young Advocates' Standing Committee ("YASC") is a standing committee of The Advocates' Society with a mandate to be a voice for young advocates (advocates who are ten years of call or fewer) within the Society and within the profession. We do this through networking/mentoring events, by publishing articles by and for young advocates, and by raising issues of concern to young advocates as we work with the Society's Board of Directors.

The opinions expressed by individual authors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies of The Advocates' Society.



focused on mental health.

On the topic of diversity, there has been much debate about the Law Society of Ontario's Statement of Principles. This issue's *Young Advocates Speak Up* shifts the debate by excerpting the Statements authored by six young advocates. The themes are striking: speaking up for the vulnerable, listening to the experiences of others, checking privilege, and confronting barriers. Let them be a reminder to focus on what matters: the need to eliminate discrimination from our profession.

And, finally, this month we have an interview with

Nicola Langille, a young lawyer who left her practice in the Canadian "south" to become a staff lawyer with the Legal Aid Commission of the Northwest Territories.

YASC is always looking for quality contributions to its *Keeping Tabs* newsletter. If you've got something to say or have attended a Society event or program you want to talk about, please get in touch with our editor, David Campbell at [David@rblp.com](mailto:David@rblp.com) or deputy editor, Caroline Youdan at [cyoudan@faskens.com](mailto:cyoudan@faskens.com). The deadline to submit for our June 15th issue is May 4th (*Star Wars* Day for the JDs out there). 🍷



KINGSTON TRIVIA | February 15, 2018  
Winners: *Rorabeck Sowerby Theriault LLP*

## YASC PHOTO GALLERY



TRIVIA CHALLENGE TORONTO | March 22, 2018



TRIVIA CHALLENGE TORONTO | March 22, 2018  
Winners: *Henein Hutchison LLP*



KINGSTON TRIVIA | February 15, 2018



TORONTO WINE AND CHEESE | April 12, 2018

## YASC PHOTO GALLERY



FIRESIDE CHAT ON MENTAL HEALTH | March 13, 2018



LONDON FIRESIDE CHAT ON ADVOCACY | March 29, 2018



OTTAWA FIRESIDE CHAT | March 14, 2018  
(Left to Right) Max Binnie, Tara DiBenedetto,  
The Right Hon. Beverley McLachlin, Guy Pratte, Erin Durant



OTTAWA FIRESIDE CHAT | March 14, 2018  
Tara Dibenedetto in conversation with  
The Right Hon. Beverley McLachlin



SOPINKA CUP | March 18, 2018  
Winners: Kelsey Angeley and Dominique Verdurmen  
McGill University

**Toronto Mentoring Dinner Series**  
Building Trusted Client Relationships | May 16, 2018 | Toronto



## YASC REPORT

# An Evening with the Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin: A Singular Event for Ottawa's Young Advocates

Sanam Goudarzi, *Department of Justice, Civil Litigation Section*



Winter ended on a high note for Ottawa's young advocates, who had the privilege of attending a very special Fireside Chat on Advocacy on March 14, 2018. YASC was honoured to have the Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, P.C., former Chief Justice of Canada, with us at the HMCS Bytown Officers' Mess in Ottawa for a relaxed and intimate interview with YASC member Tara DiBenedetto. Attendance at the event was limited to 40 Advocates' Society members of 10 years of call or fewer, which included a number of law students from the University of Ottawa.

Introduced by YASC member Max Binnie, Justice McLachlin imparted words of wisdom from a long and distinguished career culminating as the longest-serving

Chief Justice of Canada. To the young lawyers in the crowd, starting out their careers in advocacy, she spoke about the value of being flexible and open to new opportunities, and the utmost importance of civility. To those looking for advice on how to excel in their chosen careers, she recommended finding the thing in the law that makes you passionate—and then excelling at it. In words that will resonate not only with the young advocates in the room but with all of us in the legal profession, Justice McLachlin spoke about the significance of new technologies, and her hope that the profession will take advantage of them to ensure that cases move forward faster and at less cost. Guy Pratte from BLG provided the evening's concluding remarks.

The event was generously sponsored by Conway Baxter Wilson LLP and Soloway Wright LLP, and the team from Macallan who treated attendees to a tutored whiskey tasting. 🍷

## Mental Health in the Legal Profession: Renowned Psychiatrist Dr. David Goldbloom Weighs In

Lindsay Board, *Stockwoods LLP*



On March 13, I attended the YASC Fireside Chat on Mental Health. The session featured insight from renowned psychiatrist Dr. David Goldbloom, who was interviewed by Guy Pratte of *Borden Ladner Gervais LLP*. What follows are a few of my observations from the evening.

Open dialogue surrounding mental health in the workplace is becoming increasingly common. As Dr. Goldbloom mentioned, this, in itself, is a positive development. Much can be achieved simply by making mental health part of a productive conversation in a way that seeks to break down barriers and encourage people to be comfortable sharing their experiences.

There is little disagreement that more needs to be done to address mental health in the legal profession. The challenge is determining what, specifically, can be done to achieve this goal. Not surprisingly, the first thing lawyers typically turn to is drafting a policy. What the Fireside Chat made clear is that firms can benefit from consulting a mental health professional regarding what comes next

in terms of concrete steps.

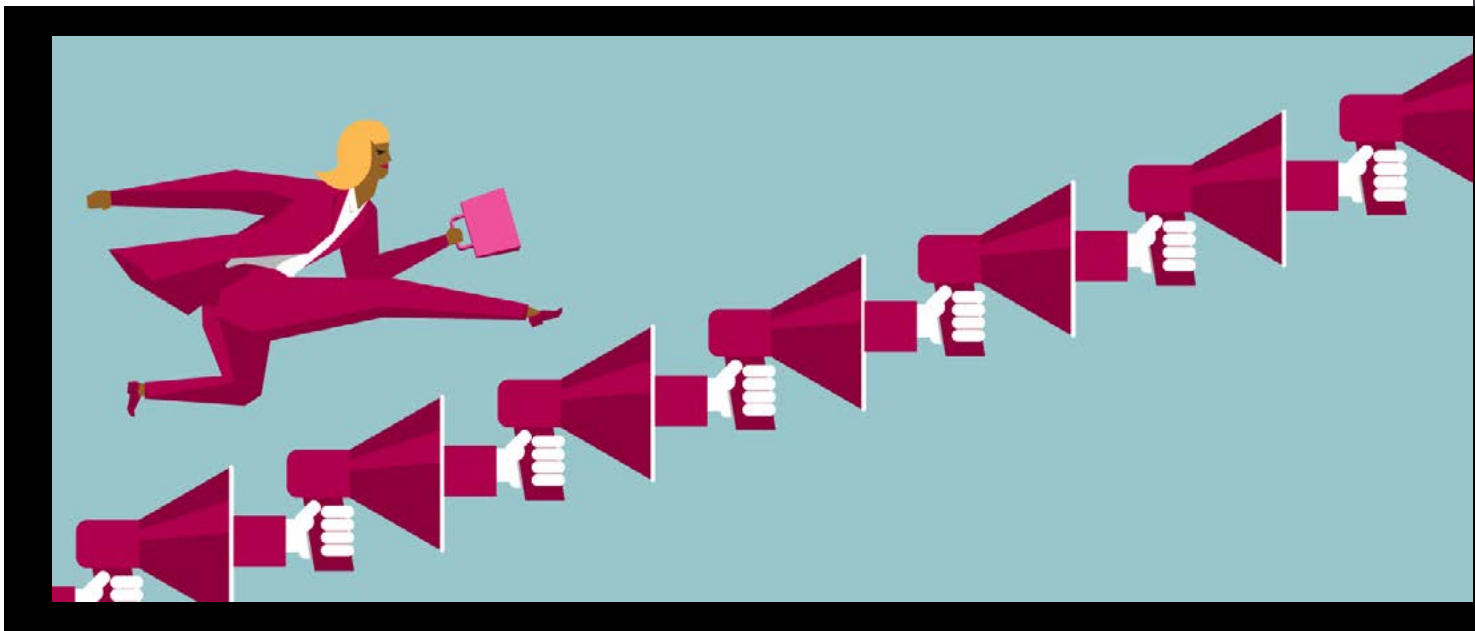
For example, Dr. Goldbloom suggested that employers should look at increasing employees' benefit entitlements for mental health services like counselling. Most employer plans cover up to \$500, which covers at most 2-3 sessions with a mental health professional. As Dr. Goldbloom stated, most behavioural therapies take about 10 sessions to make a real difference. Further, management needs to be trained extensively on mental health and crisis management.

On this last point, it strikes me that the legal community may be unique among workplaces. Many lawyers are sole practitioners, practise in chambers, or practise in small firms. In those cases, there is little or no formal management. More thought needs to be given to how to address mental health in these situations.

Finally, focusing on mental health in the legal profession needs to extend beyond a reactive approach. Although learning to manage and cope with mental health crises is a laudable goal, we should not lose sight of promoting mental wellness in the profession in a proactive way. As Dr. Goldbloom suggested, businesses that invest in initiatives to promote mental wellbeing see a high return on their investment in terms of employee productivity. The legal profession is no exception. ▀

**End of Term Dinner 2018 | June 7, 2018 | Toronto**

Be in the room for a Fireside Chat with the new Chief Justice Richard Wagner, P.C., in conversation with The Honourable Justice Michal Fairburn. [Click here to learn more.](#)



## YASC COMMUNITY

# Young Advocates Speak Up

Louis Century, *Goldblatt Partners LLP*



Last year, the Law Society of Ontario (LSO) introduced a requirement that licensees “adopt and abide by a statement of principles acknowledging their obligation to promote equality, diversity and inclusion generally, and in their behaviour towards colleagues, employees, clients and the public.”

According to the LSO, the purpose behind this requirement is to reinforce existing professional obligations, such as the “special responsibilities of lawyers and paralegals to respect human rights laws and to honour the obligation not to discriminate in their dealings with others.”

Treasurer Paul Schabas has said that “eradicating racism in the legal profession involves recognizing it and reminding ourselves that we all have a role to play.” Out of the 1,450 articling students who responded to a recent LSO survey, more than one in six reported having experienced discrimination or harassment.

Licensees are not required to make their statements public. However, *Keeping Tabs* decided to check in with

our members to learn what some young advocates are doing to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in their practices. Here are excerpts from the statements of six young advocates:

**Atrisha Lewis, *McCarthy Tétrault LLP***

“My specific and actionable commitment to diversity in the profession is two-fold. First, I am committed to speaking up for myself and for others whose voices are not always heard. I will speak up by tweeting, writing in legal publications, and advocating privately about what diversity and inclusion looks like. Second, I am committed to mentoring and sponsoring diverse lawyers, and in particular female minority licensees. I am committed to taking the time to give them constructive feedback so they can be the best lawyers they can be. I am committed to ensuring others hear about their accomplishments and strengths so that new opportunities come their way.”

**Michael Fenrick, *Paliare Roland Rosenberg Rothstein LLP***

“I commit to listening to the experiences of racialized people and Indigenous peoples. I recognize it may be difficult to tell me, a white man, about those experiences, but that does not relieve me of my responsibility. I must read Indigenous authors. I must watch films, listen to podcasts and read articles created or written by people of colour. I need to learn about the multigenerational impact of colonialism in Canada. I commit to trying my best to understand the impacts of racism on the people I know, the justice system, the workplace and beyond. I also aspire to have the humility to know

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October 19-20 2018 | The Westin Trillium House, Blue Mountain



that there is always much to learn.”

**Thomas Milne, Nahwegahbow,  
Corbiere Genodmagejig**

“A commitment from the lawyers, judges, and individuals working in the justice system to promote equality, diversity and inclusion cannot be understated, as a sea change is required to address the injustice experienced by Indigenous and racialized peoples in an institution that is supposed to be unbiased and unprejudiced. My commitment therefore is to institutional and systemic change, in hope of reducing the barriers created by racism, unconscious bias and discrimination, for the benefit of my Indigenous and racialized clients, the public, and young Indigenous and racialized lawyers to come. Advancing equality and enhancing diversity and inclusion is an important commitment for all lawyers, and it is central to maintaining the integrity of the legal profession in the eyes of the public.”

**Annamaria Enejajor,  
Ruby Shiller & Enejajor, Barristers**

“I commit to being more mindful of the different barriers to accessing the legal profession that exist for racialized licensees. I will work towards

removing these barriers by providing mentorship to aspiring lawyers who struggle to negotiate cultural differences and obscure concepts such as “fit.” More concretely, I commit to being an advisor for the McGill Faculty of Law Women of Colour Group—a commitment I made in 2017 after reflecting on my professional obligations. I also commit to challenging the myth that competence is somehow sacrificed when we seek to strengthen diversity. I will write and speak publicly on the importance of equity and inclusion, and seek to provide a space so that the voices of other racialized lawyers can be heard as well.”

**Chris Horkins,  
Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP**

“In my Statement of Principles, I am committing to a reality check. I commit to acknowledging and confronting the realities of systemic racism in our profession. I commit to acknowledging, recognizing and checking the privileges I have and the unconscious biases that I hold. I commit to treating clients, colleagues, prospective colleagues, opposing counsel, court staff and the public with equal respect. I commit to mentoring and supporting junior lawyers in my firm who do not look like

me. Most of all, I commit to listening and learning from my racialized licensee peers, to take seriously their concerns and to do my part to be part of the solution and not the problem.”

**Louis Century, Goldblatt Partners LLP**

“Systemic discrimination in the legal profession is real, and it privileges me. As a white male, I am given the benefit of the doubt; I am perceived to “fit”; my path is easier. I deserve no credit for acknowledging this reality; what matters is what I do. First and foremost, I will listen and pay attention. I commit to really listen to women, racialized and Indigenous lawyers, and to support them in their efforts. I commit to a practice of naming, credit-giving, promoting, and opportunity-enhancing. I commit to interrogate my own unconscious biases and to confront discrimination when I witness it in others. When I fail, I commit to reflect and engage with colleagues so that I can do better next time.”

*If you are interested in sharing your personal commitments to promote equality, diversity and inclusion, please contact Louis Century of Goldblatt Partners LLP at [lcencyury@goldblattpartners.com](mailto:lcencyury@goldblattpartners.com).*

**UPCOMING YASC EVENTS**



**Halifax Pub Night**

May 9, 2018  
Halifax

*To learn more  
click here*



**Thunder Bay Pub Night**

May 10, 2018  
Thunder Bay

*To learn more  
click here*



**Toronto Mentoring Dinner Series**

May 16, 2018  
Toronto

*To learn more  
click here*



**Vancouver Fireside Chat**

May 16, 2018  
Vancouver

*To learn more  
click here*



## IN THE NEWS

### Young Advocates in the News

In this feature, we will highlight TAS young advocate members in the news. All of the lawyers profiled have been called to the bar in the last ten years.

If you or a fellow young advocate has had a recent brush with the media about your/their work on a case, please forward the news story link to:

Andrew Eckart, [andrew@eckartmediation.com](mailto:andrew@eckartmediation.com); or

Louis Century, [lcentury@goldblattpartners.com](mailto:lcentury@goldblattpartners.com)

[Toronto lawyer serves claim with Instagram](#), *Canadian Lawyer*, February 2, 2018. Tara Vasdani, associate at Mason Caplan Roti LLP (now an associate at MacDonald & Associates), obtained an order for substituted service, allowing her to serve a statement of claim through Instagram and LinkedIn. According to Tara, this is just one example of how the use of technology is creeping into the legal profession.

[Man charged in shooting death of Yosif Al-Hasnawi will plead not guilty](#), *CBC*, March 7, 2018. Owen Goddard of Breese Davies Law is representing the accused, charged of second-degree murder in the shooting of Yosif Al-Hasnawi in Hamilton, Ontario.

[Victim's family again denied chance to confront careless driver](#), *CBC*, February 28, 2018. Warren WhiteKnight of Bergeron Clifford LLP is representing a husband whose wife was killed in a motor vehicle accident near Cornwall, Ontario.

[McDonald's lease dispute highlights need for reasonable notice in revocation of waiver](#), *The Lawyer's Daily*, February 6, 2018. Andrew Parley and Margaret Robbins of Lenczner Slaght Royce Smith Griffin LLP, successfully represented his client in an appeal to the Ontario Court of Appeal. In this article, Andrew comments on the decision's significance for lawyers negotiating and drafting commercial leases. ▀



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## Interview with Nicola Langille, *Legal Aid Commission, Northwest Territories*

Compiled by Shannon Beddoe, *Martha McCarthy & Company*

1. **Q. Why did you become a litigator or advocate?**  
A. It fit my personality. For better or for worse, I tend to be argumentative, and I actually enjoy the adversarial process. When I started law school I didn't even know what "litigation" referred to (although I pretended I did). But once I figured it out and got a taste of it during a summer rotation at a firm, there was really no question that that's where I was headed.

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2. **Q. Which word do you prefer: litigator or advocate?**  
A. Advocate. It's a broader term than litigator and I think it better captures all we do.

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3. **Q. What is your year of call?**  
A. 2015 in Ontario and 2017 in the Northwest Territories.

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4. **Q. Which talent would you most like to have?**  
A. The ability to sleep on circuit planes.

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5. **Q. What do you like most about the practice?**  
A. Clients sharing their most personal stories with me, and trusting me to use that information to advocate on their behalf. It's a responsibility but it's also a great privilege.

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6. **Q. What is your greatest extravagance in your everyday life?**  
A. Good cheese. It will always be my kryptonite. I miss St. Lawrence Market in Toronto a lot!

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7. **Q. Which living lawyer do you most admire?**  
A. Bryan Stevenson, the founder and head of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) based in Montgomery, Alabama. He has devoted his life to improving the criminal justice system both through criminal litigation and by working to change the social circumstances that lead to crime in the first place. I got to work with Bryan while doing an internship at EJI in 2014, and it was a truly inspiring experience.

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8. **Q. If you weren't a lawyer, what would you be?**  
A. Probably a failed back-up singer.

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9. **Q. What is your most distinctive characteristic?**  
A. Endless (and needless to say high-quality) dad jokes.

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10. **Q. What would you consider your greatest achievement?**  
A. My 2017 March Madness bracket. This year's bracket doesn't need to be discussed.

Continued on page 10

11. **Q. What is your favourite case?**

**A.** *R. v. D.B.*, 2005 SCC 25, which established that the diminished moral blameworthiness of youth offenders is a principle of fundamental justice under s. 7 of the *Charter*. In my view, how we treat youths in the criminal justice system is one of the most important reflections of how good of a society we are. *D.B.* is the most significant Canadian precedent recognizing that youths are different from and must be treated differently than adults.

12. **Q. What is your greatest fear in practice?**

**A.** Being caught off-guard in court.

13. **Q. What is your favourite drink?**

**A.** Mulled wine. It's been a long, cold winter.

**14. Q. What is the latest non-legal book you've read?**  
**A.** I'm almost through *Late Nights on Air*, by Elizabeth Hay. It's a classic Yellowknife novel about the many reasons people end up moving to this city.

15. **Q. How would your colleagues describe you?**

**A.** I asked, they answered: "Great source of snacks. And also a fighter, big time. But most importantly, the snacks."

16. **Q. Who or what is the greatest love of your life?**

**A.** My boyfriend, Andrew, who I met here in Yellowknife. I definitely did not move here for the dating scene but somehow lucked out.

17. **Q. From whom have you learned the most about the practice of law?**

**A.** I've worked with and learned a ton from some incredibly experienced lawyers (including all the lawyers at my old firm, Henein, Hutchison LLP). Right now, I have three colleagues who are unbelievable mentors. They come to watch my trials and I am constantly bouncing ideas off them. I feel really fortunate to have that support. I also couldn't answer this question and leave out *Rumpole of the Bailey* ....<sup>1</sup>

18. **Q. What should us 'southern' advocates know about the life of a litigator in the NWT?**

**A.** The biggest difference I've found is that practice feels personal and immediate. It's a small bar, so you connect with the other lawyers in your field very quickly. We also spend a lot of time traveling on small planes to remote communities with the judges we appear before. And, because the communities are so small, we get to know our clients, their families, and their towns in a direct and meaningful way. I've learned so much from being here, and encourage anyone who's interested in northern practice to go for it. ▀

**Note**

1. Watch or read *Rumpole*. It has great advocacy lessons. —ed.

