

A Word for Justice



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JUSTICE FOR ALL

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*We've Been Helping People in
Western Canada Since 1990.*

MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ALLAN PARKER

Welcome to our Summer 2008 Edition of *A Word for Justice*. We appreciate the opportunity to share news of the many activities at Access Justice over the past few months. On the business side, we recently completed our 2008 Business Plan and held a directors' retreat. We were pleased to receive grants from the Vancouver Bar Association and the Notary Foundation of BC—we express our sincere gratitude to these two groups for their support.

I attended the Equal Justice Conference in Minneapolis during the first week of May. This is a three-day conference of public legal assistance organizations from around North America and this year there were over 1000 attendees. *Pro bono* organizations were well represented at the event: in addition to several American organizations, *pro bono* groups from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario were in attendance. Probably the most difficult choice during the conference is deciding on which of the seminars to attend, as there are several concurrent sessions during each of the conference segments. Some of this year's topics included

cultivating *pro bono* partnerships, using technology to market *pro bono* services and using video conferencing to access justice. The conference represents a great opportunity to network with others who are involved in *pro bono* services and to learn about their work. Resources, including a number of conference papers from this as well as past conferences, are available via the conference website:

www.abanet.org/legalservices/ejc/home.html



The 2007 Annual Report for Access Justice is now available at:
www.accessjustice.ca/donors/annualreports.asp.
Printed copies are also available by calling our office.

ACCESS JUSTICE COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach is a vital aspect of our work to help ensure that the message of accessing justice is shared as widely as possible.

The following is a summary of some of our recent outreach activities:

AM1320 RADIO PROGRAM

Access Justice introduced free legal resources in BC at a Chinese radio call-in program on Wednesday, May 28th. Representing Access Justice, Jimmy Yan spoke with the host, Ms. Fanny Zhou, and the other guest speaker, Ms. Yvonne Gan for 20 minutes. He then answered live telephone questions regarding how to access free legal assistance in BC.

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■ *People at Access Justice*

NEW CLINICS

Access Justice welcomes four new partnerships in clinic projects. We have recently opened a clinic in cooperation with the **Motivation, Achievement & Empowerment Society** on West 4th in Vancouver. MPA promotes the dignity and wellbeing of people with mental health issues and has served Vancouver area residents since 1971.

We have opened another clinic on the west side of Vancouver at **Steeves Manor**. We welcome being part of the social services provided to residents and to the general public in that neighbourhood. This clinic helps meet our client needs in central and west Vancouver as we are no longer able to operate a clinic at the Self-Help Resources office because of their growing space needs. Our thanks to Self-Help Resources for their past cooperation in supporting our clinic.

We have recently partnered with the **First Contact** program of the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army, to provide a clinic at Belkin House in Vancouver. The clinic is focused on providing services to recent immigrants.

We have joined with the Salvation Army to provide a clinic at their social service centre in **Langley**. Volunteer lawyers have been recruited by both the Salvation Army and Access Justice. Client bookings using the Access Justice database are made by both organizations.

MEET OUR STAFF

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new term Intake Coordinator, Zohar Barzilai. He has taken over in the position while Ashley Singh is away on parental leave. Zohar will be with us until the end of July, after which he will be off to the University of Western Ontario Law School.



Zohar has been working on an exciting website project with a small group of law students and law school applicants, and with the support of Jimmy Yan, our Project Manager and Web Advisor. The website (www.futurelawyer.ca) fills an information void for aspiring lawyers and future law students across Canada by providing information on anything from the LSAT to the application process to a comprehensive section comparing law schools in Canada. They are also in the process of publishing articles written by law students, lawyers and law professors on their site with the aim of providing unique insights into the lives of law students and lawyers from across the country.

Expect to see new articles published in

the near future! If you are a lawyer, law student or law professor and would like to contribute to this great new resource, please contact Zohar at contact@futurelawyer.ca.

HELLOS, GOOD-BYES & CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Finance Administrator Vivian Song who recently traveled to China for her marriage to husband Kevin. While Vivian was away Jacqueline Chen filled in assisting with our book-keeping, and we say thank you to Jacqueline for that.

We are saying goodbye to our Clinic Coordinator of two years, Jenny Lau. Jenny is taking up an exciting new position with North Shore Connections. We thank Jenny for her very faithful service with us and we wish her well. We have recently welcomed Frank Yates to fill Jenny's position. Frank is a young-at-heart retiree from Telus who has volunteered with us in the past as a Clinic Assistant. We look forward to benefiting from Frank's many years of work experience.



■ *Ride for Justice and Outreach*



FIRST ANNUAL LAWYERS' BIKE TO WORK FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICE A SUCCESS!

On the morning of Thursday, May 29, downtown commuters and pedestrians witnessed a parade of robed lawyers and supporters riding their bicycles from the Vancouver Public Library to the Vancouver Law Courts. The occasion was the first annual Lawyers' Ride to Work for Access to Justice, an event to honour the memory of the late Dugald Christie and to demonstrate of the importance of access to justice principles. The bike to work event was sponsored by the Western Canada Society to Access Justice and supported by the BC

Branch of the Canadian Bar Association (CBABC) and the Trial Lawyers Association of BC.

At the courthouse steps, Access Justice Chair Bruce Fraser, QC, noted

legacy—a legacy that continues through the *pro bono* services of many members of the BC Bar today. On behalf of the CBABC, Vice President Miriam Maisonville noted the ongoing concern of access to justice for low-income people because of the continued imposition of the PST on legal bills. Paris Simons, on behalf of the TLABC, spoke of the many daily access to justice challenges British Columbians face, including increased court filing fees, courthouse closures, and recent proposed changes to the Rules of Court.

We look forward to next year's event!



the symbolism of bicycle riding and justice issues that had been Dugald's

ACCESS JUSTICE COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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2008 LAW DAY

CBABC invited Access Justice to set up an information booth at its annual Vancouver Law Day event on Saturday, April 19. The 2008 Law Day's theme was Access to Justice: Breaking Down Barriers. Despite a snowstorm the previous night, over 100 people attended the event. Jimmy Yan, Jenny Lau, Carol Tse, and Vivian Song helped staff the society's booth. In Victoria, Access Justice Community Representative Carol Elliott participated in the Law Day display at the Law Courts building. Access Justice

brought its Canadian Charter poster to the event. Those present at the Law Day event were very excited to see our Charter poster and learn about our free legal services. Their response reaffirmed the importance of *pro bono* services to the general public.

SUCCESS BURNABY KOREAN WORKSHOP

The Korean Settlement Program Officer of Success, Lillian Kim, invited Access Justice to host a workshop at the Success Burnaby office on April 29. Former UBC Korean Jour-

nalism president John Kim and current president Peter Chung provided substantial support to us in terms of promoting and organizing the workshop. Twenty-five Korean Burnaby residents attended the event.

John Kim and Peter Chung hosted a 60-minute presentation in Korean about free BC legal service providers including Access Justice. Jimmy Yan, Project Coordinator at Access Justice, then answered questions from the audience in English, while John and Peter helped with the interpretation.

■ About Us

NEW RESOURCE AT OUR WEBSITE

Legal Help for Rural British Columbians

Access Justice is pleased to host this guide, prepared by lawyer Cliff Thorstenson through a grant from the Law Foundation. The guide covers several common legal topics including family law, criminal law, welfare and debt. The guide has a particular emphasis on services and self-help resources that can be of assistance to people in rural locations around the province. A link for the guide is available by clicking the "News" tab at our website.



UPCOMING EVENTS

September 17 - CLE Course: *Pro Bono Practice* 2008 (Vancouver)

September 18 & 19 - The Second National *Pro Bono* Conference (Vancouver)



DONATIONS

Every year, thousands of people on low and moderate income attend Access Justice's *pro bono* legal clinics. They receive one-on-one legal advice from qualified lawyers on a variety of matters including speeding tickets, assault charges, custody and access, maintenance, immigration, contracts and insurance. In 2007, approximately 4,000 people used an Access Justice *Pro Bono* Legal Advice Clinic because they were not able to afford a lawyer.

Please consider a donation to support our work: Access Justice, 1440 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6H 1M8 or donate online at www.accessjustice.ca.

WITH THANKS

Access Justice would like to express its deepest gratitude to the Law Foundation of British Columbia, the Ministry of the Attorney General, social agencies, lawyers, volunteers and law firms for your continued and generous support.



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Access Justice is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing legal advice to low-income clients.

For clinic information call 604-878-7400, toll free 1-877-762-6664 or visit www.accessjustice.ca.