

LCO / CDO

LIAISON

NEW BOARD CHAIR

Bruce Elman, former dean of law at the University of Windsor, began his three-year term as Chair of the LCO Board on September 1. The LCO also welcomes Board members Andrew Pinto, partner at Pinto Wray James LLP and Acting Deputy Attorney General Mark Leach.

LEARNING ON THE JOB



Left-Right: Eddie Clark, Jordan Birenbaum, Nathalie Kalina, Karla Bonilla and Rasha Rehman

University law students Eddie Clark (SJD candidate at U of T) and Jordan Birenbaum, Nathalie Kalina and Debjani Poddar (JD students at U of T, Osgoode and Ottawa, respectively) spent the summer months working on LCO projects, together with LCO Work Study student Karla Bonilla and Toronto high school student Rasha Rehman, who joined the team as part of the Law in Action Within Schools (LAWS) program.

Message from the Executive Director



All of us at the LCO were thrilled with the launch of our older adults final report this past summer, a milestone as we enter our sixth year of operation. You can learn more about how it was received in this issue of *Liaison*. Expect in December the release of

the final report in the older adults' sister project — a study of persons with disabilities. You'll also hear soon about a day-long event planned around these projects and our new project in capacity and guardianship.

Speaking of new projects, be sure to visit our website for the consultation paper on the *Forestry Workers Lien for Wages Act*.

You can also read inside about former Ontario Deputy Attorney General Murray Segal's significant role in creating and guiding the LCO through its first six years until his retirement from the Ontario Public Service May 31. I want to express my own appreciation to Murray, who was a terrific friend to the LCO.

Thanks to Professors Bev Baines and Kathleen Lahey for inviting me to their classes at Queen's Faculty of Law to spread the word about the LCO. For more on my October classroom visits, see my blog. I also met with Dean Bill Flanagan, faculty and students, as well as with community groups. I'll be visiting other law schools next term.

Patricia Hughes



Read the whole story online at www.lco-cdo.org

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LAW COMMISSION OF ONTARIO
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LCO at the United Nations

Older adult framework of “tremendous international benefit”

The LCO was an invited guest of the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) at a United Nations working group exploring the protection of the human rights of older persons. In August, staff lawyer Lauren Bates joined representatives of civil society and member states from around the world and shared details from the LCO’s newly released legal framework for evaluating laws, policies and practices affecting older adults.

“The LCO’s work has a valuable role to play at the international level in helping civil society and UN representatives understand how they might evaluate the effectiveness of existing legislation and policy initiatives,” says Bates of the UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) meeting in New York. “The questions they might ask were all questions we asked during our research.”

Released July 11 to the Honourable John Gerretsen, attorney general of Ontario, the LCO report represents four years of intensive research and consultation with older adults and the organizations and providers who support them. Guided by an advisory panel of experts, the project included several commissioned research papers and a conference on elder law.

“The work conducted by the LCO is ground breaking,” says Jane Barratt, IFA secretary general and LCO project advisory group member. “Until now there has been a paucity of robust thoughtful discussions and an absence internationally as to how best to examine the effect and effectiveness of laws as they relate to older people.”

Barratt expects the LCO report will prove of tremendous practical international benefit, alongside and beyond the dialogue within the OEWG.

“The LCO has been courageous in its intent and committed to protecting the fragility of vulnerable older people,” she says. “Their work has the potential to make a decisive difference in the lives of older people not only in Ontario, but nationally and internationally.” Barratt added, “Future research will respond to some of the most pressing issues facing Ontarians.”



The Honourable Attorney General John Gerretsen receives the Report from Chair of the LCO Board of Governors, Larry Banack



Violence against women modules in Ontario law schools

The LCO has launched a series of Ontario-wide law school curriculum modules on violence against women. Developed with funding from the Ontario Women’s Directorate, the modules

are intended as a roadmap to help professors set the context within every law course and explore key issues in courses such as ethics and professionalism, and family and criminal law.

“No matter what kind of law you practice, you have the potential to become involved in a file where violence against women is a factor,” says Pamela Cross, a lawyer and expert in violence against women, who served as coordinator of the initiative.

Queen’s University Professor Kathleen Lahey agrees academics can’t continue to leave the subject of violence against women up to individual instructors. The LCO is offering “an extremely well thought out solution to a serious problem.”

Lahey believes that “this has the potential to be a truly transformative project.”



*Read the whole story
online at www.lco-cdo.org*

The next generation of leadership

Board Chair aims to raise LCO profile



In his three-year term as chair of the LCO Board of Governors, Bruce Elman hopes to have the ear of Ontario's policymakers. The former law dean at the University of Windsor stepped

into the role September 1, on the heels of outgoing chair Larry Banack, who remains an LCO governor.

"Larry brought tremendous experience and knowledge to the Board as a professional mediator," says Elman, a specialist in constitutional law, freedom of expression, law and religion, and multiculturalism. "My niche will be bringing the reports to the attention of policymakers in the province to promote understanding of the issues and possible solutions."

Elman's history with the LCO stretches to its founding when, as chair of the Ontario Law Deans, he helped to secure the commitment of the province's law schools.

"Bruce is a great choice," says Banack. "He brings a fantastic academic CV and real historic insight."

Last governor standing



When former Ontario Deputy Attorney General Murray Segal retired from the LCO Board this past June, he became the last original governor standing. Segal joined the LCO prior to its founding in

2006, helping to shape what he calls the "tremendous success" of the organization to date.

"We have produced many ground breaking and influential reports, some of which have led to action and provided a terrific forum for the community-at-large," says Segal, now a private practitioner in Toronto.

"Murray always encouraged the broadest thinking possible," says Larry Banack, chair of the Board from 2009 to 2012. "He offered me the opportunity and permission to think outside-the-box to where a preeminent law commission could go."

"The fact that we had his support gave the initiative credibility with funders, the bar and the judiciary," agrees founding chair Patrick Monahan. "He is the sort of person you always want on your team."

For his part, Segal remains optimistic about the LCO's future. "We were fortunate to have had great leaders in Patrick, Larry and now Bruce working with Patricia, the Board and staff."

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