

LIAISON

LAW COMMISSION OF ONTARIO

Farewell message from Patricia Hughes



Eight years — an intensive eight years since the Law Commission of Ontario's launch in September 2007. This is my last Liaison message as executive director. I leave the LCO feeling that we have established ourselves as an

original and trustworthy law reform body that acknowledges that law and justice actors are part of a bigger world to be taken into account in fashioning law reform. We have consulted hundreds of people affected by areas of the law we have studied, and have established many reciprocally satisfying relationships with community groups and legal institutions in Ontario and elsewhere.

I'm unable to express here the depth of appreciation I have for our staff, legal (Lauren Bates, Sue Gratton and Sarah Mason-Case) and administrative (Laura Caruso and Amanda Rodrigues), our MAG Counsel, our funders and supporters, our advisory groups, the commitment of the Board of Governors, and friends and professional acquaintances I've been fortunate to make.

I know that Aneurin (Nye) Thomas, who assumes the role officially on December 15 after a period of transition, will have a challenging and rewarding time as executive director. And yes, perhaps I'm even envious that I won't be part of the excitement!

Patricia Hughes

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LCO Board names new executive director

Nye Thomas officially takes the helm on December 15



A legal professional with a long history of experience in policy development, access to justice and legal reform has been named the next executive director of the Law Commission of Ontario.

Aneurin (Nye) Thomas joins the LCO from Legal Aid Ontario (LAO), where he was director general of policy and strategic research. Most recently, Thomas was responsible for leading LAO's project to significantly expand financial eligibility and legal aid services in Ontario. He was accountable for the organization's dedicated strategies to improve access to justice for Aboriginal peoples, persons with mental illness and addictions, and victims of domestic violence, and he oversaw policy and research for the Ipperwash Inquiry. Thomas was selected by the LCO Board after an intensive, six-month-long search.

"Nye really understands the LCO's deep commitment to high quality research and evidence-based policy-making," says Board Chair Bruce Elman, who served as a member of the search committee led by Osgoode Dean and LCO Board member Lorne Sossin. "It's what he practiced at Legal Aid and what he sees as the prime imperative of the Law Commission going forward."

Among the many factors that attracted Thomas to the job are the LCO's ability to engage a diversity of stakeholders and provide sophisticated, independent analysis on contemporary issues. "I hope to continue the LCO's tradition of independence, constructive engagement, and rigorous legal and public policy analysis," he says.

Thomas is currently serving as the LCO executive director designate. He officially takes the helm from founding executive director Patricia Hughes on December 15.



Watch for Liaison's online tribute to Patricia Hughes following a reception in her honour on November 19.



Watch for Q&A with incoming LCO executive director Nye Thomas



See this?
Read more at www.lco-cdo.org

LCO seeks to improve last stages of life

Newest project launched in May



The LCO is wading into the complex and emotional end-of-life debate with the launch of its newest project. The Improving the Last Stages of Life project seeks to explore the role of the law in end-of-life care.

“We’ve seen a shift from an acute healthcare model focused on prolonging life, to a need for comfort and care that emphasizes quality of life, and physical, social and spiritual well-being,” explains

research lawyer Sarah Mason-Case. “The question is whether or not we have a legal system to support those changing needs.”

Since May, Mason-Case has completed a legislation and policy review, and reached out to more than 60 individuals and organizations to determine where the LCO might best be of assistance. The results of her analysis will be presented later this fall in the form of a project scoping document.

“Our aim is to provide clarity and coherence in the law,” says Mason-Case. “There should be a standard by which everybody is able to receive quality care in the last stages of life.”

Seeing double: Two MAG lawyers begin secondment

Two Ontario government directors are relishing the opportunity to dig deep into pressing legal issues during year-long secondments at the LCO.

Fran Carnerie, deputy legal director with the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, began her term as the LCO Ministry of the Attorney General Counsel-in-Residence in July. She’s lead on the class actions project, which asks if the more than two-decade-old *Ontario Class Proceedings Act* is still relevant. “It’s a luxury to research, analyse and immerse myself in the issues again,” she says. “It allows for truly creative and constructive thinking.”

Ken Lung agrees. A 24-year Ministry employee who most recently oversaw 175 lawyers as portfolio director in the legal services division of the Office of the Assistant Deputy Attorney General, he joined the LCO in June as a special Counsel-in-Residence. “After years as a Ministry manager, this opportunity is a good transition back to professional practice,” he says. Lung is applying his government know-how to a handful of LCO projects, including legal capacity and end-of-life care.



Fran Carnerie



Ken Lung

Board approves small estate report

A report aimed at providing small estates with a streamlined and affordable alternative to Ontario’s probate system was approved in August by the LCO Board of Governors. The report, which will be publicly unveiled on November 19, is directed at estates worth up to \$50,000.



IN BRIEF

Board chair renewed

LCO Board Chair Bruce Elman and at-large members Andrew Pinto, Mark Berlin and Maria Páez Victor have each been reappointed for a second three-year term, while Camille Cameron has resigned as the Law Deans of Ontario appointee. Cameron is now dean of Dalhousie’s Schulich School of Law.

Liaising with Lakehead

Canada’s newest law school is helping to strengthen the LCO’s academic ties as a member of the Law School Research and Liaison Group. Welcome to Dr. Mariette Brennan from the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law at Lakehead University.

Staff hand-off

Kudos to staff member Andrew Seo, whose term at the LCO concludes this fall. Welcome back Amanda Rodrigues.

Student learning

Thank you to summer students Lisa-Marie Williams (Osgoode), Pia Anthonyuttu (Western), and Jasmine Attfield and Samantha Peters (Ottawa); interns Greg Miles (U of Maryland) and Jenny Kim (Michigan State); University of Ottawa Fellow Ava Karbakhsh; and Radhika Sharma and Priya Khatri, who completed work study and LAWS placements respectively.



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