

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Kasari Govender, President

On behalf of Rise Women's Legal Centre (Rise), I would like to extend our gratitude to all our members, volunteers, community partners, donors, staff, Board, and our Community Advisory Committee. The concept for a women's legal clinic started at West Coast LEAF, where we had a vision that providing real representation services to women was not only necessary, but achievable. This vision has taken many years to come to fruition and has required the hard work and dedication of many individuals and organizations who endeavour to make a difference in the lives of women in their communities. Now is a time to celebrate what we have accomplished together.

When Rise was founded nearly two years ago, our goal was to provide accessible legal services that were inclusive of all women, regardless of age, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation and ability. Since opening our doors, more than 400 women, of various ages and abilities, born in 30 different countries and speaking 12 different languages, have walked through them and received legal assistance.

We would not be able to provide these essential legal services without the support of the University of British Columbia's Peter A. Allard School of Law, and our student clinicians, who are the backbone of our organization. Over the last year, we have had the pleasure of working alongside 20 amazing student clinicians, and had the privilege of watching them grow into new lawyers. Each student has surpassed our expectations by working diligently and fostering relationships of mutual respect and understanding with our clients. These relationships are mutually beneficial, as our students are continually inspired by the strength and resiliency that our clients demonstrate daily. We believe that our alumni, armed with what they have learned at Rise, will help transform the legal profession in British Columbia.

Looking forward to the year ahead, we are excited to announce two new projects. The Remote Service Project, funded by the Law Foundation of British Columbia, will allow Rise to improve and expand the legal services that we can provide to women in rural communities across British Columbia through the use of technology. Access to family law services remains the most significant unmet legal need for women across the province, and we hope this pilot project will help us learn how Rise can reach women in small communities who may not otherwise be able to access a lawyer. With generous funding from Status of Women Canada, we will also be partnering with the Center for Response-Based Practice to look at ways in which cross-disciplinary expertise can inform our understanding of family law and influence the way that we practice.

Finally, we look forward to continuing to build relationships with those around us – the connections we build within the community remain imperative to the long-term success of Rise. We look forward to your continued support as we move forward through our second year.



STAFF

[Kim Hawkins](#), Executive Director [Vandana Sood](#), Supervising Lawyer [Sheila Schierbeck](#), Operations Manager

We also work closely with [Raji Mangat](#), Director of Litigation at West Coast LEAF and liaison lawyer to Rise. Rise also wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance we received this year from temporary support staff [Claire Henwood](#), [Grace Lichtenwald](#), [Hailey Laycraft](#), and [Jasmine Nielsen](#).



The staff at Rise would like to give a special thank you to West Coast LEAF for their ongoing support, knowledge, and guidance.

West Coast LEAF plays a vital role in advancing women’s equality in British Columbia through education, law reform, and strategic impact litigation. In addition to taking the initial steps necessary to create a legal clinic for women, West Coast LEAF has given countless hours to Rise in our first year of operations in order to help us find our feet. We could not have done this without you.

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OUR SUSTAINING CIRCLE

The Sustaining Circle is a special group of donors who have pledged to support Rise with ongoing annual contributions, helping us plan for long-term sustainability. We thank the following individuals for their commitment to ensuring Rise’s future.

Nancy Bradshaw & Robert Brown

Judith Korbin

Alison Brewin

The Hon. Risa Levine

The Hon. Kirsti Gill

The Hon. Donna Martinson

Jenkins Marzban Logan LLP

.. and other generous Sustaining Circle members who have requested anonymity.

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FUNDERS



**PETER A. ALLARD
SCHOOL OF LAW**





GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Kasari Govender

The Hon. Risa Levine

Clea Parfitt

Featured Volunteer: Nermin Karim



I love how well organized and efficient Rise is. I really appreciate all the support structures in place for me when I volunteer there. Sheila feeds me soup just about every time I go, and everyone there is amazing. I'm surrounded by rockstars! It's the coolest thing. Because the support structures are there and it is so well organized I feel as though Rise maximizes the use of my time.

VOLUNTEERS

Clea Amundsen

Alison Brewin

Julie Brown

Kala Bryson

Louisa Chantler

Steven Coventry

Kaila Dotten

Andrea Glen

Patrick Grayer

Ryan Gunther

Tevia Jeffries

Paula Kalsi

Nermin Karim

Grace Lichtenwald

Salima Samnani

Sonali Sharma

Monique Shebbeare

Janos Sitar

Chantelle Wilson-Cole





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Noemi Argueta

Miryam Burns

Elizabeth Cameron

Michelle Casey

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Floriana Costea

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Maryann Dinh

Arash Ehteshami

Chris Holmes

Alice Huynh

Sarah Khan

Alyssa Leung

Samual Maroney

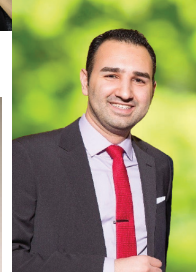
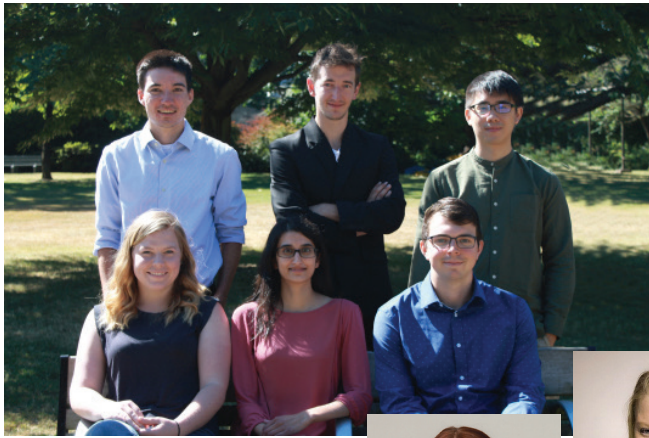
Ana Mihajlovic

Candice Minnaar

Jasmine Nielsen

Satkarand Sandhu

Kang Yang



Holiday Hampers with Hammerberg Lawyers

In the fall of 2016, Hammerberg Lawyers reached out to Rise with a wonderful offer. Every year, as part of their holiday tradition, Hammerberg creates customized gift baskets for families in the community who could use some extra cheer. Hammerberg invited us to partner with them by identifying some families from among our clients who might welcome a little help with their celebrations. After Hammerberg had assembled the hampers, they were hand-delivered to clients by staff at Rise. This was a special and rewarding experience for students, staff and clients.

We would like to thank Hammerberg for including us in their holiday tradition and for their generous support during this exciting first year. We're proud to count them among our friends in the legal community.



ABOUT OUR CLIENTS



- 65% of clients did not identify in survey
- 10% of clients self-identify as immigrants
- 9% of clients identify as having a disability
- 7% of clients identify as living outside of Vancouver and the Lower Mainland
- 6% of clients identify as Indigenous
- 3% of clients identify as LGBTQ

In 2017, with generous funding from the Notary Foundation of British Columbia, Rise partnered with wills and estates lawyer, Monique Shebbeare (*pictured*) to start a new wills drafting service at Rise. Our program fills a unique niche by focusing on drafting wills and related estate planning documents for women, and in particular for mothers who are concerned with ensuring that they have made provisions for the care of dependent minor children. This has been a very positive learning experience for our students and has helped Rise move towards our ultimate goal of being able to provide holistic legal services for women in BC. We would like to say a special thank you to Monique, who first proposed the wills clinic, and has donated many hours to make it happen.

RISE'S WILLS PROJECT





GUEST SPEAKERS

Shahnaz Akbari & Rosa Arteaga - *Introduction to Organizations Serving Women Who Have Experienced Violence*

Timothy Bailey - *Immigration Law: A Gendered Perspective*

Patricia Barkaskas - *Indigenous Women and Legal Issues*

JP Boyd - *Solicitor-Client Relationships: Understanding your Client's Narrative*

Henriette Chabot - *Clients with Mental Health Issues*

Leslie Chesick - *UBC Counselling*

The Hon. Judge J. Gary Cohen - *Family Court, Procedure and Family Court Counsellors*

Megan Ellis QC
Trial Advocacy

The Hon. Judge Judith Gedye -
Courtroom Conduct and Decorum

Mark Gervin - *Professionalism*

Andrea Glen - *FLA Forms and Family Law Procedure*

Kasari Govender & Laura Track - *Introduction to Rise*

Patrick Grayer & Marco Lilliu - *Affidavit Drafting*

Nikos Harris - *Evidence in Family Law*

Katrina Harry - *Child Protection Practices*

Kim Hawkins & Vandana Sood - *Interviewing Skills*

Helen Huzzey - *Ethics*

Zarah Jimale - *Mediation and ADR in High-Conflict and Abuse Cases*

Paula H. Kalsi - *Client Management*

DJ Larkin & Elin Sigurdson - *Law and Social Change*

Vicky Law - *Family Violence Screening*

Vicky Law, Margaret Florczyk & Andrea Vollans

Introduction to Organizations Serving Women Who Have Experienced Violence

Rhona Lichtenwald & Shelina Neallani - *Mediation and ADR in High-Conflict Family Violence Cases*

Dana-Lyn Mackenzie - *Cultural Competency and Working with Indigenous Clients*

Sarah Marsden - *Client Interviewing*

The Hon. Donna Martinson - *Children's Law*

Dinyar Marzban QC - *F8 Financial Statements & Financial Disclosure*

The Hon. Master Leslie Muir - *Chambers Practice*

Annette Murray - *Working with Clients on Persons with Disabilities*

Amber Prince & Amita Vulmiri - *Working with Poverty Law Issues*

Lobat Sadrehashemi - *Understanding Client's Stories*

Salima Samnani - *Client Interviewing and Counselling*

Monique Shebbeare - *Wills Clinic*

Adrienne Smith - *Trans & Gender Diversity*

Andrea Stevenson & Andrew Gay - *Clio Training*

Zara Suleman - *FLA: Family Violence Provisions and Nuts and Bolts of the FLA and Practice Management*

Zara Suleman, Shahnaz Rahman & Amy S. Fitzgerald - *Family Violence, Gender and the Law*

Kaya Tecza - *Trauma-informed Practice and Self-care*

Andrea Vollans, Tina Huyen & Ana Vilma Gomez
Introduction to Organizations Serving Women Who Have Experienced Violence

Dr. Allan Wade and Dr. Linda Coates - *Psychological Assessment & Response-Based Testing*



SPECIAL VISITORS IN 2016-2017

The Hon. Jody Raybould-Wilson, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

The Hon. Chief Judge Thomas Crabtree, Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of British Columbia

The Hon. Chief Justice Robert Bauman, Chief Justice of the British Columbia Court of Appeal



The Hon. Jody Raybould-Wilson with Board members, supporters, staff and students on November 26, 2016.



The Hon. Chief Judge Crabtree with Rise students on July 7, 2017.