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**Attention: Members of the New Brunswick Young Lawyers Section**

Re: Young Lawyers – CBA, National Directorate Conference November 6-8, 2009

It is my pleasure to report to the Members of the New Brunswick Young Lawyers Section on the interesting ideas and events which are happening across the country for lawyers who are newer to the practice. The Young Lawyers-CBA National Directorate Conference was held November 6-8, 2009 in Ottawa. This meeting saw Branch Chairs from every Province and Territory in attendance for a weekend long session of collaboration on the issues affecting newer lawyers.

This National Directorate conference began with presentations on ongoing Young Lawyers Sections initiatives as well as new initiatives. One new initiative is the development of a section on the CBA website where lawyers can track their professional development. In many provinces, continuing professional development has now become mandatory, and lawyers are expected to devote a certain number of hours throughout the year to continuing legal education and learning. In some provinces where the minimum development is not attained, fines are imposed. In New Brunswick this has not yet become mandatory however this is something the Law Society of New Brunswick is contemplating.

Some ongoing Young Lawyers Section initiatives include Pro-Bono Call-in Days which have been instituted in various provinces and allow individuals in the community to speak to a lawyer on specific legal questions during designated days with the goal of improved access to justice. Podcasts are also now available on the CBA website on varying topics including networking, Pro-Bono as well as information on work life balance for lawyers.

The topic of work life balance was explored at length at sessions amongst all the Young Lawyers Branch Chairs which helped to develop new ideas to assist newer lawyers attain a satisfactory work-life balance while acknowledging the various pressures facing this demographic. This session reviewed the differences in the challenges that newer lawyers face as compared to senior lawyers who may have a more traditional home life. The feedback provided during this session will be used to help implement

and design better products and services aimed specifically at newer lawyers in hopes to achieve work-life balance and associate retention.

The various Branch Chairs shared ideas and updated the Directorate on events which are happening in their home province. Through these discussions I learned that in New Brunswick, young lawyers are fortunate because if they are under the age of 40 years old or have less than 10 years at the Bar, then there is no fee for membership in the Young Lawyers Section. This is not the case however in many of the other provinces across Canada where lawyers have to pay for each section that they wish to be involved in.

Some of the events which other Young Lawyers Sections have undertaken and which our current New Brunswick Young Lawyers Section executive will consider for implementation in our province include:

- Timeraisers, which is an event held where volunteer time is auctioned for artwork. An individual will bid on a piece of artwork with volunteer hours and if the individual wins the bid then the art is held and displayed by the agency where the volunteer work will be done. Once the pledge has been fulfilled, then the volunteer receives their artwork.
- Submissions to governments to have the articling year considered as education so that articling students do not have to repay their student loans until six months after their articling year has been completed.
- Sessions on how to work effectively with your Legal Assistant.
- Beer tastings, scotch tastings and wine and cheeses as networking/social events and as a means for young lawyers to meet the judiciary.
- Golf primers for newer lawyers who may need help with their golf game.
- CLEs on various emerging areas of law such as "Insolvency 101" and "Securities 101".

It is with sincere gratitude and appreciation that I had the opportunity to attend this conference. I look forward implementing various ideas in the New Brunswick Young Lawyers Section and seeing all of you at upcoming Young Lawyers events.

Yours very truly,

**BARRY SPALDING**



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