



Be-LEAF in Equality! ... News from the frontline ...

The Bi-monthly Email Update of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund February 2006

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Hello LEAF Supporters!

We hope everyone had a joyfully festive holiday season. As we begin a new year, there are many exciting plans in the works across the LEAF family. This email update highlights our ongoing work and invites your participation in shaping the future of LEAF.

Legal Update

DBS v. SRG

On January 16, 2006 LEAF heard that Mr. Justice Binnie of the Supreme Court of Canada had denied LEAF leave to intervene in *DBS v. SRG*. No reasons for the denial were given; the applications made by other organizations for leave to intervene were also denied.

DBS v. SRG concerns the issue of child support and the entitlement of recipient spouses, predominantly mothers, to increased child support following an increase in the income of payer spouses, who are predominantly fathers. The jurisprudence that has developed around retroactive child support has developed inconsistently across the country and has the potential to disadvantage women and children, and to leave women at an increased risk of poverty following relationship breakdowns.

We are attempting to have LEAF's factum in *DBS* published so that we can share with other equality rights advocates the equality analysis that LEAF developed relating to the critical issue of retroactive child support. We will keep you posted as to when it will

be available on the LEAF website. www.leaf.ca

We want to hear from you

Many of you may know that LEAF National is undergoing a restructuring process to transition us to a new structural model that will ultimately increase our capacity to engage in a range of litigation, law reform and public legal education activities.

We are also using this period to assess the equality landscape to determine where there may be gaps for LEAF to fill or areas where we can add value. Information about regional, provincial and national issues gathered through consultation with branches, supporters, sister organizations and others will help establish the priority areas of LEAF's work for the next three to five years.

We invite you to share with us what you think should be the priorities for LEAF into the future in litigation, law reform and public legal education. Some examples include:

- how to deal with claims of competing equality rights;
- how to use international law to challenge women's inequality in Canada;
- what public legal education tools could be most effective in advancing women's equality and to what audiences;
- how to litigate claims of gendered racism and gendered disability more effectively;
- what legislation, policies or procedures should be addressed to remedy women's poverty, increase access to justice or end male violence against women, etc.

We want to hear from you about the priorities relating to women's equality rights in Canada today. Please send us your email at info@leaf.ca by March 31, 2006.

LEAF Volunteer Recruitment

As of June 2006, LEAF will be operating under a new organizational structure that will see an expansion of new and existing committees. This new structure was designed to help us do more and in a sustainable way. There are now even more opportunities for friends and supporters of LEAF to be involved in advancing women's equality. LEAF is recruiting volunteers for the board, committees and legal subcommittees. If you are interested and have skills that you think will be of value to us, please consider applying.

LEAF offers an engaging environment for women interested in equality rights. Most meetings are held by conference call and work done via email. Some committees and the Board of Directors meet in-person at various times during the year. We encourage applications from women of diverse backgrounds and from across the country. For more information on the recruitment notice and supplementary details please visit our website at www.leaf.ca. Deadline for applications is February 28, 2006.



Upcoming Events

West Coast LEAF's 19th Annual Equality Breakfast 2006

West Coast LEAF will hold its 19th Annual Equality Breakfast, proudly presented by VanCity, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver on Friday, March 10th, 2006.

In celebration of International Women's Day, the Equality Breakfast is a highly anticipated fundraising event attended by professionals from the legal, business, academic and social service sectors. Proceeds from the event support public legal education programs in schools around BC, particularly the "No Means No" violence prevention program. The event will feature guest speaker, Senator Mobina Jaffer, as well as a silent auction and first-class breakfast courtesy of the renowned Hyatt chefs.

Please reserve your tickets in advance. For tickets and other information, please contact Joyce Lee, Breakfast Coordinator, at 604-684-8772 ext. 116 or at breakfast@westcoastleaf.org. The venue is wheelchair accessible.

LEAF National RBC Equality Day Dinner

In celebration of Equality Day, LEAF will be hosting its fifth annual RBC Equality Day Dinner on Wednesday April 19, 2006. Co-hosted by Mr. Charles Coffey, Executive Vice President of Government and Community Affairs at RBC Financial Group, the dinner will be held at Royal Bank Plaza in Toronto. Mr. Coffey has been a supporter of LEAF for many years and has hosted this special fundraising dinner for 60 invited guests since 2000. The guest speaker for this event will be confirmed shortly.

If you are in the Toronto area and would like to attend the RBC Equality Day Dinner, please contact Audrey Johnson at a.johnson@leaf.ca. The venue for this premier fundraising event is wheelchair accessible and limited to sixty guests so please reserve your place in advance.



Holiday Campaign

Thanks to those of you who responded to our direct mail appeal sent in December. If you haven't already sent your gift, you will receive a reminder notice in the mail shortly. Please send your contribution to LEAF today. Your support enables us to continue to challenge unfair laws that prevent women from being full participants in the social, economic and political life of our society. Thank you for being there with us.



Acknowledgments



their successful Persons Day events. Not to leave anyone out, we also extend warm and heartfelt thanks to all the other branches and ad hoc committees that organized Persons Day Breakfasts in 2005. Thanks to volunteers in Richibucto, Kitchener, Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Edmonton for their efforts and continued support.

We also acknowledge the Toronto Persons Day Breakfast committee for organizing a tremendously successful event, which featured Senator Vivienne Poy as the guest speaker and raised nearly \$85,000 for LEAF. Some on the committee will be stepping down from their posts after many years of organizing the Toronto event. We thank them all for their dedication and hard work. Thanks very much to: outgoing breakfast chair, Marie Rounding, and to Pam Agnew, Terry Bissett, Karen Brock, Mary Hellin, Judith Finlayson, Kate Love, Eva Lum, Louise Mitchell, Lynda Newmarch, Jennifer Scisizzi, Beth Atcheson and coordinator, Sonnia Kim.

More Information

The LEAF Email Update is published every two months. The next Update will be sent in April 2006. If you have questions about anything in this email or about the work of LEAF, please contact us at info@leaf.ca or 1-888-824 LEAF (5323) or visit our website at www.leaf.ca.

Donate Today!

Your donations enable LEAF to pursue our work to ensure equality for all women and girls in Canada. Thank you for your ongoing support!

For more information, or to make a tax-deductible donation to LEAF:

- Call (416) 595-7170 x 228
- Email: donate@leaf.ca
- Mail your donation to LEAF, 2 Carlton St., Suite 1307, Toronto, ON M5B 1J3
- Donate online through CanadaHelps.org
- Charitable # 10821 9916 RR001

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email: info@leaf.ca

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