

Women's Legal Education  
and Action Fund  
Fonds d'action et d'éducation  
juridiques pour les femmes

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

2017  
2018



Women's Legal  
Education and  
Action Fund | Fonds d'action et  
d'éducation juridiques  
pour les femmes



## OUR MISSION

The Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) has been speaking with a proud feminist voice for almost 35 years. LEAF works to advance the substantive equality rights of women and girls through litigation, law reform, and public education using the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

LEAF is unique among Canadian charities. We bring our legal expertise to constitutional law and act strategically to make legal arguments that can have a significant impact on all women and girls. Women's rights have been tested, and strengthened, through our advocacy work. Since 1985, we have intervened in landmark cases that have advanced equality in Canada. Our landmark victories have created real change in women's lives—helping to prevent

violence, eliminate discrimination in the workplace, allow access to reproductive freedoms, provide better maternity benefits, and ensure a right to pay equity.

LEAF's vital work is only possible with the support of pro bono counsel, community partners, and our generous donors. Together, we are making a lasting contribution to women's rights in Canada.

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## A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

This has been a particularly exciting year for Canadian feminist advocacy, and LEAF has been at the very centre of policy networks pushing forward the struggle for substantive equality.



Lise Gotell,  
LEAF Board Chair

Drawing on our long history of advocacy on sexual violence, we have tried to shape proposed changes to the Criminal Code provisions on sexual assault to ensure that women who are assaulted, while incapable of consenting, receive justice. In preparing our submissions to House of Commons and Senate committees, LEAF was able to draw on a nation-wide network of feminism lawyers and academics who are leading experts on sexual assault law.

Together with key advocacy groups we have struggled to push Canadian governments to honour constitutional and international commitments to equality rights. With the Institute for Advancement of Aboriginal Women, we made a submission to the independent inquiry into the treatment of the complainant known as Angela Cardinal, an Alberta Cree woman who suffered a brutal sexual assault and was herself incarcerated as a “flight risk” during the preliminary inquiry in this case. LEAF played a key role within a coalition of human rights groups pushing for federal-provincial-territorial action on gender equality. We made submissions to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women demanding national action plan, protesting the lack of action on violence against Indigenous women and offering recommendations to address the pervasive problems of sexual violence and cyber-violence.

LEAF’s policy and law reform work reinforces our litigation work and helps to advance the equality rights Canadian women and girls. And with LEAF Branches we delivered important public education, promoting the understanding of women’s legal rights through our programs, *Only Yes Means Yes*, *Reproductive Justice* and *LEAF at Work*. All of this work to make gender equality a reality relies upon generosity of donors and the incredible commitment of our volunteers.

Lise Gotell,  
LEAF Board Chair

## A MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At times, the Supreme Court of Canada's decisions seem abstract, relating to technicalities that only lawyers care about. At other times, those decisions have been incredibly tangible and have had a direct impact on my life, and my friends and family members.



Geeta Sehgal,  
*LEAF Interim  
Executive Director*

Over the past year, I have often wanted to personally thank the visionary people who have helped the Supreme Court understand how the law affects so many people like me. People making their own decisions about their reproductive systems. Survivors seeking to be treated fairly when reporting sexual assault. Same-sex couples who deserve equal legal protections when relationships end. We all have a greater ability to make choices and participate as equal members of society because over the past 33 years, LEAF's lawyers, volunteers, and donors have seen how important it is to protect and promote the equality provisions of the *Charter*, leading to a real difference in so many people's lives. I am so grateful for the foresight and generosity of these individuals.

I am also immensely grateful for the LEAF supporters who recognize the importance of fighting for equality in new ways. As the courts consider whether doctors should be obligated to refer patients for abortion services or provide care for transgender patients, whether teenagers' privacy rights should be respected in their high schools, and whether people can consent to a life-threatening degree of force in sexual activity, legal decisions continue to have a real effect on our lives. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to every LEAF supporter who is contributing now to make sure people continue to be protected in the future.

Geeta Sehgal,  
*LEAF Interim Executive Director*

## A REPORT FROM OUR LEGAL DIRECTOR

I am so excited to be at LEAF! For years, I was very aware of its impressive work in fighting for women's equality. I was also drawn to its current work and priorities, including combatting discrimination and violence against Indigenous women and girls, addressing pervasive, gendered sexual violence, and achieving pay equity for women in Canada. Since arriving here, I have felt even more inspired. I am so grateful for my talented colleagues and for our incredible partners – the many individuals and organizations who devote their time, energy and brilliance to contributing to LEAF's important work.



Shaun O'Brien,  
Legal Director, LEAF

There is always so much work to be done, but we can celebrate some significant achievements. Recently, LEAF was a member of a coalition that argued two cases related to pay equity before the Supreme Court of Canada. The Court accepted many of our arguments, has recognized pay equity as a fundamental human right, and acknowledged that systemic sex discrimination is responsible for the pay inequity women experience. These are both bedrock principles that now will assist ongoing efforts to achieve pay equity for women in Canada. I also am very proud of the work LEAF continues to do, together with our partner the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women, on behalf of Cindy Gladue. Cindy Gladue, an Indigenous woman, died as a result of a violent sexual encounter. LEAF has argued and will continue to argue that she was treated in a discriminatory and inhumane manner by the justice system. We will insist on a robust, equality-enhancing treatment of sexual violence in the courtroom, while also fighting for a recognition of Cindy Gladue's humanity both inside and outside the justice system. Cindy Gladue was a daughter, a mother, and a valued community-member. I am proud that LEAF is continuing to honour her memory and stand up for her rights.

We could not do any of this without the support of our partners, *pro bono* counsel, and our generous donors. Thank you.

Shaun O'Brien,  
Legal Director, LEAF

## PROFILE – Pro Bono Lawyer



Gillian Hnatiw

I heard about LEAF during law school and was in awe of all it has done over the past 30 years to help improve laws for women in Canada. I believe in the power of the law to effect meaningful social change, and there is still so much to be done to achieve meaningful equality for all women and girls in this country. By giving 50 to 100 hours of pro bono time every year, I feel like I can make a meaningful contribution to this multi-generational fight. It's inspiring for me to cite cases argued by Elizabeth Shilton, a fellow LEAF board member, more than two decades ago. It's incumbent on the next generation of feminist litigators to continue that legacy.

## Thank You to Our Pro Bono Lawyers and Community Partners

*The following individuals donated countless hours to make Canada a more equal place for women and girls.*

Tope Adefarkhan	Nadia Effendi	Martha Jackman	Senweng Luk	Genevieve Painter
Moiria Aikenhead	Joanna Erdman	Laverne Jacobs	Raji Mangat	Debra Parkes
Jane Bailey	Fay Faraday	Holly Johnson	Sunny Marriner	Renee Pelletier
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Mary Eberts	Gillian Hnatiw	Megan Longley	Fran Odette	Alice Woolley



## RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

Earlier this year, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women presented her preliminary findings. She found that Indigenous women are physically and sexually assaulted almost three times more often than other women in Canada. "Indigenous women face marginalization, exclusion and poverty," she noted, "because of institutional, systemic, multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination that has not been addressed adequately by the State." With your support, LEAF is standing up now to ensure that Indigenous women's *Charter* rights to equality and security are recognized.

### R v. BARTON

The death of Cindy Gladue is tragic in so many ways. She was only 36 when her body was found in a hotel bathroom in 2011, and she was dehumanized throughout the following murder trial, constantly referred to as a "Native girl" and a "prostitute".

In partnership with the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW), LEAF has sought leave to intervene at the Supreme Court of Canada to advocate for the rights of Cindy Gladue and all Indigenous women.

When Bradley Barton first went on trial for her murder, the jury accepted the defense argument that Gladue had consented to rough sex and her death was an accident. In 2016, IAAW and LEAF intervened at the Alberta Court of Appeal, arguing that the trial judge should not have allowed evidence of Gladue's sexual history without an admissibility hearing. We also argued that he did not properly instruct the jury on the law of consent, that consent to one form of sexual touching does not mean consent to other forms of touching, for example. The Court of Appeal unanimously agreed that "myths and stereotypes continue to stalk the halls of justice in cases involving sexual offences" and "inequality falls most heavily on women since sexual assault has been and continues to be, largely a gender-based crime."



Earlier this year, the accused appealed to the Supreme Court, and IAAW and LEAF are again seeking leave to intervene. Again, we'll argue that racist and sexist stereotypes have no place in our courtrooms, and that women have the right to consent, or not, to what happens during any sexual activity and how it happens.

Cindy Gladue was a daughter, a mother, a woman who deserves justice.

## R. v. BLANCHARD

LEAF has also partnered with the Institute for the IAAW to argue for justice for Indigenous women in the provincial review of *R. v. Blanchard*. In October 2017, we filed a joint submission with Alberta's independent review of the circumstances surrounding the treatment of "Angela Cardinal", an Indigenous woman and a survivor of a vicious sexual assault at the hands of Mr. Blanchard. During the trial, Cardinal was subjected to horrific treatment: remanded into custody, forced to testify in shackles, and transported to and from the court together with the accused.

LEAF and IAAW have drawn attention to the ways in which racism, colonialism, and sexism create systemic and targeted violence against Indigenous women. We also put forward several policy recommendations, such as initiating an Alberta Indigenous Justice Inquiry—including directions on protecting equality and privacy rights in the *Crown Prosecutors' Manual*—and providing independent legal representation to sexual assault complainants.

## CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION V. ATTORNEY GENERAL (CANADA)

In November 2017, LEAF and the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) appeared at the Supreme Court of Canada to advocate for Indigenous women's access to justice.

The case concerns two Indigenous families who sought recognition of their right to register for Indian status under the *Indian Act* before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. The Tribunal argued that challenges to the *Indian Act* should not be heard under human rights legislation but under the *Charter*, an argument accepted by the Federal Court of Appeal.

LEAF and NWAC argued that the Federal Court of Appeal's decision creates significant barriers to access to justice and equality for human rights complainants, and, in particular, for Indigenous women. All complainants should be able to choose to proceed in either the human rights tribunal or the court system.

In June 2018, the Court upheld the Tribunal's finding. While we are disappointed with this ruling and what it means for the capacity of First Nations women to challenge the sexist registration provisions in the *Indian Act*, LEAF will continue to seek opportunities to challenge these discriminatory policies and support the equality rights of Indigenous women.

## NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

LEAF is an active member of the Legal Strategy Coalition on Violence Against Indigenous Women (LSC). In April, 2018, the LSC submitted a discussion paper to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women highlighting Canada's persistent failure to address systemic bias in the legal system. For decades, we've known the solutions: for example, the *Indian Act* could be amended to allow women equal ability to pass on status. This racism

and sexism creates profound social and economic disadvantages, and fuels the crisis of murders and disappearances. If the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls does not adopt a feminist understanding of violence—rooted in the experience of Indigenous survivors—to address discrimination in the justice system, it will not fulfill its promise.



## SEXUAL VIOLENCE

In Canada, one in 20 sexual assaults are reported to police. Of those that proceed to trial (and most do not—in fact, charges aren't filed in more than half of cases), only about one in ten will end in a conviction. By partnering with LEAF, you are saying No to sexist policies and stereotypes. Together, we are bringing a feminist voice to the treatment of sexual violence in the courtroom.

### R. v. AL-RAWI

In May 2015, a woman was found—naked from the waist down, so intoxicated the police shook her awake—in the back of Bassam Al-Rawi's taxi. She'd been turned away from a bar and was going home, but the cab was nowhere near either of those places. She can't remember what exactly happened or her state of mind. Nonetheless, the first trial judge determined that, because the complainant *may* have been conscious at the time the sexual activity started, he was not convinced that she was incapable of consenting or, in fact, did not consent.

LEAF partnered with the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre to intervene in the subsequent appeal. We argued that, in cases involving intoxicated complainants, the court must engage a robust analysis of whether the complainant had the capacity to consent to sexual activity—and that doesn't just mean that the person was conscious. We also argued that, even when a complainant was too intoxicated to remember the events, the Court can rely on circumstantial evidence—in this case, the predatory and exploitative behavior of Al-Rawi. By making these arguments we suggested to the court that this acquittal enforced outdated stereotypes and victim-blaming, suggesting that intoxicated women are sexually available, "asking for it".

In January 2018, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal agreed that proof of unconsciousness is not required to find that the complainant was incapable of consenting, and agreed that courts can rely on circumstantial evidence of non-consent in circumstances such as these. The Court quashed the acquittal and ordered a new trial.



Alex Fidler-Wener, Gillian Hnatiw, and Karen Segal at the Supreme Court of Canada

## R v. JARVIS

Mr. Jarvis taught high school English. In the classroom, in the hallway, in the cafeteria, he secretly filmed students' cleavage with his camera pen.

Jarvis has been acquitted of voyeurism at trial, a decision upheld by the Ontario Court of Appeal. The appellate Court ruled that the students did not have a reasonable expectation of privacy, as required under the Criminal Code, because their school is "public".

In April 2018, LEAF intervened in this case at the Supreme Court of Canada. We argued that it is "reasonable" for girls to expect their teachers, who occupy a position of trust and authority, to respect and safeguard their autonomy and well-being. More broadly, LEAF argued that because

voyeurism disproportionately affects women, courts should apply an equality lens to this provision, and adopt a broad and contextual approach to privacy that recognizes women's reasonably held privacy expectations in both private and public places and provides meaningful protections.

This case is the first important test of the scope of the new criminal prohibitions on voyeurism. It will also have implications for the even newer criminal restrictions on non-consensual distribution of intimate images, often referred to as "revenge pornography", that only apply if the complainant had a reasonable expectation of privacy. These provisions are of critical importance for women's equality in the age of camera phones and social media.

## DUE JUSTICE FOR ALL

Recent high-profile trials have illuminated how traumatizing and challenging a sexual assault trial can be for survivors of sexual violence. In addition to advocacy in the courts, our legal team engages in law reform and policy advocacy to advance women's equality.

Accordingly, in 2016, LEAF partnered with METRAC Action on Violence and Women at the centre to begin Due Justice for All, a three-year project dedicated to improving access to justice for sexual assault complainants. The project, funded by Status of Women Canada, will examine whether there are viable alternative paths to justice for sexual assault survivors.

## BILL C-51

In October 2017, LEAF appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights to comment on proposed changes to sexual assault law in Bill C-51, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Department of Justice Act and to make consequential amendments to another Act*. Some of the proposed amendments will strengthen rape shield provisions, reduce discrimination in the trial process and enhance women's equality rights.

For example, the defence will be required to disclose any of the complainant's private records that he or she intends to use to challenge the complainant's credibility—a key issue during the trial of Jian Ghomeshi—and a complainant may obtain her own lawyer to challenge the relevance and admissibility of this evidence. However, LEAF also is advocating against some of the changes. In particular, we are concerned that provisions in the bill relating to a woman's capacity to consent will be misused by defence lawyers to the detriment of women.

## SUBSTANTIVE EQUALITY

For almost 35 years, you have made it possible for LEAF to ensure that our *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* recognizes the substantive rights of women. Our laws should not only speak to equality, but also they must make a difference in the day-to-day lives of women and girls in Canada.

### ATTORNEY GENERAL OF QUEBEC V. ALLIANCE DU PERSONNEL PROFESSIONNEL ET TECHNIQUE DE LA SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX, ET AL. ATTORNEY GENERAL OF QUEBEC V. CENTRALE DES SYNDICATS DU QUÉBEC, ET AL.

Working women in Canada still earn 31% less than men—a gap that widens for women of colour (37.5%) and Indigenous women (54%). Systemic sex discrimination in pay is embedded in policies and practices that have long tended to ignore, or to undervalue, work typically performed by women.

LEAF partnered with the Equal Pay Coalition and the New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity (the “Equity Coalition”) to appear in two cases before the Supreme Court in October 2017. Both cases involve provisions of the *Quebec Pay Equity Act*.

In *Centrale des syndicats du Québec*, LEAF and our partners supported a challenge to provisions that delayed the requirement to provide equal pay and denied retroactive pay to women who worked in female-dominated fields, such as child care workers, where there was no direct male comparator. In this way, women’s rights depended on the presence or absence of male-dominated job classes in the workforce.

In *Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux*, the Equity Coalition

supported a challenge to provisions that require workplaces to review their pay scales to ensure pay equity only once every five years—with no back-pay obligations—unfairly limiting women’s equality rights and denying women the right to any remedy. Pay equity is the product of systemic discrimination, and deeply rooted biases and prejudice. It takes active intervention to maintain equality.

We urged the Court to apply a robust equality analysis that recognizes how systemic discrimination structures women’s work in order to advance women’s right to pay equity and financial equality. In May, the Court released two rulings that can be counted as victories for women’s equality rights. It decided that while it is discriminatory for workers in female-dominated professions to be paid less, the government was justified in allowing the pay equity commission time to calculate fair compensation. It also ruled that a five-year delay in assessing pay gaps violates women’s equal rights under Section 15 of the *Charter*.

This is an important step toward income equality for women in Canada.

## ALBERTA BILL 17

In May 2017, Alberta introduced Bill 17, *The Fair and Family Friendly Workplaces Act* to amend the Employment Standards Code (ESC) and the *Alberta Labour Relations Code*. While the bill proposes important improvements toward gender equality in the workplace, such as job-protected leaves—including leaves for circumstances involving family responsibilities and domestic violence—LEAF believes it does not go far enough. There are still gaps in the ESC, and it is still not in compliance with existing human rights guarantees. LEAF made

several recommendations to the Alberta Workplace Legislation Review to improve gender equality under the ESC: for example, removing eligibility thresholds for family-related leaves, providing for the right to request flexible work arrangements, and establishing a task force to investigate solutions to the problem of work-family conflict.

The workplace is a key site of gender inequality in Canada, and the law can play an important role in rectifying gender disadvantage.

### PROFILE – Community Partner



Jackie Stevens,  
Executive Director, Avalon  
Sexual Assault Centre

LEAF and the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre share a commitment to improving access to the law for survivors and others. There's a disconnect between what the law says and how it works in relation to human rights. The work we're doing and the issues we're experiencing are shared with other groups across the country. By working with LEAF, we're able to affect change more broadly.

## EDUCATION

Women's equality rights must be recognized outside of the courtroom. LEAF's education programs empower people of all genders by teaching them about sexual rights, responsibilities, and the meaning of consent in law—essential knowledge they can apply to their everyday lives. Most of our public education is delivered at the community level by passionate and skilled branch volunteers supported by the national education program committee. Some of our most popular workshops include:



### LEAF AT WORK

*LEAF at Work* is a dynamic workshop for youth in grades 9-12. We analyze real-life scenarios as examples of the inequality they may encounter in the workplace and share how the *Charter* applies to issues such as sexual harassment, discrimination in government benefits, and hiring practices. We also discuss how gendered stereotypes are used to justify a lack of job opportunities and career advancement. These policies and practices have devastating impacts on women's self-fulfillment and economic independence. This should be the last generation to enter an unfair workforce.

### REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Women cannot always control the conditions under which they become pregnant or raise their families. Inadequate access to contraceptives or information about reproductive health, poverty or enforced economic dependence, sexual coercion or violence... these are just some of the issues that disproportionately affect women. LEAF's *Reproductive Justice* workshops highlight how the *Charter* can protect their reproductive rights.

### ONLY YES MEANS YES

LEAF's *Only Yes Means Yes* workshop provides resources to the community to explain consensual relationships, the role of gender discrimination in sexual assault, and their impact on women. Almost 20 years ago, the Supreme Court's decision in *R. v. Ewanchuk* clearly upheld that consent to any sexual activity is mandatory—and consent means saying Yes. *Only Yes Means Yes* describes the wide-reaching relevance of this decision and is one of LEAF's most successful educational programs.



### LEAF HALIFAX

**Tanisha Blackmore, Education Coordinator**

We hosted 8 Only Yes Means Yes and about 5 Reproductive Justice workshops. Our workshops have been delivered at junior high after school programs, women's prisons, a local Girl's conference that is held annually and during alternative orientation week programming at a local university. Our feedback is overwhelmingly positive with attendees often noting how engaging the interactive format is, or giving thoughtful suggestions that help us to be more accessible and effective. A big win for us this year was the generous contribution of a local artist who illustrated scenarios from the Only Yes Means Yes workshop to use as visual aids when delivering the workshop to groups where language can pose a barrier.

### LEAF TORONTO

**Erica Young, Chair**

In March 2018 we hosted a panel, Cyberviolence and Your Rights. Our panelists included: Angela Chaisson, criminal defence lawyer at Chaisson Law; Molly Reynolds, counsel at Torys LLP; Alexi Wood, founding partner at St. Lawrence Barristers LLP; and Tina Yang, lawyer at Charney Lawyers and member of the Toronto Branch Executive Committee. Our panelists discussed how the sexual harassment of women, including hate speech, stalking and threats, is perpetuated through technology. They also addressed the legal remedies available to those who experience this type of abuse and the role of lawyers as advocates and advisors. Finally, they discussed education, advocacy and access to justice as related to privacy rights. About 500 attended and we raised over \$1,000. People were pleased with the breadth of substantive topics explored and appreciated the engagement and expertise of the panelists.

### LEAF WINDSOR

**Madalyn Bavaro, Chair**

During orientation week at the University of Windsor, our volunteers facilitated 11 workshops in the university residence buildings from October 16th to October 19th, 2017.

Over the course of the fall and winter semesters our volunteers facilitated another 20 workshops in various high schools throughout the Windsor Essex area, as well as at the Windsor Youth Centre. Our branch has partnered with Pro Bono Students Canada at Windsor Law to provide the Only Yes Means Yes workshops. Pro Bono Students Canada helps to arrange these sessions as they have resources to contact schools in the Windsor-Essex area throughout the summer months.

All 20 facilitators were law students from the University of Windsor. The vast majority of feedback from participants (mostly students in Grades 9-12) was positive. Although students expressed the need for more relevant scenarios (including Snapchat, for example) and more group participation. University students expressed the need for more age-appropriate material. Teachers have suggested we offer more of these workshops in their schools.

Our branch also collaborated with the Women and the Law chapter at Windsor Law and held an event on February 7, 2018 where we hosted Senator Marilou McPhedran, one of the founders of LEAF, for the day. Ms. McPhedran had an informal discussion with LEAF members over breakfast in the morning where she discussed the founding of LEAF and what prompted the need for the organization. She then delivered a more formal speech to about 30 law students about equality in the Charter. She provided us with an invaluable perspective on how far we have come and what further work still needs to be done.



## LEAF EDMONTON

### Danielle Paradis, Chair

LEAF Edmonton held a panel discussion on April 5, 2017, titled "Running for Office: A panel discussion on violence and harassment in politics and on the campaign trail." The panelists were Laurie Blakeman, former Liberal MLA; Kathleen O'Neill, then president of the Progressive Conservative Party; Wildrose MLA Leela Aheer; and NDP MLA Anam Kazim. Panel moderator was Marion Fyshe, Vice-Chair of Equal Voice Alberta North. Co-sponsors of the panel discussion were LEAF Edmonton, Equal Voice Alberta North, and the Women's Law Forum. The event was held at the University of Alberta Law Centre.

Moreover, at the LEAF Edmonton Annual General Meeting, held on April 18, 2017, Kaylin Betteridge of the City of Edmonton's Women's Initiative spoke about projects on issues affecting women. The

Women's Initiative, supported by Edmonton City Council, fosters and promotes equality, opportunity, access to services, justice and inclusion for women in the city. The Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton (WAVE) Committee, is a group of 15 community leaders from diverse backgrounds who are brought together to help advance the work of Women's Initiative.

## LEAF OTTAWA

### Fatima Kwar & Ayesha Mehreen, Co-Chairs

LEAF Ottawa is a completely volunteer, student-run branch. Each member of our branch executive and the vast majority of our workshop facilitators are students from the University of Ottawa Law Faculty. Many of our volunteers graduated last year and we were unable to have a consistent volunteer team. As we grow, we've held three LEAF at Work workshops and one volunteer training.

## PROFILE – Donor



Jo Lee,  
Freelance Illustrator,  
La Jolee Design

I did a project for International Women's Day and was looking to donate the proceeds. I saw that LEAF is an established organization and was impressed by the work it's doing locally and nationally—especially its work to support Aboriginal rights. For me, what was nice about LEAF is that it's taking on big cases that will affect larger groups of people. I sold tote bags and postcards and accepted donations at the One of a Kind show, and lots of people were interested. Donating to LEAF was an easy decision.

## PERSONS DAY EVENTS

Persons Day refers to the Persons Case dating back to October 1929 when the Judicial Committee of the British Privy Council (then Canada's highest court of appeal) ruled that women were to be considered persons under the law and therefore eligible to sit in the Canadian Senate.



### LEAF TORONTO Erica Young, Chair

In September 2017 we celebrated the re-launch of the LEAF Toronto branch with a screening of the documentary *Constitute!*, the film that tells the story of how women and other activists fought for the equality provisions in the Constitution's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Following the film, we hosted a panel with: Deepa Mattoo, Director of Legal Services at the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic; Shaun O'Brien, now LEAF's Legal Director; Cheryl Milne, Director of the Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights at the University of Toronto; and, Naomi Sayers, Indigenous feminist, influencer, writer, and educator. This re-launch/Persons Day event was sponsored by the U of T Feminist Law Student's Association and Chitiz Pathak LLP. We had about 40 attendees from a variety of backgrounds, many of whom were pleased with the re-launch and eager to get more involved with LEAF.

### LEAF WINDSOR Madalyn Bavaro, Chair

LEAF Windsor hosted a Persons Day brunch panel with Fathima Cader (human rights and labour lawyer, adjunct professor at Windsor Law) and Mariam Moktar (Windsor Law class of 2012 and lawyer at Lenczner Slaght). They discussed their experiences as women working in the predominantly-male legal field, which was highly relevant to the audience of mostly women about to enter the profession. Both were young, Muslim, women of colour, which are additionally underrepresented communities in the legal field. This made the conversation even more relevant for Windsor Law's highly diverse student population. Much of the discussion surrounded working as a woman, prejudices/stereotypes, clients, and other lawyers may hold against women, people of colour, queer people, and Muslim people in the profession, work life balance, dress codes, and other relevant topics. Feedback from the twentysomething

students that attended was positive: they felt inspired, excited, and represented from the panel and what they spoke about. It is important for law students to be aware of what occurs in the legal workforce prior to entering it and knowing that there are others out there who will support them.

### **LEAF EDMONTON** **Danielle Paradis, Chair**

We had over 300 people in attendance at the Persons Day Breakfast in 2017. The Right Honourable Kim Campbell spoke about rape shield law. We also presented our 2017 Recognition Awards, honouring Robyn Schaapman and Equal Voice Alberta North (EVAN). The award to EVAN was accepted by Lana Cuthbertson, the organization's Chair. Ms. Schaapman was chosen for her outstanding commitment to and mentoring of young women in the building trades. She is also involved in Build Together, Women of the Building Trades, a national program that promotes, supports, and mentors women in the skilled construction trades. EVAN was honoured for its important role in encouraging and supporting women in seeking public office.

### **LEAF HALIFAX** **Sarah Baddeley, Chair**

We held a number of fundraisers in 2017-18, including our annual Person's Day Breakfast in October, which was the best attended in the branch's history. Good Robot Brewing Co. also hosted a 'Goodwill Bot' in honour of LEAF Halifax in July, creating a space for fun and community in addition to raising funds for our workshops.



Former Senator Nancy Ruth is presented with LEAF's Lifetime Achievement award

### **LEAF OTTAWA** **Fatima Kwar & Ayesha Mehreen, Co-Chairs**

LEAF Ottawa's Persons Day Breakfast was held at the Lord Elgin Hotel in October. It was one of our best-attended as 140 came to hear introductory remarks by Professor Rakhi Ruparelia and a keynote by Sharon McIvor. Senator Marilou McPhedran called for more action to address the discriminatory provisions in the *Indian Act*. LEAF Ottawa and Law Needs Feminism had a letter writing campaign, where we wrote letters to our MPs to end this discrimination.

## PERSONS DAY SPONSORS

*Your generosity helps LEAF build a better and more equal Canada for women and girls!*

SUPREME SPONSOR	PARTNERS	ADVOCATES	ASSOCIATES	MEDIA
The Honourable Margaret Norrie McCain, CC	   	    	    	PRECEDENT

*LEAF's work is only possible with the support of our donors.*

### FRIENDS

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J. Derek Brackley  
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Vivienne Poy  
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Sirje Sellers  
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UFCW Local 401  
Unifor- the Union  
United Steelworkers - National Office  
University of Ottawa Financial Services

*Thank you to everyone  
who shares their  
generosity with LEAF.*

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Women's Legal Education and Action Fund's financial statements provide our supporters with a summary and insight into the organization's financial well-being.

The Board of Directors is committed to investing in programs that will sustain the organization into the future. The dollars we raise, year after year, allow us to engage in litigation, law reform, and public education.

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Year ended March 31	2018 \$	2017 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current assets		
Cash	205,452	328,214
HST Recoverable	18,334	13,836
Accounts Receivable	279	331
Prepaid Expenses	6,311	16,271
	230,376	358,652
Investments	614,510	279,771
Capital Assets	5,171	1,810
	850,057	640,233
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	47,254	44,950
Deferred revenue	163,738	91,351
	210,992	136,301
<b>OPERATING NET ASSETS</b>		
	639,065	503,932
	850,057	640,233

Independent Auditor's  
Report provided by  
HILBORN LLP.

Complete audited  
statements available  
on request.

### STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Year ended March 31	2018 \$	2017 \$
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Donations and fundraising	714,306	650,324
Grants	298,614	289,344
Investment income (loss)	14,988	18,377
	1,027,908	958,045
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Administrative	475,342	496,245
Fundraising	131,959	77,634
Legal cases and projects	253,236	293,986
Professional fees	32,238	33,194
	892,775	901,059
Excess of revenue over expenditures for year	135,133	56,986

### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

Year ended March 31	2018 \$	2017 \$
Operating net assets, beginning of year	503,932	446,946
Excess of revenues over expenditures for year	135,133	56,986
Operating net assets, end of year	639,065	503,932



## GET INVOLVED

LEAF thrives with the support of donors, volunteers, and members. There are many ways to join us to advocate for gender equality.

### Donate

LEAF's litigation, law reform and public education work are made possible through the generosity of individual donors and an annual grant from the LEAF Foundation. Please contact LEAF at [info@leaf.ca](mailto:info@leaf.ca) or by calling 416-595-7170 or toll-free 1-888-824-5323, and visit our web site, [leaf.ca](http://leaf.ca), for further details and to make a donation.

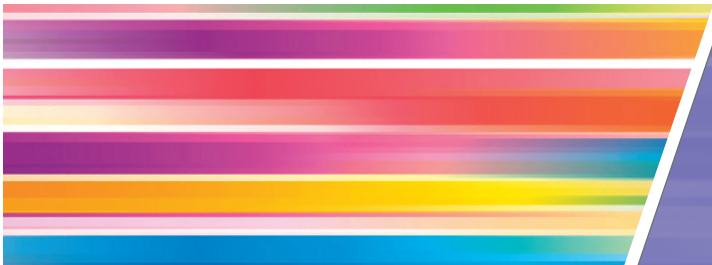
### Volunteering or

#### Giving Time Pro Bono

The dedicated work of our volunteers across the country is central to LEAF's success. Volunteers govern the organization, serve on active committees and staff branches, support LEAF with annual events, and play a crucial role in raising funds. Many lawyers also generously give their time pro bono to act as LEAF counsel whenever LEAF intervenes at the Supreme Court of Canada and Appellate Court levels. Please visit <http://www.leaf.ca/6-ways-to-volunteer/> to volunteer.

### Membership

Your membership with LEAF entitles you to receive regular notices of LEAF news and events. The monies we receive in membership dues and donations help support public education events to promote awareness of equality issues as well as litigating important equality cases through our national office.



Women's Legal Education  
and Action Fund

Fonds d'action et d'éducation  
juridiques pour les femmes

#### NATIONAL OFFICE

260 Spadina Avenue, Suite 309  
Toronto, ON, M5T 2E4, Canada

[info@leaf.ca](mailto:info@leaf.ca)

Phone: 416.595.7170

Toll-free: 1.888.824.5323

LEAF acknowledges the support of Status of Women Canada  
and the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund



Status of Women  
Canada

Condition féminine  
Canada

WOMEN'S LEGAL EDUCATION AND  
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pour les femmes

