

## **Women Lawyers' Forum Report 2015-2016**

The Women Lawyers' Forum (WLF) is the connecting point for women in the legal profession. Through the inter-lacing of the social and the professional, the WLF provides an opportunity for women in the law to meet and get to know each other better, for personal and professional benefit. The WLF organizes several events each year where women can engage, relax, and enjoy the company of other women who share the law as a common thread.

The Executive of the WLF met regularly to plan the year's calendar of events and discuss issues of importance to women in the practice of law. We continued, as in past years, to plan events that brought women together.

This year's events included:

### **So you Want to Be a Judge?**

On September 22, 2015, the WLF hosted an informative panel session to 21 participants about the application process for the provincial and federal judiciary, the appointment processes and the lifestyle and work demands of judges.

Speakers included the Honourable Madam Justices Freda Steel and Diana Cameron of the Manitoba Court of Appeal, and the Honourable Judge Lee Ann Martin, Provincial Court of Manitoba.

### **MBA Mid-Winter Conference – Harassment in the Legal Workplace**

On January 22, 2015 the WLF hosted this session for 66 participants. Harassment in the Legal profession is an initiative of The Office of the Law Society of Manitoba Equity Ombudsperson and the MBA. Its goal is to raise awareness about discrimination and harassment for members within the legal profession. The session included a discussion of the latest developments in the law of harassment and violence in the workplace, a review of appropriate workplace policies and procedures, practical considerations for employers and employees, an interactive presentation of "Do's and Don'ts" and a review of the CBA Sexual Harassment Awareness Campaign.

Presenters included Brenlee Carrington Trepel, Law Society of Manitoba Equity Ombudsperson, Kristin Gibson, Aikins, MacAulay & Thorvaldson LLP, Grant Mitchell, Q.C., Taylor McCaffrey LLP and Kim Antonio, Taylor McCaffrey LLP.

### **Soup Sisters/International Women's Day Event**

In recognition of International Women's Day, on March 6 2016, 18 members of the Section participated in a Soup Sisters event at the Winnipeg Fairmont Hotel. Soup Sisters is a national effort that organizes soup making events to provide hundreds of litres of soup to women's shelters and programs for youth in crisis in various cities across the country. In Winnipeg, it provides soup to the women and children at Willow Place. The event provided a great forum for socializing and cooking that culminated in a simple, sit-down supper of soup, salad, bread and wine for all participants.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Networking Event – DeLuca's Cooking Class and Wine Tasting Extravaganza**

On April 13, 2016, the WLF and the Women's Enterprise Centre of Manitoba hosted the 8th annual Spring Networking Event at DeLuca's. The evening was well attended with 90 participants. It included many opportunities for networking with professional women. To highlight the event, the DeLuca's team gave short cooking classes while preparing the evenings appetizers. They also explained the various

wines that were paired with the appetizers. Each participant got to take home a gift basket of DeLuca's goodies that included the recipes for the appetizers that were prepared at the event.

#### Celebrating Success - Wine and Cheese Reception for Women Lawyers and Judges

On June 9, 2016 the WLF hosted this annual event to say hello, goodbye and congratulations to newly appointed and retiring women judges.

Women who were honoured included Justice Jennifer Pfuetzner, Justice Janice leMaistre, Justice Kaye Dunlop, Associate Chief Justice Marianne Rivoalen, Associate Chief Judge Anne Krahn, Chief Judge Margaret Wiebe, Master Joy Cooper and Master Karen Clearwater. Also, Mona Brown was recognized as having received the Isabel Ross Hunt McLean Award.

Submitted by,

Justice Diana Cameron, Co-Chair MBA Women Lawyers' Forum