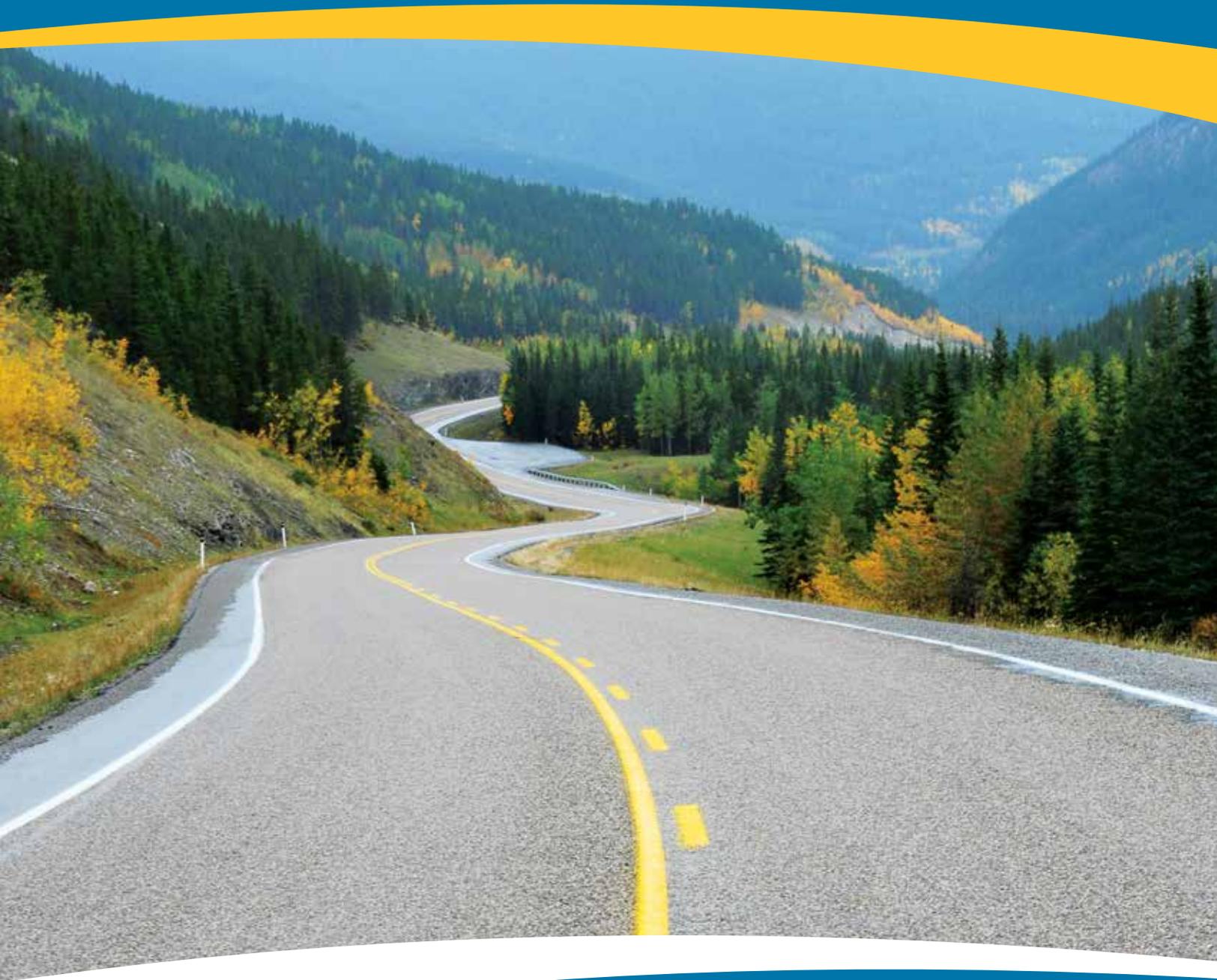


ANNUAL REPORT 2015–2016



Pro Bono Law Alberta

Paths to possibilities

Message from the President and Executive Director



Kevin Feth, QC, President



Gillian D. Marriott, QC, Executive Director

Pro Bono Law Alberta (PBLA) works in collaboration with the pro bono sector, community stakeholders, and members of the legal profession to facilitate access to justice for Albertans. In the last year, the need for legal assistance continued to grow. Thanks to the many volunteer lawyers, law firms, and student volunteers participating in PBLA's partnerships, programs and community initiatives, thousands of Albertans were assisted.

The 2015-2016 year was an exciting time of renewal and transition for our organization. PBLA completed a three-year Strategic Plan, including goals for maximizing pro bono engagement in Alberta and fostering responsive pro bono initiatives in partnership with the pro bono sector. PBLA welcomed new leadership on its Board and on its Executive team – and looks ahead to achieving the goals we have set.

PBLA also hosted meetings among Alberta's pro bono clinics to discuss collaboration, best practices and efficiencies which will enhance pro bono services for individuals across Alberta. PBLA is pleased to be part of ongoing discussions about how the pro bono sector can work together to facilitate access to justice for those most in need. PBLA looks forward to continuing the dialogue and collaborating on initiatives with other organizations in Alberta's pro bono community.

PBLA's court-based programs, the Civil Claims Duty Counsel Project (CCDC) and Queen's Bench Amicus Project (QB Amicus), continue to serve self-represented litigants in both Edmonton and Calgary. In 2015-2016, more than 5000 individuals accessed these programs to obtain legal assistance and support thanks to the volunteer efforts of hundreds of volunteer lawyers, supporting law firms, law students and internationally-trained lawyers.

We are proud of several milestones achieved in 2015 across Alberta. In September 2015, PBLA partnered on an inaugural pro bono clinic in Lloydminster. PBLA also continued its work in the development of pro bono initiatives in the Wood Buffalo region, in partnership with local lawyers and community organizations. PBLA held its fifth annual Calgary Legal Grounds Clinic in October 2015 in partnership with Norton Rose Fulbright LLP, the Calgary Public Library and Calgary Legal Guidance. The Volunteer Lawyer Services (VLS) program marked its 20th anniversary assisting non-profits, and five years assisting individuals referred by the provincial pro bono clinics. PBLA is also proud of the continued success of brokered legal service partnerships between dedicated law firms and community organizations.

In 2015-2016, PBLA continued to participate in national pro bono associations and initiatives with other provincial pro bono organizations, Pro Bono Students Canada, and through the Canadian Bar Association at the National and Branch levels.

There are challenges ahead as more and more Albertans seek legal assistance. Possible changes to the legal aid landscape may also affect how the pro bono community delivers service. PBLA is ready to meet whatever challenges await, working in partnership with others to meet the legal services needs of Albertans.

The success of PBLA's collaborative partnerships, programs and community initiatives is due to the enthusiasm and dedication of PBLA's incredible staff, Board and Advisory Board, as well as the hundreds of volunteer lawyers, articling students, law students and partnering law firms that participate.

Thank you for continuing to travel with us on the path to enhancing pro bono legal services in Alberta. For those looking for new ways to engage in pro bono legal service, we invite you to join us as we move forward in collaboration with others in the pro bono sector to enhance access to justice for Albertans.

Kevin Feth, QC, President

Gillian D. Marriott, QC, Executive Director

Guiding Principles

The Legal Profession:

- Enhance the growth of pro bono culture.
- Promote awareness of pro bono opportunities and resources.
- Create opportunities for lawyers to discharge their professional responsibilities to provide pro bono legal services.

Community Organizations:

- Collaborate with community organizations to facilitate the integration and coordination of pro bono services provided throughout Alberta.
- Foster the development of new pro bono programs with existing community organizations where needed.
- Complement services – Pro bono legal services are intended to complement, not to replace, a properly funded legal aid system.

The Public:

- Promote awareness – raising general public awareness of pro bono legal services to community organizations and Albertans in need that require legal services.
- Support and improve the quality of pro bono programs available to Albertans in need.

Strategic Goals

Pro Bono Law Alberta will fulfill its mission by achieving the following four strategic goals:

1. Maximize volunteer lawyer engagement in the provision of pro bono legal services.
2. Strengthen pro bono culture within the legal community throughout Alberta.
3. Foster innovative and responsive pro bono initiatives throughout Alberta.
4. Maintain organizational excellence.



The first cross-border clinic was held in Lloydminster in September 2015.

Statement of financial position

As at March 31, 2016

	2016	2015
ASSETS	275,672	258,038
LIABILITIES	55,607	63,092
NET ASSETS	220,065	194,946

Statement of operations

For the year ended March 31, 2016

	2016	2015
REVENUE	738,141	668,561
EXPENSES	715,013	694,148
OTHER INCOME	1,991	2,983
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	25,119	(22,604)

For a copy of PBLA's audited financial statements email info@pbla.ca

Community Pro Bono Partnerships and Projects

Collaboration Round Table Meetings

In November 2015 and March 2016, PBLA organized and participated in collaboration Round Table meetings with provincial pro bono clinics and organizations. The discussions focussed on ways that organizations within the Alberta pro bono sector can work together to enhance and expand pro bono services for individuals across Alberta. Following the collaboration meetings, pro bono organizations continued their work together through working groups on specific initiatives.

Collaborative Clinics

In 2015, one-day "pop up" legal clinics were held in Fort McMurray, Lloydminster and Calgary, supported by volunteer lawyers. Two milestones were celebrated: the fifth annual clinic in partnership with Calgary Public Library, Norton Rose Fulbright LLP and Calgary Legal Guidance, and the first clinic in partnership with Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan providing legal advice on both sides of the provincial border in Lloydminster. These one-day legal advice clinics provide access to free legal advice from volunteer lawyers for people with legal questions who may not otherwise obtain legal services. The clinics increase volunteer engagement within the local bar, raise awareness of the need for pro bono legal services in the community and provide much needed assistance to those in need of legal help.

Several ongoing clinics continued to be offered in 2015-2016 as well through partnerships with law firms, individual lawyers, and community partners.

Volunteer Lawyer Services (VLS)

In 2015, the VLS program marked its 20th year matching volunteer lawyers with charitable organizations requiring legal services. In 2015-2016, VLS also continued to provide services to individuals through referrals from pro bono clinics and Legal Aid Alberta. VLS lawyers decide the scope of pro bono legal services they provide and volunteer opportunities can be tailored to meet the volunteer lawyers' needs and schedule. Lawyers may join the roster at any time. This past year, 262 volunteer lawyers provided several groups and individuals with pro bono legal services in areas such as non-profit governance, civil, employment, immigration, estate, and family law.

Law Firm and Law Student Engagement

Pro Bono Leaders of Tomorrow

PBLA works to enhance a pro bono ethic in the profession and has worked extensively with law faculties at the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary to create and promote meaningful volunteer experiences for law students to gain practical legal skills, benefit from mentorship of other lawyers, and to provide clients with much needed legal assistance. At the 2015 Annual Celebration, PBLA recognized the contributions of law students with the presentation of the "Pro Bono Leaders of Tomorrow" Award to Pro Bono Students Canada, Student Legal Assistance and Student Legal Services whose students are actively engaged in joint projects with PBLA.

Court-Based Programs

Civil Claims Duty Counsel Project (CCDC) is a joint initiative with Pro Bono Students Canada (Calgary and Edmonton Chapters), Student Legal Assistance, Student Legal Services of Edmonton, several law firms, individual volunteer lawyers and students. CCDC provides legal assistance to Albertans engaged in civil proceedings in Provincial Court in Calgary and Edmonton. Volunteer lawyers provide summary legal advice, procedural information, help with court forms, and other services. In the 2015-2016 fiscal year, more than 480 volunteer lawyers provided over 2000 hours of pro bono legal services to more than 3700 individuals.

Queen's Bench Amicus Court Assistance Program (QB CAP) aims to improve access to justice for self-represented litigants appearing in Queen's Bench Justice and Masters Chambers in Calgary and Edmonton. In the courtroom, volunteer lawyers act as *amicus curiae* to assist individuals with their appearance before the court, thus streamlining court processes for unrepresented litigants. The program also includes a "storefront" at which volunteer lawyers provide summary legal advice regarding Chambers applications and other legal matters in the Court of Queen's Bench. This past fiscal year more than 200 volunteer lawyers provided over 1000 hours of pro bono legal services to more than 1500 individuals.

The court-based programs continue to attract interest from law firms, individual lawyers and law students. A total of 35 firms were involved in both Calgary and Edmonton this year.

Our Vision

Pro Bono Law Alberta will be recognized as a leader and valued partner in fostering pro bono contributions by the legal community to facilitate access to justice for Albertans.

Thank you

Pro Bono Law Alberta's success is possible through the support of many law firms, volunteer lawyers, articling students, law students, community stakeholders, project partners, court administration, donors and funders.

Advisory Board

The Honourable Madam Justice M.S. Paperny
The Honourable Madam Justice J.M. Ross
The Honourable Mr. Justice R.A. Jerke
The Honourable Judge A.H. Lefever
The Honourable Judge J. T. Henderson
The Honourable John Major, C.C., QC
The Honourable Allan Wachowich, QC
Donald Bishop, QC
Cheryl Gottselig, QC
Phyllis Smith, QC

Board of Directors

Kevin Feth, QC, President (Edmonton)
Brett Anderson, Vice President (Calgary)
Jana Neal, Treasurer (Calgary)
Scott Harling, Secretary (Lethbridge)
Walter Pavlic, QC (Edmonton)
Ed Ma (Calgary)
Allyson Jeffs (Edmonton)
Christopher Rickards, QC (Red Deer)
Robert Dunster, LSA Bencher Representative (Edmonton)

Staff

Gillian Marriott, QC, Executive Director
Kendall Moholityny, Deputy Executive Director
Cecelia Frohlick, Director of Programs and Operations
Nonye Opara, Program Manager
Myra Skerrett, Executive Assistant
Kristina Baykusheva, Program Assistant
Cayley Rauw, Program Assistant
Randy Mitchell, Summer Student 2015

Legal Community

Ackroyd LLP
BDO Financial Recovery Services
Bishop and McKenzie LLP
Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP
Borden Ladner Gervais LLP
Brownlee LLP
Burnet, Duckworth & Palmer LLP
Canadian Bar Association – Alberta Branch
Carbert Waite LLP
Chomicki Baril Mah LLP
City of Edmonton Law Branch
Dentons Canada LLP
DLA Piper (Canada) LLP
Emery Jamieson LLP
Family Law Office
Field LLP
Foster LLP
Gowling WLG
Grant Thornton LLP
GSD Law Group LLP
Hudson & Company Insolvency Trustees Inc.
Imperial Oil
JSS Barristers LLP
MacPherson, Leslie & Tyerman LLP
McCarthy Tétrault LLP
McLennan Ross LLP
McLeod Law LLP
McMillan LLP
Miller Thomson LLP
MJM Barristers
National Energy Board
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP
Ogilvie LLP
Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP
Parlee McLaws LLP
Randhawa Law Office
Reynolds Mirth Richards & Farmer LLP
Robert B. White, QC and Company

Russ Weninger, Barrister and Solicitor
Scott Venturo LLP
Walsh LLP
Witten LLP
WK Family Lawyers & Mediators
Yanko & Popovic

Pro Bono Community

Calgary Legal Guidance
Central Alberta Community Legal Clinic
Children's Legal and Educational Resource Centre
Edmonton Community Legal Centre
Grande Prairie Legal Guidance
Lethbridge Legal Guidance
Medicine Hat Legal Help Centre
Pro Bono Students Canada – Calgary and Edmonton Chapters
Student Legal Assistance
Student Legal Services of Edmonton

Project Partners

1000 Voices at the Genesis Centre
Brenda Strafford Centre for the Prevention of Domestic Violence
Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
Calgary Public Library
Discovery House Family Violence Prevention Society
Legal Aid Alberta
Wellspring Calgary – Money Mentors Program
Women's Centre of Calgary

Funders

Alberta Law Foundation
Law Society of Alberta
United Way of Calgary and Area

Alberta **LAW**
FOUNDATION



LAW SOCIETY
of ALBERTA



United Way
Calgary and Area
Building a great city for all.



Pro Bono Law Alberta
Paths to possibilities

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Calgary, Alberta T2S 2T8

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info@pbla.ca
www.pbla.ca

PBLA engages the legal community to increase access to pro bono legal services for Albertans in need.