

Constitutional/Human Rights Section Report 2015-2016

This year, the Constitutional/Human Rights Section was Co-Chaired by Meghan Menzies (University of Manitoba) and Bryton Moen (Provincial Prosecutions).

In December, the Section co-sponsored a lunch workshop entitled *Access to Justice/Legal Services for Manitoba Children and Youth* with two other sections, the Aboriginal Law Section and the Child & Youth Law Section. The session was well-attended and focused on issues pertaining to:

- Access to justice and legal services for Manitoba children and youth
- The impact of the apprehension and removal of children from their families and communities upon Manitoba's Indigenous peoples
- The role of legal professionals in perpetuating and legitimating the ongoing removal of Aboriginal children and associated impacts thereof in light of the profession's current reconciliation responsibilities (particularly given the legal profession's implication historically as agents of law within the context of colonization and "cultural genocide" as described by Chief Justice McLachlin in May 2015)

Speakers at the event further discussed a number of the barriers and challenges in addressing these issues as well as examples of innovation and opportunity in moving to improve outcomes for Manitoba's Aboriginal children and youth.

In March, the Constitutional/Human Rights and Legal Research Section jointly sponsored a lunch workshop which addressed the issue of *Standards of Review and Jurisdiction in Human Rights Cases*. Speaking at the event was the Honourable Madam Justice Diana Cameron of the Manitoba Court of Appeal who presented on standards of review and jurisdiction in human rights cases. Justice Cameron reviewed and critiqued recent case law in order to provide guidance for lawyers seeking to understand this evolving area of law.

Looking forward, the Section is hoping to move towards increasingly interactive workshops and events as well as a heightened presence on the National front.

Submitted by,
Meghan Menzies, Co-Chair, MBA Constitutional/Human Rights Law Section