

# **2021 Bencher By-Election – District of Kamloops**

## **Candidate biographies and statements**

The candidates were invited to submit biographical information and an election statement. The views expressed are those of the candidates and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Law Society.

Candidates are listed in order of their appearance on the ballot, as determined by drawing of lots, pursuant to Rule 1-28.

## **Candidate information for District No. 9 – District of Kamloops**

- JOHNSON, Cameron E.
- SUTHERLAND, Michael
- COOK, Camille J.
- CARTER, Kim
- MCNAMEE, Daniel



**JOHNSON, Cameron E.**

Called to the Bar: 2020

Cates Ford Soll & Epp, Lawyers and Mediators

Email: [cjohnson@cfselaw.ca](mailto:cjohnson@cfselaw.ca)

Website: [www.cfselaw.ca](http://www.cfselaw.ca)

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

Cameron grew up in a suburb of Edmonton, Alberta, and worked in hospitality and retail management for more than a decade before deciding to complete his post-secondary education. In 2012, Cameron completed his Honours Thesis on the genesis of corporate criminality titled “Drifting into Delinquency: Creating the Criminal Corporation”. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree in Sociology [Criminology] in 2013.

In 2019, Cameron graduated from Thompson Rivers University, Faculty of Law. He joined Cates Ford Soll & Epp in Kamloops, first as a summer student, then as an articling student soon after, and completed his articles just in time to successfully argue at the BC Court of Appeal (*R v Chappell*, 2020 BCCA 38) as a 19-day call.

Cameron’s practice is largely in criminal and family law, with some civil litigation and administrative files.

Cameron is a Director of the Kamloops Bar Association, active as Alumni of TRU Law, and involved with several civil liberties organizations.

Cameron and his wife, Zelda, are parents to a furry-child, Charli (their cat) and have set down permanent roots in the Kamloops-region.

**ELECTION STATEMENT**

Cameron is seeking election as a Bencher, early in his career, to provide a different perspective on the governance of the profession for a person under 5-years of call. While the Benchers come from diverse backgrounds and include professional luminaries, representation of those newest to the profession is not currently reflected in the governance of our profession.

Cameron seeks to implement protections for articulated students, support and encouragement for principals who take on students, support for technological innovation and assistance for practitioners as the profession moves towards embracing technology in the courtroom.

Cameron supports revision of the Act, Code and Rules to facilitate the appointment or election of Associate Benchers, who can be delegated to take on responsibilities of a Bencher on an ad-hoc or even semi-permanent basis so that the ‘bench strength’ of the Benchers is increased. Associate Benchers would be able to stand in place of their Bencher as requested and allow Benchers with large geographical responsibilities to attend functions and perform duties by sending an Associate in their place to avoid logistical and scheduling issues – while simultaneously allowing for the training of an Associate Bencher to step up to the lead role either after election, retirement, or judicial appointment. In its idealized form, an Associate Bencher appointed could simply step into the role of Bencher upon a retirement, judicial appointment or other vacancy without the need to have a by-election as there would be a mechanism for a seamless transition and there would be built-in succession planning as the Associate Bencher would already be the extant deputy of the previous Bencher.

Cameron would like to hold monthly virtual town halls, for members to share concerns about the governance of the profession with the capacity for anonymous correspondence.

[\[Return to Candidates list\]](#)



**SUTHERLAND, Michael**

Called to the Bar: 1999

Mair Jensen Blair LLP

Email: [mjs@mjblaw.com](mailto:mjs@mjblaw.com)

Website: [www.mjblaw.com](http://www.mjblaw.com)

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

I graduated, moved to Kamloops in 1998 and articulated and was called while employed with Morelli Chertkow. In 2000 I was hired at MJB, where I have worked as both a civil and criminal litigator for the last 21 years.

Karyn and I have raised three children in Kamloops and are proud to call Kamloops our home.

I spend a significant amount of my time volunteering in Kamloops. I have been a hockey coach for KMHA for the last 16 years, and was awarded Rep Coach of the year in 2020. I have also coached youth baseball for KMBA for most of the last 18 years and volunteer with the Kamloops Swim Club and provide Pro Bono Legal Services to a number of youth sports societies in town.

I served as a director of the Kamloops Chamber of Commerce for 2009-2010.

Prior to embarking on my career as a lawyer, I was a goaltender for the 85/86 Lethbridge Broncos and the 86/87 Swift Current Broncos of the WHL. I also helped my hometown Cranbrook Colts win the Cyclone Taylor Championship in 84/85, and for a period played for the Kelowna Packers, Vernon Lakers and Nanaimo Clippers of the BCHL.

**ELECTION STATEMENT**

Having lived and practiced in Kamloops for over 23 years, I believe that I can represent the interests of the Kamloops and area bar, and our clients, with a knowledge of practicing in the Interior of British Columbia.

These are challenging times for all the bar. The roles of lawyers in our community are changing, the way we do business is changing. Technology is evolving, the need for a vibrant, diverse, well informed bar is more important than ever and the need for a

Bencher that understands these issues at both a provincial and local level is very important. I would like to be part of that process.

I see the role of bencher as being a combination of gathering information regarding the needs and concerns of our bar and representing them to the Law Society, and communicating with our bar regarding updates and developments from the Law Society. Following in the footsteps of previous benchers, I believe spending time with articling students and lawyers new to the bar, and canvassing ethical and practice issues to help in their collective education.

I believe that I am at a time in my career where I have the time and the experience to be able to give back the Bar and our community. I ask for your vote for bencher.

[\[Return to Candidates list\]](#)



**COOK, Camille J.**

Called to the Bar: 2014

Ministry of Attorney General

Email: [camille.cook@gov.bc.ca](mailto:camille.cook@gov.bc.ca)

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

I have embraced life in Kamloops since moving here from Vancouver in 2014 for a position with the British Columbia Prosecution Service (“BCPS”). Prior to working with BCPS, I articulated for a small criminal defence firm.

My passion for providing advocacy on behalf of the vulnerable started long before law school. I worked as an advocate for indigenous accused persons and was a mental health advocate for mentally compromised accused persons in Provincial Court. These opportunities have provided me with experience and perspective on how our courts work and how lawyers can do better to protect vulnerable members of society.

I strongly believe in the importance of supporting young lawyers who are passionate about advocacy. I volunteer as a mentor for students at Thompson Rivers University Law School.

I have sought to ensure that I am up to date with evolving legislation and that remote communities and minorities can have access to justice through my work as a member of various resource counsel groups and committees with BCPS, including the Bilingual Prosecution team, Circuit Court committee, and the Indigenous Court program.

I have always felt a responsibility to work hard and remain open-minded over the course of my career.

**ELECTION STATEMENT**

As a criminal litigator and a woman, I can provide a unique voice and experience to the Law Society. I am keenly aware that there are many issues that affect lawyers in British Columbia, and ultimately the public, but will focus here on just a few that are particularly meaningful to me.

## **Access to Justice**

As a Bencher, I will ensure that the Law Society continues to be focused on improving legal aid funding. Without adequate funding, we as a society are allowing an injustice to continue to unfold against those vulnerable citizens who desperately need our help. Our courts are overwhelmed by criminal, family and immigration issues which could be unburdened by adequately resourced lawyers. We are doing a disservice to the public if we do not continue to advocate for improved funding.

## **Equity and Diversity**

The population of British Columbia has changed over the last few decades and will only continue to do so as time goes on. To be representative of this population, the Law Society must ensure that it continues to support diversity and equity in our profession. As a Franco-British Columbian and female Bencher, I will continue to ensure that it does.

## **Mental Health**

This profession takes its toll on all of us, and those with mental health challenges are amongst those who suffer the most. The Law Society must continue to support and educate its members about the importance of maintaining healthy minds. Without this support, lawyers are doing a disservice to themselves, their families and ultimately the public. As a Bencher, I will advocate for continued mental wellness support and education for its members.

I am passionate about the law and the people who practice it. I would be honoured to serve my colleagues as a Bencher.

[Return to Candidates list]



**CARTER, Kim**

Called to the Bar: 2008

Legal Aid BC

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**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

Kim Carter was called to the bar in Saskatchewan and British Columbia in 2008. Kim began her law practice in family law with Paul & Company and then transitioned to sole practice, focusing in the areas of family law and child protection. In 2019, Kim joined Legal Aid BC as their staff lawyer at the Parent’s Legal Centre (PLC) and is now Managing Lawyer for both Kamloops and Williams Lake PLC’s.

In her professional capacity, Kim is a member of the Family Court Users committee. She has frequently guest lectured at Thompson Rivers University Faculty of Law, participated as a keynote speaker for the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers BC Chapter, and provided mentorship through CBA Women Lawyers Forum-Kamloops section. She has strongly advocated for increasing awareness around Mental Health and Wellness in the legal profession, and increasing awareness on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Kim is an advocate for supporting and developing initiatives to increase access to justice in the Thompson/Okanagan region, including Truth and Reconciliation initiatives.

Kim has volunteered with Motion of Colour, a student organization that facilitates discussions on racial equality and social justice.

Outside of work, she enjoys CrossFit and spending time with her two boys.

**ELECTION STATEMENT**

I am very excited to have the opportunity to run for bencher in Kamloops and the surrounding area. As a bencher, I would strive to ensure that I can represent you and give you a voice at the Law Society of BC with dedication and commitment. I am a lawyer with twelve years of experience in Kamloops and I have had the fortunate opportunity to work in varied settings, including working as an associate lawyer in a small firm, as a sole practitioner for eight years and with Legal Aid BC. Given my practice experience, I

believe I am able to provide the community and the Law Society a broader perspective that enables me to strongly advocate and assess the needs of the rural communities, small firms and sole practitioners.

In addition to bringing the concerns of our membership to the Law Society, I will work to develop and build upon initiatives that support lawyers (including supports for mental health and wellness, initiatives to address retention of women in the profession, and supports to increase equity, diversity and inclusion in our profession). I believe such initiatives will protect the public interest and enhance a collaborative dialogue between the Law Society and our members.

The pandemic has made us all too aware of the need for increased supports for mental health and wellness in our profession. The health of the legal profession depends on it. I hope to contribute to the Mental Health Task Force and implement more initiatives and supports for lawyers in Kamloops and surrounding areas. I will continue to make the legal profession more inclusive and welcoming and broaden opportunities for new lawyers. The stronger we are the better we can be.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

[\[Return to Candidates list\]](#)



**MCNAMEE, Daniel**

Called to the Bar: 2015

Jensen Law

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**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

I have worked as a lawyer in Kamloops since I was called to the Bar in British Columbia in 2015. I've worked in insurance defence and criminal defence here in Kamloops, so I know how to defend people's interests. I originally came from Toronto but I have come to love Kamloops and its ample parking and light traffic. I'm currently working on a case involving a bull. I play golf at a mediocre level. I very rarely send out mass emails.

**ELECTION STATEMENT**

I plan to try to shake things up a little bit at the law society. I will vote against all fee increases and any increases to pro bono requirements or anything like that for lawyers. I will also be trying to get the law society's practice advisors to set up a hold line so that lawyers who call the practice advisors don't always have to leave a message and wait 24-48 hours for a response. If elected as a bencher to represent Kamloops and the surrounding area I will buy a set of cowboy boots with spurs and wear them to all law society bencher meetings. Perhaps more importantly, I'll go to the law society to represent the interests of this region. I'll happily tell the people in Vancouver when Kamloops sees things differently.

[\[Return to Candidates list\]](#)