



## **November 16, 2021 Bencher Election – County of Nanaimo**

### **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 3 – County of Nanaimo**

- DYBWAD, Brian
- WILSON, Chelsea D.



**DYBWAD, Brian**

Called to the Bar: 2010

Legal Aid BC

Email: [Brian.Dybwad@legalaid.bc.ca](mailto:Brian.Dybwad@legalaid.bc.ca)

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

Called to the bar in 2010, I have worked in the areas of Criminal Defence, Family Law, Child Protection, and Director’s Counsel for the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program.

I am a member and Hereditary Chief of the Gitksan Nation. I wish to add my knowledge, experience and diversity to the Benchers’ table. I am passionate about issues of diversity; lawyers’ mental health; reconciliation and good governance.

I have dedicated my career to the protection of vulnerable people, as the Managing Lawyer for the Parents Legal Centre in Campbell River focusing on Child Protection through Collaborative Practice from Port Alberni to Port Hardy and as a Fellow for CanAge, Canada’s National Seniors’ Advocacy Organization. CanAge offers a powerful national voice to protect the rights and well-being of aging Canadians.

I previously served as President of the Campbell River Bar Association for three terms. I have presented on various topics to Continuing Legal Education; Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario; and, volunteered on an Indigenous Courts’ committee and working group. I also coach Rugby for the Campbell River Athletic Association.

I also enjoy listening to and playing music (multiple instruments) and spending time with my family.

**ELECTION STATEMENT**

I am seeking the candidacy for the position of Bencher of the Law Society of British Columbia for District No. 3, the County of Nanaimo.

My goal as a Bencher is to help create and maintain a collaborative, respectful and healthy legal community, inclusive of all lawyers, and responsive to our ever-changing practice.

Our profession is changing; lawyers' roles in our community are evolving, as is the way we do business and practice law. There are technological changes, demographic changes, a shift to increasingly collaborative practice, and issues with access to justice. We need diverse and collaborative Benchers at the table that can work to address these issues for the betterment of the profession, but also for the betterment of both urban and rural lawyers, and specifically the lawyers in the County of Nanaimo.

I will advocate for the unique interests of the County of Nanaimo at the Bencher table and work collaboratively to ensure that your voices and concerns are heard and addressed. I will engage with the Bar Associations within the County of Nanaimo about the various LSBC initiatives and ensure that they are well informed and active with the same.

In accordance with the Law Society's mandate to protect the public interest in the administration of justice, I will bring to the table my experience and knowledge with providing access to justice and affordable legal service options through community outreach and engagement. It is this continued effort to be visible and engaged in community activities that will close the gap between lawyers and the public which will facilitate access to justice.

I look forward to mentoring new lawyers and assisting established lawyers with practice, ethical and personal matters that arise. I hope to spark the interest of other Indigenous lawyers, and others in our community to rise to the challenge and become a voice for equity, diversity and inclusion in our profession.

I believe mental health is an important issue that is currently facing our profession. The evolution of our profession; the changes in technology and services; and, the challenges of the business of law are wearing on the mental health of our profession. The LSBC Mental Health Task Force has undertaken positive advancements but more needs to be done to destigmatize mental health issues; address the causes; and support our lawyers.

As our Country, our profession, and our community works towards healing and reconciliation, I ask you to elect me as Bencher for the County of Nanaimo so I can work to advance these efforts.

I ask for your support for my candidacy for Bencher.

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**WILSON, Chelsea D.**

Called to the Bar: 2005

Ramsay Lampman Rhodes

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Website: [www.rlr.law](http://www.rlr.law)

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

I began my career as a lawyer in the litigation and regulatory departments of a large law firm in Vancouver. A few years later, I moved to a boutique firm in Vancouver to focus exclusively on the areas of estates, wills and trusts. Since moving to Vancouver Island in 2010, I have had the pleasure of working and raising my family in a beautiful environment with a rich cultural history. I have a litigation and solicitor's practice that focuses almost exclusively on the areas of wills, estates and trusts.

I have served as the Nanaimo County benchler for the past two years. During my time as a benchler, I have been a member of the Practice Standards, Ethics and Complainants' Review Committees. I am presently the Vice-chair of the Practice Standards Committee.

I have been a director of the Nanaimo Foundation for the past four years and served as the President of the Nanaimo County Bar Association for four years. As County Bar President, I organized the Inns of Court program in Nanaimo. I have also lectured and written papers for CLE and the CBA on a variety of topics relating to wills, estates and trusts.

**ELECTION STATEMENT**

The Law Society plays an important role in upholding and protecting the public interest in the administration of justice. It has been my honour and pleasure to serve as the Nanaimo County benchler for the past two years. In the last two years, the Law Society has focused on many important issues, including access to justice, Indigenous intercultural competency and reconciliation, the wellness of our members and a host of challenges and new opportunities arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. It is fascinating and important work that I have enjoyed immensely and hope to be able to continue.

As a member of the Practice Standards Committee, and now Vice-chair of that committee, I have addressed concerns regarding the quality of service being provided by

particular lawyers to their clients, which often involves addressing underlying issues that are causing lawyers to struggle in practice and implementing remedial measures. It is rewarding when we are able to get lawyers back on track so they can properly serve their clients. During my time on the Ethics Committee, we worked on a variety of professional responsibility issues with the goal of protecting the public interest. The Complainants' Review Committee plays an important function in reviewing the case files of complainants who are dissatisfied with dismissal of their complaints following a review by Law Society staff.

Being a bencher has provided me with the opportunity for thoughtful and meaningful engagement on a number of policy issues affecting our members and the public they serve. I greatly enjoy being able to provide guidance to other lawyers who reach out to me in my bencher capacity for practice and ethics advice. The bencher interviews with articulated students have provided an important opportunity to welcome articulated students to the profession of law and help ensure they are ready to embark on their careers as lawyers. I am really looking forward to our November call ceremony, which will be the first in-person regional call ceremony we have been able to host in Nanaimo County since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. These ceremonies are personalized for the new local lawyers and are a special time for them and their families.

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