

2026 Benchers By-Election (September) County of Vancouver

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 1 – County of Vancouver

- LACROIX, Derek, KC
- LEE, Kyla
- LACK, Timothy Jacob
- SWANSON, Peter
- FRASER, Andrea
- BHULLAR, Tony
- CHAN, Jennifer



LACROIX, Derek, KC

Called to the Bar: 1975

Derek C. LaCroix

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Derek attended UBC with a degree in Physical Education in 1971 and Law in 1974. With 52 years work experience in Law he brings a sincere and valued perspective to his commitment to making the world a healthier and safer place and to the BC legal profession.

Derek practiced law for 18 years, as Crown Counsel and Criminal Defense. He expanded his skills in business and counselling and went into business in Oregon where he was called to the Bar in 1995. Starting in 1997 he built the Lawyers Assistance Program of B.C. This diverse range of interests has helped Derek become a respected leader in the legal, health care and recovery communities. He has served on committees with the Canadian Bar Association, the American Bar Association and the Mental Health Task Force of the Law Society. He is also on several non-profit boards of societies dealing with addictions, education, and spirituality. He is often called upon to present seminars and workshops throughout the province. He received the designation of Queen's Counsel in 2004.

Over the past many years Derek has been extremely interested in environmental issues and has studied and worked with Joanna Macy and other environmental educators.

ELECTION STATEMENT

I have wanted to be a lawyer since I was eight years old. I read books about law, watched courtroom dramas, and admired lawyers who combined courage, intelligence and a commitment to justice. I have always loved and respected the law and the legal profession. After many years in practice and service to the profession, I understand both the privilege and the pressures of being a lawyer. I have practised as a trial lawyer, Crown Counsel and criminal defence counsel, in private practice, and as general counsel in business. I have also participated in both the Canadian and American Bar Associations.

For the past 29½ years, much of my work has been devoted to helping lawyers. I built the LAPBC and travelled throughout the province, Canada and North America, working with lawyers and others on mental health, addiction, well-being and culture change. I also served on the Mental Health Task Force.

That experience has taught me something important: the legal profession is filled with people who are intelligent, knowledgeable, caring, honest and deeply committed to doing good work. I am proud to be one of them.

I believe the Law Society has two important responsibilities: protecting the public and supporting a healthy, effective and sustainable profession. These responsibilities should reinforce, not undermine, one another. Lawyers who are treated with dignity, supported in times of difficulty and encouraged to seek help are better able to serve their clients and the public.

I am concerned that aspects of the proposed Legal Professions Act, particularly its approach to mental health and substance use, risk creating a more punitive regulatory culture. As we move through the transition from self-regulation, I want to help ensure we do not lose the progress we have made in recognizing lawyer well-being as an essential part of professional competence.

I would bring practical experience, institutional knowledge and a deep respect for lawyers, to the Law Society. I want to contribute to governance that is thoughtful, fair, useful and grounded in reality—protecting the public while recognizing the dignity, humanity and worth of the people who make up our profession.

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LEE, Kyla

Called to the Bar: 2012

Acumen Law

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I have devoted my career to criminal defence in Vancouver, focused on the driving and impaired driving cases that touch ordinary people's livelihoods. I have argued thousands of appeals of driving prohibitions, written two books published by LexisNexis, and built one of the profession's most visible platforms for plain-language legal education through my Driving Law podcast, my YouTube channels, and regular media commentary because the public deserves to understand the law that governs them. I care about access to justice, standing up for what is right, and protecting Charter values.

Service to the profession matters deeply to me. Nationally, I have held officer roles across the Canadian Bar Association's Criminal Justice Section, Women Lawyers' Forum, and SAGDA. Provincially, I have held officer roles with SAGDA and am currently Vice-Chair of the Criminal Justice Section of CBABC. I serve as Vice President of the BC Civil Liberties Association and BC Vice President of WiCCD. I am also the VP of Education and Events for the DUIDLA.

I would be honoured to bring this experience and energy to the Benchers and continue to stand up for the rights of everyone in the profession, and whom the profession serves.

ELECTION STATEMENT

When I look at the Benchers table, I see dedicated people. But I do not see enough of us who come from diverse backgrounds or who carry the kind of lived experience that so many in our profession, and so many of the people we serve, live with every day. Regulation shaped mainly by those who have never felt overlooked will always miss the people standing just outside the room.

I want to be a Benchers for those people. I want to be the resource a lawyer reaches out to when they don't feel they can turn to anyone else, because I have made that kind of accessibility a feature of my career.

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I have already worked hard to accomplish this independently of being a Benchers. I put forward a resolution permitting pronouns to be added to the Law Society directory, a small change that every LGBTQ2SIA+ member and potential client can rely on to be seen and to find competent counsel. I sponsored a recent resolution demanding transparency in the Bill 21 process, because decisions that reshape our profession cannot be made behind closed doors. And I have consistently fought for the rights of those our system most easily forgets.

I want to keep going. Equity and diversity are how we build a profession and a regulator that earns the public's trust. I will push for a Law Society that reflects the people it governs, that meaningfully listens before it decides, and that treats inclusion as central to competence, not separate from it.

At the same time, our independence is under real threat. Governments are testing how far they can reach into the self-regulation of the legal profession, and British Columbia is no exception. Self-regulation is not just a privilege for lawyers; it is a protection for the public and a guarantee that legal advice answers to the law, not to the government of the day. I will work to defend it fiercely.

I would be honoured to bring my voice, my experience, and my commitment to the table if you trust me with your vote.

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LACK, Timothy Jacob

Called to the Bar: 1994

Redpoint Law LLP

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Timothy Jacob Lack has 32 years of solicitor-only practice in real estate, secured and commercial lending, wills and estates, and business law. He has been the responsible lawyer on more than 12,500 real estate files, with experience ranging from complex real estate acquisitions and developments, commercial leasing, land assemblies, and a wide range of secured lending transactions. He has also provided expert opinions to other lawyers on private lending issues and advises clients on business acquisitions and sales, as well as wills and estates. Timothy has served as Co-Chair and Presenter for the CLEBC “Residential Real Estate Conference” for the past 14 years.

Recent Professional Engagement (2024–2026):

- CLEBC Co-Chair/Presenter, “Residential Real Estate Conference”
- CLEBC Co-Chair/Presenter, “Solicitor Tune-Up”
- CLEBC Presenter, “Real Estate Fundamentals”
- CLEBC Co-Chair/Presenter, “Real Estate Commercial Lending”
- CLEBC Presenter, “Advanced Conveyancing Practices for Paralegals”
- CLEBC Chapter Contributor, BC Mortgages Practice Manual
- Director and Current President, Mortgage Investment Association of British Columbia
- Member, BC Land Title and Survey Authority (LTSA) Legal Professions Advisory Committee
- Lecturer/Speaker/Presenter, Society of Notaries Public of British Columbia and BC Notaries Association
- Instructor/Course Materials Co-Author of “Mortgage Broker Legal Updates”, BC Financial Services Authority (BCFSA)

ELECTION STATEMENT

When people ask what kind of lawyer I am, my answer has been the same for 32 years: I’m a “nuts and bolts” solicitor. I have a varied practice across multiple areas of law, and I have never litigated.

Having crested three decades of practice, I bring a pragmatic, roll-up-your-sleeves approach to work every day. As a solicitor focused on private lending, most of my files involve the trifecta of concerns: big dollar amounts, short time frames and determined (pushy) parties. I wouldn't have it any other way. Yet, this practice must fit within the same regulatory framework that governs every lawyer in the province. As a founding partner of a solicitor-only firm, I understand the challenges of practising within these constraints. We handle significant trust funds, often under intense time pressure, while meeting client verification and trust accounting requirements. That is my world every day, and it is the “go-go-go” experience I would bring to the role of Benchers.

I respectfully ask for your support. I would bring my solicitors-only experience, practical approach, integrity, balanced judgment and a personality that is helpful, approachable and, when needed, candid.

Benchers have an important role as our profession evolves. I know the rules that govern us, and I understand the challenges lawyers face in practice, in their personal lives and in their communities. I want to help our Law Society govern with a fair, measured and practical approach.

Our Law Society does a commendable job, and our profession has so much to be proud of. To keep moving forward, Benchers and all lawyers need to work together. I want to be part of that effort—not just responding when problems arise but providing practical guidance that helps lawyers avoid them in the first place.

I like my hardscrabble solicitor experience. I have worked at national and mid-sized firms and co-founded my own firm. I have stayed active in my community, raised a family, and faced—and beaten down—personal challenges (thank you, LAP!). Those experiences have made me both stubborn and compassionate, these being traits I believe would serve me well as a Benchers.

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SWANSON, Peter

Called to the Bar: 1988

Bernard LLP

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I am a founding partner of Bernard LLP.

My practice has two main dimensions: I assist clients with shipping related problems, including collisions, ship-source pollution, cargo damage, and commercial disputes; and, I help health care professionals with disciplinary and registration issues before their regulators. My professional regulatory practice involves working with clients to navigate the complexity of their specific professional regulatory regime. Examples include assisting foreign physicians to obtain registration with the local College and to assist registrants with disciplinary matters through to disciplinary hearings.

I appear at all levels of court in B.C. and in the Federal Court. I was successful counsel in *Z.I. Pompey v. ECU-Line*, 2003 SCC 27.

I am an adjunct professor of maritime law at UBC. I frequently speak on legal topics to lawyers and to industry.

I am an active member of the CBA, being a past chair of the Provincial and National maritime law sections. I am a director and past chair of both the Vancouver Maritime Arbitrators Association and the International Sailors Society Canada (a seafarer welfare charity that funds seafarer centers across Canada). I am also a board member of the Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia.

ELECTION STATEMENT

The enactment of the new Legal Professions Act represents significant change to the regulation of the legal profession in British Columbia, overturning 150 years of self-regulation. The Chief Justice, while concluding the new Act is not ultra vires, accepted “an independent Bar as a bedrock principle of the Canadian Constitution and ... the independence of the Bar to be an unwritten constitutional principle.” I support the current appeal. However, with transition work continuing, we must press for meaningful consultation and dialogue with the Attorney General in order to advocate for changes that

improve professional regulation while preserving our independence through a governance structure with a clear and substantial majority of lawyers. As a Benchler, I will support the current LSBC position and forcefully advocate for independence of the bar both in form and in substance.

I believe I have the necessary background to help achieve the best possible outcome for British Columbia lawyers. I bring over 38 years of legal experience to the table with a unique practice mix. I routinely represent health care professionals with registration and disciplinary issues. There have been significant changes to the regulatory structure of health care professions in B.C. My experience helping health care professionals navigate their way through that change, provides me with a uniquely informed perspective on understanding the current legislated changes to professional regulation while ensuring public safety.

Additionally, I practice in both the BC and Federal court systems, dealing regularly with different rules and actual practice differences across the country. Working with those differences requires thoughtful consideration and flexibility, two traits I believe will be invaluable working as a Benchler through to the end of 2027.

Fundamentally, I believe it is essential that lawyer independence from state intervention be maintained, not eroded. That independence is foundational to the practice of law in British Columbia. That said, I am not stuck in the past. I fully support transparent and effective governance that includes meaningful diversity and inclusion. I will work to ensure independent governance exercised in the public interest is maintained for B.C. lawyers.

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FRASER, Andrea

Called to the Bar: 2016

Guild Yule LLP

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I was called to the bar in 2016 after graduating from Allard Law. Since then, I have practiced litigation at Guild Yule LLP, first as an associate and now as a partner. I maintain a general litigation practice with an emphasis on health law, municipal law and personal injury.

From my time at Allard Law to present, I have made it a priority to contribute to the legal community. I was elected to the board of the Vancouver Bar Association, where I was on the board for 5 years, including as Vice-President, President and Past-President. I have also sat on the executive of the CBABC Insurance Law Subsection and on the Canadian Defence Lawyers Young Lawyers Committee. I am a strong supporter of law students, both as a member of Guild Yule's Student Recruitment Committee and as a member of the Allard Law Alumni Association (and past President of the Allard Law Students' Association).

Outside of law, I am a solo mother to two young children who help keep me grounded, entertained and busy!

ELECTION STATEMENT

I'm running for election as Benchers in Vancouver County because I value our legal community and want to continue to contribute to it.

The Law Society is at a potential inflection point. We do not know what the years ahead will look like for the regulation of our profession. I believe that an independent Law Society is integral to both our profession and to our constitutional democracy. If elected, I will support the Law Society's ongoing appeal of the decision with respect to the constitutionality of the Legal Professions Act and support the principles of independence and self-governance.

In the meantime, the Law Society's important work goes on. My time on the VBA taught me the importance of listening carefully, bringing people together and finding practical

solutions to difficult issues. If elected, I would bring that same approach of common sense and thoughtfulness to my work with the Law Society. I am particularly interested in continuing my work of supporting law students and incoming lawyers in the early days of their careers.

Our society is also at an inflection point with the broad introduction of AI tools. I am on Guild Yule's AI Committee and have come to a good understanding of how AI technologies can assist the practice of law while simultaneously introducing risk. If elected, I would continue to develop the Law Society's guidance to professionals about AI, including parameters to vet AI tools that firms or lawyers may be considering. I believe that AI has practical uses in the practice of law, and that the Law Society can play a crucial role in assisting lawyers in learning how to use AI tools to support their work appropriately and responsibly.

Finally, I recognize the challenges that can be faced by lawyers in achieving balance between their personal and professional lives. Ensuring that supports like the Lawyers Assistance Program and Telus Health continue to be available is a top priority for me. I would also like to help develop parenting-specific resources for Law Society members.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be honoured to have your vote.

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BHULLAR, Tony (he/him)

Called to the Bar: 1995

Tony Bhullar

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Tony was born in Vancouver, B.C. However both his parents immigrated from India, and thus Tony speaks Punjabi fluently. Tony participates in numerous Indo-Canadian events and celebrations. Around 10 years of age, his parents purchased a blueberry farm in Cloverdale, B.C. and hence he learned a great deal about farming, especially by working on local vegetable farms. Tony attended Simon Fraser University for his B.A., University of Victoria for an LL.B, and the University of Notre Dame for his LL.M. In the legal profession, Tony has been a federal and provincial prosecutor, in private practice, and as a civilian member of the Royal Canadian Mounted police (RCMP). After much oscillating, Tony put his name forward to seek a seat in the British Columbia Legislature and was elected. It was an enlightening experience, and he learned a great deal on how the machine of law making functions and operates. After his term in the Legislature, the Vancouver taxi business was in turmoil and Tony accepted the position of President of the Vancouver Taxi Association (VTA) and tackled numerous problems. Tony, as a hobby enjoys inventing devices. One that attracted attention is a laser scarecrow that protects crops from birds feeding on them.

ELECTION STATEMENT

Tony is by nature one who believes those that cannot help themselves must be assisted by those who are more fortunate. For Tony this was just not words but action. Amongst many instances two stand out in particular, the case of the "missing woman" and the Frank Joseph Paul case. The missing woman (mostly Indigenous) matter was where a serial killer, Robert Pickton, preyed on woman in the sex trade in the Downtown Eastside. Tony filed a complaint with the Office of the complaints Commissioner seeking a judicial inquiry, he reported the Vancouver Police Department be held accountable. Because the matter was going to the Courts was put off until 2010. In correspondence dated October 20 2010 OPPC commissioner, Stan Lowe, wrote to the mayor, police chief, the Solicitor General and Tony stating "With the appointment of the Commission of Inquiry, the concerns raised by the third party complainant Tony Bhullar should be addressed in the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry." Tony spoke with numerous parents of the victims reached out to Tony as this was

extremely emotional for them. Quoted in the Globe and Mail, Tony said: "I can't imagine what must it be like to be like to lose a loved one and then realise that nothing is being done about it." The authorities again failed to provide counselling to loved ones.

Confused how someone could die in police custody, namely Frank Joseph Paul. Mr. Paul was Indigenous gentleman and homeless. sadly, On a cold December 6 night the VPD took him out cells and dumped him off in a alley behind a detox centre and he died by the cold. Again seeking accountability filed a complaint with OPPC. It did not stop there Tony raised the matter with Solicitor General in the Legislature (Hansard):

T Bhullar: This correspondence indicates the Solicitor's office was satisfied that there was no serious wrongdoing in this matter [death of Frank Paul], and the file was closed. Would the Solicitor General please tell the House the precise nature of the review by his office?

Tony will keep fighting for those cannot, always.

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**CHAN, Jennifer**

Called to the Bar: 2009

Providence Health Care

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I am grateful to be General Counsel and Chief Privacy Officer for Providence Health Care, which operates St. Paul's Hospital and other hospitals and health care facilities. After several years of intensive solicitor training at large firms (McCarthy; Blakes), I pursued my calling to serve the public interest and have since enjoyed many fulfilling experiences doing so. Prior to my current role, this included poring over evidence on taser use (Braidwood Commission), examining scientists on the decline of sockeye salmon (Cohen Commission), investigating AML rule breaches and advising on more inclusive policies (Law Society), and junioring on a few precedential Charter cases (once before the SCC).

Serving community-focused, nonprofit organizations has also been a longstanding passion. I currently help commuters connect with the places and people that matter most (Board Vice-Chair, TransLink) and support the improved recovery and recycling of used beverage containers (Board Member, Encorp Pacific, dba "Return-It"). Previously, I led the Vancouver Public Library Board through its pandemic response (Board Chair), encouraged CLEBC's expansion of digital offerings (Board Member), and helped the Vancouver Foundation award grants to deserving environmental organizations (Advisory Committee Member).

Education: Harvard (LL.M.), Oxford (M.Sc.), U. Victoria (LL.B.), UBC (B.Sc.), and ICD.D.

ELECTION STATEMENT

Whether our days involve guiding people through some of their toughest moments, drafting the rules that shape our social and economic relationships, or advocating for how we should understand the past and build the future, our profession is truly special. It's also not something we can or should take for granted. It requires our input. An independent and self-regulated profession, by definition, calls upon its members to participate in its governance. When done right, professional regulation establishes "those wise restraints that make us free," allowing for both public protection and a thriving profession. It would be my honour to contribute to this regulatory function, which flows from the distinct privilege and shared responsibility that is the practise of law.

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A well-governed legal profession requires a regulator that maintains the public trust through transparency and fairness, adapts to modern challenges, and considers the well-being and diversity of the professionals it regulates. I don't have the answers to all the challenges our profession faces, and there are many, but as a Bencher I would commit to doing what we are all trained to do: listen carefully, consider the facts and people affected, and collaborate towards even-handed and good-hearted decisions. Bringing my perspective as in-house counsel, I would endeavour to ensure that regulatory approaches consider the unique circumstances faced by lawyers outside traditional private practice environments. Having previously worked at the Law Society, I am familiar with the organization's strengths and limitations and would be ready to hit the ground running.

I would be grateful to put my experiences and education to the service of the Law Society, including my experiences co-leading and governing large, trusted, public institutions. Thank you for your faith in granting the opportunity.

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