

2025 Benchers Election – County of Prince Rupert

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 8 – County of Prince Rupert

- HOPKINS, Sara K.
- YUEN, Jonathan



HOPKINS, Sara K. (she/her)

Called to the Bar: 2013

Ministry of Attorney General, BC Prosecution Service

Email: sara.hopkins@gov.bc.ca

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Called to the bar in 2013, Sara Hopkins worked with Glen Orris K.C. where she practiced criminal defence, immigration, and employment law. Since joining the Terrace Crown office in 2014, Sara has traveled the North working on files ranging from *Wildlife Act* prosecutions to homicides. She would choose a snowy commute over traffic any day of the week.

An experienced trial Crown with a varied practice, Sara supports her colleagues as resource counsel in the areas of digital evidence, online offences against children, and sexual assault. Sara is also a regular speaker at legal and community events. She has represented Prince Rupert County on the CBA Provincial Council and has represented BC on the National CBA Criminal Justice Section. Sara recently completed her LLM through Osgoode Hall and teaches at Coast Mountain College.

A National Team athlete, Sara served as Commodore of CanoeKayak Canada and as the President of CanoeKayak BC. She currently volunteers as the President of the Terrace Ringette Association. In her spare time, she runs with her dogs.

ELECTION STATEMENT

I seek your support because I have the skills and the experience to give voice to the unique needs of the Northern Bar. During my 12 years of practice I have faced a wide range of practical and ethical dilemmas, and I often relied on the wisdom, patience, and practicality of a bencher to guide me through challenging situations. I understand the importance of having access to a reliable sounding board and it would be an honour to support my peers as I have been supported in the past.

In my volunteer life, I have worked with international partners to design and host Olympic-level competitions, I have led strategic planning and governance review processes, and I have used my teaching background to develop community legal education programs. I care

deeply about the Law Society's role in advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, about the vital details of implementing the *Legal Profession Act*, and about options for ensuring the integrity of our colleagues, including the Alternative Dispute Resolution process.

Lawyers occupy a position of immense privilege in our Northern communities and we rely on the Law Society to both protect and enhance the public's confidence in the legal profession. I have great respect for the dispute resolution process, and if elected, I will advocate for reductions in resolution timelines and for enhanced virtual options. As a volunteer with the Lawyers Assistance Program, I am keenly aware of the workload, isolation, and resource issues we struggle with in the North. I will serve you with integrity, with transparency, and with a strong voice.

Please call me to chat.

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YUEN, Jonathan (he/him)

Called to the Bar: 2002

Yuen Westwood Law Corporation

Email: jonathanyuen@telus.net

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Called to the bar in 2002, Jonathan Yuen articulated in Kamloops before moving to Smithers in 2003 to work with Gamble & Co. on the Federal Crown Contract. He has practised largely as a barrister, including ad hoc Crown, criminal defence, family and child protection cases, appearing in both Provincial and Supreme Court. As counsel for the Director under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* since 2009, his practice ranges throughout Prince Rupert County, with regular court appearances in almost every court in the region.

First elected a Bencher for 2024, Jonathan served on the Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Committee and is currently a member of the Access to Justice Advisory Committee and the Credentials Committee.

He has been active on the CBA's Judicial Advisory Committee and, along with Sarah Westwood, K.C., organized the annual Bench, Bar and Court Users' summer barbecue and archery tournament from 2011-2019.

ELECTION STATEMENT

Living and working as a lawyer in Northwestern BC since 2002, I am acutely aware of the challenges of practice and access to justice in rural and remote communities, and how issues of poverty, distance, and culture affect our clients and the communities in which we live and work. Practicing primarily in areas of law where Indigenous persons are over-represented, I have witnessed first-hand the effects and consequences of inter-generational trauma, and the need for sensitivity and understanding in how to make the legal system work for disenfranchised people. During my first term as Bencher, I also saw first-hand that many people in the profession had virtually no knowledge or understanding of these issues, or of anything beyond their own limited urban experience. I provided a counterpoint to that mindset in my first term, and I hope to continue to do that over the next two years to greater effect, as a result of the knowledge and skills I have developed during my first term and also relying on the relationships I have developed over that time with my fellow Benchers, Law Society staff, and other stakeholders.

As I enter the later stages of my legal career, I expect to have more energy to devote to the time-consuming work that is being your Benchers. Beyond my work at the Benchers table, the committees I have been a member of, and the discipline hearings and conduct reviews I have been a panel member for, I am privileged to have done the Benchers interview for dozens of articling students and also to be the Law Society's representative in several local call ceremonies over the past two years. I hope there will continue to be more going forward. I was also very pleased to help arrange the recent dinner to celebrate the retirement of Judge Jackson and hope to arrange further events for the legal community, including reinstituting the Bench, Bar and Court Users' barbecue and archery tournament next summer.

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