



# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES

*Gaa kina gwii waabamaa debwewin • All those who seek the truth*

# ANNUAL REPORT

**2023**



# IN GRATITUDE TO THE ALS TEAM, COMMUNITY, FRIENDS & FUNDERS

Aboriginal Legal Services (formerly Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto) was established on February 21, 1990. ALS was formed following a need for a legal-related program for Aboriginal people living in the Greater Toronto Area.





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# Aboriginal Legal Services

## Mission Statement

To strengthen the capacity of the Aboriginal community and its citizens to deal with justice issues and provide Aboriginal controlled and culturally based justice alternatives.



## Vision & Beliefs

Aboriginal individuals require equitable treatment in the justice system, access to the legal and related resources within the justice system, as well an understanding of the system and their options.

The support required includes advocacy in all areas of the law as well as alternatives which can break the cycles of recidivism and dependency which is all too prevalent.

These alternatives are more effective when they are community-controlled and are based on the traditional cultural norms and values of the Aboriginal community.

It is necessary to re-introduce community-controlled and culturally based justice alternatives by ensuring community involvement in the process and by integrating justice-related services with complementary programs within the Aboriginal community.

## Vision Statement

- We seek a community which deals with justice issues in an assertive, constructive and respectful way.
- A community which provides support and guidance to its citizens when they need to interact with the justice system.
- A community involved in developing and implementing justice initiatives and alternatives which are culturally based and community controlled.
- A community where our youth have the opportunities and abilities to deal with justice issues affecting them.
- A community where its citizens have minimum exposure to the existing legal system and are less vulnerable to acts of aggression, racism, and ignorance of who we are.
- A community which resolves its conflicts internally with minimal need for outside involvement.
- A community which promotes a positive environment related to justice issues - an environment based on mutual understandings with non-aboriginal groups/ services such as schools, police, and other enforcement agencies.
- A community where its agencies work together to ensure justice and related services and issues are provided in a holistic and integrated way.
- A community where its citizens have the confidence and self-esteem to deal with issues in a constructive way.





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# All Those Who Seek The Truth

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# **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MATERIALS**





# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES

*Gaa kina gwii waabamaa debwewin • All those who seek the truth*

## ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES Annual General Meeting 2023

### DRAFT AGENDA

**Date and Time:** Thursday, December 7th at 6:00pm EST

**Meeting Mode:**

The AGM will be held exclusively on Zoom: You can click here to join:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87942435506?pwd=OUV4MUxtV0NnQlQzbnkWSDR4dDlxZz09>

Meeting ID: 879 4243 5506

Passcode: 288255

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

1. Opening Thanksgiving and Teaching
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes – AGM 2022
4. Consideration of the Final Audited Financial Statements and Auditor's Report
5. Appointment of Auditor
6. President's Report
7. Executive Director's Report
8. Presentation and Update on Aboriginal Legal Services Strategic Planning 2023 by Sisco Consulting
9. Election of Directors
10. Closing



## **ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES**

Annual General Meeting

Thursday, December 8, 2022

### **MINUTES (KN)**

#### **Present:**

##### Members:

Jessie Stirling (President/Chair), Paul-Emile McNab (Vice-President), Basima Roshan (Treasurer), Karlie Nordstrom (Secretary), Cheyenne Latimer, Stephen Knight, Derek James Mastin

##### Presenters:

Elder Jimmy Dick, Christa Big Canoe, Jonathan Rudin, Ian Manning, Jason Mercredi, Ovide Mercredi

##### Welcome Guests:

Nazanin Najafizadeh, Shaunna Kelly, Sharon Archer, Katy Allen, Amanda Carling, Kim Whiteduck, Constance Manitowabi, Bahri\*, Line Laport, Sharon Reynolds

*\*No last name indicated on Zoom.*

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#### **Meeting Documents**

- ◆ Aboriginal Legal Services Annual General Meeting Report 2022, linked here: [als\\_agm\\_2022\\_report.pdf \(aboriginallegal.ca\)](#)



1. Opening Thanksgiving and Teaching

- Elder Jimmy Dick provided the opening thanksgiving and teaching.

2. Approval of Agenda

**MOTION #1:** To approve the December 8, 2022 agenda.

**Moved:** Stephen Knight

**Seconded:** Cheyenne Latimer

**Carried**

3. Approval of Minutes – AGM 2021

**MOTION #2:** To approve the minutes from AGM 2020 held on December 7, 2021.

**Moved:** Cheyenne Latimer

**Seconded:** Paul-Emile McNab

**Carried**

4. Consideration of the Financial Statements and Auditor's Report

- Ian Manning presented the financial statements and auditor's report for the fiscal year ending on March 31, 2022.

**MOTION #3:** To approve the audited final financial statements for ALS Legal Clinic for the fiscal year ending on March 31, 2022.

**Moved:** Paul-Emile McNab

**Seconded:** Basima Roshan

**Carried**

**MOTION #4:** To approve the audited final financial statements for ALS Inc. for the fiscal year which ended on March 31, 2022.

**Moved:** Paul-Emile McNab

**Seconded:** Cheyenne Latimer

**Carried**

5. Appointment of Auditor

**MOTION #5:** To reappoint Edward and Manning LLP Chartered Accountants as Aboriginal Legal Service's auditor.

**Moved:** Paul-Emile McNab

**Seconded:** Stephen Knight

**Carried**

6. President's Report

- Jessie Stirling's report was circulated in advance as part of the Aboriginal Legal Services Annual Report (2022).

7. Management's Reports

- Christa Big Canoe, Legal Advocacy Director, reported on the activities of Aboriginal Legal Services – Legal Clinic throughout the past year.
- Jonathan Rudin, Program Director, reported on the activities of Aboriginal Legal Services Inc. throughout the past year.
- Both reports were circulated in advance as part of the Aboriginal Legal Services Annual Report.

8. Presentation on Indigenous Justice Strategy Project by Ovide Mercredi and Jason Mercredi of Silent Drums Consulting

- Jonathan Rudin introduced the Project and presenters.
- Ovide Mercredi and Jason Mercredi presented on their approach to and perspectives on an urban Indigenous justice strategy, as well as their plans re community engagement efforts.

9. Election of Directors

**MOTION #6:** To elect Paul-Emile McNab and Basima Roshan to the Board of Directors as Directors, and to elect Jessie Stirling to the Board of Directors as a Shadow Director.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:**

**Carried**

10. Closing Thanksgiving

- Elder Jimmy Dick provided the closing thanksgiving.





**Edward & Manning** LLP  
Chartered Professional Accountants

# **ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.**

## **Financial Statements**

**March 31, 2023**





Edward & Manning <sup>LLP</sup>  
Chartered Professional Accountants

# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.

March 31, 2023

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## **Independent Auditors' Report**

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To the Members of  
ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.

### *Qualified Opinion*

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Aboriginal Legal Services Inc. (the "Organization"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2023 and the statements of operations and net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In our opinion, except for the effects of the matters described in the Basis for Qualified Opinion paragraph, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Aboriginal Legal Services Inc. as at March 31, 2023, and the results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### *Basis for Qualified Opinion*

In common with many charitable organizations, the Organization derives revenue from donations and fundraising, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, verification of these revenues was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Organization. Therefore, we were not able to determine whether, as at and for the year ended March 31, 2023, any adjustments might be necessary to revenues, deficiency of revenue over expenses, assets and net assets.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.





## **Independent Auditors' Report**

### ***continued***

#### ***Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

#### ***Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.



## Independent Auditors' Report

### *continued*

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

***Edward & Manning LLP***

Chartered Professional Accountants  
Licensed Public Accountants

Toronto, Ontario  
October 16, 2023



# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.

## Statement of Financial Position

As At March 31, 2023

	Note	2023	2022
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash		\$ 1,977,251	\$ 1,089,945
Short term investments		5,408	5,408
Amounts receivable		889,048	300,860
Due from Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic	(4)	5,801	252,292
HST recoverable		108,299	192,268
Prepaid expenses		48,232	74,191
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>3,034,039</b>	<b>1,914,964</b>
Capital assets	(5)	23,326	31,890
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>\$ 3,057,365</b>	<b>\$ 1,946,854</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		\$ 747,333	\$ 330,632
Deferred revenue	(6)	1,750,326	1,109,663
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>2,497,659</b>	<b>1,440,295</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>			
Unrestricted		559,706	506,559
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		<b>\$ 3,057,365</b>	<b>\$ 1,946,854</b>

Approved on Behalf of the Board:

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The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.

## Statement of Operations and Net Assets

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

	2023	2022
<b>Revenue</b>		
Ministry of Attorney General	\$ 2,445,030	\$ 1,989,814
Department of Justice	1,333,480	529,203
Legal Aid Ontario	1,217,899	1,300,561
Donations, fundraising and other income	618,216	377,613
Ministry of Children, Community and Youth Services	301,800	292,993
Mizwie Biik, Aboriginal Employment	210,636	232,519
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	170,319	163,322
Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council	167,951	632,537
Law Foundation of Ontario	150,390	104,917
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>6,615,721</b>	<b>5,623,479</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Salaries and wages	4,349,421	3,992,711
Training and program costs	968,663	604,064
Travel	379,004	115,733
Telephone, telecommunications and computer costs	317,357	238,552
Accommodation	247,256	256,829
Professional fees	179,516	97,401
Office and general	63,360	120,471
Supplies	25,958	24,188
Insurance	23,475	21,874
Amortization	8,564	9,256
<b>Total operating expenses</b>	<b>6,562,574</b>	<b>5,481,079</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenditures</b>	<b>53,147</b>	<b>142,400</b>
Net assets, beginning of year	506,559	364,159
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 559,706</b>	<b>\$ 506,559</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.



# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.

## Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

	2023	2022
<b>Cash flows from operations:</b>		
Excess of revenues over expenditures	\$ 53,147	\$ 142,400
Amortization	8,564	9,256
Increase in amounts receivable	(588,188)	(280,626)
Decrease (increase) in HST recoverable	83,969	(35,681)
Decrease (increase) in due from Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic	246,492	(157,946)
Decrease in prepaid expenses	25,960	12,856
Increase in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	416,699	156,325
Increase (decrease) in deferred revenue	640,663	(179,736)
<b>Total net cash flows from operations</b>	<b>887,306</b>	<b>(333,152)</b>
<b>Net cash increase (decrease) during the year</b>	<b>887,306</b>	<b>(333,152)</b>
Cash at beginning of year	1,089,945	1,423,097
<b>Cash at end of year</b>	<b>\$ 1,977,251</b>	<b>\$ 1,089,945</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

### (1) About Aboriginal Legal Services Inc.

Aboriginal Legal Services Inc. (the "Organization") is incorporated without share capital under the laws of the Province of Ontario. The Organization was formed to provide court worker services assisting Aboriginal people to deal with the criminal, family and young offender courts in Toronto. It also provides Alternative Justice Programs as an alternative to the court system.

The Organization is a federally registered charity, a registered charity is exempt from income taxes and is able to issue donation receipts for income tax purposes.

### (2) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### (3) Significant accounting policies

#### (a) Capital assets

The costs of capital assets are capitalized upon meeting the criteria for recognition as capital assets; otherwise, costs are expensed as incurred. The cost of a capital asset comprises its purchase price and any directly attributable cost of preparing the asset for its intended use.

Capital assets are presented at cost less accumulated amortization and accumulated impairment losses.

Capital assets are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that its carrying amount may not be recoverable. If any potential impairment is identified, then the amount of the impairment is quantified by comparing the carrying value of the capital assets to its fair value. Any impairment of capital assets is charged to operations in the period in which the impairment occurs.

An impairment loss is not reversed if the fair value of the capital assets subsequently increases.

Amortization is provided for using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives as follows for the major classes of assets:

Computer equipment	3 years
Office equipment	5 years
Leasehold improvements	over the term of the lease

#### (b) Revenue recognition

The Organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Under the deferral method of accounting for contributions restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.



# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

### (3) Significant accounting policies

#### (c) Financial instruments and risk management

Financial assets and liabilities are carried at amortized cost, which approximates their fair value and are tested for impairment annually. It is management's opinion that the Organization is not exposed to significant risks relating to financial instruments.

#### (d) Use of estimates

The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates and may have impact on future periods.

### (4) Due from Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic (the "Clinic") is a related Organization under common directorship. The balance due from the Clinic is non-interest bearing and is due on demand.

The Organization shares a number of administrative costs with the Clinic the most significant of which is the occupancy costs of 211 Yonge Street which was \$138,595 for 2023 (2022 - \$133,816). This cost sharing arrangement is recorded at an exchange value which approximates fair value.

### (5) Capital assets

Capital assets consist of the following:

			2023	2022
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Computer equipment	\$ 117,312	\$ (115,404)	\$ 1,908	\$ 2,726
Office equipment	73,820	(68,346)	5,474	6,842
Leasehold improvements	63,776	(47,832)	15,944	22,322
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 254,908</b>	<b>\$ (231,582)</b>	<b>\$ 23,326</b>	<b>\$ 31,890</b>

Total amortization of capital assets for the year was \$8,564 (2022 - \$9,256).

# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

### (6) Deferred revenue

Details of deferred revenue is as follows:

	2023	2022
Ministry of the Attorney General, Dept. of Justice & Legal Aid Ont. - Gladue Court	\$ 470,362	\$ 411,149
Ministry of the Attorney General - Indigenous Learning Centre	201,377	-
Department of Justice - Courtwork Training	176,782	-
The Sonor Foundation	137,348	59,767
Ministry of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth - Alternative Dispute Resolution	105,588	79,572
Ministry of the Attorney General - Aboriginal Courtwork Program Project	103,736	62,210
Legal Aid Ontario - Giwedin Anang Project	78,710	78,710
Ministry of the Attorney General - Supervised Access	69,142	-
Department of Justice - Indigenous Justice Strategy	56,459	-
Department of Justice - Needs Assessments for Toronto Courthouse and Bail Centre	53,732	-
Law Foundation of Ontario - Catalyst	51,237	29,252
Ministry of the Attorney General - Indigenous Knowledge Keepers	51,069	42,688
Ministry of the Attorney General - FASD Worker Program	49,345	96,477
Department of Justice - Department for Women and Gender Equality Program	42,302	-
Department of Justice - Strategic Plan	39,646	-
Department of Justice - Elders Gathering	25,376	-
Ministry of the Attorney General - The Road to Your Name	23,366	62,971
Ministry of the Attorney General & Dept. of Justice - Community Council	8,012	67,289
Ministry of the Attorney General - Welcome Home Restorative Justice Program	6,737	9,365
Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council	-	110,213
	<b>\$ 1,750,326</b>	<b>\$ 1,109,663</b>

### (7) Commitments

The Organization's total obligations, under the operating lease for occupied premise at 211 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, exclusive of sales taxes and other occupancy charges, are as follows:

2024	\$ 49,478
2025	49,478
2026	28,864
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 127,820</b>





# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES INC.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

### (8) Financial instruments and risk

The Organization does not face significant credit, currency, interest rate, liquidity or market risk exposure. The fair values of items that meet the definition of financial instruments approximate their carrying values. These items include cash, short term investments, amounts receivable, due from Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic, HST recoverable, prepaid expenses, and accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

#### Exposure to credit risk

The Organization is exposed to normal credit risk resulting from the possibility that a customer or counterparty to a financial instrument defaults on their financial obligations.

The maximum exposure to credit risk, as represented by the carrying amount of the financial assets, was:

	2023	2022
Cash	\$ 1,977,251	\$ 1,089,945
Short term investments	5,408	5,408
Amounts receivable	889,048	300,860
Due from ALS - Legal Clinic	5,801	252,293
HST recoverable	108,299	192,268
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,985,807</b>	<b>\$ 1,840,774</b>



**Edward & Manning** LLP  
Chartered Professional Accountants

# **Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic**

## **Financial Statements**

**March 31, 2023**





Edward & Manning <sup>LLP</sup>  
Chartered Professional Accountants

# Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

March 31, 2023

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## **Independent Auditors' Report**

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To the Members of  
Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

### *Opinion*

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2023 and the statements of operations and net assets, and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic as at March 31, 2023, and the results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.



**Edward & Manning** LLP  
Chartered Professional Accountants

## **Independent Auditors' Report**

### ***continued***

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic's financial reporting process.

### ***Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic to cease to continue as a going concern.



**Edward & Manning** LLP  
Chartered Professional Accountants

## **Independent Auditors' Report**

### ***continued***

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

## ***Edward & Manning LLP***

Chartered Professional Accountants  
Licensed Public Accountants

Toronto, Ontario  
October 16, 2023



# Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

## Statement of Financial Position

As At March 31, 2023

	Note	2023	2022
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash		\$ 556,816	\$ 443,433
HST recoverable		34,388	25,591
Prepaid expenses		32,832	30,708
Amounts receivable		-	52,490
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>624,036</b>	<b>552,222</b>
Capital assets	(4)	25,290	24,460
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>\$ 649,326</b>	<b>\$ 576,682</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		\$ 60,367	\$ 58,170
Due to Aboriginal Legal Services Inc.	(5)	5,801	252,292
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>66,168</b>	<b>310,462</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>			
Project fund	(6)	147,492	133,102
Capital fund	(7)	25,290	24,460
Legal disbursements fund	(8)	2,672	2,802
General fund		407,704	105,856
<b>Total Fund Balances</b>		<b>583,158</b>	<b>266,220</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		<b>\$ 649,326</b>	<b>\$ 576,682</b>

Approved on Behalf of the Board:

\_\_\_\_\_

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

## Statement of General Fund

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

	Note	2023	2022
<b>Revenue</b>			
Legal Aid Ontario			
Direct receipts		\$ 1,446,292	\$ 952,013
Indirect receipts	(9)	56,338	45,396
Other income		600	992
<b>Total revenue</b>		<b>1,503,230</b>	<b>998,401</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Salaries and wages		793,738	596,515
Accommodations		138,595	133,816
Employee benefits		116,343	97,925
Indirect payments	(9)	56,338	45,396
Professional fees		35,721	7,609
Administration, supplies and other program costs		24,213	16,632
Memberships, licenses and other fees		16,870	12,869
Travel		9,104	6,743
Telephone and telecommunications		6,692	8,614
Library		2,454	650
Equipment		1,314	-
<b>Total operating expenses</b>		<b>1,201,382</b>	<b>926,769</b>
<b>Excess of revenues over expenditures</b>		<b>301,848</b>	<b>71,632</b>
Fund balance, beginning		105,856	34,224
<b>Fund balance, ending</b>		<b>\$ 407,704</b>	<b>\$ 105,856</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.





# Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

## Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

	2023	2022
<b>Cash flows from operations</b>		
Excess of revenues over expenses (all funds)	\$ 316,938	\$ 103,384
Amortization	12,305	7,906
Decrease (increase) in amounts receivable	52,490	(52,490)
(Increase) decrease in HST recoverable	(8,797)	3,595
Increase in prepaid expenses	(2,124)	(148)
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	2,196	(5,147)
(Decrease) increase in due to Aboriginal Legal Services Inc.	(246,490)	157,946
<b>Total net cash flows from operations</b>	<b>126,518</b>	<b>215,046</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>		
Capital asset purchases	(13,135)	-
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(13,135)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net cash increase during the year</b>	<b>113,383</b>	<b>215,046</b>
<b>Cash at beginning of year</b>	<b>443,433</b>	<b>228,387</b>
<b>Cash at end of year</b>	<b>\$ 556,816</b>	<b>\$ 443,433</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

### (1) About Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic (the "Clinic") is incorporated without share capital under the laws of the Province of Ontario. The Clinic was formed to provide quality legal services to low income individuals of the Aboriginal community in the Greater Toronto Area and occasionally elsewhere in the province and is primarily funded by Legal Aid Ontario. The statements pertain to funds received from Legal Aid Ontario and not to other activities unless otherwise noted. The Clinic qualifies as a not-for-profit organization under the Income Tax Act and is exempt from corporate income tax.

### (2) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### (3) Significant accounting policies

#### (a) Capital assets

The costs of capital assets are capitalized upon meeting the criteria for recognition as capital assets; otherwise, costs are expensed as incurred. The cost of a capital asset comprises its purchase price and any directly attributable cost of preparing the asset for its intended use.

Capital assets are presented at cost less accumulated amortization and accumulated impairment losses.

Capital assets are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that its carrying amount may not be recoverable. If any potential impairment is identified, then the amount of the impairment is quantified by comparing the carrying value of the capital asset to its fair value. Any impairment of capital assets is charged to operations in the period in which the impairment occurs.

An impairment loss is not reversed if the fair value of the capital assets subsequently increases.

Amortization is provided for using the declining balance method over the estimated useful lives as follows for the major classes of assets:

Computer equipment	3 years
Office equipment	5 years
Leasehold improvements	Over the term of the lease

#### (b) Financial instruments and risk management

Financial assets and liabilities are carried at amortized cost, which approximates their fair value and are tested for impairment annually. It is management's opinion that the Clinic is not exposed to significant risk relating to financial instruments.



# Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

### (3) Significant accounting policies

#### (c) Use of estimates

The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates and may have impact on future periods.

#### (d) Fund accounting

The Clinic follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions whereby all contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable. All the funds described below, except as noted, are restricted as to use by various agreements between the Clinic and Legal Aid Ontario ("LAO") and title to the Clinic assets vests with the funder. The Clinic has established the following segregated funds:

- i) General Fund: These funds are used to provide a range of legal and paralegal services, including information, advice and representation, to low-income individuals and families.
- ii) Legal Disbursement Fund: These funds are used to provide for certain direct expenses incurred in representing the Clinic's clients in legal proceedings.
- iii) Capital Fund: This fund holds the capital assets of the Clinic that have been funded by Legal Aid Ontario.
- iv) Project Fund: These funds are received from non-LAO sources and are used to fund expenditures under separate project agreements.

### (4) Capital assets

Capital assets consist of the following:

			2023	2022
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Computer equipment	\$ 49,055	\$ (40,319)	\$ 8,736	1,285
Leasehold improvements	66,216	(49,662)	16,554	23,175
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 115,271</b>	<b>\$ (89,981)</b>	<b>\$ 25,290</b>	<b>24,460</b>

Total amortization of capital assets for the year was \$12,305 (2022 - \$7,906).

### (5) Due to Aboriginal Legal Services Inc.

# Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

### (5) Due to Aboriginal Legal Services Inc.

Aboriginal Legal Services Inc. is a related Organization under common directorship. The balance due to Aboriginal Legal Services Inc. is non-interest bearing and is due on demand.

The Clinic shares a number of administrative costs with Aboriginal Legal Services Inc., the most significant of which is the occupancy costs of 211 Yonge Street which was \$138,595 (2022 - \$133,816). This cost-sharing arrangement is recorded at an exchange value which approximates fair value.

### (6) Project fund

The Project Fund activity during the year is as follows:

	2023	2022
Project fund, opening balance	\$ 133,102	\$ 96,556
Revenue, Ministry of the Attorney General	209,963	209,962
Revenue, Canadian Mental Health Association	-	25,350
Program expenses	(195,573)	(198,766)
<b>Project fund, closing balance</b>	<b>\$ 147,492</b>	<b>\$ 133,102</b>

### (7) Capital fund

The Capital Fund activity during the year is as follows:

	2023	2021
Capital fund, opening balance	\$ 24,460	\$ 32,366
Capital assets acquired - funded by Legal Aid Ontario	13,135	-
Amortization	(12,305)	(7,906)
<b>Capital fund, closing balance</b>	<b>\$ 25,290</b>	<b>\$ 24,460</b>

### (8) Legal Disbursements Fund

The Legal Disbursements Fund activity during the year is as follows:

	2023	2022
Legal disbursements fund, opening balance	\$ 2,802	\$ (310)
Revenues, Legal Aid Ontario	21,793	4,500
Legal disbursements	(21,923)	(1,388)
<b>Legal disbursements fund, closing balance</b>	<b>\$ 2,672</b>	<b>\$ 2,802</b>



# Aboriginal Legal Services - Legal Clinic

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2023

### (9) Indirect Payments - General Fund

Legal Aid Ontario administers and makes payments on behalf of the Clinic for the following expenditures:

	2023	2022
Supplies and services	\$ 49,502	\$ 39,917
Library expenses	6,735	5,398
Pension and group insurance	101	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 56,338</b>	<b>\$ 45,396</b>

### (10) Commitments

The Clinic's total obligations, under operating lease for occupied premise at 211 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, exclusive of sales taxes and other occupancy charges, are as follows:

2024	\$ 49,478
2025	49,478
2026	28,864
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 177,298</b>

### (11) Financial instruments and risk

The Clinic does not face significant credit, currency, interest rate, liquidity or market risk exposure. The fair values of items that meet the definition of financial instruments approximate their carrying values. These items include cash, prepaid expenses, accounts payable and accrued liabilities and due to Aboriginal Legal Services Inc.

#### Exposure to credit risk

The Organization is exposed to normal credit risk resulting from the possibility that a customer or counterparty to a financial instrument defaults on their financial obligations.

The maximum exposure to credit risk, as represented by the carrying amount of the financial assets, was:

	2023	2022
Cash	\$ 556,816	\$ 443,433
HST recoverable	34,388	25,591
Amounts receivable	-	52,490
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 591,204</b>	<b>\$ 521,514</b>

# ALL STAFF





## Aboriginal Legal Services Team

We are pleased to introduce our staff team, who work hard to deliver our programs and services to the community. This list showcases the amazing and talented staff members who have made a difference in the lives of Indigenous people and communities through their work at ALS. They have faced many challenges and opportunities with courage, innovation, and collaboration and have embodied the mission and vision of ALS. They have shown resilience, creativity, and passion in their work and have demonstrated the values and vision of ALS. We are grateful for their work. Please join us in celebrating and acknowledging our staff members and their roles:

### ADMINISTRATION

Chantell Barker	Executive Director
Clarke Delangis	HR Assistant Trainee
Loretta Watetch	Legal Secretary
Michelle Rice	Finance Officer
Nazanin Najafizadeh	Manager, People Operations

### CLINIC

Audrey Huntley	Paralegal
Brandon Fenton	Culture to Wellness Therapy & Training Coordinator
Caitlyn Kasper	Senior Staff Lawyer/Courtworker Manager
Carlene Pheasant	Victim Rights Caseworker
Christa Big Canoe	Legal Advocacy Director
Emily Hill	Senior Staff Lawyer
Julie Broomfield	Victim Rights Advocate
Keenan Miller	Law Clerk
Kyle Brooks	Staff Lawyer
Léa Desjardins	Child Protection Lawyer
Matthew Malott	Staff Criminal Lawyer
Maxwell Hill	Staff Criminal Lawyer
Quinn Roffey	Culture to Wellness Project Coordinator
Sheila Warner	Tenant Rights Paralegal
Sumrana M. Taher	Staff Lawyer

### DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

Jonathan Rudin	Special Projects Director
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### INDIGENOUS LEARNING CENTRE

Jenne Finley	Indigenous Learning Centre
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### COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Cassandra Fitzgibbon	Community Council Caseworker
Colette McCombs	Community Council Program Manager
Joanna Wemigwans	Youth Addictions/Mental Health Outreach Worker
Kenika George	Youth CCP Caseworker
Steven Bondy	Youth CCP Caseworker

### FASD

Charlotte King	FASD Worker
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### GIIWEDIN ANANG

Jacob Washington	Giiwedini Anang Caseworker - Peel
Vicky Auf Der Mauer	Giiwedini Anang Civil Facilitator
Ryan Walsh	Senior Manager, Giiwedini Anang
Summer Jim	Giiwedini Anang, Supervisor

### ABORIGINAL COURTWORKERS

Alicia Lariviere	Courtworker Trainee
Cristina Nebenionquit	Courtworker
Dustin Jacko	Courtworker
Patricia Watetch	Courtworker
Lana Morissette	Courtworker
Madison Hovey	Courtworker
Sue MacLennan	Courtworker Supervisor/Toronto
Regional Bail Centre	

### WELCOME HOME

Dorothy Peters	Traditional Teacher
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### GLADUE PROGRAM

Ginny Boissoneau	Gladue Caseworker Coordinator
Kim Whiteduck	Gladue Report Coordinator
Leanne Moses	Gladue Program Specialist
Mila Delangis	Gladue Program Assistant

### GLADUE CASEWORKERS

Desiree Duplessis	Senior Manager, Gladue Caseworkers
Abby Carpenter	Gladue Caseworker, Brantford
Angie Assinewe	Gladue Caseworker, Toronto
Connie General	Gladue Caseworker, Correctional Liaison Caseworker
Dianne Hamilton	Gladue Caseworker, Durham
Duncan Stewart	Gladue Caseworker, Sudbury
Edna Campos	Gladue Caseworker, Brantford
Iris Taylor	Gladue Caseworker, Toronto
Jamie Metallic	Gladue Caseworker, Ottawa
Jonathan Yellowhead	Gladue Caseworker, Toronto
Kathy Priolo	Gladue Caseworker, North Bay
Kristal Nahmabin	Gladue Caseworker, Sarnia
Margret Larochelle	Gladue Caseworker, Sault Ste. Marie
Meghan Skyum	Gladue Caseworker, Windsor
Theresa Sandy	Gladue Caseworker, Barrie

### GLADUE WRITERS

Amanda General	Senior Manager, Gladue Writers
Erica L. Jamieson	Gladue Writers, Brantford
Jasmyne Galley	Gladue Writer, Toronto
Katharine Melanson	Gladue Writer, Ottawa
Kassandra Hill	Gladue Writer, Brantford
Marie Embury	Gladue Writer, Sault Ste. Marie
MaryJo Denne	Gladue Writer, Durham
Melanie Garant	Gladue Writer, Windsor
Michael MacDonald	Gladue Writer, North Bay
Michel Sands	Gladue Writer, Sarnia
Pamela McNeill	Gladue Writer, Barrie
Priscilla Krebs	Gladue Writer, Toronto
Shyla Trudel	Gladue Writer, Guelph
Tanis Desjarlais	Gladue Writer, Toronto

### ROAD TO YOUR NAME (BRANTFORD)

Lisa Van Every	Road to Your Name Program Coordinator
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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the Aboriginal Legal Services (ALS), welcome to ALS Annual General Meeting! My name is Chantell Barker. My spirit's name is Getchi Nodin Ikwe and I am from the Deer Clan. I am from Saptatowyak Cree Nation in the Treaty 4 Territory. This past year has been exciting as I have grown in my position as the Executive Director. I am honored to work with an amazing Board of Directors who are supporting the work of ALS and the ALS team who are so passionate about their work.

The past year, we have been working hard to ensure a smooth transition into a unionized environment, new updated policies that align with our Collective Agreement, envisioning the future of ALS with a Strategic Plan, and ensuring we provide high quality culturally relevant services that is client focused. The highlight of this year includes our Justice Strategy sessions with the community, our staff retreat, and getting to know and work with the staff and board. My report will highlight the great work of ALS Inc. and the ALS Legal Clinic's programs and services.



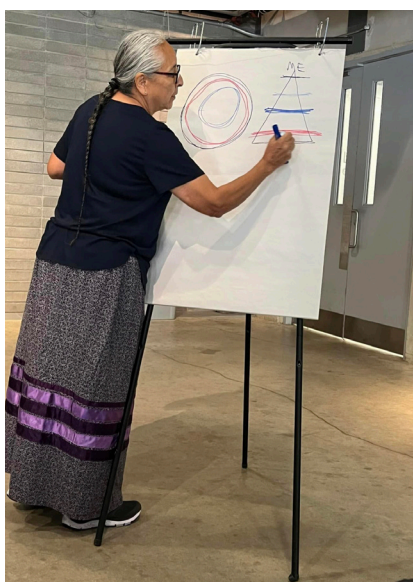


# ALS INC.

## **Giiwedin Anang family programming:**

The Giiwedin Anang program which is our Indigenous Family Dispute Resolution (IFDR) program continues to serve families as an alternate dispute mechanism using talking circles. Since April of this year, we have facilitated several circles each for over 20 families and we have had at least 5 families reunify, where the children have returned home. We have also had 10 parents graduate from the parenting program and we have facilitated supervised access for four families.

Over the last year we have received new funding from the province to provide the first Indigenous Supervised Access program for non-child welfare matters, essentially filling a gap of service delivery that we have received requests to provide for several years. We are excited to offer this new service to the community. Also, we are delighted to announce that we are currently hiring two new full-time positions, a much-needed program coordinator and a full-time “Dreams From Growing Children” parenting program facilitator. Previously our parenting program was only offered on a part-time basis over the last decade. We would like to acknowledge the Archdiocese of Toronto Healing & Reconciliation Fund for the financial support for these new positions. We would also like to acknowledge the Sonor Foundation for another year of funding for the Peel region facilitator.



## **Welcome Home Program**

Our Traditional Teacher continues to support almost 80 individuals over the last year, in various capacities, from informal counselling, healing ceremonies, grief support, cultural teachings, sentencing circle, talking circles and mediations.

## **Aboriginal Courtworker Program**

The move of criminal court services to the new Ontario Court of Justice - Toronto (OCJ-T) and the Toronto Regional Bail Centre (TRBC) is complete!

From the beginning of March through to the end of May 2023, our ALS Courtworker team worked hard to pack up and re-locate from the 311 Jarvis, Metro West, College Park, Metro North, Metro East, and Old City Hall courthouses to the centralized address of 10 Armoury Street for appearances such as set dates, plea, and trials. As each of these sites closed (except for 311 Jarvis, which is now solely dedicated to family law and child welfare matters), all adult bail matters were re-directed northwest to 2201 Finch Avenue West (formerly known as Metro West).



There are two new ALS Courtworker offices at the OCJ-T located on the ninth floor for Indigenous adults and the sixth floor for Indigenous youth. Gladue courts are now open three days per week as opposed to the one- or two-day weekly scheduling of the older courthouses. The Gladue courtrooms are designed to reflect the importance of Indigenous culture and incorporate the healing circle; ability to smudge at any time throughout the proceedings; and a screen that comes down to hide the dais so the presiding judge can sit within the circle. The downtown location of the OCJ-T has also meant greater ease for our clients in accessing other services and/or agencies located in the same building or surrounding area.

Similarly, the movement of bail to the TRBC has meant that in person support services are now available at one location with a more streamlined

process for bail hearings and/or early resolution (i.e., guilty pleas). Remote appearances, however, remain the norm for bail court and communicating with clients in a meaningful way by video is an ongoing challenge. Wait times for clients to be brought to the detention centre's video booth for release planning has also been a barrier that is slowly improving.

As we move into the New Year, our ALS Courtworkers continue to improve and implement best practices that reflect the changing and developing operations of the OCJ-T and the TRBC. Throughout these growing pains however, our advocacy for processes that support the success of the Courtworker program and the clients we serve remains the same.

## **Community Council**

The 2022-23 year has been a year of growth and change for the Community Council Program. We have continued to host our eight-week installments of Addictions Wellness and Feelings Expression Circles, both of which were very well attended during each cycle. In addition to these circles, and our regular hearing schedule for participants, the Community Council has been lucky to provide a safe space for grief. In February and October, the Community Council hosted Grief and Bereavement retreats for participants, held on the land. Council members have reported clients feel more empowered as they've established the Community Council as a support for themselves. Some clients have developed a want for programming that matches their goals and the journey they are on. I've had clients find the strength to come back after having a fallout to their current plan, they come back because they want to get back on their path and recognize us as a support.



A Community Council Member provided some outreach to George Brown College by way of a Zoom lecture during a restorative justice class. The Council member explained the programs and services we provide, their efficacy, and why they differ from western methods of justice.

The Youth Community Council has been busy learning life skills, including tools to assist in mental health support, 2SLGBTQIA+ learning, job search and resume skills, and healthy lifestyles to name a few. The Youth Council attended Blue Mountain in February to assist with their learning on physical wellness and its connection to mental wellness; they also attended Canada's Wonderland as a well-deserved treat.

### **Community Council Success**

A young man was diverted into the Community Council; he had just been diagnosed with diabetes and had it was his twelfth time going through the Council. He shared about his new concern for his health and the welfare of his children should he die before he gets a chance to watch them grow. This young man also shared his passion for Indigenous justice, protecting the land and walking the red-road. The Community Council Decision included: fire keeping for sacred fires, following through with his healthcare, and spending extra time with his kids and at home.

Since that time, this young man registered for a family week-long camping trip, has been fire keeping for the travelling fires for those who are passed on and attended a sweat lodge with Aboriginal Legal Services. He also chose to enroll in the Feelings Expression eight-week program formerly known as "Anger Management". After the sweat, he attended his first fasting camp and fasted for four days as well as helped with the fire and attended five additional sweat lodge ceremonies. He feels strong in his ability to maintain his sobriety and has expressed a desire to attend therapy.

### **Aboriginal youth Mental Health and Addiction**

Aboriginal Youth Mental Health and Addiction Program is designed for Youth aged 12-18yrs who are involved in the Youth Criminal Justice System and/or at risk. The Program offers weekly drop-in Youth Group at Gabriel Dumont Non-Profits Homes located in the portal at 4203 Kingston Road every Monday from 4-6pm. This Youth Group offers a safe environment for sharing in opening and sharing Circle, meals and TTC transportation Support. The Program mainly offers One-on-One Support and Outreach in the Community.

We hosted Traditional Teachings and Hand Drum Making Workshop facilitated by Traditional Healer Gray Cloud (Elder, James Carpenter). Also, completed a three-week session workshop for developing and creating Ribbon Skirts and Shirts with the youth. Additionally, the Youth were very excited to participate in the Self-Care Day event we hosted where all youth got their hair washed cut and styled and facials with partnership with Local Aboriginal

Hairdressers and Marca College students. Each Youth received a make over hairdo and self care gift bags. Youth received a Movie outing and dinner. This event was very successful, and we hope to offer it again. We offered four-day fast ceremony where Youth participated some for the very first time. Furthermore, we hosted a number of Traditional Sweat Lodge Ceremonies which youth attended and actively participated in the process of building and preparation for the entire ceremony. As an Aunty in my community makes me proud seeing our youth learning our cultural ways and traditions.

### Road to Your Name Podcast - Yoha:Te Ne Kahsen:na

The road to your name continues to be a huge success as viewers come from 37 countries. Seasons 5 and 6 are completed and available online.

<https://www.aboriginallegal.ca/road-to-your-name-podcast.html>

The Road to Your Name program held two sessions this year. The topics covered ranged from language, music, seeds, gardening, medicines, corn, food, games, wampum, arts, cosmology, storytelling, and the Thanksgiving Address. There were 25 participants at the spring session.

In addition, there was a fall session, and it was on the Great Law. Topics covered ranged from language, circle wampum, clans, free will, traditional teachings and language, and wampum strings. There were 50 participants who attended this session.





## Indigenous Knowledge Keeper Program

The Indigenous Knowledge Keeper Program held a Conference: March 2023 – Creativity in the Courtroom on Six Nations of the Grand River Territory. There were 135 Attendees. The Indigenous Knowledge Keepers continue to attend all Indigenous Person Court days in Brantford to assist Indigenous offenders.

Lastly, there was a Lunch and Learn at the Brantford Court in September 2023. Topics covered included “Indigenous Knowledge Helper Roles and Indigenous Legal Principles”.

## Gladue Program

The Gladue Program has had a successful, and busy year through 2022 and 2023. With the pandemic came changes to how the program completes interviews with clients waiting for Gladue Letters and Gladue Reports. Attending correctional institutions has been challenging while navigating changes regarding in person meetings in custody, and even in November 2023, we are still seeing entire ranges, and units, closing down for COVID-19 outbreaks. Despite the ever-changing landscape of the interviewing process, Gladue Writers and Caseworkers have continued to support clients as they transition through the justice system and become sentenced for the charges they have before the Court. To help even the workload, the Gladue program changed the sentencing position regarding cut off requirements for whether a Gladue Report or Letter is created from 90 days in custody to 120 days.

Between March 22 – 23, 2023, some members of the Gladue Program attended Montreal for a Gladue Conference: 11 years after the Ipeelee Decision. Some themes from the conference focused on culturally appropriate trauma repair practices for Indigenous peoples, trauma and resilience – understanding the impact of adverse childhood experiences and increasing the possibility of meaningful and effective sentences, to name a few. Gathering with Gladue service providers throughout the province allowed for networking, and learning, to take place on a broader scale, and to share and relate to the work that other agencies are doing.

Between June 27-28, 2023, Aboriginal Legal Services Gladue Program held in person training in Toronto. Themes of that training conference included a criminal law refresher, upfront work with Gladue Letters and Reports, and available resources for recommendations. Also, the team attended the new Court in Toronto at 10 Armoury and met with His Honour, Justice Andre Chamberlain to discuss the importance of Gladue Reports and Letters, and the role that Gladue team members can have at the Court level.

### Gladue Report Successes

- Writing Gladue Reports for the Law Society of Ontario re: disciplinary hearings of members
- Excellent sentencing outcomes following Gladue Report prepared for serious offences (manslaughter)
  - o Case 1: House Arrest, Probation
  - o Case 2: Probation

## Culture: Healing, Intergenerational Wellness, and Client Supports

On November 8 and 9, Aboriginal Legal Services (ALS) Gladue Program travelled to Ottawa for an in-person training session and retreat. The fall training theme focused on Culturally Relevant Recommendations as Alternatives to Incarceration and the Importance of Healing, and Intergenerational Wellness.

When preparing Gladue Letters, and Gladue Reports, Gladue Caseworkers and Gladue Writers canvass alternatives to incarceration for the individual they are assisting. The goal of the training, and retreat, was to better understand how important and fulfilling culturally appropriate programs and services are for the individuals we work with and ourselves. For Indigenous people, culture is the essence of who we are. Our culture is tied intimately to who we belong to, where we come from and how we relate to others. We inherit our cultural identity through our families, our traditions, and ceremonies. For some Indigenous people, cultural identity and development have been a lifelong journey. For others, it is a new path to be explored. Regardless of where we are in our travels, we know that culture has a profound impact on our future.

By focusing on culturally relevant programs and services, the Gladue Program can revitalize traditions, ceremonies, and customs that have been undervalued in many aspects of our lives. Cultural safety is a process where we can make spaces, services, and organizations safe, and equitable for Indigenous people.





During the training, emphasis was given to Building Trust, and Breaking Down Barriers with the individuals we work with. Ensuring that culture is at the forefront of our working relationships will not only create a more trusting dynamic, but it will also ensure that our culture, ceremonies, and customs, are valued as they should be.

I attended the Gladue Program Training session on November 8. During that session, I had the Gladue Team participate in an exercise regarding Intergenerational Impacts and Breaking Cycles. Exploring historical and colonial harm, and translating that to present day challenges, allowed the Gladue Program an opportunity to come to a better understanding of the challenges clients may face, and the vicarious trauma we adopt through the work we do.

Inevitably, by writing Gladue Letters, and Gladue Reports, we end up carrying the weight of the experiences that are shared by the clients we work with. The retreat to Madahoki Farm located on 164 acres in Ottawa's greenbelt on November 9 offered staff the opportunity to reconnect to the land and participate in workshops throughout the day to focus on personal healing and wellness, while discussing and appreciating the impact of these types of activities on healing and growth for clients navigating the justice system.



# THE LEGAL CLINIC

Led by the Legal Clinic Director, Christa Big Canoe, the advocacy team/clinic continues to deliver service from our office offering in-person and phone intakes. We provide general intake 3 days a week. Last year we expanded services into criminal and child protection law. In addition to our 3 general intake days, we also offer one criminal intake and one child protection intake a week. These can also be done in person or by phone. Over the past year, we have had a law clerk, seven staff lawyers, two paralegals, four victim rights advocates, 2 University of Toronto Law, clinic students, and a Legal Director/Lawyer.

The four additional staff lawyers have been positive for ALS in rolling out new expanding services and dealing with backlog in the Inquest system and high-pressure areas like Landlord Tenant Board matters. We hired two criminal lawyers, Matthew Malott, a duty counsel lawyer, and Maxwell Hill, who was our student-at-law last year. We also hired Caitlyn Symczyk-Dekker as our child protection lawyer. She is currently on maternity leave and Léa Desjardins has filled that leave. Last year, thanks to a generous grant from the Alnoba Lewis Foundation we were able to retain staff lawyer Kyle Brooks and are fortunate to have the Foundation funding us for another year. This specific funding has and will continue to enable us to meet our Landlord Tenant's board pressures and Inquest caseload.

The other staff lawyers, Emily Hill, Caitlyn Kasper and Sumrana Taher as well as our two paralegals Sheila Warner and Audrey Huntley have all been doing great work, as always. Of course, the whole team puts in a big effort and Keen Miller, our law clerk and the VRA team- Brandon Fenton, Carlene Pheasant, Quinn Roffery-Antoine and Julie Broomfield contribute to the difference we make for our community members when they are experiencing legal issues, harm, and violence.

Like last year, in addition to regular caseload, litigation and Inquest work, a number of staff members have publicly spoken at various events, CPD, training, University lectures and public legal education events. We have also participated in training the profession, the bench, police services and been keynote speakers at conferences, special events and community engagement. To enumerate each of these events, in this report would be lengthy. Suffice to say, members of ALS legal team continue to be reliable educators, speakers, and subject matter experts in a number of arenas.

A few highlights include:

- Caitlyn Kasper, Senior Staff Lawyer was one of the interviewees in Thunder Bay a true crime documentary that is available on Crave TV. Ryan McMahon, an award-winning podcaster's documentary is on a quest to reveal the truth behind the deaths of Indigenous teenagers in Thunder Bay, Ontario

<https://www.crave.ca/en/tv-shows/thunder-bay>

- Caitlyn Symczyk- Dekker, our child protection lawyer, delivered public legal education to service providers, including Indigenous community organizations and to all of Peel Child Services. Her presentations were well received and helpful.





In the lead up to this year's National Day of Reconciliation Christa did a number of speaking engagements to community service providers, as part of educational series and with corporations. Some of these included:

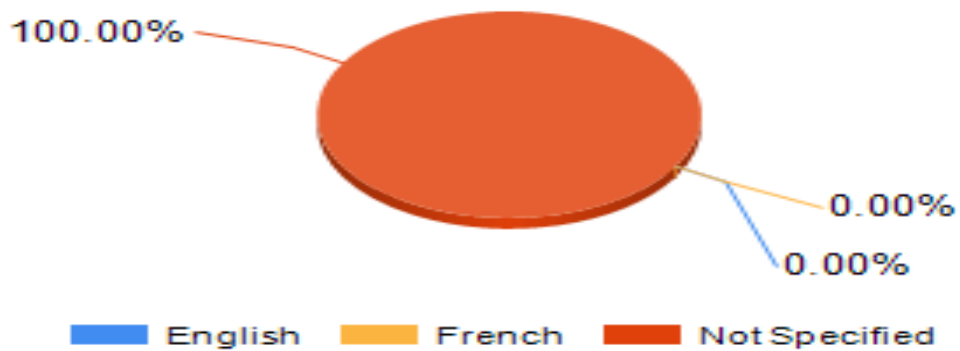
- The 2023 YMCA Canada National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day Webinar,
- National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Truth and Reconciliation Week 2023 Lunch and Learn session,
- IMAX corporation for their 2023 Day of Impact. IMAX then invited ALS staff, volunteers, and family to a private screening of "Killers of the Flower Moon" in October. Although it is a difficult film to watch, many were grateful for the full IMAX experience, including popcorn, water, and the theater for our sole use.

## SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS

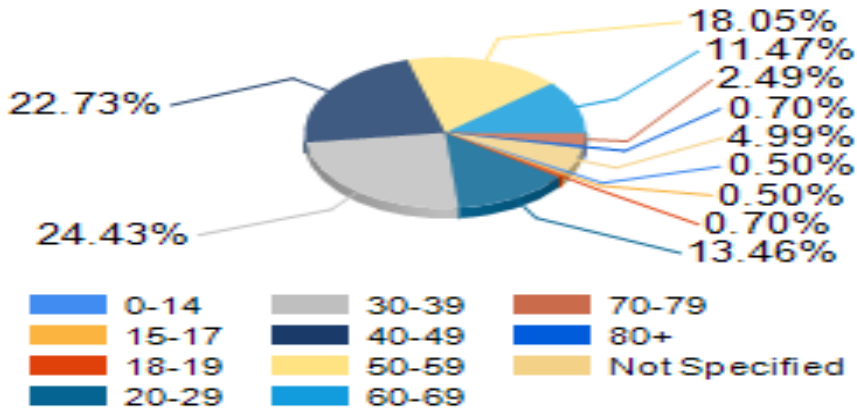
The Case Information Management System (CIMS) is software we use for file management and assignment of workload everyday. It also assists in providing a picture of the services with statistics. This year, between November 21, 2022, and November 20, 2023 (one full year timeframe) we had **1215 new cases** while carrying **629** cases opened from the prior period for a total of **1,844 cases**. In this same time period, we closed or completed **633 cases**, meaning there are **1,211** currently opened or in review. These are for all services from referral to summary advice through to representation. These statistics do not capture the amount of time spent on larger cases like Inquest, test case and advocacy work. For a little more detail but not for all of our cases and areas of law practiced, we have had:

- 🕒 235 new housing related files (with a starting caseload of 158)
- 🕒 237 new criminal,
- 🕒 170 family law issues but note we provide child protection representation/assistance in 23 cases,
- 🕒 102 Indigenous rights issues,
- 🕒 27 human rights complaints/issues,
- 🕒 10 healthcare complaints/issues with service,
- 🕒 29 Income assistance and maintenance cases, and
- 🕒 30 cases involving Violence (with a starting caseload of 67).

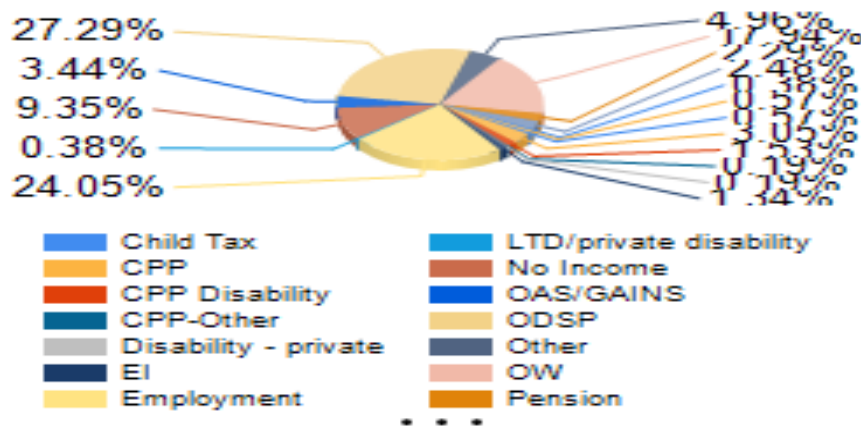
### Top 5 Language Spoken



### Age Group of Clients



### Income Sources





## ALS LEGAL CLINIC: PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS



Welcoming  
Courageous  
Young Journeys

ALS continues to be a member of the steering committee for this Law Foundation Funded project that is aimed at providing legal information and support to Indigenous youth aging out of care. This fall we did focus groups with Elders, teachers and helpers, service providers and have upcoming youth focus groups about the website. This past year has seen a lot of development and research. An immense amount of work has been done on the website and it is available at:

<https://courageousyoungjourneys.ca/>

The next steps are to receive community feedback, make required adjustments, and plan to have an event in Toronto that celebrates the youth on their journey to adulthood and wraps them in dignity and community support.

### **Tracking (In)Justice**

At least 704 people have been killed or died during police use of force encounters in Canada since 2000. This information, and much more, is newly available to the public in an accessible online database tracking police-involved deaths in Canada. The database is part of a collaborative project by a team of researchers and front-line organizations that includes information on date, location, police service, level of force used, and when known, age, race, and gender of the victims. It is based on publicly available sources including government reports and reliable Canadian media sources. ALS is glad to be a community partner on this project. In addition to use of force deaths by police, Tracking (In) Justice also researches and reports on death in correctional institutions and deaths in custody. It has a memorial page and includes resources on Police and Carceral Violence for family and advocates. <https://trackinginjustice.ca/>

### **Culture to Wellness: Reimagining Holistic Healing Approaches for Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People**

As announced last year, WAGE Canada is funding our Culture to Wellness project that is using the Make Music Matter's healing in harmony model. A team of leaders has been trained on the model and has been working to Indigenize the program. They went through a full cycle of programming and have written and recorded the song "Where is everyone?" with the help of a sound engineer, Thomas Aman, and creative producer Julian Lee, at the Harris Institute's studios in Toronto. The song is about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Participants are known as artists in the program. The artists were fortunate to have the input of a number of great producers as well as their assistance in post production, and even some advice from the Band members of Billy Talent.

Currently a second session of staff artists are in a cycle so that we can continue to build the capacity to deliver these types of healing services to our community. The artist got to make hand rattles at the Harris Institute with Billy Talent and birth their rattles in a ceremony at ALS's tipi near the end of November. Artists of the first session got to listen to the song with the band at the studio and receive their initial response and feedback. The song will be released in December and be available on many listening platforms.



We want to thank our community partners Make Music Matter and the Harris Institute. We also rely on some external service providers such as one of our grandfathers, Jeffery McDonald, Elder Blu Waters and our psychotherapist, Karen who practices art therapy in order to do this work. It is noteworthy that Thomas and Julian volunteer their time with us. We want to thank everyone for their dedication to this project.

## **LITIGATION, INQUESTS AND LAW REFORM:**

### **Inquest into Death of Brennan Nicholas**

Christa Big Canoe and Kyle Brooks, along with the assistance of Maxwell Hill, represented the Family of Brennan Nicholas at the Inquest into his death. Brennan was a twenty-four-year-old man with Oneida and Anishinaabe heritage, a dedicated athlete, and a practitioner of Oneida cultural traditions. On February 8, 2018, Brennan was sentenced to federal custody and admitted to the Millhaven Institution – Regional Treatment Centre

(the “MI-RTC”). On June 15, 2018, he was found deceased in his cell. The inquest hearing was online from February 27, 2023 and ended on March 10 2023. The jury made critically important recommendations to Correctional Services Canada (“CSC”) to improve Indigenous peoples’ access to Indigenous specific services in federal custody and to better resource key Indigenous staff positions.

### **Jury issues dozens of recommendations after man dies at Millhaven Institution**

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/brennan-nicholas-millhaven-death-inquest-1.6774608#:~:text=The%20inquest%2C%20which%20began%20in,a%20cut%20to%20his%20neck.>

### **Inquest into the death of Moses Beaver**

Caitlyn Kasper and Emily Hill represented the Family of Moses Beaver. The hearing was in-person in April and May 2023 in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Mr. Beaver was First Nation, fifty-six years old and a well-established visual woodland artist. On January 17, 2017, Mr. Beaver was charged with assault and breach of recognizance by the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service. The Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service placed Mr. Beaver into custody.

On January 18, 2017, the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service transported Mr. Beaver into custody at the Thunder Bay Jail. On February 23, 2017, Mr. Beaver was pronounced deceased in his cell.

The jury determined that the cause of Mr. Beaver’s death was by hanging, but the means of his death is undetermined. The jury made several important recommendations, including recommendations to the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Nishnawbe-Aski



Police Service to improve mental health supports for Indigenous inmates. In total, the jury made 63 recommendations that mainly focused on improving mental health care for Indigenous people.

**Moses Beaver's sons tell inquest their requests for help for Oji-Cree artist were brushed off**

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/mosesbeaver-inquest-thunderbay-firstnations-mentalhealth-1.6835317>

**More mental health resources needed in remote First Nations, jury hears during Moses Beaver inquest**

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/mosesbeaver-inquest-indigenous-mentalhealth-firstnations-1.6841875>

**Moses Beaver inquest jury hands down 63 recommendations**

<https://www.snewswatch.com/local-news/moses-beaver-inquest-jury-hands-down-63-recommendations-6995138>

**Inquest into the Death of Shannon Sargent**

Christa Big Canoe and Caitlyn Kasper, with the assistance of Kyle Brooks, represented the family of Ms. Shannon Sargent at the Inquest into her death. The online inquest started on May 29 and ended on June 14, 2023. Ms. Sargent was a thirty-four-year-old Indigenous woman with cardiac health issues. On July 19, 2016, Ms. Sargent was arrested and placed into custody at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre. Upon her arrival, Ms. Sargent complained of excessive fatigue and abdominal pain.

Correctional officers from the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre then transported her to the Ottawa Hospital. However, the correctional officer responsible for escorting her to the emergency department failed to escort her to be triaged in the department. The correctional officers transported her back to the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre and she was placed into custody. In the early hours of July 20, 2016, Ms. Sargent was found deceased in her cell.

Our closing submissions addressed the need to find that Ms. Sargent died by homicide, because the responsible correctional officer omitted to ensure Ms. Sargent was triaged into the emergency department, which deprived her of the opportunity to receive necessary medical attention. The jury determined that Ms. Sargent died by homicide. This type of finding is rare in Inquest processes. It is the first time we have received a verdict of homicide on behalf of the family where no use of force was engaged, despite making these submissions in many cases. The jury made a total of 37 recommendations.

**Family urges inquest jury to find Shannon Sargent's death was homicide | CBC News**

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/family-urges-inquest-jury-to-find-shannon-sargent-s-death-was-homicide-1.6382861>

**Shannon Sargent 'deserved the best of us.' jury hears as inquest adjourns**

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/shannon-sargent-deserved-the-best-of-us-jury-hears-as-inquest-adjourns-1.6815132>

**Jury rules Shannon Sargent's death a homicide | Ottawa Morning with Robyn Bresnahan | Live Radio | CBC Listen**

<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-100/clip/15991420>

**Shannon Sargent's death a homicide, inquest jury finds** <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/shannon-sargent-homicide-coroner-inquest-death-ocdc-recommendations-1.6876715#:~:text=Shannon%20Sargent%27s%20death%20in%20her%20cell%20at%20the%20emotional%20testimony%20from%20witnesses%2C%20experts%20and%20Sargent%27s%20family.>

Each of the Inquest Verdicts and Recommendations can be found online at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2023-coroners-inquests-verdicts-and-recommendations>

### **Senate Submissions**

#### **Bill S-212- Senate Standing Committee Submissions**

This is a bill sponsored by Senator Kim Pate it seeks to amend the *Criminal Records Act*

to provide for the expiry of criminal records. It also makes consequential amendments to other Acts and repeals a regulation. Christa Big Canoe was invited to be a witness on behalf of ALS and provided submissions on September 20, 2023. A link to the transcripts are below.

<https://sencanada.ca/en/Content/Sen/Committee/441/LCJC/67EV-56319-E>

#### **Bill C-48 - Senate Standing Committee Submissions**

Aboriginal Legal Services was not invited to make submissions, but the Indigenous Bar Association was invited. The IBA asked Christa Big Canoe to testify on their behalf as a

member at large and agreed to join positions with ALS on some aspects of the proposed legislation. Christa testified on September 28, 2023. The Interim transcript is available at:

<https://sencanada.ca/en/Content/Sen/Committee/441/LCJC/56348-E>

The Senate adopted the CCLA recommended s. 493-2-related amendment. The amendment around 493-2 is specifically about Indigenous and black people and the need for a judge to provide a reason why they have not considered their circumstances under 493 if they deny bail. The Bill will now go back to the House of Commons.

### **Future Litigation and Test Case**

Currently we have two test case litigations in the hopper. We have been granted intervention in *Fair Change v. Ontario* which is a challenge to the Safer Streets Act that will be heard February 6-7, 2024. Emily Hill and Christa Big Canoe are counsel on behalf of ALS for this file. We have also been granted intervention at *R v. Cope* at the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal, that will be heard February 13, 2024. Jonathan Rudin and Emily Hill are counsel for ALS on this file.

You can look forward to updates on these cases in either our E-Newsletter or next year's AGM report.

"As always it is an honour to work in my community with my community and the amazing,



dedicated ALS staff and team. I also want to express my gratitude to our funders, partners, allies, and members of the community. Although my portion of the report seems lengthy—it is never long enough to cover everything that ALS clinic services does> It cannot cover how many relationships are built, how we celebrate our community or how coordinating our services and streamlining matters right away from the Canadian justice system means contributing to the strength and re engagement of our practices. For all of this I am grateful even if I cannot contain all of it into my annual report.” – Christa Big Canoe, Legal Clinic Director.

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

### **Provincial Court Worker Training**

The provincial Court Worker training took place in September and October at the Briars. Jonathan Rudin coordinated the September event and Caitlyn Casper coordinated the October session. Mila Delangis provided exceptional administrative support with all aspects of the gatherings. The evaluations from the participants at both sessions were uniformly highly positive.





### **Indigenous Justice Strategy for Toronto**

Aboriginal Legal Services received funding from the Department of Justice to conduct community engagement sessions for the Indigenous Justice Strategy (IJS) for Toronto. These sessions were held at the Evergreen Brick Works. Dorothy Peters was the Elder for the day and, as usual, provided real insights. Ovide Mercredi also brought a unique perspective on what an IJS for Toronto could encompass based on his great experience over the years. The participants had some very creative thoughts about the IJS. Silent Drums, the contractor on the project, will be doing up a final report that will reflect the consensus reached at the two sessions. The report will likely set out what was learned, and how to move forward with the IJS.

### **New Toronto Courthouse Evaluations**

Jonathan is working with consultants for the first of two evaluations of how the two court locations are functioning. The consultants expect to start interviews in early 2024. The first phase of the project (which was completed in June) cost less than anticipated so we have the funds necessary to allow for more interviews with more people for this phase.

### **MAG/DOJ Restorative Justice Training**

The Ministry of Attorney General and Department of Justice have provided funding to ALS to provide training for restorative justice workers from across the province. The conference will take place February 13 and 14 in Toronto. Outreach has begun to programs across the province, and we anticipate approximately 100 attendees.





In conclusion, this report demonstrates all the team's hard work and commitment over the past year. Although there are many barriers the team must overcome to assist their clients, they do it with professionalism, integrity, and understanding. The clients that are served are so grateful for the resources and hard work the team provides to ensure they can overcome their current situations. Lastly, I would like to thank the Board, the ALS team, funders, and volunteers for all you do for our clients, the community, and Aboriginal Legal Services. I am humbled and honored to work with such as amazing organization.



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Back Row, L-R: Paul-Emile McNab (President and Chair), Jessie Stirling (Shadow Director), Basima Roshan (Treasurer), Sinead Charbonneau, Cheyenne Latimer, Derek James (Shadow Director), Hugh O'Reilly  
Front Row, L-R: Darian Baskatawang, Karlie Nordstrom, Stephen Knight, Leslie Anne St. Amour

Welcome, everyone, to Aboriginal Legal Services' Annual General Meeting!

My name Paul-Emile McNab, I am the President and Chair of the Board of Directors at ALS, and, by day, I am the Vice-President of Business Development and Membership Experience with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business. I have served on the Board since 2020 and have held my current role since the AGM 2022.

I am pleased to report that the Board had an incredibly successful year. I am immensely proud of what we have accomplished over the past year and others deserve to know and celebrate our accomplishments, too! The Board developed and implemented various mechanisms to strengthen ALS governance. We have begun our journey in the Strategic Planning process and hired Sisco Consulting to build ALS its first 5-year plan. We are excited on the progress to date and used 2023 as a building year for the Board and organization. In 2023, the Board also engaged in a very fruitful public recruitment process that resulted in the election of several Shadow Directors to our ranks; The External Affairs Committee also collaborated on the idea of a new E-Newsletter for ALS, which launched in November 2023. We are extremely excited for our future!

With support from senior leadership, the Board has had its hands full with several special projects, including: the search for the new Executive Director; In February of 2023, we hired Chantell Barker as the new Executive Director, who has brought tremendous leadership to the organization, a capital campaign for a new home for ALS, which will be ongoing in the future. I am deeply grateful and look forward to a bright future under Chantell's leadership and dedication to the organization.



These accomplishments would not have been possible without the commitment and hard work of my fellow Board Members, all of whom volunteered their time, energy, and skills this year to improve and sustain ALS. I want to take the opportunity to specifically recognize Basima Roshan (Treasurer) for her exemplary service in the position. Quite simply, I do not know what I (or the Board) would do without you. I also praise our Board Members, Darian Baskatawang, Cheyenne Latimer, Hugh O'Reilly, Stephen Knight, Karlie Nordstrom and Derek James Mastin (Shadow Director), who continue to impress me with their unique gifts and uplifting spirit. In the Summer of 2023, we also welcomed five new Shadow Members: Alexandra Cropp, Rhea Murti, Carolyn Parkinson, Annette Borger and Chelsea Young. I am excited for their future contributions.

Last, but certainly not least, I recognize our longest-standing outgoing Board Members who have served this organization for over 5 years: Sinead Charbonneau, Leslie Anne St. Amour and Jessie Stirling (Shadow) Fellow Board Members, I lift you up and offer the most sincere and special thank you for all of your contributions to the organization.

I would also like to recognize and thank our funders, without whom our work and the work of ALS would not be possible. A complete list of ALS' funders can be found in your AGM 2023 Report. A sincere thank you to all!

This is my first AGM as President and Chair of the Board of Directors. I am immensely proud to volunteer, walk the good path, lend a hand, provide leadership to ALS, and look forward to its continued success under our outstanding staff, leadership team and Board of Directors!

May you and your families have a very merry holiday season and a happy New Year.

Thank you,

PAUL-EMILE MCNAB

PRESIDENT AND CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES

**ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023  
REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE, POLICY, AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

**Date:** December 7th, 2023

The Governance, Policy, and Nominating Committee (the “**Committee**”) has had a busy year working on various initiatives for the Board of Directors (the “**Board**”), including:

- Engaging in a public recruitment process resulting in Rhea Murti, Annete Borger, Carolyn Parkinson, Chelsea Young and Alexandra Cropp joining the Board as Shadow Directors.
- Updating a Nominating Manual to guide future Director recruits.
- Updating a Code of Ethics.
- Implementing a revised annual performance evaluation for Directors.
- Onboarding new Committee members.
- Executing an ongoing workplan in 2023 and planning the Committee’s work in 2024.

The Committee is also responsible for reporting on the composition of the Board, making nominations, and submitting a resolution respecting the election of Directors for consideration at the Annual General Meeting.

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**REPORT ON BOARD COMPOSITION**

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The Board’s current composition is as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Jessie Stirling	Shadow Director
Paul-Emile McNab	Director, President and Chair
Basima Roshan	Director, Treasurer
Sinéad Charbonneau	Director
Leslie Anne St. Amour	Director
Darian Baskatawang	Director
Karlie Nordstrom	Director
Cheyenne Latimer	Director
Carolyn Parkinson	Shadow Director
Hugh O’Reilly	Director
Annette Borger	Shadow Director
Stephen Knight	Director
Derek James Mastin	Shadow Director
Chelsea Young	Shadow Director
Alexandra Cropp	Shadow Director
Rhea Murti	Shadow Director



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## NOMINATIONS

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Per the *Aboriginal Legal Services Bylaws*, Directors are elected to a term expiring at the second Annual General Meeting after their election or appointment.

The Committee nominates four Directors for re-election and four current Shadow Directors to fully-fledged Director positions to terms ending at AGM 2025.

- The four Directors running for re-election are Darian Baskatawang, Karlie Nordstrom, Hugh O'Reilly, and Stephen Knight.
- The four Shadow Directors running for election are Carolyn Parkinson, Annette Borger, Chelsea Young and Alexandra Cropp.

Leslie Anne St. Amour, Jessie Stirling (Shadow Director) and Sinéad Charbonneau will be leaving the Board following AGM 2023.

Cheyenne Latimer has chosen to not seek re-election and to shift into a Shadow Director position. In 2024, she will serve as a Shadow Director alongside Shadow Directors, Rhea Murti and Derek James Mastin.

If the nominees are elected, the proposed Board composition will be as follows with ten elected Directors and three Shadow Directors:

Name	Notes
1. Paul-Emile McNab	President and Chair
2. Basima Roshan	Treasurer
3. Darian Baskatawang	Director
4. Karlie Nordstrom	Director
5. Hugh O'Reilly	Director
6. Annette Borger	Director
7. Stephen Knight	Director
8. Alexandra Cropp	Director
9. Chelsea Young	Director
10. Carolyn Parkinson	Director
1. Cheyenne Latimer	Shadow Director
2. Derek James Mastin	Shadow Director
3. Rhea Murti	Shadow Director

The *Aboriginal Legal Services Bylaws* mandate that:

- a majority of Directors at any given time shall be Indigenous-identifying persons; and
- a minimum of two (2) Directors at any given time shall be licensed to practice law.

The Committee is satisfied that these requirements will be fulfilled by the proposed Board composition outlined above.

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**RESOLUTION**

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Therefore, the Committee submits the following motion to the AGM:

**MOTION:** To re-elect Hugh O'Reilly, Stephen Knight, Darian Baskatawang and Karlie Nordstrom as Directors and to elect Annette Borger, Carolyn Parkinson, Alexandra Cropp and Chelsea Young as Directors of Aboriginal Legal Services to hold office until the second Annual General Meeting after their election or appointment or until their successors are elected or appointed.

If you have any questions regarding this report or its contents, please contact Paul-Emile McNab, Board President and Chair at [paul.emilemcnab@aboriginallegal.ca](mailto:paul.emilemcnab@aboriginallegal.ca).





**WITH  
THANKS**

*Nia:Wen  
Marsee  
Miigwech  
Ay Ay  
Yaw^ko  
Qujannamiik  
Thank You*



United Way  
Greater Toronto



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL  
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO  
an Ontario government agency  
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario







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## In Gratitude

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Archdiocese of Toronto  
The Indigenous Justice Division of the Ontario Ministry of  
the Attorney General  
The Ontario Arts Council  
The Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social  
Services  
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care  
Legal Aid Ontario  
The Government of Canada-(WAGE) Minister for Women  
and Gender Equality and Youth  
The Law Foundation of Ontario  
United Way of Greater Toronto  
The Alnoba Lewis Foundation  
Delta Bingo  
Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training  
The Toronto Foundation  
Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council  
Private Donors

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# ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES

*Gaa kina gwii waabamaa debwewin* All those who seek the truth

416.408.4041

[info@aboriginallegal.ca](mailto:info@aboriginallegal.ca)

[aboriginallegal.ca](http://aboriginallegal.ca)

211 Yonge Street, Suite 500  
Toronto, ON M5B 1M4