

PATHS' Restorative Justice Community Forum Conference
April 14 & 15, 2000

Biographies

Judge Bria Huculak was appointed to the Saskatchewan Provincial Court in January 1992. Prior to her judicial appointment, she was the Legal Director of Saskatoon Legal Assistance, a position she held from 1978. Her areas of practice were criminal and family law. Judge Huculak has had a long-standing interest in issues relating to equality. She was a founding member of LEAF Saskatchewan, Women and The Law, and The E. Fry Society in Saskatchewan, and was on the national board of LEAF. She is a member of the Gender Committee of the Law Society of Saskatchewan and chair of the Gender, Race and Ethnic Equity Committee of the Saskatchewan Provincial Court Judges Association. In 1996, she took a one-year leave from her judicial duties and commenced a Ph.D. in Law at the University of British Columbia. Her thesis concerns Restorative Justice and Sentencing. She has been a guest lecturer at the Universities of Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia Law Schools, and a frequent speaker on sentencing circles and restorative justice, and at conferences concerning Aboriginal Justice. In August this year, Judge Huculak will be part of an International Institute on the Spiritual Roots of Restorative Justice.



Fay Blaney is one of the founding members of the Aboriginal Woman's Action Network (AWAN) and a Vice-President of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. As an executive member of NAC, she chairs the Aboriginal Women's Caucus. Her involvement with AWAN and NAC takes her to many events, boards, committees, and gatherings organized by social justice seeking groups, such as the 'Women's March Against Poverty', the People's Summit on APEC, anti-violence activities, child apprehension rallies, and so on. Fay is an instructor of Women's Studies and Canadian Studies at Langara College. She has also worked in the area of basic literacy in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. Fay is Homalco, and is the mother of Andrew Paul and Corena Marie. She strongly believes that her achievements are rooted in her cultural practices and her active participation in the Aboriginal sobriety movement.

Pauline Busch is a member of the Nisichawayasihk First Nation, Woodlands Cree, in Northern Manitoba. She was raised in a traditional matriarchal community, with a commercial fishing and trapping economic base, a lifestyle that dictates a nomadic existence and a strong system of co-operative survival. Pauline is a graduate of SIFC, with a degree in Cree Linguistics. She has taught in the Cree Immersion Program for the Saskatchewan Centre for International Languages at the U of R, been a Guest Lecturer at SIFC on 'The Role of Women in Traditional Cree Society', and a Guest Lecturer at the University of Manitoba on Aboriginal Government Structure, Aboriginal Environmental Issues, and Traditional Cree Community Structures. She lectures and makes presentations to the RCMP and Regina City Police on Aboriginal cultural practices, and on current issues facing Aboriginal communities. Pauline is currently the Executive Director of the Regina Alternative Measures Program. She is an accredited instructor for the Family Group Conference training and has provided this training to Social Workers, Police Officers, Community Justice employees, and band office employees.

From 1981 to 1994, **Virginia Fisher** had a general law practice in B.C., with an extensive Family Law component, including hundreds of legal aid files (the vast majority for female clients) in all three levels of court in B.C. Since 1995, Virginia has been the Coordinator of the Provincial Association of Transition Houses of Saskatchewan (PATHS), the umbrella association of Saskatchewan's shelters for battered women. As PATHS' Coordinator, Virginia has lobbied the government extensively on behalf of battered women and presented educational sessions on violence against women in numerous post-secondary classrooms, including the Law Society of Saskatchewan's Bar Admission Course, and classes in the University of Saskatchewan's Colleges of Nursing and Medicine. In 1999, she received a five-year appointment to the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan as Clinical Preceptor on issues of Domestic Violence. She has presented a brief on TV violence to the CRTC, and briefs in the area of violence against women to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs regarding Bill C-68 (the Gun Control Bill) in 1995, and to the Special Joint Committee on Child Custody and Access in 1998. For the last three years, Virginia has spearheaded the '**Hot Peach Pages**' as a tool for victims of abuse. In late 1999, she developed what has become the world's premier web site on abuse (see **Hot Peach Pages**) and early this year (2000), she spearheaded the effort that convinced SaskTel to sponsor the **Abuse Help Lines** page near the front of every phone book in the province. She is the organizer and host of this national conference on **Restorative Justice: Is it justice for battered women?**

Bevann Fox is employed at Regina Alternative Measures Program, but on contract to Yorkton Tribal Justice, Alternative Measures for the next six months. She has extensive experience in alternative measures as a mediator and facilitator, including seven years with John Howard Society as a mediation caseworker for youth. Bevann is from Piapot First Nation, and was raised by her late Cree grandparents who are still a great influence on her family values. When she was seven, her grandparents sent her and ten siblings and cousins to a residential school. While there, she was not allowed to speak in her language or of her beliefs. Over the past 10 years, Bevann has faced and dealt with the horrors of that abuse, abuse which allowed her to continue to be a victim for too long. Today, she is finally able to see herself not as a victim, but as a survivor, having worked to reshape the programming of the boarding school system within herself.

After receiving her education and participating in various community-orientated areas, **Wanda Gamble** began her employment at the Aboriginal Women's Council of Saskatchewan as a Mediator/Facilitator in 1997. Interested in working with people and helping her community, she knew she could do both as a justice worker. Through the three years she has been with the Alternative Measures Program, she has seen the positive effects Restorative Justice has on victims, offenders and the community as a whole. Wanda wants to be part of implementing new and better programs for people in her community, and throughout Canada.

Norma Green is a member of the Wahpeton Dakota-Sioux First Nations, near Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. She is currently employed by Corrections Service, Canada, in Special Projects. From March 1, 1994, to February 11, 2000, she was the Kikawinaw (Warden) at Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge, in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, which houses federally sentenced Aboriginal women. There, Norma was responsible to oversee the building of the Lodge at a cost of \$9.2 Million, the hiring and training of staff, and the development of programs. Aboriginal spirituality, culture and traditions are the focus of the Lodge. Norma's drive in life is to provide support and help to those who are socially and economically disadvantaged, and to work to alleviate racism, sexism and classicism for future generations.

Sandi LeBoeuf is a First Nations from Muskoday First Nation. She is the Director of the STC (Saskatoon Tribal Council) Family Centre, which was set up to deliver in-home counselling and support for at risk families. Sandi is very active in the community of Saskatoon, Co-chairing the Working Group to Stop the Sexual Abuse of Children by Johns and Pimps (Saskatoon Communities for Children) and sitting on several other Boards and committees, including EGADZ, AIDS Saskatoon, Diabetes Ad Hoc Group, Hepatitis C Committee, and Meyoyawin (advisory to Saskatoon District Health).

Anne McGillivray is Professor of Law at the University of Manitoba, where she teaches Children and the Law, Law and Literature, Criminal Law, Professional Responsibility, and Legal Systems. She has written some 36 articles and reports and edited essay collections in the areas of childhood and Aboriginal childhood, domestic violence, criminal law, *parens patriae*, and law and literature. She was a member of the CIDA delegation to Cuba on children's rights in 1997. Her most recent book is **Black Eyes All of the Time: Intimate Violence, Aboriginal Women and the Justice System** (with Brenda Comaskey), University of Toronto Press, 1999. (Anne brought copies of Black Eyes All of the Time to the conference for those who are interested.)

In 1997, **Bev Poitras'** employer, the Touchwood First Nations, changed Bev's focus in community planning from project management to social development for youth, because the communities were experiencing high youth crime and wanted alternatives to the court process. With funding from the RCMP, Bev attended a trainer's workshop in Family Group Conferencing (now known in Canada as Community Justice Forums), facilitated by Real Justice from Australia. This approach became the agency focus until formal alternative measures were implemented. On April 1, 1999, Bev was hired as the Director of the Restorative Justice Unit for the File Hills/Qu'Appelle Tribal Council. She found the crossover to the restorative justice unit to be an easy process, because the social problems in the communities reflect the problems that exist in the justice program.

Tracy Porteous is a long time advocate for justice and social change for women and others who have been victimized. She has worked for 18 years as a counsellor, trainer, curriculum developer, policy maker, administrator, fund-raiser and advocate. As the Senior Provincial Coordinator for the BC Association of Specialized Victim Assistance & Counselling Programs, Tracy works closely with many levels of government and related service sectors across B.C. on the development of program, policy, and legislation in the area of violence against women and others. She is known for her numerous creative and innovative projects, many of which have produced important social change provincially, nationally and internationally. Tracy has been a member of the Ministry of Attorney General's Sexual Assault Policy Development Committee for the past five years, and, most recently, has led grass roots activities to provide the B.C. government with critical feedback related to public policy development and to current reforms taking place in Restorative Justice.

Wally Roth's experience as a social worker includes financial assistance, child protection, juvenile delinquency, adolescent psychiatry, adult counselling, family counselling, and group work. For the past 14 years, he has been primarily involved in co-designing, co-facilitating and co-ordinating the ALTERNATIVES program for men who are violent to their partners. ALTERNATIVES is a four stage, 64-week group program designed to support men to end their violence, particularly against their partners and their children. Wally works full-time at ALTERNATIVES, co-ordinating and co-facilitating four groups per week. From 1990 to 1993, he also co-facilitated a weekly women's support group. He has made numerous public presentations about ending men's violence against women.

Bruce Slusar was admitted to the Law Society of Saskatchewan in 1983, the Law Society of British Columbia in 1991, the Law Society of Alberta in 1998, and is currently a member of those Law Societies and of the Canadian Bar Association. He practices extensively in the areas of Aboriginal Law, Civil and Criminal Litigation and Environmental Law, and has conducted numerous civil and criminal trials in the Provincial Court and Court of Queen's Bench, with many appearances before the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal and the Federal Court of Canada. Bruce has lectured on behalf of Public Legal Education Association (P.L.E.A.) in the areas of Aboriginal law, Wills and Estates, and the Young Offenders Act. He currently acts for many members of Indian Bands, Tribal Councils, and Federations of First Nations with respect to co-management of natural resources, treaty and Aboriginal rights and land claims, and alternative dispute resolution.

Irene Smith, the Executive Director of the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, graduated from Mount St. Vincent University with a degree in Psychology and Sociology. She has taken a number of women's study courses, holds a certificate in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations, and has comprehensive training in Mediation of Work Place Harassment. As a Human Rights Officer working with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, Irene was responsible for assisting companies and organizations to develop and implement their sexual harassment policies and guidelines. With over 12 years experience in non-profit and grass roots organizations, Irene has done extensive work in the area of community development, and has been an advocate for improvement to public policy and services for a wide range of social issues. She has also been very active in lobbying for law reform with respect to a broad range of justice issues, and she recently co-authored Avalon Sexual Assault Centre's response to **The Restorative Justice Program** of the Nova Scotia Department of Justice.

Judy White (alias) is a 34-year-old Caucasian professional woman, who is married and has three children. "I am a survivor of domestic violence. Although it now seems like a lifetime away, only seven years ago I lived in a relationship that included daily emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. My relationship lasted for almost 10 years and was, without a doubt, the most difficult and life-altering period of my existence, and in the lives of my children. I want to include my voice in the discussion about instituting restorative justice in the province of Saskatchewan. As a survivor, I hope I can bring a perspective to this conversation and help you to understand how this decision will affect those who are the victims-the very people society is obligated to protect. While I speak for myself and about my experiences, the communication I've had with others tells me that I speak for many survivors of domestic violence."

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