

MINUTES OF SPECIAL CONVOCATION

Toronto – Wednesday, 16th June, 2010
9:00 a.m.

The Treasurer (W. A. Derry Millar), benchers and their guests proceeded to the auditorium at Roy Thomson Hall for the Call to the Bar ceremonies of 294 candidates listed in the Report of the Director of Professional Development and Competence.

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CONVOCATION WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:00 A.M.

A quorum of Convocation was present.

The body of the auditorium was occupied by the candidates and their guests.

The Treasurer asked all present to stand for the National Anthem sung by Erica Huang.

The Treasurer welcomed the candidates and their guests.

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CONFERRING OF AN HONORARY DEGREE

Ms. Symes, a representative of the Professional Development and Competence Committee introduced the Doctoral candidate Diana Lynn Fuller and read the following citation:

“Treasurer may I present to you and this Convocation Diana Lynn Fuller, and request that you confer upon her the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.”

Legal trailblazer is a label that has often been applied to Ms. Fuller. After being called to the Bar of Ontario in 1978, she was immediately hired as an Assistant Crown Attorney in Sudbury, making her the first female Crown in a city that had only six female lawyers. With her passion for the rule of law, her surgical precision during cross examination and her easy rapport with juries, she quickly earned the respect of her colleagues and clients.

Over the course of her legal career, she served as Regional Director of Crown Attorneys for North-Eastern Ontario, as one of the first women on the Senior Management Team at the Ministry of the Attorney General, and later, as the Crown's General Counsel for Special Prosecutions. She truly has been a role model and mentor for many young female lawyers and law students.

Diana Lynn Fuller is most deserving of this honour and I request you, Sir, to confer upon her the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*”.

The Treasurer admitted Diana Lynn Fuller to the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

Ms. Fuller then addressed the candidates and their guests.

“Mr. Treasurer, Honourable Justices, benchers, members of the Law Society, and especially Candidates for the Bar, together with your family and friends.

Let me first thank Beth Symes, a distinguished advocate, counsel, bencher and dear friend, for her kind words. And allow me to say how delighted and honoured I am to be here to share this exciting day with you. Allow me also, to share a few thoughts with you, on two areas: opportunity and professionalism.

Thirty-two years ago, I basked in the glow of my call to the bar ceremony, with my family. Like you, I was about to start a career during difficult economic times, and like many of you, I didn't have a job yet. The advice I offer all of you today is this: be more flexible and more open than you want to be to the many opportunities out there.

There is no profession as versatile as the law. Whatever your position today, know that you will probably be doing something else, somewhere else, in ten years. However clear your goals now, experience teaches, that few of us know what will make us happy at this point in our lives. So don't restrict your career path to private or public sector, urban, southern, a particular niche or even to practising law itself. I'm here to tell you that not getting what we want is sometimes a good thing.

I articulated for a large Toronto law firm and thought corporate law was my future. (My mark in that course should have been my first clue that I was misguided.)

About a month after my call, while reading the bulletin board at the Law Society, I noticed that Sudbury was looking to hire an assistant Crown Attorney. Well, it wasn't solicitor's work, and Sudbury was a galaxy beyond my geographic area of search – the northern boundary of which I set at Eglinton Avenue.

Nonetheless, something told me to apply for this position, in a different field of law, in the middle of nowhere, where I knew not a soul. So I re-wrote my resume, and made it look as if I had always wanted to practise criminal law. And to my great surprise, the material was all there. Before I knew it, in spite of the person I thought I was, I fell in love with the north, its energy, its lifestyle and the challenge of litigation.

Looking back, I cannot imagine a more satisfying career for myself, or a more nourishing environment. In my first year as a prosecutor, I did 15 jury trials, and for 30 years thereafter, continued to be amazed at how my work showed me the resilience, dignity and courage of the human spirit. All the while, the physical environment of rocks and lakes and snow became part of the rhythm of my life.

Recently, having enjoyed doing trials on the James Bay coast, I helped out in Yellowknife and some of the fly-in communities of the Northwest Territories. I want to tell you, it was so much fun! I couldn't help but think what an adventure this would be for a young lawyer where opportunities abound.

My experience was but a modest example of a leap of faith, (at least for a female lawyer in 1978). I guarantee there is a myriad of opportunities out there waiting to be recognized. Step out of your comfort zone. It is the only way we grow.

Stay open, as well, to non-work-related opportunities. Make sure to allocate time for you, and consider how you want to spend it. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson stated: *“Your job today tells me nothing of your future – your use of your leisure today tells me just what your tomorrow will be”*.

Start now involving yourself in your community, an activity, or volunteer organization you really enjoy and can contribute to. You will enrich your life, while inevitably making friends and contacts. And speaking of friends, make efforts to stay in touch with them. I mention this because today your paths diverge, and friendships are something we can become careless of, in spite of how valuable they are to us.

I'd like to speak briefly about what it means to have a profession. As you step over that threshold – from “mere mortal” to lawyer and member of the Law Society, realize that it is a transition more onerous than from childhood to adulthood, or from B.A. to LL.B. This transition vests you with a new and elevated status in our society.

But remember: to whom much is given, much is expected – by the Law Society, by those you represent, by your community and ultimately by yourself.

As a professional, you must demonstrate the core competencies and the core values of the profession. Your achievement of the former is acknowledged by your being here today. However, demonstrating the core values of the legal profession is something you will have to practise every day. Discipline, integrity, civility, diligence – these qualities must be reflected in your work, to uphold the Law Society's elegantly simple motto, “Do right”.

Let me suggest 3 factors that promote professionalism:

1. Maintain boundaries. Realize now that it will sometimes be in your client's interest that you fail to maintain boundaries in the lawyer/client relationship, and know that such disregard can make you, your client and the profession vulnerable.
2. Discover a mentor to guide you on issues of practice and ethical issues. He or she might be an experienced colleague, someone at the Law Society or a former professor – someone who may be able to steer you through a difficult problem. Mentoring is part of the public service nature of our culture. Don't be afraid to draw on it.
3. Continuing education is a career-long responsibility, essential to maintain and improve your legal skills. In addition to courses in your field or acquiring a specialist status, you may be like me and need a change after a while. If you can afford it, take a sabbatical, get an LL.M. or pursue an interest in a completely different area. You will come back refreshed.

Arthur Maloney, one of the country's greatest criminal lawyers, spoke at my call about continuing education. What he said then is as true today. "Don't just read law" he said. You will be a better lawyer for reading literature, biography, history and philosophy, as well. You will learn more about the human condition, and improve your critical thinking.

Interestingly, the novelist, Joseph Conrad, said that the role of the writer is to make you hear, to make you feel, and above all, to make you see. Surely, great counsel acquire and demonstrate the capacity to do just that. In my view, the more widely you read, the more articulate, creative and compelling you will be, both on your feet and in your legal drafting.

Finally, in congratulating all of you, I want to acknowledge the contribution your families and friends have made to your achievement today. You can demonstrate your appreciation of their support and affection by continuing to make them proud of you.

In closing, let me wish each of you, about-to-be-newly minted lawyers, both rich lives and wonderful careers.

Thank you".

CALL TO THE BAR

Mr. Conway, Ms. Dickson, Ms. Minor and Mr. Swaye presented to the Treasurer 294 candidates for the Call to the Bar as follows:

294 CANDIDATES FOR CALL TO THE BAR

(list of candidates in Convocation file)

The Treasurer conferred upon the candidates the degree of Barrister-at-law and called them to the Bar of Ontario.

The Treasurer addressed the new barristers.

CONVOCATION ADJOURNED

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Following Convocation a Special Sitting of the Court of Appeal for Ontario and the Superior Court of Justice convened, with the Honourable Madam Justice Susan G. Himel presiding.

The candidates were presented to Justice Himel before whom they took the Oaths and acknowledged their signatures on the Rolls in the presence of the Court.

Justice Himel addressed the new barristers and solicitors.

Confirmed in Convocation this 29th day of September, 2010.

Treasurer