

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #27:

We call upon the Federation of Law Societies of Canada to ensure that lawyers receive appropriate cultural competency training, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism.

Steps the Law Society of Manitoba (LSM) has taken and continues to take to address the TRC's Calls to Action #27:

- The LSM Benchers endorsed a Road Map for Increasing Cultural Competency, which will help guide and track our efforts to respond to TRC's Call to Action #27.
- On March 5, 2019 the Law Society hosted a "Building Connections" networking event for Indigenous law and articling students in partnership with the Aboriginal Law section of the MBA and the Manitoba Indigenous Law Students Association. The purpose of the event was to provide the students with an opportunity to practice networking in a comfortable and supportive environment. Forty people attended, including 14 students. The students were matched with host lawyers and participated in several rounds of speed networking. The feedback was very positive. We plan to hold this event on either an annual or bi-annual basis.
- In February 2019 the LSM offered a half day CPD on diversity and inclusion for our members. A significant number of LSM staff members also participated. In November 2018, we provided diversity and inclusion training for members of the LSM Discipline Committee.
- The theme of the November 2018 Isaac Pitblado Lectures was Reimagining Justice: Trust, Truth and Transformation(s). In the wake of the public reaction to the verdicts in the Stanley and Cormier trials earlier this year, the Pitblado Lectures provided a good opportunity to explore some of the broad and systemic issues that the verdicts and ensuing reaction raised.
- The Equity Officer has written articles on the following topics for the Communique, the Law Society's electronic newsletter which is sent to the entire profession:
 - Traditional Land Acknowledgements: More Than Just a Gesture (August 2018)
 - Why Indigenous Law Matters (November 2018)
- The Law Society initiated discussions with the Chief Justice of the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench to proactively consider the issue of requests for modifications to the call to the bar ceremony to accommodate Indigenous traditions and explore opportunities to incorporate Indigenous traditions into the ceremony in keeping with the TRC's Calls to Action. We continue to work collaboratively with the court on this.

- In September 2018, we provided diversity and inclusion training for our Benchers at the Law Society's Annual General Meeting. The session covered micro aggressions, unconscious bias and systemic racism and included practical strategies for responding.
- The annual Western Bar half day CPD in September 2018 was on diversity and inclusion.
- In September 2018 we held a one day CPD program on Indigenous law, called Tebweta Ajiimowin (To Tell the Truth). This program was unique in that the content was set and delivered entirely by Indigenous elders and knowledge keepers, and the program was named by an Indigenous elder in a traditional naming ceremony. The program was organized in partnership with the Aboriginal law section of the Manitoba Bar Association, the Faculty of Law and the Manitoba Indigenous Law Students Association. It took place at Turtle Lodge on Sagkeeng First Nation. LSM Benchers and members of the Equity Committee were invited to attend at no cost.
- Effective January 2018 the LSM created the new position of in-house Equity Officer & Policy Counsel. One of the responsibilities of this position is coordinating the work of the LSM in responding to the TRC's Calls to Action. For the first time we have a single staff person responsible for coordinating our work in this important area.
- One of the four strategic objectives in the LSM's strategic plan (201-2020) is "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – promote equity, diversity and inclusion in the regulation of the legal profession and in the delivery of legal services". Two of the action items that have been identified in support of this objective are increasing cultural competence in the delivery of legal services and increasing cultural competence among the benchers and law society staff. Over the last couple years, our Equity Committee has focused its efforts on the TRC's Calls to Action. The committee will continue to identify specific initiatives and opportunities for implementing the Calls to Action.
- In March 2018, LSM staff watched the video "But I Was Wearing a Suit", a mini documentary that raises awareness about the racism and unconscious bias that Indigenous lawyers and law students face within the legal profession.
- In June 2017, a half day CPD at the Northern Bar in The Pas was held on the topic of B.C.'s experiment with designated First Nations Courts. B.C. Provincial Court Judge Steven Merrick and B.C lawyer Suzette Narbonne presented.
- In 2017, many LSM staff and Benchers participated in an interactive blanket exercise workshop put on by KAIROS to gain a better understanding of the historic and contemporary relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.
- Beginning in 2016, staff in the CPD department began including cultural competency training in CPD programs wherever possible. For example: a CPD on Interpreting Drug Tests included an Indigenous speaker who addressed the special treatment required for hair and nail samples in Indigenous culture; and CPDs on child protection have involved presentations on the intergenerational trauma caused by residential schools, community based alternative approaches to child apprehensions and culturally appropriate resources available to assist Indigenous families involved in the child protection system.

- In 2016, we began acknowledging the treaty territory we are situated in at all our CPD programs, Benchers meetings, and other Law Society events.
- In November 2016 we held our annual two-day continuing legal education lectures, the Isaac Pitblado Lectures on the theme of “Journey to Reconciliation: Lawyers Call to Action”.
- In 2015/2016, we held a series of five continuing professional development (CPD) programs on Aboriginal Law. The topics were: An Introduction to Aboriginal Law; Understanding Treaties; Section 91(24): The Evolution of Federal Jurisdiction and Implications for Provincial Governments, Métis and Non-Status People; Urban Reserves as a Tool for Economic Development; and a full day session on Indigenous Legal Traditions, held at Turtle Lodge on Sagkeeng First Nation.
- In October 2015, we hosted the Federation of Law Societies national conference in Winnipeg on the theme of Truth and Reconciliation.