

**To:** Members of the Law Society of Nunavut

From: Jonathan Park, Chair, Standing Committee on Inuit Representation in the Legal

Profession; and Committee Members: Gloria Song, Anne Crawford, Caroline Pothemont,

Erinma Abara

Re: Report for the 2019 - 2020 Annual General Meeting

**Date:** June 15, 2020

## **Background:**

The Standing Committee on Inuit Representation was formed after a motion passed at the 2017-2018 LSN AGM, originally moved by Anne Crawford and seconded by Joseph Murdoch-Flowers at the 2016-2017 LSN AGM and amended at the 2017-2018 AGM. In part, this amended motion provides the mandate defining the purpose of this Committee, which is to develop and publish a plan on the Law Society's role in creating a Nunavut where the majority of individuals providing legal services are Inuit and the profession seeks to be representative of the people it serves.

## A. ACTION PLAN 2019-2020

The action plan for the Committee in the coming 2019-2020 year was as follows:

- 1) Complete literature review of the list of resources
- 2) Consult Inuit organizations to determine the most culturally sensitive manner to consult with Inuit on this question.
- 3) Ask major employers (PPSC, GN, LSB) whether they have developed Inuit Employment Action Plans and whether they would disclose those plans and supporting policies to the committee.
- 4) Complete a final draft of a survey to distribute to Inuit membership and former members who have since resigned.
- 5) Organize events designed to bring stakeholders together to provide the Committee with their perspectives on how the Committee can most effectively achieve its mandate.
- 6) Develop a programming plan along with a proposed budget to assist in obtaining sustainable funding for a Legal Skills Workshop as proposed in recommendation 3 of this Report.

## **B. MEETING SUMMARIES**

The Committee did not formally meet during 2019-2020 but did exchange a number of emails to discuss the Committee's action plan and priorities for the Executive's consideration.

## C. ACTION STEPS

On September 12, 2019, the Chair met with the Executive Committee to discuss the action steps and the recommendations made by the Committee in the Report to the Membership in May 2019. The Executive welcomed the recommendations and invited the Committee to bring forward priorities for which the Law Society could consider undertaking as part of its mandate. For example, during the September meeting, the Chair and the Executive discussed the revival of the Legal Skills Program, a workshop that was put on around the territory in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 through Aboriginal Affaires and Northern Development Canada (Inuit Studies Support Program) as it was then known. It was agreed that contact should be made with Makigiaqta, a training fund established by Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. under Makigiaqta Inuit Training Corporation pursuant to the Nunavut Settlement Agreement. Also discussed at that meeting was potentially establishing a connection with the high school to encourage youth to consider the legal profession, what steps and approach should be taken to encourage graduates of the Nunavut Law Program to remain in Nunavut, and the Committee requesting information from major employers about their plans to hire Inuit law students and Inuit articling students.

On October 31, 2019, the Chair met with the Dean of the Law Program at the Nunavut Arctic College to obtain further information on the Law Program's career development plan. The Dean advised that a Career Development Officer at the University of Saskatchewan was scheduled to come to Nunavut in January to meet face-to-face with prospective employers and have face-to-face meetings with students to discuss career goals. In 2019, every student in the Law Program who was looking for summer employment successfully secured a position. A Career Fair was scheduled for February 2020 for summer employment and articling opportunities. At the time of the discussion, the Dean was working to secure commitments from major Nunavut employers of legal professionals so that articling positions would be available to graduates from the Law Program.