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NUNAVUMI MALIGALIQUQTTIT  
LAW SOCIETY OF NUNAVUT  
BARREAU DU NUNAVUT



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

**From:** Sara Siebert  
Federation of Law Societies of Canada, Council Member nominated by the Law Society of Nunavut

**Re:** Report for the 2020 – 2021 Annual General Meeting on the Law Society of Nunavut’s Access to Justice activities

**Date:** May 18, 2021

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### **The Federation of Law Societies of Canada (“Federation”)**

The Federation of Law Societies of Canada is the national coordinating body of Canada’s 14 provincial and territorial law societies, which regulate more than 125,000 lawyers and 3,800 Quebec notaries and Ontario’s nearly 10,500 licensed paralegals in the public interest. It is a leading voice on issues of national and international importance relating to the administration of justice and the rule of the law.

The Council of the Federation is the governing body of the Federation and is responsible for the strategic direction and oversight of the organization. The Council consists of elected Council members nominated by the Federation’s 14 member law societies.

### **2020 Annual Conference:**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Federation’s Annual Conference was held virtually. The conference focused on the lessons learned and new possibilities for legal regulation.

Presentations looked at how the justice system and legal profession have adapted to the “new normal”. In addition to the impacts of the pandemic, presenters spoke to how climate change related events in Canada (preceding the pandemic) raised similar concerns about the need to be agile and adaptive in the face of challenging circumstances. Topics also included how social unrest in the midst of the pandemic and the corresponding growth of the Black and Indigenous Lives Matter movements have brought other important issues into the spotlight.

Through plenary and small group discussions, attendees explored lessons learned and looked toward the future. The conference was an opportunity to reflect on and discuss what we are learning and the possibilities for strengthening legal regulation for a different tomorrow.

The focus of the 2021 Conference is the regulatory response to generational change and the future of the legal profession, with a particular emphasis on entry into the profession and how best to support new members.

### **Federation Initiatives and Committee work – updates:**

The following is intended to be a high-level summary update of current Federation initiatives that may be of particular interest to the LSN membership. Additional information on the work of the Federation is available on the Federation’s website: <https://flsc.ca/national-initiatives/>

#### **The National Well-Being Study**

On November 1, 2020 the Federation officially launched its National Well-Being Study. This project will survey the well-being of legal professionals in Canada. It is a project of the Federation and the Université de Sherbrooke, in collaboration with Canada’s law societies and the Canadian Bar Association.

The purpose of the study is to address the gap in data on the mental health of legal professionals in Canada. The goal is to collect national data that will assist the Federation, law societies and the Canadian Bar Association to better understand well-being challenges faced by members of the profession and identify evidence-based supports.

The survey questionnaire has been validated and finalized and the research team anticipates launching the survey in the last week of May<sup>1</sup>.

#### **Reconciliation Initiatives**

In recognition of its responsibility as a justice stakeholder to foster reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, the Federation approved a [formal statement of commitment to reconciliation](#).

The statement is an essential part of the Federation’s framework for responding to the TRC Calls to Action. It recognizes the important role that all justice system participants play in fostering truth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in Canada and highlights the steps that the Federation will take in fulfilling its commitment, many of which are already underway.

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<sup>1</sup> May 31 is the confirmed date for the launch by the LSN.

An essential component of the statement was the adoption of [Guiding Principles](#) that were developed to ensure Indigenous perspectives inform the Federation's journey towards reconciliation and are reflected in all aspects of its work.

The statement of commitment is a first, but significant step, in the Federation's efforts to foster truth and reconciliation. The Council and Federation staff are currently exploring ways in which it can demonstrate and deepen that commitment through its national initiatives, its relationships with law societies, law schools, and national Indigenous organizations.