

Hey, thanks for caring enough about these elections to come read through some bios. My name is Barton Soroka. I hold a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Regina and a Juris Doctor from the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University. I'm a new call (as of July 2018), but an old hat when it comes to governance. I've served on a variety of boards for the last decade - most recently as a representative on the Dalhousie Board of Governors and its Capital Projects Committee, and currently as the Chair of UR Pride, a 2SLGBTQIAP+ (Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Asexual, Pansexual, and more) organization serving Regina and southern Saskatchewan. In my time with UR Pride, we have rewritten and adopted a new constitution, as well as the bylaws to go with them.

While attending Schulich, I was able to write two papers relating to access to justice with a lens on leveraging young/new lawyers to fill the access gap. It is clear by any metric that some people who need legal representation can't afford it, and simultaneously do not qualify for Legal Aid. These individuals have worse outcomes in the legal system, and have a much worse outlooks on the legal system and profession. My papers focused on utilizing models from around the world and in Canada to move beyond a traditional firm approach for individuals who had recently received their degrees. The recommendations have been adopted by the school as part of their 10 year plan.

I was involved in major overhauls to the Law School Curriculum, including advocating for an indigenous law course for first year students. In my 3rd year, I was able to assist in organizing a "Blanket Exercise" for all incoming 1st year students as part of Welcome Week. Thanks to the incredible work of Naomi Metallic, this exercise is now part of Aboriginal and Indigenous Law in Context (AILC). AILC is a 1st year course, taken by every incoming student, as of 2017. I performed a research project reviewing the various approaches taken by law schools in Canada to the debate between practical and philosophical legal education, presenting the information to Dean Camille Cameron and discussing the proper balance to be struck between the two.

Which is all a long winded way to say that I would love to serve the people of Saskatchewan by donating my time and skills to the Law Society. I can bring informed outside perspectives to the Access to Legal Services, Admission and Education, or Governance committees. My experience in these areas, combined with an educated perspective not conditioned in "this is how it's always been", will be invaluable in assisting the Law Society in serving the public, and making the organization better for our members.

Thank you,

Barton Soroka