



Kari Boyle



BC Dispute Resolution Practicum Society Celebrates 10 Great Years

The BC Dispute Resolution Practicum Society—DRPS, as it is affectionately known—has celebrated its 10th year of service to British Columbians.

The DRPS provides trained but inexperienced mediators the opportunity to get hands-on experience by mediating real cases under the supervision of skilled mediators who act as mentors.

- The Court Mediation Program, the most established service of DRPS, operates in five registries of the BC Provincial Court, Small Claims Division.
- The Family Mediation Practicum Program provides training and free mediation in family matters.
- The Child Protection Mediation Practicum Program provides training and mediation services in child protection cases.

Twenty-seven BC Notaries have completed the Court Mediation Program; many have become mentors or have been selected to serve as Small Claims Mediators who conduct sole mediations in the Provincial Court.

Others, including Sally O'Sullivan-Lee, first female President of The Society of Notaries Public of BC—1996 to 1998—have gone on to serve as mentors in other DRPS programs.

Over 100 people attended the celebration reception in the Heritage Courtroom at the Vancouver Art Gallery, the home of the Vancouver Courthouse until the late 1970s. The wonderful turnout was a tribute to the significant impact the DRPS has had on the lives and careers of many people from a variety of backgrounds.

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The work of the DRPS, and the Court Mediation Program in particular, was highlighted in the Spring 2006 edition of *The Scrivener*, including feature articles by founders Lee Turnbull and Sharon Sutherland.

At the reception, both Lee and Sharon were honoured for their long-term dedication to the DRPS and to the development of mediation in the province.

Special guests included Chief Judge Hugh Stansfield of the Provincial Court; Deputy Attorney General Allan Seckel QC; Assistant Deputy Minister, Justice

Services, M. Jerry McHale QC; Wayne Robertson, Executive Director of the Law Foundation of BC; David Merner, Director of the Dispute Resolution Office, Ministry of AG; Sally O'Sullivan-Lee, mentor and former Notary; Carol Graham, Court Services Branch; Ron Friesen, Continuing Legal Education Society of BC, one of the key founders and first President of the DRPS; and many current and former Board members, staff, mentors, mediators, court staff, and friends.

The DRPS has enjoyed a long and beneficial relationship with BC Notaries and congratulates The Society on its continuing support for the Notary Foundation Mediation Workshop and the participation of BC Notaries in the DRPS programs.

Here's to another 10 years!

For more information on the DRPS or the Court Mediation Program, please go to www.courtmediation.com. ▲

Kari Boyle currently serves as Executive Director of the DRPS. She is a lawyer (called in 1981), a trained mediator, an educator, and a consultant in legal services management and civil justice reform.

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