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LAW FOUNDATION OF NOVA SCOTIA
ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021

LAW FOUNDATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

OBJECTS:

To establish and maintain a fund to be used for the examination, research, revision and reform of and public access to the law, legal education, the administration of justice in the Province and other purposes incidental or conducive to or consequential upon the attainment of any such objects.

The Law Foundation of Nova Scotia was established in 1976 by amendment to the *Barristers and Solicitors Act* (now the *Legal Profession Act*. 2004, c. 28, s. 1.). Its central purpose is to receive and distribute interest earned on lawyers' pooled trust accounts in accordance with its mandate. It is the only foundation in Nova Scotia devoted solely to community law-related initiatives and legal education.

The Foundation is administered by a board of up to nine members. The Governor in Council appoints up to five members. The Nova Scotia Barristers' Society appoints four. There were two outgoing board members who served a partial term and two incoming new board member appointments in 2020-2021, keeping the complement to nine members of the board.

Please visit nslawfd.ca for more information on the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia.

Appointed by the Governor in Council:

Paulette Anderson
Laura Broz (incoming new appointment)
Lee-Ann Conrod (incoming new appointment)
Meg Green (outgoing)
Kent Noseworthy (outgoing)
Tokunbo Omisade
M. Estelle Theriault, Q.C., VICE-CHAIR

Appointed by the Council of the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society:

Robert G. MacKeigan, Q.C., CHAIR
Margaret M. MacKenzie, SECRETARY
Dwight Rudderham, Q.C.
Douglas G. Ruck, Q.C., TREASURER

The Governor in Council appoints the chair from the members of the board, upon the joint recommendation of the Attorney General and the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society.

The board meets 3 – 4 times per year and reviews grant applications for the following fiscal year at its winter meeting.

During 2020 – 2021 the Foundation employed two part-time staff members:

Mary D. Hamblin, Executive Director
Kathy Samson, Executive Assistant

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The *Legal Profession Act* states that the objects of the Law Foundation are “to establish and maintain a fund to be used for the examination, research, revision and reform of and public access to the law, legal education, the administration of justice in the Province and any other purposes incidental or conducive to or consequential upon the attainment of any such objects.”

The fund maintained for this purpose arises from the payment by financial institutions of interest accrued on lawyers pooled trust accounts, which interest is based on the prime rate of the banks and other institutions. These monies are then paid as grants to organizations who further the objects of the Law Foundation.

GRANTS APPROVED

In January 2021 the Foundation approved seventeen grants for the fiscal year April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022, totaling \$937,094, almost \$1 million less than the previous year when grants totaled \$1,976,237. The decrease was due to a sharp decline in revenue resulting primarily from a drop in the prime rate from 3.95 per cent to 2.45 per cent in March 2020. Grants support a wide range of work including direct services such as the provision of legal information, assistance with navigation of legal systems, and services and training for staff and intermediaries who help vulnerable individuals and marginalized populations.

The grants approved by the Foundation support valuable work in the community, work that strives to meet legal needs, particularly the legal needs of individuals who face barriers to accessing justice. The Foundation also funds projects targeted to address specific priority unmet needs identified in our research; research such as the *Grants Review and Future Directions Report* (2017). This report assessed the impact of current grants and identified gaps which the board continues to prioritize in hopes of attracting targeted projects worthy of support. It is my hope that as revenues improve we will continue to sustain and grow the Foundation's grants program well into the future.

CONSIDERATIONS IN APPROVING GRANTS

The *2017 Grants Review and Future Directions Report* continues to fulfill its mandate to help the board evaluate the current distribution of funds and to provide a roadmap for the future. It identifies specific barriers to access to justice and highlights certain populations' unmet needs, suggesting priority directions to address legal vulnerabilities identified during the research, vulnerabilities such as:

- the prohibitive cost of legal services;
- rural inaccessibility;
- lack of cultural competency;
- the growing need for family law information;
- the plight of self-represented litigants, including their effect on the legal system; and,
- the need for pro bono and alternate dispute resolution services.

Foundation grantees state the report has shed light on the critical aspects of their work toward improved access to justice. They continue to leverage the findings of the report at community and board meetings as well as in their research programs to raise awareness. The legal community and the general public also have an interest in improving access to justice in Nova Scotia. The Foundation will continue to respond to these calls for action through its granting program.

REVENUE AND GRANTS

A reserve fund is maintained by the Foundation to ensure sustainability of its grants mandate. Declining interest rates in past years have forced the Foundation to call upon the fund to pay for grants. In the years when interest rates are higher and the revenues stronger, the reserve fund is replenished to ensure a hedge against the potential for future years' challenging economic times, including reductions in interest rates. In 2020-2021 as revenue flagged, the reserve fund supported grants. The Foundation board was prudent in its granting to ensure sustainability of the reserve.

TRUST INTEREST REVENUE TRACKING

The Foundation works with financial institutions and lawyers in an effort to ensure that the financial institutions are reporting on all lawyers' pooled trust accounts. We focus on ensuring accurate payments from all accounts. The Nova Scotia Barristers' Society provides the Foundation with a list of the pooled trust accounts reported by lawyers and firms on Annual Trust Account Reports. This allows the Foundation to identify accounts which may have not been included in the remittance reports received from the financial institutions. Tracking of this nature began in earnest in 2014 resulting in recovery to date of \$219,492 in retroactive interest owing on trust accounts that had not been included on monthly remittance reports.

MARCH 2020 INTEREST RATE CHANGES AND COVID-19

The prime rate in Canada fell from 3.95% to 3.45% on March 6, 2020, following the Bank of Canada's decision to drop its overnight target by 0.5% to 1.25% the day before. In its statement, the bank said "the COVID-19 virus is a material negative shock to the Canadian and global outlooks." Similar decreases in the prime rate followed on March 17 (to 2.95%) and on March 30 when the prime rate decreased to 2.45%. In the meantime the Province declared a State of Emergency on March 22, 2020 in response to COVID-19. The board of the Foundation met on March 31, 2020 and recognized that the Law Foundation may suffer a significant deficit in 2020-2021 rather than the projected surplus. The board nevertheless determined that the grants approved in January 2020 should be paid during the 2020-2021 fiscal year so long as the grantees are able to carry out the intended programs.

NOVA SCOTIA STATE OF EMERGENCY

The State of Emergency declared for all of the Province of Nova Scotia on March 22, 2020 was in effect, with various amendments and additions, throughout the Foundation's fiscal year. The State of Emergency has been extended repeatedly with the most recent extension to June 13, 2021 and can be renewed. This presented significant challenges to the operations of both the Foundation and its grantees. During most of the fiscal year, the staff of the Foundation worked remotely from home.

RECOGNITION OF THE BOARD, STAFF AND TRUSTEES

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the board for volunteering their time and generously contributing to the work of the Foundation and access to justice in Nova Scotia. In particular, I thank outgoing board members Meg Green and Kent Noseworthy for their exemplary service on the board. Laura Broz and Lee-Ann Conrod were welcomed as new members of the board, having been appointed by Order in Council of the Province on August 27, 2020.

All board members show great dedication and commitment, and their service to the community in this manner is greatly appreciated.

In the day-to-day administration I would like to recognize Mary Hamblin as executive director and Kathy Samson as executive assistant who have skillfully provided the core operations that are so important to the success of the work of the Law Foundation. All members of the board appreciate their assistance in meeting the challenges during the pandemic caused by COVID-19.

In April 2021 (shortly after the end of the Foundation's fiscal year) Kathy Samson advised that she had decided to retire at the end of April. Kathy has been a very valuable member of the staff of the Foundation during the last thirty-three years and has ably assisted successive chairs and board members. Kathy's work and knowledge will be missed and we extend our best wishes to her as she commences her retirement.

I also wish to recognize and thank those who have acted with me as co-trustees of the Law Foundation scholarship fund. Estelle Theriault, Q.C., vice chair of the Foundation has acted throughout the fiscal year. Dean R. Camille Cameron, Q.C., Dean of the Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University acted as co-trustee for the first several months, followed by Richard Devlin, acting Dean.



Robert G. MacKeigan, Q.C. Chair

REVENUE

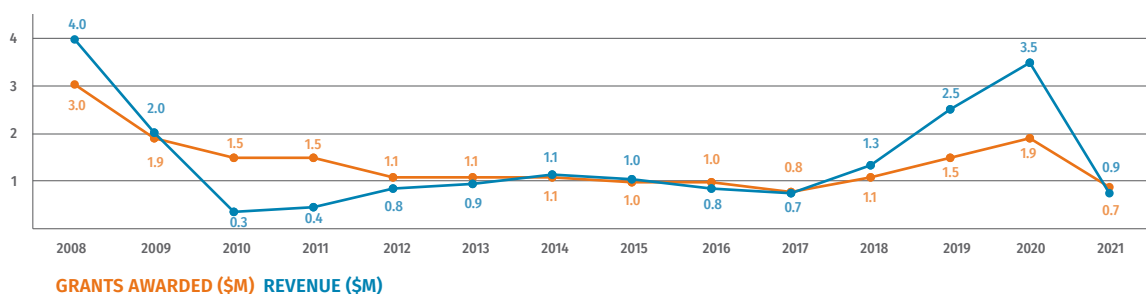
The Foundation's main source of revenue is interest earned on lawyers' pooled and Service Nova Scotia trust accounts in the province. Trust account revenue fluctuates with the balances in the trust accounts and with the prime rate of interest. Financial institutions remit interest based upon "prime - X" formulas negotiated with each law foundation in Canada; changes in the prime rate can produce dramatic results. The Foundation experienced highs and lows between 2008 and 2010, seeing trust account revenue top the \$4 million mark and then drop to \$331,560. Trust account revenue remained steady at about \$1 million for the next 3 years but that changed in 2015 - 2016. After holding the target for the overnight rate at 1 per cent for several years, the Bank of Canada reduced it unexpectedly to $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent in January 2015 and then again to $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in July.

Financial institutions followed by dropping their prime rates to 2.85 per cent and 2.7 per cent, resulting in a drop in the Foundation's trust account revenue from \$1,054,754 in 2015 to \$766,388 for the year ending March 2016, then declining to \$703,059 for the year ending March 2017. In a turn-around, then, financial institutions followed the Bank of Canada's three successive increases in the overnight rate between July 2017 and January 2018 resulting in the prime rate jumping from 2.7 per cent, to 2.95 per cent, to 3.2 per cent, and, by March 31, 2018, to 3.45 per cent. Since then, revenues continued to improve. In July of 2018, the prime rate increased to

3.7 per cent, followed by another increase in October to 3.95 per cent. The average prime rate in the fiscal year 2018-2019 was 3.7 per cent, with the pattern of growth continuing into 2019-2020 when the prime rate remained steady at 3.95 per cent. Unfortunately, the prime rate plummeted with 3 rate drops in March 2020. On March 1st the prime rate was 3.95 per cent, but by March 30th it was 2.45 per cent, negatively affecting the new fiscal year which began on April 1, 2020. The prime rate remained at 2.45 per cent through the entire fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

Historically, dramatic interest rate swings, coupled with different methods of calculating interest paid by financial institutions and higher or lower trust account balances, have produced interesting results. For instance, the prime rate peaked at 22.75 per cent in August 1981 but trust account revenue was under \$300,000. By 1993 - 1994, a different formula for calculating interest payments produced the same amount of trust account revenue with an average prime rate of 5.7 per cent. An average prime of 7.4 per cent in 2001 resulted in trust account revenue of \$1.9 million, whereas, an average rate of 6 per cent in 2008 yielded over \$4 million. In 2019-2020 the average prime rate of 3.95 per cent resulted in trust account revenue of \$3,501,146. In 2020-2021 the prime rate of 2.45 per cent resulted in trust account revenue of \$664,959.

TRUST ACCOUNT REVENUE AND GRANTS FISCAL YEARS ENDING 2008-2021



RESERVE FUND SUPPORTS GRANT LEVELS

It was recognized early in the Foundation's history that a severe decline in the prime rate could severely reduce trust interest revenue and force the board to reduce or eliminate grants. To help protect against this risk, the Foundation established a prudent investment fund as a reserve in 1986 to be used to maintain grants in periods when low interest rates result in insufficient income to fund them. The Foundation was, in 2019-2020, able to increase the investment which was a saving grace in 2020-2021 when annual revenues declined to \$664,959 from \$3,501,146 in 2019-2020. In 2020-2021 the Foundation was forced to resort to making withdrawals from the reserve fund to provide grant funding approved in January 2020 for the grantees' 2020-2021 year.

It is not new that the Foundation has had to rely upon its reserve fund. For example, although trust interest revenue dropped dramatically in 2010 due to the reduction in the prime rate of interest, the decision to maintain grant allocations at \$1.5 million, higher than the revenue stream, forced the Foundation to, then, rely upon the reserve fund. In subsequent years, although revenues climbed slightly, the Foundation continued to provide grants equal to, or incrementally higher than, revenues, which meant that it often had to use reserve funds for the grants.

As the years progressed and revenues continued to remain low, the Foundation decided to slightly reduce grants, hovering at the \$1.1 - \$1 million mark for several years. In 2015 the prime rate dropped further, which, ultimately, resulted in a reduction of most grants by

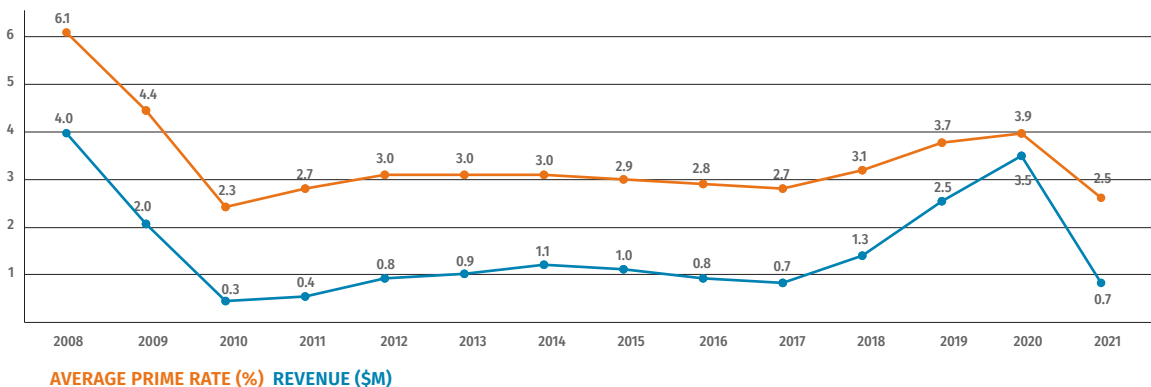
15% for 2017-2018, and an increasing draw upon the reserve fund. There were concerns that this may be unsustainable if revenues continued to falter.

The downward trend reversed when the prime rate increased in fiscal year 2017-2018 starting in July (from 2.7 to 2.95 per cent); then, September (to 3.2 percent); and, finally, in January when it climbed to 3.45 per cent, allowing the Foundation to increase grants for the 2018-2019 fiscal year to \$1,086,056, higher than the previous year's \$798,529 grants budget. Prime rate increases in 2018-2019 (to 3.7 percent in July and 3.95 per cent in October) further allowed the Foundation to increase grant levels to \$1,493,359 in 2019-2020, and to increase grants again in 2020-2021 to \$1,976,237.

However, the prime rate plummeted to 2.45% by April 2020, causing a dramatic drop in revenue which forced the Foundation to draw from the reserve fund in 2020-2021 in order to fund grants. In response to the prime rate drop, the board reduced grants to \$937,094 for 2021-2022, an amount expected mostly to be drawn from the reserve fund.

By March 31, 2021 the reserve fund balance was \$3,907,949. While it continues to serve as a reserve for the challenging economic times forecast for 2021-2022, its sustainability is precarious and the board takes great care in its granting to ensure optimum stability for the Foundation.

TRUST ACCOUNT REVENUE & PRIME RATES FISCAL YEARS ENDING 2008 - 2021



GRANTS

LAW FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Separate from its annual project grants, the Law Foundation established a trust fund in 1981 to provide scholarships to students attending the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University. The fund supports scholarships valued at \$21,500 for four students entering first year. The scholarships are renewable in their second and third years provided the recipient maintains a B+ average. Two Fellowships of \$20,000 at the graduate level are also available. During the past 40 years, the Law Foundation Scholarship Fund has provided \$4.33 million in scholarships to support 399 law students.

The 2020-2021 scholarships included four entrance, four second year, three third year students, and two graduate fellowships. Scholarship payments for the year totalled \$276,500.

PROJECT GRANTS TO BE DISBURSED IN 2021-2022

Since its creation in 1976, the Foundation has received approximately \$49.9 million in revenue from interest on lawyers' trust accounts and has awarded over \$45 million in grants. These grants have made it possible for community organizations to help Nova Scotians understand the law and to use it to improve their lives while also promoting improvements in the law and excellence within the profession. During the 2020 – 2021 fiscal year, the Foundation awarded grants totaling \$937,094 to be disbursed during 2021-2022. Grants are categorized according to the Foundation's four mandated objectives. Activities of many of the funded organizations fall under more than one of the objectives.

FUNDING GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The board strives to be accountable in the distribution of funds received by the Foundation. The board also endeavours to be transparent and consistent in its evaluation of applications. It takes into consideration where programs will operate and who will benefit from them, as well as whether they fit within the Foundation's mandate. Accountability extends to the careful assessment and consistent monitoring of programs that receive funding. Funding guidelines and grant application procedures may be obtained by contacting the executive director, and, or by visiting the Foundation's website at nslawfd.ca

2020-2021 LAW FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS:

Entering 1st Year:

Grace Bryson
Daniel Campbell
Liam Gilbert-Walsh
Patrick Sheppard

Entering 2nd Year:

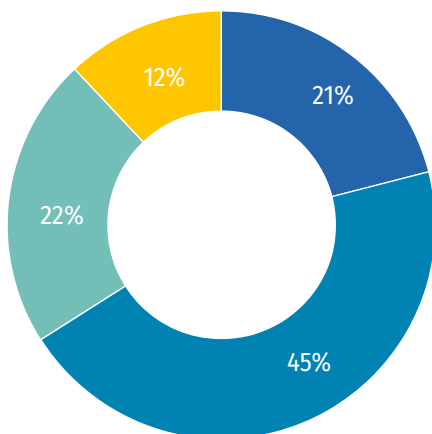
Elizabeth Dreise
Deanna Kerry
Mallory MacGregor
Kelsey Warr

Entering 3rd Year:

Laura Burlock
Madysen Gillespie
Natalie MacDougall

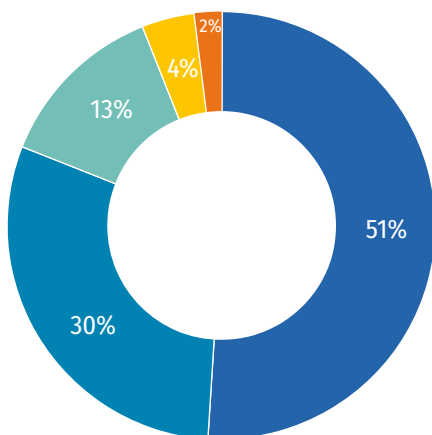
Graduate Fellowships:

Kevin Burke
Ogbu Okanga



GRANTS AWARDED BY MANDATE

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----|-----------|
| Research and Reform | 21% | \$198,245 |
| Public Access | 45% | \$421,493 |
| Legal Education | 22% | \$206,441 |
| Administration of Justice | 12% | \$110,915 |



GRANTS AWARDED BY REGION

| | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----------|
| Province Wide | 51% | \$481,186 |
| HRM | 30% | \$276,992 |
| Cape Breton | 13% | \$122,310 |
| Antigonish Pictou Guys | 4% | \$40,606 |
| King's County | 2% | \$16,000 |

Total Awarded: \$937,094

GRANTS TO BE DISBURSED IN 2021-2022

Access to Justice and Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia \$104,000

Access to justice research and reform, review of provincial laws & recommendations for improvement, modernization and reform

Antigonish Women's Resource Centre \$40,606

Justice Matters for Women – Rural Outreach in Antigonish and Guysborough Counties - a rural outreach program providing law-related information and support for women and adolescent girls in rural counties and the Strait area

Avalon Sexual Assault Centre \$36,528

Prevention, Intervention, and Awareness (PIA) Program - legal information and education, professional training workshops, support services and policy development aimed at improving the criminal justice process for victims of sexual violence

Concilio Prison Ministry \$36,000

St. Luke's Renewal Centre – for inmates at Springhill Institution and their families an innovative approach to re-integration of long-term offenders into the community as productive citizens, addressing issues of barriers to justice

Coverdale Courtwork Services \$48,000

Information and support for women in the criminal court process; counseling and support at parole hearings & pre-release planning; life skills programs to prevent recidivism

Dalhousie Legal Aid \$79,990

Pro bono legal services for marginalized populations; community development and law reform; an educational experience for 3rd year law students

East Coast Environmental Law Association \$52,000

Collaboration among students, academics & practitioners responding to environmental law issues such as environmental racism, discrimination; environmental legislation and policy review; environmental law education

Elizabeth Fry Cape Breton \$82,310

Support for women in prison; programs & services for women charged with offences or at risk in the community; law reform & community education

Elizabeth Fry Mainland \$57,600

Support Services for Vulnerable, Criminalized Women and Girls help women charged with offences or at risk in the community; law reform & community education

EPIC Society \$40,000

After school and specialized programs for youth in conflict with the law & support for parents; reduces recidivism amongst at-risk youth; outreach to marginalized youth in rural areas of Cape Breton

Halifax Refugee Clinic \$116,000

A pro bono legal clinic to assist financially eligible refugee claimants before the Immigration & Refugee Board & in related matters

King's County Seniors' Safety Program \$16,000

A program to provide legal, safety & security information on an individual and group basis to seniors in King's County

Leave Out Violence (LOVE) \$12,000

Youth who have experienced violence are trained to be peer educators to deter and reduce violent behavior

Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia (LISNS) \$137,600

Programs providing Nova Scotians with pro bono access to legal information & resources to increase access to justice

Mainline Needle Exchange \$29,260

A legal education program to reduce recidivism; help for drug users and service providers in court & correctional institutions

Pro Bono Students Association \$10,800

Law students volunteer their time to provide legal services to public interest community organizations

Stepping Stone \$38,400

Court support & assistance for current or former sex trade workers; workshops for sex trade workers and the legal community; community education

TOTAL 2021-2022 GRANTS: \$937,094

GRANTEE STORIES & TESTIMONIALS

“ The support of the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia has allowed for a tradition of considered and independent law reform in Nova Scotia to continue since 1969. Despite the many challenges and transitions experienced by our law reform bodies over the past half century, the support of the Law Foundation has been a source of stability and support, allowing us not only to continue, but to expand our mandate as the Access to Justice & Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia. ”

Ilana Luther, Executive Director
Access to Justice & Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia

ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND LAW REFORM INSTITUTE OF NOVA SCOTIA

2020-2021 brought many new beginnings to the Law Reform Institute. We began advisory group sessions on parentage legislation in Nova Scotia, started our issues paper on the *Testator's Family Maintenance Act*, began our project on trauma-informed justice and domestic violence in Nova Scotia, started surveying issues facing self-represented litigants in Atlantic Canada, re-introduced the Law Reform Class to the law school and rejoined the Uniform Law Conference of Canada as a delegate for Nova Scotia.

Our many wonderful students - volunteers and researchers alike - have poured their time and focus into these projects and have shown incredible resilience and diligence in these trying and uncertain times. We are so grateful and really could not do our work without them.

Ilana Luther, Executive Director
Access to Justice & Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia

Check out our A2J Directory for Nova Scotia!
<https://lawreform.ns.ca/navigate-a2j>

For more information go to lawreform.ns.ca

ANTIGONISH WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

With the generous support of the Law Foundation of NS, the Justice Matters for Women outreach program in Guysborough County continued to provide essential support to women and their families throughout the pandemic. This included accompanying and serving as a testimonial aid for women seeking justice through the courts, and supporting women fleeing intimate partner violence. In one case, the Outreach Worker's advocacy was instrumental in securing the financial resources for a family leaving violence to find safe and secure housing after months of being precariously housed. In the context of the Covid-19 restrictions, the services and supports offered by the Outreach Worker were more necessary and important than ever. As women cope with the interconnected challenges of social isolation, financial insecurity, navigating government systems to access benefits, and increased family tensions and risk of gender based violence, the option to have support available in-community has been invaluable.

Wyanne Sandler, Executive Director, Antigonish Women's Resource Centre & Sexual Assault Services Association
Marcia Connolly, Outreach Worker, Justice Matters for Women, Antigonish Women's Resource Centre & Sexual Assault Services Association
For more information go to awrcsasa.ca

AVALON SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

Funding from the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia has helped to support Avalon Centre in adapting our community and legal education programming for online delivery during the Global pandemic; this has allowed us to continue offering support to organizations, service providers, and survivors, and will have long-standing positive impacts on capacity building moving forward.

Avalon wishes to share a resource that they created: it is a "virtual healing room." When doing training or workshops in the community, they like to ensure there is a space to decompress and have some resources on hand for people to take a break/take care of themselves in the moment, have some strategies and resources to take with them afterwards, and also to share with clients they are working with. That has become a bit more challenging in the new online world, so they created this link that includes resources for different stress reduction strategies. They have been sharing the link in online trainings and workshops, and it is also being shared with clients.

The "virtual healing room" can be found here:
docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vS-m87X-WaRBq8T--GmNjW_gyRykjsgxgTO81zqV2D-fiQqFi8nrfV54i46NlQ2RdyEV2XC9QzgohXZ/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000&slide=id.p

Avalon greatly appreciates the support of the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia. Many thanks for investing in Avalon's programs for survivors!

Dee Dooley, MA, Coordinator of Prevention, Intervention, and Awareness, Avalon Sexual Assault Centre

For more information go to avaloncentre.ca

INDIGENOUS BLACKS AND MI'KMAQ INITIATIVE (I B & M)

The IB&M Initiative is grateful for the grant support provided by the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia. It is an initiative designed to increase the representation of Indigenous Blacks & Mi'kmaq people in the legal profession. The IB&M Initiative continues to work to increase the representation of indigenous black and Mi'kmaq individuals in the legal profession through education at the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University.

Kelsey Jones, BA, JD
Director, Indigenous Blacks & Mi'kmaq Initiative
Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University

For more information go to dal.ca > [Schulich School of Law](https://dal.ca)



THE COVERDALE TEAM 2020

COVERDALE COURTWORK SERVICES

This past year has both illuminated and widened the access to justice crisis in Nova Scotia, which overwhelmingly impacts our most vulnerable and marginalized community members. Due to the pandemic, this year has been unlike any other for our society. As the needs of our service users have both shifted and increased, so have our responses. As access to the courts, prisons and jails became restricted, we were forced to adapt our services and address the tremendous impacts that these restrictions had on those in conflict with the law. Through collaborative initiatives with community agencies, justice system stakeholders and legal professionals, Coverdale has been able to deliver court support, bail support, advocacy support and programming to over 300 women, trans, non-binary and two-spirit individuals.

The Law Foundation of Nova Scotia provided project funding to Coverdale to launch a pilot project aimed at providing court support and navigation services to women and gender diverse people navigating the family court system. This pilot was immensely successful, and responded to a very concerning and identifiable gap in access to justice for victims and survivors of violence, mothers involved with child protection and those navigating both criminal and family courts. Throughout the year we have been able to develop a framework, including best practices, which will help to guide our next steps as we seek to secure and expand the project.

**Ashley Avery, Executive Director
Coverdale Courtwork Society**

For more information go to coverdale.ca

DALHOUSIE LEGAL AID

The mission of Dalhousie Legal Aid Service includes providing legal aid services for persons who otherwise would not be able to obtain legal advice or assistance. Our ability to conduct research, provide information, make recommendations, and engage in programs relating to legal aid and law reform in the Province of Nova Scotia would not be possible without the support of the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia. The legal education and experience for students enrolled in the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University has been described as exceptional. This combined with providing community legal education for front line community groups, organizations, and their clientele, is all part of the work that we do daily here at the "Clinic". The Law Foundation funding allows us to continue these projects and develop new ones. Essentially, without the assistance of the Law Foundation, we would not be able to make our mission possible!

**Raylene LeDrew, Office Manager
Dalhousie Legal Aid Service**

For more information go to
dal.ca/faculty/law/dlas/about-dalhousie-legal-aid



DALHOUSIE LEGAL AID SERVICES' NEW SPACE 2020

EAST COAST ENVIRONMENTAL LAW (ECE LAW)

Thank you to the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia for helping ECE LAW provide access to justice for Nova Scotians experiencing environmental injustice, including many marginalized and racialized communities.

The **East Coast Environmental Law Summary Series** gives concerned individuals, community groups, and organizations easy-to-understand information about environmental laws and regulatory processes throughout Atlantic Canada. The latest volume of our Summary Series is a guide to public engagement in aquaculture processes in Nova Scotia. You can access the volume at the link below.

Joint Submissions on the Proposed Federal Aquaculture Act

Did you know that the Government of Canada is developing a federal Aquaculture Act to create a new legal regime for aquaculture facilities?

Together with a number of concerned organizations across the country, East Coast Environmental Law has been engaging in the process and raising serious concerns about the industry-driven mandate reflected in the Act. You can read ECE LAW's recent submissions to Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Minister Bernadette Jordan by following the links.

www.ecelaw.ca/media/k2/attachments/Aquaculture_Summary_Series_Jan_2020.pdf?mc_cid=cf431ea73b&mc_eid=a037d085c8

Lisa Mitchell, Executive Director, East Coast Environmental Law

For more information go to ecelaw.ca

ELIZABETH FRY CAPE BRETON

"Funding from the Law Foundation has provided the Elizabeth Fry Society of Cape Breton the financial stability to assist criminalized women island-wide in specialized courts, and to offer a wide range of services and outreach making a positive impact on the lives of so many marginalized individuals."

Darlene MacEachern, Executive Director
Julie Kendall, Associate Executive Director
The Elizabeth Fry Society of Cape Breton

For more information go to efrycb.com

ELIZABETH FRY MAINLAND

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Nova Scotia (EFMNS) is grateful for the support provided by the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia. EFMNS is devoted to alleviating poverty for vulnerable women and girls in our province through comprehensive housing support, innovative programming initiatives, justice system reform, and through building women's individual capacities to develop positive relationships with their communities.

Our three core priorities are 1) housing, 2) programming, and 3) prison law advocacy, navigation and triage.

Emma Halpern, Executive Director
The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia

For more information go to efrymns.ca



FROM YOUTH PEER NORTHSIDE PROGRAM. THE UNUSUAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION WAS SUGGESTED BY STAFF TO LIFT THE SPIRITS OF A YOUTH WHOSE SOLE PROVIDER IS UNDERGOING LIFE-THREATENING SURGERY.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS INNOVATIONS CHARITY (EPIC) SOCIETY

The Law Foundation of Nova Scotia continues to be EPIC's largest and longest source of support to promote ongoing social adaptation and academic advancement in high-risk CBRM youth. This has enabled EPIC to slowly expand the Youth Peer Program, sustaining referrals from 19 different schools and 12 community agencies even in pandemic times.

Youth Peer in Sydney operates daily transporting kids from a wide area, provides weekly tutor-mentor services in Glace Bay, New Waterford, and Northside, and delivers Youth Peer Online to the 20% of youth who can no longer be safely accommodated in person. The program is transformative for youth participants and deeply gratifying to youth volunteers.

The caregiver of a middle school student told Youth Peer staff that his grandson was known at school mostly for conflicts. He was amazed that when his grandson had to go online to attend Youth Peer, he reports that, "he got mature and kind to the younger kids and more helpful at home."

Photo: From Youth Peer Northside Program. The unusual birthday celebration was suggested by staff to lift the spirits of a youth whose sole provider is undergoing life-threatening surgery.

Barry Waldman, volunteer Executive Director
Educational Program Innovations (EPIC)

For more information go to epiccharity.com

THE HALIFAX REFUGEE CLINIC

COVID-19 has had a disproportionately negative impact on clients of the Halifax Refugee Clinic, refugee claimants and non-status migrants, who are already a marginalized group. When the global pandemic hit, The HRC team quickly responded, providing outreach to clients, distributing grocery store gift cards and offering settlement and legal support remotely and with new protocols in place. We are proud to have adapted to continue to offer our essential services during this time and are in admiration at the strength, resilience and leadership that our clients have shown throughout this year.

In June 2020, The Halifax Refugee Clinic was the recipient of the 2020 ISANS Award, which recognizes an individual, community group, business or employer who has demonstrated exceptional and innovative efforts in welcoming immigrants to Nova Scotia and in assisting them to successfully integrate into the community.

The HRC was also among 20 incredible individuals and organizations to receive a Bhayana Family Foundation Invisible Champion Award, which recognizes the extraordinary contributions made by non-profit organizations, their staff, and volunteers across Nova Scotia.

We are overjoyed to welcome Gabriella Utreras Sandoval, Immigration and Refugee Lawyer, to the legal team here at the HRC in late 2020. Her expertise and commitment to refugee rights has been a true gift. Recently some clients who were granted refugee status wrote this to us when they received the decision: "I am glad that this year started this way for me. More successful things yet to come for me down the road! I am also thankful and grateful for all the hard work that was done in your clinic... Millions of thanks would not express my gratitude to all of you for your support. God bless you all!"

The Halifax Refugee Clinic celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2020! We wish to thank the vital support provided by the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia for helping to make our outcomes possible and being able to provide free legal, settlement and advocacy support to refugee claimants and non-status migrants in Nova Scotia.

For more information go to halifaxrefugeeclinic.org



LEFT TO RIGHT: SAN PATTEN, SWANTJE JAHN, DRITON DEMBOGAJ, BARBARA DAVID, JULIE CHAMAGNE, AYAT NOORI, LINA HAMID, GILLIAN SMITH



WOLFVILLE FIRE CHIEF TODD CROWELL, CST. DEAN HUNTER, CST. EVAN COLLIER, AND KINGS SENIORS' SAFETY COORDINATOR MICHELLE PARKER.



CARL OLDHAM THE OWNER OF CARL'S INDEPENDENT, CST. JEFF WILSON, AND KINGS SENIORS' SAFETY COORDINATOR MICHELLE PARKER

KINGS COUNTY SENIORS SAFETY SOCIETY (KCSSS)

The Kings County Senior Safety Society Program appreciates grant funding from the Law Foundation in order to help seniors avoid crime, improve their safety and understand legal issues as they affect seniors. Here is a photo for social media to create broad awareness among the community of WEAAD.

The photo above was shared by the Kings Seniors' Safety Society, The Wolfville Fire Department and the Nova Scotia RCMP on social media sites and reached over 10,000 people helping to increase awareness.

The Society worked with the provincial Department of Seniors to develop a provincial flyer disseminated across the province on senior abuse with particular attention paid to the dangers of social isolation in abusive situations given COVID 19.

We launched the Scam Alert campaign in March of 2021 to raise awareness of scams involving google play, iTunes cards, etc. The campaign reaches out to businesses who provide such cards to their customers, making them aware of the potential scam. A sign is provided (along with resources for staff) to display near the display of these cards at their business. This project was initiated by Kings Seniors' Safety, and partnered with the Nova Scotia RCMP. This initiative was shared with provincial counterparts and has spread across the province.

Daisy J. Dwyer, Board President
Kings County Seniors' Safety Society

For more information go to kingsseniorssafety.com

LEAVE OUT VIOLENCE (LOVE)

At LOVE, youth who have experienced violence are trained to become educators about the root causes, effects & alternatives to violent behavior. Below is a testimonial:

"Support from the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia has been highly valuable to LOVE Nova Scotia's programs with 24/7 on-call support. We are thankful for the Foundation's ongoing belief in our work."

Here are a couple of recent photos from LOVE. The Law Foundation of Nova Scotia funds the Succeed & Proceed program, or one-on-one work with youth, and these youth are always included in our holiday deliveries every year. In December 2020, LOVE made over 75 personalized deliveries of turkey dinners, gifts, and grocery gift cards to youth involved in our programs.

**Jaime Forsyth, Fund Development Manager and Youth Worker
Leave Out Violence (LOVE)**

For more information go to novascotia.leaveoutviolence.org



LOVE YOUTH + FINLEY TOLLIVER, SENIOR PROGRAM COORDINATOR



**FINLEY TOLLIVER, SENIOR PROGRAM COORDINATOR, LOVE YOUTH, AND
DENNIS ADAMS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.**

LEGAL INFORMATION SOCIETY OF NOVA SCOTIA (LISNS)

LISNS says THANK YOU to the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Thanks to the support of the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia, the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia was well positioned to move to 100% remote work when the pandemic struck and we have continued to deliver all of our services without interruption. Demand for our services has increased as the pandemic has brought a whole host of new legal issues while the old ones remain and the inquiries are more complicated.

The Law Foundation support contributed to LISNS having critical pandemic planning tools available to support Nova Scotians as the pandemic struck. Our timing with the launch of the Personal Directive App provided an important public service and pandemic planning tool with people not being able to have someone accompany them if going to hospital. Healthcare providers have told us how helpful this planning is for their work particularly during the pandemic. LISNS' Personal Directive App and information was the most visited part of our website during the initial pandemic closure period. We have continued to experience significant traffic and we know that people are downloading the hard copy form in addition to using the app which creates a finished document.

The partnerships we had put in place pre-pandemic with the Seniors' Safety Coordinators and the Retired Teachers' Organization NS have served us well. The NSLF support of our navigator work directly resulted in LISNS securing federal funding as a pandemic response for our Seniors' Navigator Project where we are connecting community volunteers to help a person with using the app by phone. Both of these groups piloted our online navigator training to high praise and they are assisting us in the promotion of the dual pronged initiative – encouraging people to make personal directives and to participate as volunteer navigators.

Having the strong support of these partners and NSLF is impactful. Each time we have undertaken specific public promotion via LISNS' social media and media interviews we have tended to experience a 349.5% increase in views and a 23% increase in completions of the PD App. Recently we reached over 12,000 contacts promoting the PD planning including the Federation of Labour, CUPE to all of its members and universities and community colleges to students age 19 and older.

Recent feedback from a LISNS stakeholder survey conducted in November 2020 indicates that the number one support being requested is more navigator programs. We are pleased to be able to build on the success of our navigator programs for small claims court (award winning and only possible due to support from NSLF) and personal directive planning. We will be launching a wills app this month which makes a finished will with navigator training

and then a power of attorney app in May with navigator training. Both the will and power of attorney are critical pandemic planning tools and we know these will continue to be in demand as per our experience with the personal directive.

LISNS has continued to support its Medical Legal Health Partnerships with the IWK and VG Palliative Care through the pandemic along free wills clinics for disadvantaged seniors and families in the Preston Communities. We have also worked with 32 Dal Law Pro Bono students (our largest cohort ever) on a broad range of issues including the production of handbooks to assist visually impaired Nova Scotians through a partnership with CNIB and this unfunded work has only been possible due to the support of the NSLF.

We have moved to deliver legal information sessions on highly requested topics through webinars that are targeted to stakeholder groups thereby building on our family legal information sessions for front line community service workers and broadening the support that is available to the public. These webinars have had high attendance with demand for further sessions. LISNS has also continued to produce podcasts on a variety of requested topics, from family law to investor protection, to provide Nova Scotians with more options for accessing legal information. In this way LISNS has been ahead of the curve in anticipating public demand as research now indicates that podcasts are one of the most effective means to connect with people. Again, we could not be doing this work without the support of the NSLF. And LISNS has been sought out as an expert resource by CBC over the year to provide radio interviews on varied subjects including the personal directive app and seniors' navigator program, family law issues during the pandemic, investor protection for young adults in relation to scams, and support of victims of sexual harassment through LISNS Free Legal Advice Service.

The high quality of LISNS work has received recognition through project funding and this is only possible due to the core funding support of NSLF. New projects include Supporting Trans, Non-Binary and Gender Diverse Communities: a Guide for Employers and Service Providers and Elder-Abuse Awareness & Prevention along with the launch of our Investor Protection Guide, Bystander Training for addressing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and content updating in support of the new Divorce Act provisions coming into effect later this year. In this way LISNS can continue to help Nova Scotians at an early point with their legal issues and avoid expensive costly and stressful legal processes that often result in greater cost to individuals, society and Government.

Heather de Berdt Romilly, B.Comm., LL.B., LL.M.
Executive Director, Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia (LISNS)

For more information go to legalinfo.org

LUNENBURG COUNTY SENIORS SAFETY SOCIETY PROGRAM (LCSSP)

The Health & Safety measures associated with the pandemic certainly limited the scope of presentations we were able to do for our community and for our partners. It required a quick pivot to an online format and we were able to adapt well.

The Law Foundation of Nova Scotia grant had a very positive impact for the direct service component of the Lunenburg County Seniors' Safety Program clients. With additional staffing time and technology funded through the grant, we were able to assist seniors without access to computer, internet or technological familiarity, to complete online forms & applications and access legal information to support them. Our enhanced knowledge and expertise will continue to resonate and enrich the services we provide to our seniors.

Thank you again to the Law Foundation of NS for this most generous support.

The Law Foundation of NS grant provided LCSSP with funding to support our Seniors' Legal Navigator project. This allowed us to reach out to more seniors and help them to better understand legal issues and to access available resources pertaining to their needs.

Our program was able to purchase technology to help seniors without computer, internet or the technological familiarity, to access and complete online applications and legal information in the comfort of their own home. With the current pandemic, access to technology with assistance has been paramount. Seniors feel more empowered and safer using technology in the company of the Seniors' Legal Navigator.

Thanks to this grant, the LCSSP team have enhanced knowledge and expertise that will continue to resonate and enrich our future services.

Carole Hipwell, Seniors' Legal Navigator
Chris Acomb, Seniors' Safety Coordinator
Lunenburg County Seniors' Safety Program

For more information please visit:

facebook.com/lunenburgseniorssafety



CAROLE HIPWELL, LCSSP SENIORS' LEGAL NAVIGATOR, USES TECHNOLOGY PROVIDED BY LFNS GRANT, TO ASSIST SENIORS ACCESS INFORMATION IN THE COMFORT OF THEIR OWN HOME.

MAINLINE NEEDLE EXCHANGE

We are so grateful for the support from the Law Foundation which allows us to provide much-needed assistance and advocacy for so many individuals who have lived or living experience of drug use as well as involvement with the civil and criminal justice systems. Most of the people we support face numerous barriers to accessing supportive services, accurate information, and critical referrals. In addition, our staff are able to provide information, support and encouragement in a comfortable and non-judgmental manner, ensuring that the supports provided meet the needs of the clients we serve. The project continues to meet its intended goals: to increase knowledge and life skills; to provide access to legal information and education; to provide a continuity of care and support for individuals who are involved with the criminal and civil justice system; to help individuals to make informed decisions about their legal issues; to make lifestyle choices leading to improved well-being; to provide support for clients to secure safe and affordable housing, income assistance and/or addiction treatment; to provide support for individuals to achieve success in the community and reduce recidivism. Thank you for your continued support of this community-based legal support & education project; it is invaluable to the clients we serve.

There are so many heroes at Mainline! Thomas is a PALS (Peers Assisting and Lending Support) person with Direction 180, and Melody is with Mainline peer program. Mainline partners with the PALS project every Monday and provide court support at the SGR court house. This has been such a possible and important partnership for the people we help during this time. Mainline thanks the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia that allows us to offer this support for people involved with the criminal justice system.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, project staff continue to attend court to support individuals every week. However, public health restrictions have meant they are not able to enter the building, so all communication takes place outside the courthouse. Project staff also provide additional supportive services as requested by individuals, including letters, advocacy, referrals and other needs. The project continues to partner with many community and government stakeholders in HRM and throughout the province in order to provide supportive services for individuals that are involved with the criminal and civil justice system. In the past year many individuals were released early from corrections facilities due to the pandemic, and project staff from Mainline were pleased to be able to offer them supports immediately upon release thanks to the support from the Law Foundation and in partnership with Direction 180's PALS program.

Jo Parker, Program Coordinator
Mainline Distribution and Disposal Program

Diane Bailey, Program Director
Community Based Legal Support and Education Project
Mainline Needle Exchange

For more information go to mainlineneedleexchange.ca



THOMAS OF PALS (PEERS ASSISTING AND LENDING SUPPORT) PERSON WITH DIRECTION 180 AND MELODY WHO IS WITH THE MAINLINE PEER PROGRAM

NOVA SCOTIA LEGAL AID

The Law Foundation of Nova Scotia's funding of Nova Scotia Legal Aid's two pilot projects – the Social Justice Support Worker in Cape Breton and the provincial African Nova Scotian Social Worker program – provided a mechanism to trial new ways of delivering and improving culturally appropriate and inclusive services to our clients and developing/enhancing community connections.

Both projects funded by the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia were well received by community and justice partners and illustrate the impact of what investing in justice can look like.

Social Justice Support Worker – testimonial:

Community CARES Youth Outreach is a youth development organization located in Sydney Mines, NS, serving young adults (up to age 35) and young families who face significant social and economic barriers to living their full potential. Presently we are leading an effort to transform our centre into a community hub that supports broad collaboration and outreach supports from a network of organizations. The role of Social Justice Outreach Worker is key to the hub model as it is also rooted in social justice, and supporting those hard to reach individuals who have complex needs. To have Legal Aid support a skilled Navigator/Community educator who meets people where they are, and who reaches across an under-served community like the CBRM, is a game changer! Already, Nora has quickly built positive relationships with agencies, as well as with residents in need. Her outreach work continues to be impactful, listening deeply as those in crises share their stories, and responding quickly to diverse needs.

- Community CARES Youth Outreach Centre (Sydney Mines) Executive Director, Dorothy Halliday

Client survey response:

"Nora was amazing. She went above and beyond in helping me with my appeal, and even followed up with me afterwards, offering me any further help if I needed it. She made the process so much less intimidating too. She is excellent at what she does."

African Nova Scotian Social Worker – testimonial:

We at Barry House have been working closely with Charnell Brooks over the course of the past few months. Charnell has assisted us in supporting two of our guests in particular. Most recently, Charnell has assisted us by advocating for a guest of ours who required support from Child Protective Services in order to secure permanent housing through the Metro Regional Housing Association. Charnell's advocacy for this client was a significant contributing factor in this guest being able to make the transition from sheltered living to long-term stable housing.

- Barry House – Shift Supervisor, Taylor Armstrong:

Client survey response:

"As an educated black woman who found herself in a position that I never thought I'd be in, I truly lost all hope and for the first time felt the feeling of hopelessness. However, from mine and Charnell's initial conversation I slowly started to see the light at the end of the long tunnel. And though I'm still fighting this battle, Charnell says to me every time we speak "we'll continue to fight this battle. We got this." That's the definition of having someone in your corner who believes in you."

- family client.

**Charlene Moore, QC, Service Delivery
Director, Nova Scotia Legal Aid**

For more information go to nslegalaid.ca



**NORA MACINTOSH, OF NOVA SCOTIA LEGAL AID'S SOCIAL JUSTICE
SUPPORT WORKER PROJECT**



**CHARNELL BROOKS, OF NOVA SCOTIA LEGAL AID'S AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN
SOCIAL WORKER PROGRAM**



PRO BONO STUDENTS FROM THE LAW STUDENTS SOCIETY FAIR IN 2020.

PRO BONO DALHOUSIE

This year, despite the challenges faced by COVID-19, Pro Bono Dalhousie was still able to offer and place over 150 students across 31 different organizations throughout Halifax. We saw the resilience and adaptability of organizations and students alike, and despite the school year being drastically different, students were given the opportunity to learn and gain invaluable experience from their placements, as well as to give back to the community of which we are a part. This program would not be possible without the generous funding of the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia, and we are so grateful for the support.

**Claire Lingley & Dan White, Program Coordinators
Pro Bono Dalhousie - Schulich School of Law**

For more information go to
dal.ca/faculty/law/current-students/pro-bono.html

REACHABILITY

"reachAbility is an organization dedicated to equalizing the playing field for people facing barriers. We sincerely thank the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia for this grant, which helps to equalize the playing field for all Nova Scotians in the legal system."

**Legal Services Coordinator
reachAbility Association**

STEPPING STONE

Linda runs Stepping Stone's "Tipping the Scales" program funded by the Law Foundation. The program provides current and former sex workers who have come into contact with the Criminal Justice System with direct support and assistance including a legal navigation service.

Stepping Stone says, "In August of 2020, Linda Grandy, our Court Support and Corrections worker hit a mile stone with Stepping Stone. Linda has been working with Stepping Stone for 20 years. Linda became our court support worker in 2007, and doesn't plan on slowing down. Linda is and always has been a major asset to Stepping Stone, and we are so grateful she is part of our team. Congratulations Linda, and, here's to many more years!"

**Alex MacDonnell, Executive Director
Stepping Stone – RE Tipping the Scales**

For more information go to steppingstonens.ca



LINDA GRANDY RECOGNIZED FOR 20 YEARS' SERVICE AT STEPPING STONE

FAMILY SERVICE OF WESTERN NOVA SCOTIA PROJECT

NAVIGATOR WELLNESS COURT BRIDGEWATER NS

Thank you to the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia for grant support for a Wellness Court Legal Navigator to assist so many participants in their processes.

De-identified Case Synopsis:

"Frank" and his partner had been together for over 15 years and within the last 5 years they began to grow apart. Frank's partner became unwell, leading him to assume the often-stressful role of primary caregiver, which led to him to feel less like a partner. They began to argue during this time, with one escalated incident that resulted in police involvement. However, they had previously shared with the navigator that this was not a reflection of the relationship they wanted together. Frank described the incident as a "bit of a wake up call".

As a result of this conflict with the law, he undertook a lot of self-reflection, engaging in heavy and difficult work with the clinical team. Together, Frank and his partner chose to rekindle their relationship and became "comfortable around one another again". He shared, "for the first time in a long time we were connecting as partners and enjoying one another".

One morning, shortly after the passing of Frank's wife the Legal Wellness Court Navigator received a phone call sharing his devastating news. As they reminisced about his wife he spoke about reflection and stated that as he made his morning coffee, he felt the need to call and share his feelings about the last few

months with his wife. He wanted the Wellness Court Team, and all those who made this opportunity possible, to know that they were central to the peace he felt during this period of extreme grief. Frank shared that the process of proceeding through Wellness Court had given him the opportunity he needed to be present in his relationship and have one last wonderful year with his wife before she passed. He wanted our team and funders to know how grateful he was for the opportunity to participate in Wellness Court and that often in court he felt he didn't "show his gratitude to everyone: lawyers, judges and staff" due to the complexities of feelings surrounding being in conflict with the law.

He asked that we share his story so folks could "know how impactful and important this Wellness Court is", and how different it was from his initial police & traditional court interactions.

"This has been amazing. It has been a blessing and the support I received taught me a lot." - **Participant during their graduation**

"Our Wellness Court is thriving." - **Lawyer**

"Therapy helped a lot and communication with my wife as well as others has improved. No more bottling things up!"

- **Participant acknowledging the impact the Program had on their family**

"I have never recommended an Absolute Discharge" keenly stated a Crown Attorney after positively recommending his second Absolute Discharge of the day for two successful Wellness Court participants.

"The Virtual Education sessions are so awesome, I sent the "Decolonization is for Everyone" information to my supervisor so she could circulate it to our whole staff team."

- **Justice Staff Member included in the Virtual Education series**

"Wellness Court allows us, the service providers, the opportunity to collaborate with the participants in the Wellness Court Program, working towards repairing harm in our community. It allows for a more restorative approach. It has been my observation that clients who participate in the program are more invested in themselves as they work through the process. Some Wellness Court participants have made significant positive changes - it's great to see! Hearing participants express how supported they feel, along with positive changes they have experienced, is wonderful. Having a Wellness Court Navigator allows service providers to come together as a team and work in conjunction with the participants in a way that has proven beneficial for the people we serve."

- **Correctional Services Team Member**

**Chris Hessian and Andrew Childerhose, Clinical Team Leads
Family Service Association of Western Nova Scotia**

For more information go to fsawns.com or follow us at [@FSAWNS](https://www.facebook.com/fsawns)



Financial Statements

Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

March 31, 2021

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Independent auditor's report

To the Members of the Board of the
Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Grant Thornton LLP
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Qualified Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Law Foundation of Nova Scotia (the "Foundation"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021, the statement of operations and changes in fund balances, and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, except for the possible effects of the matter described in the *Basis for Qualified Opinion* section of our report, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Law Foundation of Nova Scotia as at March 31, 2021, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Qualified Opinion

The Law Foundation of Nova Scotia derives substantially all of its revenue from interest credited by financial institutions of Nova Scotia Barristers' Society members' mixed trust funds which is not susceptible to complete audit verification. Accordingly, our verification of revenue from this source was limited to accounting for the amounts received from financial institutions and recorded in the records of the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia. Therefore, we were unable to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary for revenue, excess of revenue over expenses, and cash flow from operations for the years ended March 31, 2021 and 2020, assets as at March 31, 2021 and 2020 and net assets as at April 1, 2020 and 2019 and March 31, 2021 and 2020. Our audit opinion on the financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2020 was modified accordingly because of the possible effects of this limitation in scope.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Foundation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our qualified opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statement

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Foundation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Foundation's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Foundation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Foundation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Halifax, Canada
June 4, 2021

The logo for Grant Thornton LLP, featuring the company name in a stylized, cursive script.

Chartered Professional Accountants

Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Statement of operations and changes in fund balances

| Year ended March 31 | General Fund | Reserve Fund | 2021 | 2020 |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Revenue | | | | |
| Interest on trust accounts | \$ 664,959 | \$ - | \$ 664,959 | \$ 3,501,146 |
| Interest on operating account | 747 | - | 747 | 7,316 |
| Interest on investments | - | 62,653 | 62,653 | 56,030 |
| Dividend income | - | 117,874 | 117,874 | 150,788 |
| Change in market value | - | 516,415 | 516,415 | (434,630) |
| Canadian emergency wage subsidy | 77,298 | - | 77,298 | - |
| Miscellaneous income | 88 | - | 88 | 69 |
| | <u>743,092</u> | <u>696,942</u> | <u>1,440,034</u> | <u>3,280,719</u> |
| Grants disbursed | <u>845,138</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>845,138</u> | <u>1,899,221</u> |
| | <u>(102,046)</u> | <u>696,942</u> | <u>594,896</u> | <u>1,381,498</u> |
| Expenditures | | | | |
| Accounting and audit | 12,966 | - | 12,966 | 12,650 |
| Amortization | 481 | - | 481 | 382 |
| Bank charges | 369 | - | 369 | 188 |
| Consulting | 3,902 | - | 3,902 | 3,526 |
| Contribution to Law Foundation of Nova Scotia Scholarship Fund | - | - | - | 2,002,502 |
| Director's insurance | 1,490 | - | 1,490 | 1,908 |
| Investment fees | - | 40,906 | 40,906 | 50,494 |
| Miscellaneous | 1,821 | - | 1,821 | 4,522 |
| Office | 6,466 | - | 6,466 | 7,840 |
| Rent and common area | 15,512 | - | 15,512 | 18,095 |
| Salaries and benefits | 144,198 | - | 144,198 | 144,248 |
| Telephone | 1,950 | - | 1,950 | 1,910 |
| Travel and meetings - board | - | - | - | 6,229 |
| Travel - staff and chair | - | - | - | 2,641 |
| | <u>189,155</u> | <u>40,906</u> | <u>230,061</u> | <u>2,257,135</u> |
| Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures | \$ <u>(291,201)</u> | \$ <u>656,036</u> | \$ <u>364,835</u> | \$ <u>(875,637)</u> |
| Fund balance, beginning of year | \$ - | \$ 3,543,114 | \$ 3,543,114 | \$ 4,418,751 |
| Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures | (291,201) | 656,036 | 364,835 | (875,637) |
| Transfer from (to) reserve fund | <u>291,201</u> | <u>(291,201)</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> |
| Fund balance, end of year | \$ <u>-</u> | \$ <u>3,907,949</u> | \$ <u>3,907,949</u> | \$ <u>3,543,114</u> |

Law Foundation of Nova Scotia **Statement of financial position**

March 31 2021 2020

Assets

Current

| | | |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| Cash | \$ 324,172 | \$ 757,578 |
| Receivables | 34,353 | - |
| Prepays | <u>705</u> | <u>276</u> |
| | 359,230 | 757,854 |

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Investments (Note 3) | 4,536,996 | 4,769,469 |
| Equipment (Note 4) | <u>1,194</u> | <u>1,675</u> |
| | \$ 4,897,420 | \$ 5,528,998 |

Liabilities

Current

| | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Payables and accruals (Note 5) | \$ 12,377 | \$ 9,647 |
| Designated grants payable (Note 6) | <u>937,094</u> | <u>1,976,237</u> |
| | 949,471 | 1,985,884 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Long term debt (Note 8) | <u>40,000</u> | <u>-</u> |
| | 989,471 | 1,985,884 |

Fund balances

| | | |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Reserve fund | <u>3,907,949</u> | <u>3,543,114</u> |
| | \$ 4,897,420 | \$ 5,528,998 |

Commitment (Note 9)

On behalf of the Board



Director



Director

Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Statement of cash flows

Year ended March 31

2021

2020

Increase (decrease) in cash

Operating

Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures \$ 364,835 \$ (875,637)

Items in earnings not involving cash

Amortization 481 382

Change in market value of investments (516,415) 434,630

Contribution of securities to Law Foundation of Nova Scotia Scholarship Fund - 2,002,502

Reinvested dividends (886) (7,182)

(151,985) 1,554,695

Change in non-cash working capital balances

Receivables (34,353) -

Prepays (429) 2,326

Payables and accruals 2,730 1,908

Designated grants payable (1,039,143) 482,878

(1,223,180) 2,041,807

Financing

Proceeds from long term debt 40,000 -

Investing

Purchase of investments (1,290,644) (5,095,751)

Proceeds on disposal of investments 2,040,418 3,187,875

Purchase of equipment - (874)

749,774 (1,908,750)

Net (decrease) increase in cash

(433,406) 133,057

Cash

Beginning of year 757,578 624,521

End of year \$ 324,172 \$ 757,578

Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

1. Nature of operations

The Law Foundation of Nova Scotia (the "Foundation") was established in 1976 by a Nova Scotia statute as a not-for-profit organization and is exempt from income tax. Its purpose is to grant funds to groups for projects connected with the law.

2. Summary of significant accounting policies

Basis of presentation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations ("ASNPO"). The significant policies used in the preparation of these statements are detailed as follows:

Fund accounting

The Board has internally restricted funds to finance future operations of the Foundation. The net investment income earned on these assets is recorded in the reserve fund.

The general fund accounts for the Foundation's day-to-day activities which include the interest income on the lawyers' trust accounts, the interest income on the investments, less grants approved and paid, and the administrative expenses for running the Foundation.

Cash

Cash includes cash balances on hand and held in investment accounts.

Investments

The investments of the Foundation consist of money market funds, fixed income securities, and equities. They are measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognized in the statement of operations and changes in reserve fund in the period in which they arise.

Equipment

The cost of equipment is amortized over its useful life using the following annual rates and methods:

| | <u>Rate</u> | <u>Method</u> |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Computer Hardware | 3 years | Straight line |
| Furniture and fixtures | 20% | Declining balance |
| Office equipment | 20% | Declining balance |

When equipment no longer has any long term service potential to the Foundation, the excess of its net carrying amount over any residual value is recognized as an expense in the statement of operations. Any write-downs recognized are not reversed.

Financial instruments

Initial measurement

The Foundation's financial instruments are measured at fair value when issued or acquired. For financial instruments subsequently measured at cost or amortized cost, fair value is adjusted by the amount of the related financing fees and transaction costs. Transaction costs and financing fees relating to financial instruments that are measured subsequently at fair value are recognized in operations in the year in which they are incurred.

Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

2. Summary of significant accounting policies (continued)

Financial instruments (continued)

Subsequent measurement

At each reporting date, the Foundation measures its financial assets and liabilities at cost or amortized cost (less impairment in the case of financial assets), except for equities quoted in an active market, which must be measured at fair value. The Foundation has also irrevocably elected to measure its investments in fixed income securities at fair value. All changes in fair value of the Foundation's investments in equities quoted in an active market and in fixed income securities are recorded in the statement of operations. The financial instruments measured at amortized cost are accrued interest receivable and payables and accruals.

The Foundation is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments. The following analysis provides a measure of the Foundation's risk exposure as at the date of the financial statements.

- i) **Credit risk**
The Foundation is exposed to credit risk in the event of non-performance by counterparties to financial instruments. The Foundation is not exposed to any significant credit risk.
- ii) **Liquidity risk**
Liquidity risk is the risk that the Foundation will not be able to pay financial liabilities as they come due. The majority of assets held by the Foundation are invested in securities that are traded in an active market and can be readily disposed of as liquidity needs arise.
- iii) **Market risk**
Market risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. For purposes of this disclosure, the Foundation segregates market risk into three categories: interest rate risk, currency risk and other price risk.

Interest rate risk

The Foundation holds money market funds and fixed income investments of \$570,986 and \$980,239, respectively at year end (2020 - \$696,243 and \$1,024,605). A 1% absolute change in interest rates would increase or decrease interest income by \$15,512 (2020 - \$17,208).

Currency risk

The Foundation's functional currency is the Canadian dollar. Foreign currency risk arises from the Foundations investments that are denominated in a foreign currency. Fluctuations in the relative value of foreign currencies against the Canadian dollar can result in positive or negative effect on the fair value of the investments. The Foundation holds \$1,204,211 (2020 - \$1,297,451) in cash and investments denominated in United States Dollars. A 5% absolute change in the foreign exchange rate would result in a gain or loss of \$60,211 (2020 - \$64,873).

Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

2. Summary of significant accounting policies (continued)

Financial instruments (continued)

iii) Market risk (continued)

Other price risk

Other price risk is the risk that the value of financial instruments will fluctuate as a result of changes in market prices, other than those occurring from interest rate risk or currency risk. Securities held for trading are carried at fair value and, as such, impact earnings as changes occur. Investments held by the Foundation are managed by professional investment managers and are monitored by management.

Revenue recognition

The Foundation uses the deferral method of accounting for the net investment income.

Interest on trust accounts is recorded in the General Fund on an accrual basis.

Interest income and dividend income are recorded on an accrual basis, in the General or Reserve Fund.

Realized gains or losses on sale of investments are the difference between the proceeds received and the cost of investments sold.

Unrealized gains or losses on investments represent the difference between the carrying value at the year end and the carrying value at the previous year end or purchase value during the year, less the reversal of previously recognized unrealized gains and losses in respect of disposals during the year.

Use of estimates

The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with ASNPO requires the Foundation's management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent liabilities at the date of the financial statements and reported amounts of revenue and expenditures during the year. Certain of these estimates require subjective judgments by management that may be uncertain. These items could include fair value of investments and useful lives of capital assets. Actual results could differ from those reported.

Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

3. Investments

| | <u>Cost</u> | <u>2021 Market Value</u> | <u>Cost</u> | <u>2020 Market Value</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Equities and mutual funds | \$ 2,489,864 | \$ 2,981,138 | \$ 3,040,919 | \$ 3,048,621 |
| Fixed income | 951,514 | 984,872 | 1,101,799 | 1,024,605 |
| Money market fund | <u>565,187</u> | <u>570,986</u> | <u>687,771</u> | <u>696,243</u> |
| | <u>\$ 4,006,565</u> | <u>\$ 4,536,996</u> | <u>\$ 4,830,489</u> | <u>\$ 4,769,469</u> |

4. Equipment

| | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Accumulated Depreciation</u> | <u>2021 Net Book Value</u> | <u>2020 Net Book Value</u> |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Computer equipment | \$ 874 | \$ 437 | \$ 437 | \$ 728 |
| Furniture and fixtures | 8,769 | 8,623 | 146 | 183 |
| Office equipment | <u>30,718</u> | <u>30,107</u> | <u>611</u> | <u>764</u> |
| | <u>\$ 40,361</u> | <u>\$ 39,167</u> | <u>\$ 1,194</u> | <u>\$ 1,675</u> |

5. Payables and accruals

Included in payables and accruals are government remittances payable of \$3,979 (2020 - \$3,985).

6. Designated grants payable

| | <u>2021</u> | <u>2020</u> |
|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Grants payable | <u>\$ 937,094</u> | <u>\$ 1,976,237</u> |

Grants that have been approved but remain unpaid at year end are reported as current liabilities.

7. Related party transactions

Payments of \$nil (2020 - \$2,002,502) were made to the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia Scholarship Fund ("Scholarship Fund"). The Foundation is related to the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia Scholarship Fund through a common management team and the Foundation's ability to exercise significant influence over the Scholarship Fund.

Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

8. Long term debt

| | <u>2021</u> | <u>2020</u> |
|--|-------------|-------------|
|--|-------------|-------------|

Government of Canada term loan relating to the Canada Emergency Business Account ("CEBA"), bearing 0% interest, repayable by December 31, 2022.

| | | | |
|----|---------------|----|----------|
| \$ | <u>40,000</u> | \$ | <u>-</u> |
|----|---------------|----|----------|

9. Commitment

The Foundation rents its premises under a long term lease which expires June 30, 2024. Estimated annual costs are \$20,000, including annual base rental and common area costs.

10. Impacts of COVID-19

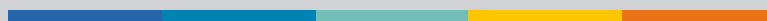
Since December 31, 2019, the spread of COVID-19 has severely impacted many local economies around the globe. In many countries, including Canada, businesses were forced to cease or limit operations for long periods of time.

Measures taken to contain the spread of the virus, including travel bans, quarantines, social distancing, and closures of non-essential services have triggered significant disruptions to businesses worldwide, resulting in an economic slowdown. Global stock markets have also experienced great volatility and a significant weakening. Governments and central banks have responded with monetary and fiscal interventions to stabilize economic conditions.

To help mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, the Foundation has claimed the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy ("CEWS") in the amount of \$77,298, the Canada Emergency Business Account ("CEBA") loan in the amount of \$40,000, and the Canadian Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance ("CECRA") in the amount of \$2,241 of which has been netted against rent expense.

As at the date that these financial statements were completed, other than the government contributions received, there has been limited impact on the Foundation's statements.

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