



# MEMORANDUM

**To:** All Firm Members (and for public posting on JFK Law website)  
**From:** Truth and Reconciliation Action Committee  
**Date:** August 20, 2018  
**Re:** Truth and Reconciliation Action Committee – Status Report 2018  
**File:** 9999-071

---

This report outlines the progress of JFK Law in implementing its Truth and Reconciliation Action Plan (the “Plan”) as of summer 2018.

The Plan was developed in late 2016 and a copy is available here: <http://jfklaw.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Reconciliation-Action-Plan-1.pdf>

## **Actions Accomplished in 2017-2018**

### *Work Planning*

- Developed a work plan for implementing the Plan, adjusted some of the target timelines, developed budgets and added additional actions to support the goals of the Plan

### *Building Cultural Capacity in our Firm*

- Held a training session for all Firm Members on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Recommendations and our Plan, in December of 2016
- Encouraged attendance at reconciliation-oriented events and training by Firm Members by providing time off to attend and covering fees:
  - Two Firm Members attended “Understanding the Village” workshops on the history of colonialism in Canada, led by Residential School survivors and elders
  - Two Firm Members attended “šxw?amət (home)” a forum theatre production involving Indigenous and non-Indigenous actors on the meaning of reconciliation and how this idea translates into human relationships

### *Committing to Pro Bono Work to Support the Development of Indigenous Communities*

- Developed a list of potential partner organizations for delivering pro bono services to Indigenous communities and/or organizations

### *Promoting Indigenous Legal Systems*

- Held a training session for all Firm Members on methods for engaging with Indigenous laws and incorporating them into our legal practice, led by Hadley Friedland, Assistant Professor, University of Alberta Faculty of Law, on June 22, 2018

### *Promoting the Implementation of UNDRIP*

- Held a training session for all Firm Members on an introduction to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, hosted by Robert Janes, on November 23, 2017
- Held a training session for all Firm Members on Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, hosted by Stacey Jessiman de Nanteuil, on December 14, 2017
- Held a training session for all Firm Members on Consent and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, hosted by Tim Dickson, on January 11, 2018

### *Creating Employment and Educational Opportunities for Indigenous Peoples*

- Established a scholarship at the University of Victoria Faculty of Law to provide \$2,000 per year to a graduate student who has shown an interest in, worked in, or is still working in Indigenous Legal Traditions
- Took steps to improve recruitment and retention of Indigenous staff including:
  - All job postings now state that “Applicants with Aboriginal ancestry are strongly encouraged to apply”
  - When hiring associates and summer students, prioritized interviewing candidates who self-identified as Indigenous
  - In response to a recommendation brought forward by an Indigenous member of the firm, modified the firm bereavement policy to expand the definition of “family” to be more inclusive of Indigenous concepts of family

### *Supporting the Development of Indigenous-Owned Businesses*

- Developed and continuing to update a list of Indigenous-owned businesses and suppliers
- Patronized the following Indigenous-owned businesses:
  - Salishan Catering, <https://www.salishancatering.com/>
  - Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society – Catering Services, <http://www.vafcs.org/programs/cateringmenus/>
  - Salmon n’ Bannock Bistro, <http://www.salmonandbannock.net/>
  - Songhees Seafood and Steam, <http://www.songheesseafood.com/>
  - Skwachays Lodge, <http://skwachays.com/dining/>

- Artists offering works through the Alcheringa Gallery, <http://www.alcheringa-gallery.com/>

#### *Advocate for Reconciliation in the Legal Profession*

- Developed a form for Firm Members to develop their own Personal Reconciliation Action Plan and circulated to all Firm Members for completion
- Developed a website page for reconciliation resources (to go live in August 2018)

### **Proposed Actions for 2018-2019**

#### *Building Cultural Capacity in our Firm*

- Organize training session on ethical and practice considerations for lawyers working with Indigenous peoples (guided by [http://www.advocates.ca/Upload/Files/PDF/Advocacy/BestPracticesPublications/Guide\\_for\\_Lawyers\\_Working\\_with\\_Indigenous\\_Peoples\\_may16.pdf](http://www.advocates.ca/Upload/Files/PDF/Advocacy/BestPracticesPublications/Guide_for_Lawyers_Working_with_Indigenous_Peoples_may16.pdf))
- Organize follow up training session on Indigenous laws workshop provided by Hadley Friedland with additional practitioners

#### *Committing to Pro Bono Work to Support the Development of Indigenous Communities*

- Develop pro-bono relationship with organization supporting Indigenous organizations/individuals

#### *Promoting Indigenous Legal Systems*

- Work with local Indigenous Nations regarding appropriate ways to recognize their territory as the locations of our offices
- Provide financial support for Testify: Indigenous Laws and Arts Program (<http://testifyindigenous.ca/>)

#### *Promoting the Implementation of UNDRIP*

- Develop internal position paper on implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including guide for including UNDRIP in advocacy

#### *Creating Employment and Educational Opportunities for Indigenous People*

- Invite two Indigenous youth, undergraduate or law students to attend a court hearing and spend a day learning about our practice
- Grant first JFK Law scholarship at the University of Victoria Faculty of Law to a graduate student who has shown an interest in, worked in, or is still working in Indigenous Legal Traditions

*Supporting the Development of Indigenous-owned Businesses*

- Improve procurement list and identify other opportunities for using Indigenous-owned businesses for additional firm expenses

*Advocate for Reconciliation in the Legal Profession*

- Invite representatives from 2 Vancouver and 2 Victoria law firms to hear a presentation on our reconciliation action plan, to encourage adoption of similar plans
- All non-Indigenous Firm Members develop Personal Reconciliation Action Plans