



M. Anne Vespry

East

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Currently

- Teach at Algonquin Academy, Ottawa: law clerks and paralegals, 2010–present
- Solicitor in sole practice: family law, wills, 2013–present

Canadian Association for Legal Ethics, County of Carleton Law Association, Family Lawyers Association, Board Member, Legal Coaches Association, EDI Committee Member, Ontario Association of Collaborative Professionals, OBA/CBA

Previously

- Taught at University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law, Professional Responsibility, 2018–2020
- Taught at Algonquin College: law clerks and paralegals, 2007–13
- Partner in a two-practitioner firm: general practice, 2003–11
- Egale Canada, volunteer, 1996–99
- Various writing and editing work for small, non-profit, arts and justice organizations.

- Called to the Ontario Bar, 2003, LL.B., University of Ottawa, 1999

Our Profession

We don't exist in a one-size-fits-all world and we don't need a one-size fits-all Law Society. Recently benchers have been polarized and decision making has suffered. The strength of our Law Society as a policy-making body is that it allows for criticism, debate, and differing opinions. We need independent benchers who bring a variety of life and work experiences and who reflect a wide range of viewpoints. I bring the perspective of a sole practitioner who knows the challenges faced by this group and wants to seek solutions to these challenges and who also knows the frustration felt at times by being a member of visible and invisible minority groups.

Bencher Experience

I served as bencher from 2015 to 2019. From the beginning I never hesitated to speak up in Convocation for issues I believed in or to express the concerns of underrepresented voices. For example, I noticed that information gathering strategies from articling students left them scared to speak up, so I pushed for an anonymous survey that yielded more honest and accurate results. The information gained from the new approach helped shape policies for articling.

Technology

The use of technology in enhancing access to justice is well underway. Apps and online legal services are creating alternatives for people to resolve legal problems. This gold-rush for technical investors could either significantly improve access to justice, or it could cause public disillusionment and greater distrust in the legal system. I have the tech-savvy to knowledgeably debate the regulation of technology in the profession, to liaise with international regulators to develop best practices, and to educate and inform the public on the safe use of unregulated legal services.

Why Me?

We are privileged to be a profession where fully-independent lawyers self-govern in the public interest.

My lived experience has caused me to believe strongly in the importance of transparency – especially to an organization prone to bureaucratic obscurity – which is why I will maintain open communication with you. I will answer your questions and put forward your requests. You can count on me.