



Environmental Law Centre

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

RESEARCH • INFORMATION • COMMUNITY

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Tuition Hikes and Preserving Public Interest Law: Ideas from Stanford

Upcoming tuition increases for UVic law students could seriously impact the number of dedicated, public-interest lawyers coming out of the program. A recent visit to the school by **Stanford University's** Vice-Dean of Law, **Barton Thompson Jr.**, provided some innovative ideas to ensure that programs like the ELC continue to produce environmental lawyers for the future.

In cooperation with the **Sierra Legal Defence Fund**, the ELC hosted Prof. Thompson for a talk describing how U.S. programs provide that bright, energetic new lawyers are able to practise environmental law despite significant financial challenges.

At Stanford, law students often graduate with debt loads exceeding US\$100,000. This forces them to think carefully about whether they can afford to take on public interest work. As Prof. Thompson put it: "Students have the choice of working for a Silicon Valley firm earning \$140,000

to start, or sticking with environmental, public-interest work for as little as \$25,000 a year."

To keep some of the best and brightest engaged in environmental law, Stanford's solution has been debt relief. The program forgives an increasing portion of students' debts the longer they remain doing public interest work. "If graduates earn below a maximum annual salary for a number of years, their debt can be completely forgiven," says Thompson.

In several years, UVic law students will face tuition approaching the predicted national average of \$10,000 per year. Higher tuition means substantially higher debt loads – debt that renders the reduced rates offered by public-interest clients and environmental work less and less attractive to young lawyers.

Stanford's program is well-supported by private benefactors and Stanford's Faculty of Law. By contrast, B.C.'s tuition hikes and the province's ideological shift to market-based policies are recent developments; philanthropic support is comparatively in its infancy.

The result? Preserving our natural resources and developing responsible environmental policy will increasingly depend on concerned private citizens like you – the supporters of the ELC. With your continuing financial and volunteer support, we can work together towards a sustainable future.

Composting Q and A:

Q: Why do we compost at the Fraser building?

A: Composting is a simple way to improve the sustainability of everyone's favourite building by decreasing the amount of garbage we throw out.

Q: What can I put in the Fraser student lounge compost collection bin?

A: Fruit and vegetable scraps, seeds, egg shells, nuts, teabags and coffee grounds.

Q: What can't I put in the compost collection bin?

A: Meat scraps, bones, dairy products, oils or fat. These things take longer to break down and are more likely to cause unpleasant odors.

Q: Won't the compost bin make the student lounge smell bad?

A: No. Dedicated (and brave) members of the ELC empty and clean the collection bin on a regular basis. The actual composter is located outside the Fraser building.

Newsletter Committee:

Jessica Burke, Simon Dahl, Ellen Leno, Namaste Marsden, Catherine Milsum, Jen Schmidt, and Rolf Warburton. Interested in contributing an article for the next issue? Please contact the ELC:

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ELC Board Approves Research Projects

On February 5, 2002, the ELC Board of Directors convened for the winter term meeting. The Board plays a general supervisory role for the ELC and meets to discuss and approve projects, and to share ideas and experiences.

The meeting featured ELC Clinic students presenting their projects for the term. Topics include: community education; the grizzly bear hunt moratorium; riparian habitat management; Right to Know labelling project; provincial government Administrative Review Process; environmentally sound transport; oil and gas moratorium; and coal dust from trains. The students' recommendations for the projects were accepted unanimously with helpful input from Board members. These wide-ranging projects will provide helpful and effective legal information for a diversity of public interest groups throughout the province.

The current Board has a diverse membership that includes: **Robert Janes** (Cook Roberts), **Maeve Lydon** (International Development Consultant),

Maxine Matilpi (Cook Roberts), **Aran O'Carroll** (Forest Watch B.C.), **Murray Rankin Q.C.** (Arvey Finlay) and **Jill Thompson** (Forest Watch B.C.) The Board also includes the Centre's student executive of **Mark Bauer, Deanna Billo, Rumon Carter, Steph James, Nancy Klenavic, Violetta Kokolus, Sarah Tarry, Rolf Warburton** and **Barbara Zeller**.

The meeting was also an opportunity to welcome our newest member, **John Borrows**. Professor Borrows was appointed to the Faculty of Law in 2001 and has previously taught at the University of Toronto; the University of British Columbia as the Director of the First Nations Law Program; and Osgoode Hall Law School as the Director of the Intensive Program in Lands, Resources and First Nations Governments. He was also a visiting Professor at Arizona State University. His research interests are Aboriginal law, constitutional law, and natural resources/environmental law. Professor Borrows is a valuable and important addition to the ELC Board and we thank him for joining us.

Conservation Facts

- \$1 out of every \$10 we spend on products pays for packaging
- Environmental savings from recycling 1 ton of paper:
 - 17 medium-sized trees
 - 26,319 liters of water
 - 1,753 liters of oil
 - 219 kilograms of air pollution
 - 2.3 cubic meters of landfill space
- Recycling Questions?
CRD Recycling Hotline: 360-3030



The Raffle Committee poses with prizes before the big draw.

Raffle a Winner for ELC

The ELC raffle came to a successful close at a well-attended draw on Valentine's Day in the Fraser student lounge. After three intense weeks of ticket sales, the raffle raised just over \$1500. Funds are earmarked for ELC activities and operating costs throughout the year.

The ELC thanks the tireless crew of volunteers, who spent countless hours making the event run smoothly, and everyone who supported us by buying tickets. The raffle's success was driven by some great prizes including massages, wine gift-baskets, plane tickets, kayaking trips and a Robert Bateman print. Prizes were generously donated by the following commendable Victoria businesses:

Bean Around the World	Fronrunners	Pernot-Richard	Saje
Black's Photography	Green Cuisine Vegetarian	Robert Bateman Foundation	Silk Road Aromatherapy Spa
Capers Community Markets	Restaurant	Queen Bee's Personal	Vancouver Island Canoe/
Coy Treatment Centre	Hugo's Grill and Brew	Luxuries	Kayak Centre
Escents Aromatherapy	House	Quizno's	Victoria Bug Zoo
Fibre Options	Instinct Art & Gift	Rogers' Chocolates	West Coast Air
Fish Hair Salon	Logical Health Foods	Royal BC Museum	West Coast Wraps &
Flowers on Top	The Papery	Russ Hay's "The Bicycle	Smoothies
	Pepper's Market	Shop"	