

BCCLA ANNUAL YOUTH CONFERENCE 2024



SFU Harbour Centre,
Vancouver, B.C



March 8th, 2024

**BUILDING SKILLS FOR A
BETTER FUTURE**

Organized by the BCCLA, The Youth and Civil Liberties Conference, assembles high school students to engage with emerging civil liberties and human rights concerns. This year will be our 19th year running the conference and will focus on "Intervening for Justice," exploring significant societal issues and equipping attendees with necessary tools for effective social advocacy. Hosted at SFU Harbour Centre, the conference will be conducted in person, fostering connections among youth, and facilitating dialogues with local advocates, lawyers, and community organizers.

Each workshop will run twice through the day to ensure students can choose more than one workshop to attend. Workshops are limited to 30 students each.

Individuals from non-participating schools interested in registering for the conference can reach out to us at info@bccla.org.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

ASL interpretation will be available by request for all sessions. Please let us know when you register if you require sign language interpretation.

Please also note if you have any accessibility needs we should be aware of.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDELINES

While attending this conference, we ask that students everyone with kindness, empathy, and respect, regardless of differences in opinions, backgrounds, or identities. The BCCLA values an inclusive atmosphere where everyone feels welcome.

EVENT DETAILS

DAY OF SCHEDULE

9:00 AM - 9:30 AM

REGISTRATION AND
NETWORKING

9:30 AM - 10:45 AM

OPENING REMARKS, LAND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, AND
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

10:45 AM - 11:15 AM

BREAK

11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

WORKSHOPS ROUND 1

12:30 PM - 1:25 PM

LUNCH BREAK

1:30 PM - 2:45 PM

WORKSHOP ROUND 2

2:45 PM - 3:00 PM

FINAL REMARKS

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



LIZA
HUGHES

Liza (she/they) is a queer white settler of mixed European ancestry. She spent most of her life on Treaty 7 territory of the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Tsuut'ina and Stoney-Nakoda in Mohkinstsis (Calgary). Since 2017 Liza has lived between the stolen lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm, Skw̓xwú7mesh, and səliłwətał people and the K'ómoks First Nation, including the Pentlatch, E'iksan and Stúłtx^w tribes.

Liza is a community organizer, artist, lawyer, educator and the Executive Director of the BCCLA. She developed a practice supporting trans kids and working to expand the rights of polyamorous and queer families. Liza led the launch of the Sexual Harassment Advice, Response and Prevention (SHARP) for Workplaces program at the Ending Violence Association of BC. Liza has also worked with Community Legal Assistance Society to design, develop, and deliver public legal education resources and trainings, promoting workplace safety and conducting workplace culture change. She is Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Comox Valley Arts Council and is deeply committed to the protection of civil liberties and the necessary foundation of human rights and dignity for all.

Jessica Kim (she/her) is one of co-drafters of the Student Press Freedom Act with Spencer in 2021. She was formerly the Managing Editor of The Griffins' Nest and is now studying political science and business administration at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario.

Jessica has continued her work in journalism as a News Editor for the Western Gazette, with a focus on building trust in news and covering the stories of marginalized communities. In 2023, she travelled to New York as a Fellow for Bloomberg's Business Journalism Diversity Program. She is currently a Shared Bylines scholar.

Jessica has worked as an Education and Outreach Assistant for the Society for Children and Youth of BC for the past two summers, working to advance children's rights and engagement through various child and youth friendly communities projects and research and advocacy work.



JESSICA KIM

ALL IS NOT LOST (YET)

Barbara Findlay and Wilson Wilson

Transgender students are being targeted for hate in New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and now Alberta. Right wing governments are targeting right of trans students to privacy, and to protection of their gender identity at school. The Premier of Saskatchewan has gone so far as to pass legislation saying that trans students have no right to equality. The tsunami of hatred is coming to BC: demonstrations at schools, parents doxing trans students and trans teachers, online threats are common. The equality rights of all students and teachers are at risk. This workshop will look at the ways that transphobia operates, and what strategies there are to protect each other from discrimination and marginalization at school.

YOUTH PRIVACY, PHONES, AND POLICE

Vibert Jack, Safiyya Ahmad and Aislin Jackson

What are your rights when the police search you? What can you do if someone is threatening to post private pictures of you online? How do you assert your right to remain silent? In this session, BCCLA's staff lawyers will introduce students to their rights to control information about themselves, including rights under Youth Criminal Justice Act and BC's new Intimate Images Protection Act. Students will also learn how to, enforce their rights, identify inappropriate police behaviour, and keep their private lives private.

JOURNALISM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Spencer Izen & Jessica Kim

Student journalists are real journalists. That's what the B.C. Civil Liberties Association and the Canadian Association of Journalists believe, among many others. Journalism is deeply involved in bringing about social change but requires independence and protection in order to do so. Student journalism is no different in this regard but faces unique, systemic hurdles that often obstruct the constitutionally-protected, public-interest craft from freely operating in a school environment. In this workshop, we will be discussing challenges to student journalism, framed as a civil liberties issue, and further how students can work around or past these barriers to produce meaningful, necessary journalism that impacts their community."

YOUTH WORKER RIGHTS

Kari Michaels

Do you feel powerless at work? Do you have questions about what your boss can and cannot do? In this workshop we will go over basic employment rights under the Employment Standards Act. We will explore common workplace issues and the limitations of the system to protect your rights at work. We'll discuss how collective action can make a difference and what it means to form a union at work.

WORKING TOGETHER: THE POWER OF ADVOCACY TO CREATE SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Ninu Kang, Renee Graham, and Samantha Matute Arrieta

Our communities have seen a worrying rise in harassment and hate crimes in recent years, and it's time that we work together towards building a culture of care; a culture that recognizes and elevates the strengths that exist within our differences.

This workshop will help us establish a historical link for some of the concerning beliefs and behaviours we see in ourselves, the groups we belong to, and in our larger communities today. By envisioning a path to move forward, we will be shifting the focus onto what is currently being done, and how our own power to effect change lies in advocacy at the personal, social, and institutional level.

The workshop will include practical tools on intervention strategies.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN BC

Laura Track

Human rights protections are essential to equality, dignity, and fairness. In this workshop, you'll learn how the law protects you from discrimination at work, as a tenant, as a student, and in other contexts. We'll discuss real cases involving racial profiling, accommodation of disability, inclusion for trans and nonbinary people, and other real-world examples where people have fought for their right to be free from discrimination. You will leave this workshop with a greater understanding of discrimination, your human rights, and what you can do if those rights are violated



LAURA TRACK

Laura is the Director of CLAS's Human Rights Clinic, as well as its Director of Education. She advocates on behalf of people who have experienced discrimination and assists complainants to navigate BC's human rights process. Laura also has a strong interest in making legal knowledge accessible. She delivers workshops and presentations to a wide variety of audiences to help people understand their human rights and comply with their legal obligations.

Laura earned her law degree from UBC in 2006, and holds a Masters in International Human Rights Law from Oxford University.

In June 2021, Kari Michaels was re-elected as Executive Vice President of the BC General Employees' Union (BCGEU) for her second term. Kari joined the BCGEU as a member when she and her fellow workers at the Kwantlen Student Association formed a union at their worksite. She quickly became active, first as shop steward and subsequently stepping up as a bargaining committee member. Kari is a passionate advocate for social justice and believes in building workers' capacity to take action to improve their working conditions through education and training.



KARI MICHAELS

Spencer Izen (he/him) co-drafted the Student Press Freedom Act alongside Jessica in 2021. Currently a second-year student at the University of British Columbia studying in information science, sociology, and political science, Spencer is the former Editor-in-Chief of The Griffins' Nest.

Spencer is a social science researcher at the B.C. Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, where he studies government secrecy, recordkeeping, and transparency policy. He is a research affiliate at the Center for Information, Technology & Public Life at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and at the Secrecy, Power, and Ignorance (SPIN) Research Network based jointly at the GW4 alliance universities in the United Kingdom (Bath, Bristol, Cardiff, and Exeter). Spencer serves as a junior editor for the UBC Journal of Political Studies and UBC's Undergraduate Journal of Sociology. Previously, he held a research fellowship with the Library Futures Institute in the Engelberg Center on Innovation Law & Policy at New York University. He continues to be involved in student journalism as the opinion editor for The Ubyyssey and is a member of the Canadian Association of Journalists' advocacy committee.

In recognition of their advocacy for students' press freedom, Spencer and Jessica were honoured as the Co-Champions of Free Expression for 2023 and nominated for the Peter Bryce Prize for Whistleblowing.



SPENCER IZEN



JESSICA KIM

Jessica Kim (she/her) is one of co-drafters of the Student Press Freedom Act with Spencer in 2021. She was formerly the Managing Editor of The Griffins' Nest and is now studying political science and business administration at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario.

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barbara findlay is a fat old white cisgender queer lawyer with disabilities, who was raised working class and christian on the prairies. All of those identities have affected her work as a human rights lawyer and as a community activist.

BARBARA FINDLAY



Wilson Wilson is a queer artist and educator. A non-binary and autistic person, Wilson's work centers performance, gender and unseen social scripts. They continually self-reflect and examine the experiences and identities of themselves and others, working in collaboration to create spaces for marginalized identities.

WILSON WILSON

Vibert Jack joined the BCCLA as Litigation Director in 2022. He completed an undergraduate degree in engineering at the University of British Columbia and following that worked briefly in the mining industry. Vibert decided to change paths in order to find a career that better aligned with his core values. He returned to UBC, this time to study law. Following that, he articulated at a boutique criminal and administrative law firm. Vibert then joined Prisoners' Legal Services, where he worked tirelessly to defend the civil liberties and human rights of incarcerated people, who are among the most marginalized and vulnerable populations in our Country. Vibert is committed to confronting injustice at every opportunity.

Outside of work Vibert enjoys playing soccer, football, and an especially lively game of chess.



VIBERT JACK



AISLIN JACKSON

Aislin (she/they) joined the BCCLA as Staff Policy Counsel in July 2023. They were born and raised in Mohkinstsis/Calgary on the Treaty 7 lands that are the traditional territory of the Niitsitapi and Tsuut'ina peoples. She is a settler living on the unceded territories of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), Səlílwətał (Tseil-Waututh), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.

Aislin attended law school at the University of Toronto, where she was Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Indigenous Law Journal and a student caseworker in the family law and residential tenancy departments of the school's legal clinic. Aislin started their legal career in the Treaty 7 area, representing First Nations in a variety of areas of law, including historical claims and child protection matters. They later practiced family and estates law in the Lower Mainland, serving Legal Aid clients and 2SLGBT+ families.

Outside of law, she has a background in linguistics, Indigenous language documentation/revitalization, and computer science. In their free time, they practice the soft arts: knitting, spinning, weaving, sewing, and quilting.



SAFIYYA AHMAD

Safiyya (she/her) joined the BCCLA in October, 2022. Safiyya grew up in Hamilton, Ontario, on Treaty 3 lands, the traditional lands of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Mississauga Peoples. She attended McMaster University for her B.A.Sc. and M.A. degrees. She then finished her law school education at the University of Ottawa, in spite of miserably cold winters and a global pandemic.

Throughout her education, Safiyya developed a special interest in interdisciplinary studies, criminal and constitutional law, and social justice, which she combined in a thesis project on vigilantism. She interned at the immigration branch of the Community Legal Services of Ottawa, and at the education branch of the University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic. She also presented at academic conferences such as PIPR and OLPP. Safiyya is an avid reader, amateur artist, philosophy student, and she is demonstrably not a poet.

Ninu Kang comes to her leadership role with EVA BC with over 30 years of work experience in the areas of newcomer settlement, gender-based violence, and justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. With an academic background in counselling psychology combined with frontline work experience, she has developed key skills in clinical counselling, facilitation, and senior leadership.

She is inspired in her work by young people who are the future of change. She aspires to learn from young people and stands committed to mentorship where needed.



NINU KANG



RENEE GRAHAM

Samantha comes to EVA BC with a background in social sciences and humanities, focused on the impacts of political and economic decision-making on marginalized and vulnerable communities. She previously worked in the settlement sector providing leadership training for newcomers.

At EVA BC, Sam is the coordinator for our Anti-Racism and Hate Response Training. She also is a key member of our communications team, building strategies and visual design. Sam brings a purposefully relational, anti-oppressive, anti-racist and inclusive lens to all her work.

Sam finds enthusiasm for her work by sharing space with and learning from others who strive to find solutions for the issues our communities face, and ensure that connections are built with purpose.

Renee comes to EVA BC with a background in copy editing and operations coordination in a corporate setting. She is open to the continual learning required in the anti-violence sector and wants to help create a community where women are safe. In her role at EVA BC, she works closely with the executive office and communications, working as the technology coordinator at the organization, coordinating organizational strategies and coordinating curriculum design and facilitation. She comes to work with enthusiasm because of her passion for gender equality and the kindness she finds in all the people she works with.



SAMANTHA MATUTE ARRIETA

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



306 - 268 Keefer Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 1X5
Unceded Coast Salish Territories

The BCCLA office is located on the unceded and ancestral territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.