



July 2, 2024

Dear Alumni

What intrigued me about TRU Law before I became the dean was the fact that at the time, it was the youngest law school in Canada. Over the years, I've studied at and worked for universities with well-established law schools, steeped in tradition and woven into the legal fabric. I respect that but at the same time, the newness of TRU Law had me thinking of all the opportunities it presented! Little did I know about the history of the school and everything the very first class had to contend with! The Class of 2014, had no building of their own, no upper year students to look to for advice, no blueprint for student events, no student law society, no CANS, and no well-trodden path to follow. But they had each other. They had the ambition to be lawyers and the sheer will to succeed. That pioneering spirit bound the Class of 2014 together and it set the tone for generations to come.

Our celebration of the first graduating class kicked off on Friday, May 17, with a cocktail party in the Atrium of the law school. We hosted a formal dinner on Saturday evening and throughout the weekend I learned to appreciate how big a leap of faith they took when choosing TRU Law and how those experiences bound them together. Jay Michi, the MC for the formal dinner, delivered an excellent keynote address. Jay said: "So we cracked the books, and we worked hard. And then on the weekends we would party rather very hard [...] Now, did our faculty leadership Associate Dean Anne Pappas and Dean Chris Axworthy appreciate the intensity of our festive weekends? No, probably not." With his dry, decidedly lawyerly wit, Jay captured the very essence of his class.

Chrysti Stewart delivered a heartfelt tribute to the late Christopher Axworthy, the very first dean of TRU Law. His leadership was meaningful, his vision pure and his courage unwavering.

I was told that the evening ended, as was only fit, in a local pub, holding court and setting the world to rights.

It was such a privilege for me to have been part of this very special occasion. I am indebted to Jay Michi, Mardi McNaughton, Amanda James, Debra Febril, Greg Thomspson, Mike Balckwell, Ashley Ricalton, Chrystie Stewart, Murray Sholty, and Brian Vickers for having worked so hard to plan this very special weekend.

To quote Jay again: "Ours was a momentous and influential year for TRU Law. I like to think that we left our imprint on this school and this program and helped set the tone for the years that followed us." Thank you, Class of 2014, for having put TRU Law on the Map. Thanks also for your generous gift to the faculty, which will be used to support the 2024/25 Kawaskimhon National Aboriginal Moot and the Wilson Moot teams.

Class of 2024

Fast forward ten years, and this year's graduating class celebrated their success at the June 4 convocation. It was a proud moment when Vanessa Locke received the Law Society of BC's Gold Medal, handed to her by the President, Ms. Jeevyn Dhaliwal. We were all touched by the speech of our Law Valedictorian, Mostafa Elfakani. I will always remember how the Class of 2024 were the very first class to be back on campus after the pandemic. Together, we met all the challenges that presented itself in the wake of that very bleak time. Thank you for having chosen TRU Law and congratulations on having completed your studies. I wish you only the very best in your careers. I will remember you fondly and hope to see you at our alumni events.

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[Learn more about Dean Daleen Millard](#)