



# THE GAZETTE

B.C. Legislative Internship Program

January - June 2023

## RECOGNIZING THE PAST AND HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

We would like to respectfully acknowledge that the BC Parliament Buildings are located on the traditional and ancestral territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən-speaking Peoples, known today as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations. As people who have the privilege to carry the parliamentary duties of the Legislative Assembly, we have an obligation to acknowledge the historical and continuous relationships that have existed on these lands since time immemorial and to challenge the impacts of and continued colonial wrong doings. Our experiences as Legislative Interns will help us work together to foster a place of community and learn to have better relations with Indigenous Peoples not only in BC, but across Canada throughout our lives.

- BC Legislative Interns, 2023

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Land Acknowledgement	2
Table of Contents	3
Message from the Editors	5
Directors' Corner	6
Intern Introductions	8
Ministry Placements	20
Caucus Placements	28
Leadership Projects	46
Memories & Articles	62
Thank you	94



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

# THE BRITISH COLUMBIA LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

---



THE 2023 COHORT WITH THE HONOURABLE RAJ CHOUHAN,  
SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, DR. JAMIE LAWSON  
AND KAREN AITKEN





## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

ZEEBEE (BEN AND ZAINA)

### How do we show our favourite moments in a magazine?

---

And just like that, the Gazette is finished and our time as BC Legislative Interns is done! It was quite the journey – one that we wouldn't change for the world. From creating deeper friendships in Port Angeles, navigating the "Great Divide" (thanks Tristen for the awesome name), playing games at the Interactivity Board Game Cafe (especially Anomia), to travelling together to Tofino, Montreal, Toronto, and Ottawa, we created many memories that we will carry with us for the rest of our lives.

We are aware that each year the Gazette is kind of like a yearbook that serves as a memento, a blast from the past, if you will. However, for this year, we wanted to capture the true essence of our cohort. Not only do we want this Gazette to reflect our experiences as interns and each one of us, but we also want it to highlight the relationships we created with each other – which show how we are a family that is stronger through our diverse perspectives and backgrounds.

One major take-away from this opportunity is how time seems to work differently in the Legislature. Every day we would witness moments of history, but had little time to digest and process them because we were continuously moving forward

and absorbing new information within our ministry and caucus placements. We got through it all and now we have the Gazette to remind us of our time within the Parliament Buildings where we created incredible memories. Not only did we make an impact through our work and presence in the Legislature, but the Legislature also shaped our experiences and contributed to our own professional and personal growth.

We know that we are extremely privileged to have had this opportunity and we are indebted to everyone that made this possible. Nathan, Karen, and Jamie: thank you for your continuous support, the laughs, guidance, and hard work to make sure that we had the best possible experience.

To Kayla, Sarah, Kevin (x2), Tristen, Parnian, Jenna, Bella, and Jacob: thank you for your support with the Gazette – we know this was a busy year for all of us! Most importantly, thank you for being amazing colleagues, and even better friends who've become family.

With this, our program has come to an end – and we're so excited to share this edition of the Gazette with everyone! Buckle up and get ready for the laughs, cries, and moments of bonding – a true rollercoaster.

# DIRECTORS' CORNER

KAREN AITKEN & DR. JAMIE LAWSON



Karen Aitken  
Program Director

work. They have been working hard and building their resilience, all the while making life-long friendships. I wish them all the best as they embark on more formal education or amazing new careers. I know, based on their enthusiasm and work ethic, that they will do well wherever they end up. I am also aware, based on experience, that some of them will become lawyers helping those around them, and others will become public servants helping British Columbians. Our province is in good hands.

- Karen Aitken

Fare Thee Well 2023!

How quickly the end of June arrives each intern year! You would think I would be used to it by now, with my 22nd batch of interns graduating and becoming parliamentary ambassadors.

It has been an exciting year to be an intern, with a change in Premier, a change in party name, and the return of all things travel. Yes, we went to Olympia, Washington and Ottawa, and the interns were also able to learn about grassroots democracy in constituencies all over the province.

This batch of interns has benefitted from meetings with all three leaders, many ministers, and numerous MLAs. We hosted the Washington State interns' visit in early March and hosted the 2024 interns in May. It has been a year of building relationships.

I trust that the interns have learned more than they imagined they would – not just the "how," but the "why" and the "why not" behind the



Dr. Jamie Lawson  
Academic Director

This year's Legislative interns are fully back in person, with COVID masks now few and far between. The Parliament Buildings are undergoing some much-needed renovations and there are now screens in the Chamber for hybrid sessions that were not there before COVID. Otherwise, life in the Legislature looks pretty similar to what it looked like for previous interns.

The interns travelled to Ottawa and Olympia, and hosted their Washington counterparts face-to-face in Victoria as well. Renewing this valued relationship with our neighbours to the South proved once again that even though Washington State and British Columbia share many problems, our politics and our institutions deal with them differently, and that we have much to learn from one another.

Currently, one of the most fashionable phrases in university administration is "experiential learning". Experiential learning is the process of learning through hands-on experience – to learn by doing. It is also something that the Legislative Internship Program has been doing really well for nearly 50 years.

At its worst, mounting calls for experiential learning in universities can make it sound as though the best a university can do is help people start their careers, and that the way to do that is to build into the curriculum as much time away from a university as possible. This view implies that what happens in university lecture halls and seminar rooms isn't very important.

But at its best, experiential learning is the meeting ground between book learning and life learning. More than a preparation for life and work after university, hands-on learning can be the best explanation for university's importance, and a potentially life-changing way to analyze life beyond. It can launch a person's career after their degree or pull them back to school for further learning.

The Legislative Internship Program does all that. It allows the interns to learn things that they didn't know before and also to experience things they did know practice.

Sometimes the inner dialogue spills out in conversation, but it doesn't have to; "Why didn't anyone ever write about Estimates?" "So, after all that work, is Question Period really 'holding government to account'?" "It looks like Bach, but it's really like jazz." "I hated group projects at school. But I'm better at teamwork than I thought." "Thanks for having my back."

Oh, and coffee has been consumed, or so I am told. As the education experts say, you had to be there. I am glad, once more, to have been the gadfly on the wall.

- James (Jamie) Lawson, PhD



# MEET THE 2023 INTERNS

# BEN RUTKOWSKI

BY SARAH ASH



**B**en Rutkowski is one of the most authentic, easygoing, and likable people you will ever meet. Immediately, his contagious laugh and ability to strike up a conversation with anyone showed him to be a complete asset in this internship cohort. This was only further amplified by the enthusiasm he brought to our workplace. The dedication he brought to working on ministry and caucus work as well as leadership projects made him an incredible colleague. Not to mention, he would always ask insightful questions to MLAs and Ministers. The connections Ben made during his time at the Ministry of Finance truly speak to both his natural ability to connect with others and the time and effort he puts into his work. Early on, Ben certainly made himself known as a Minister of Finance in the making through his unparalleled knowledge and a keen interest in the world of finance. Throughout the internship, from late-night talks on the beach to lunchtime hangouts, Ben was always the person I could stress with about post-internship plans and connect with over our shared travel interests. Getting to work with Ben is an absolute privilege and anyone would be lucky to have the chance to do so.

Hometown: Victoria, B.C.

Education: Bachelor of Arts, Double Major Political Science (Honours) and Economics, University of Victoria

Ministry Placement: Ministry of Finance

Caucus Placement: Government

Describe the intern in 3 words: Energetic, Cheerful, and Knowledgeable

Favourite Memory: There have been many fond memories throughout the internship from meeting John Horgan to the Washington trip, but the one that stands out the most was the opportunity to work and see behind the scenes of the budget lockup.

Post-Internship Plans: Ben plans to eventually return to school to complete his Masters after having an opportunity to see the world.



# ISABELLA DEVEREAUX

BY KEVIN FRANCESCHINI

Isabella Devereaux slayed the internship program. Upon meeting Bella, it was obvious how bubbly, welcoming, and genuinely kind she is. Get to know Bella even more, and you will discover the most caring, compassionate, and supportive person you have ever met. She is a great friend who checks in on others, makes herself available to listen, and is always there to chat. From policy debates to dream houses, there is never a dull conversation with Bella. With a deep passion for education and her own experience navigating the lack of support for learning disabilities in the school system, Bella made a tremendous impression in the Ministry of Education and Child Care. Talk to any of the 'governors' or caucus staff, and they will tell you how great a colleague Bella was. Her passion for policy and willingness to take on new opportunities made her an asset in Government caucus. Coming from the booming Silicon Valley and the bright lights of Vancouver, Bella quickly made the most of her time in Victoria by acquiring new hobbies such as pottery and by leading her fellow interns to try new activities like pub trivia and music bingo. It has been a pleasure to get to know Bella. I cannot wait to see what she accomplishes in life, because I know she will slay any task she puts her mind to.

Hometown: Palo Alto, CA

Education: Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Law and Society, University of British Columbia

Ministry Placement: Ministry of Education and Child Care

Caucus Placement: Government

Describe the Intern in Three Words: Compassionate, Slay, Resilient

Favorite Memory: Bella's favorite internship memory is the special bonding moments shared with her fellow interns. A particular favorite was the night of bonding that occurred at the spectacular Quality Inn in the vacation hotspot of Port Angeles.

Post-Internship Plans: Bella will be hitting the road! She plans to take the summer off and travel back to her home in California. She will then return back to her beloved beautiful British Columbia and pursue a career advocating for those who are disadvantaged within the school system.



# JACOB SCHOEBER

BY ISABELLA DEVEREAUX



Jacob, our resident sports fanatic, is our go-to for any questions (or debate) about hockey, football, and most other sports. While placed in the Third Party caucus, Jacob and MLA Adam Olsen had a friendly sports rivalry. Olsen is a die-hard Toronto Maple Leafs fan, while Jacob is a die-hard, if reluctant, Vancouver Canucks fan. They sometimes trash talked each other about hockey and gloated a little (or a lot) when the other's team lost. Elections B.C. was the perfect independent office placement for Jacob, as he can recite the outcome of many elections in B.C.'s history and has extensive niche political knowledge. Jacob is talented at many things. One Wednesday night, we learned that mini golf is not one of them! He is also decent at baking, a skill he perfected during the program. His lemon cookies are delicious! Jacob is always willing to try new activities, and you can always rely on him to make you laugh. We are positive Jacob will excel in law school and beyond.

Hometown: Vancouver, B.C.

Education: Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (Honours), Simon Fraser University. Master of Arts, Political Science, Simon Fraser University

Independent Office Placement: Elections B.C.

Caucus: Third Party

Describe the Intern in Three Words: Witty, Candid, Sincere

Favourite Memory: Frequent intern visits to local board game cafés. More specifically, games of Cards Against Humanity, which Jacob usually lost, and delicious milkshakes!

Post-Internship Plans: In the fall, Jacob will be attending law school at the University of Victoria. He is unsure what he will specialize in, but we know he will excel in whatever he chooses! During the summer, Jacob plans to have a well-deserved rest back home in Vancouver. He is looking forward to doing his favourite hikes in the Lower Mainland. Additionally, as an avid sports fan, Jacob will be going on a Canadian Football League



# JENNA HRECHKA

BY TRISTEN MCCARTNEY



Jenna Hrechka is an extremely intelligent, compassionate, and thoughtful individual. Even before the internship, her passion for helping others shone through. After graduating high school, Jenna achieved a diploma in medical radiological technology and worked as a computed tomography technologist in Edmonton and Victoria. As a cohort, we have been extremely fortunate to be able to work alongside an individual such as Jenna, knowing that she would always be available to offer an open mind or lend a helping hand. Any time the interns had a meeting with a group, MLA, or independent officer, she was prepared to offer a well-thought-out question. Jenna successfully managed the many responsibilities required of an intern. She was a successful team member in both her ministry and her caucus placement. She is also a very community-minded individual and greatly enjoyed her time doing the community outreach portion of her ministry placement. During her limited free time, Jenna juggled being a board member for a local non-profit and her love for recreational activities, being an avid soccer player and running the TC10K.

Hometown: Edmonton, AB

Education: Bachelor of Arts (Honours) with distinction, Majoring in Political Science and a Minor in Sociology, University of Victoria

Ministry Placement: Social Development and Poverty Reduction

Caucus Placement: Government

Describe the Intern in Three Words: Intelligent, Compassionate, Thoughtful

Favourite Memory: Jenna enjoyed her time touring the Vernon-Monashee riding with MLA Harwinder Sandhu. She was very grateful for the warm welcome MLA Sandhu and her constituency assistants.

Post-Internship Plans: Jenna hopes to find employment in social policy development or research. Further down the road, she plans to pursue a Master's degree.

# KAYLA BRENT

BY PARNIAN TAHERI



**K**ayla Brent is a self-assured person. I picked this word intentionally to highlight the tranquility she showcases in the face of chaos, her insightful approach to understanding problems, and her proficiency in creating well-rounded solutions. Kayla's work ethic and dedication during her time with the Third Party as well as at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food have been nothing less than admirable. Although perhaps Kayla's most charming quality is her confidence regarding her abilities and trust in herself. This confirms that her goals and dreams are very well within reach. A core memory that Kayla and I share is the highly anticipated boxing match we were about to kick off after watching the Victoria Royals get annihilated by the Prince George Cougars. As she was obviously deeply disturbed by Victoria's poor showing, my usual taunts hit Kayla particularly hard that day, and much like the players, we dropped our gloves. When I think about it, she was probably just trying to show off her fighting stance, as one does in the parking lot of the Save-On Foods Memorial Centre. We both promptly abandoned the match after realizing there was no crowd to observe the monumental occasion. It is hard to pick a favourite memory with Kayla, because we have had so many. She is always the life of the party, and we have enjoyed countless nights together dancing, laughing, pep-talking, going for midnight 'Don's trips, and ultimately cherishing each other's company.

Hometown: Milton, ON

Education: Bachelor of Sciences in Geography and Environmental Studies with distinction, University of Victoria

Ministry Placement: Agriculture and Food

Caucus Placement: Third Party

Describe the Intern in Three Words: Intelligent, Confident, Compassionate

Favourite Memory: Either repeatedly crushing Jacob at Mario Kart or watching Kevin F. eat an entire slab of butter in the Speaker's dining room.

Post-Internship Plans: This summer, Kayla plans to move to the Loire Valley in France to pursue her Masters in Vine, Wine and Terroir Management.

# KEVIN FRANCESCHINI

BY ZAINA KHAN



Kevin Franceschini is someone whose passion is not only infectious, but truly unforgettable. When you meet Kevin, his amiable and down-to-earth personality immediately draws people into conversations with him. If you find yourself wondering about who has the best facial hair throughout the history of the Legislative Assembly, or even throughout Canadian parliamentary history, Kevin is your man. Aside from his friendly and charismatic personality, Kevin is a true advocate for his community, learning early in life that the best way to make change is to get involved. Representing thousands of undergraduates as the President of the Arts and Science Undergraduate Society at McGill, Kevin worked diligently to advocate for the interests of students. His amazing work ethic and creativity continued to guide him as an intern in the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development, and Innovation, and within the Communications team of the Official Opposition caucus. If you see someone walking down the legislative hallways with a stylish suit and a unique tie or bowtie, it is most likely Kevin. Because of his bubbly and warm personality, Kevin has many friends – and it is an honour for me to call him one.

Hometown: Courtenay, BC

Education: Bachelor of Arts and Science in Sustainability, Science, and Society, and a Minor in Economics, McGill University

Ministry Placement: Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development, and Innovation

Caucus: Official Opposition

Describe the Intern in Three Words: Kind-hearted, Audacious, and Charismatic

Favourite Memory: Being the social person that he is, Kevin's favourite memories during the program include moments of bonding and friendship. In February, Jenna hosted us for a fun night of trivia, and games! On the May long weekend, we went to Tofino, cooked meals as a group, went to the beach, and watched fireworks.

Post-Internship Plans: After this program, Kevin will be staying at the Legislative Assembly working with the Official Opposition caucus.

# KEVIN WONG

BY JENNA HRECHKA



Kevin Wong is best known for being the ‘career bureaucrat’ of the group; a phrase he would often use when asked about his post-internship plans. His resume certainly supports this notion. Despite his youthful age, he boasts a wealth of experience, including working as a policy analyst for the federal government and successfully implementing a complete re-organization of the UBC political science course union during his presidency. With this experienced background, Kevin was always eager to assist his fellow interns with job interviews and applications, as well as provide inventive ideas for group projects in caucus. Beyond the internship, he utilized his kind and helpful nature by working as a tutor for high school students. He also has a taste for excellent food and never failed to offer restaurant recommendations. Furthermore, he graciously hosted multiple delicious hot pot events at his apartment. Kevin is as thoughtful as he is intelligent, as he consistently checked in with his fellow interns and provided supportive words to those around him throughout the internship. Working with and learning from Kevin was a pleasure, and I am personally excited to witness the wonderful things he will undoubtedly achieve in his future endeavors.

Hometown: Burnaby, BC

Education: Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Law and Society, University of British Columbia

Ministry Placement: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

Describe the Intern in Three Words: Thoughtful, Dependable, Knowledgeable

Favourite Memory: Kevin’s favourite memory was trying to figure out how to light the BBQ on the Intern Tofino trip. He, Kevin F, and Kayla successfully used their innovative thinking skills to light the BBQ without burning down the Airbnb. It was an immense bonding moment.

Post-Internship Plans: Kevin hopes to land a good job in the public service involving legislation. He also looks forward to moving back to the Lower Mainland to be close to friends and family.

# PARNIAN TAHERI

BY JACOB SCHOEBER



Parnian Taheri is one unique individual. Her dedication to her work, great sense of humour, and strong sense of empathy make her wonderful to be around. Over the course of the program, she helped the Official Opposition caucus highlight the important issues facing British Columbians today. We all appreciated Parnian always opening her home for social events, providing a safe refuge for us to bond and an opportunity to meet her sweet cat, Patty. She always had thoughtful anecdotes that helped us better understand any situation, and her compassion helped her be a rock of support for everyone. A personal highlight with Parnian: when filling out our caucus placement request forms during the second orientation week, we were asked, "Is there anything else you would like to share or confess?" Parnian was the only one who laughed at my quip, "Uh... I took two cans of pop from the reception last week." She is a pleasure to have become friends with and brings life to whatever room she is in.

Hometown: Tehran, Iran & North Vancouver, B.C.

Education: Bachelor of Arts with a Joint Major in Psychology and Criminology, Simon Fraser University.

Ministry Placement: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Caucus Placement: Official Opposition

Describe the Intern in Three Words: Confident, Ambitious, Hardworking

Favourite Memory: The night we spent in Port Angeles. The Teppanyaki we all enjoyed was amazing, and the gathering afterwards in Bella and Sarah's room was fun and heart-warming. Even though we were all super tired, we bonded over the fact that the hotel we stayed at will always haunt our dreams because of the things we found in the rooms and beds, finishing off the trip with a shared traumatic experience.

Post-Internship Plans: Parnian plans to move back to Vancouver and enjoy her favourite food scene, move into her own cozy place with Patty, and prepare for attending law school.

# SARAH ASH

BY KEVIN WONG



Sarah Ash's bubbly and warm personality makes it so you cannot help but start chatting when you meet her. Spend a few minutes talking, and you will quickly find a person who is deeply caring, intelligent, and passionate about the problems she's seen in B.C. As someone who worked the frontlines of systemic crises in her hometown of Prince George, Sarah brings in a level of experience that few have. Coming to Victoria, she was ready to learn about the institutions and see the structural barriers she had navigated. If you ask, she does have a list of things that need changing, and urgently. Sarah began her ministry placement in the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions where she was able to benefit professionally through learning how to write briefing notes and how to speak policy. In caucus, Sarah and I chatted about the MLAs we had met and the sacrifices that came with public life – intense scrutiny, abrasive discourse, systemic pressures, and more. It takes real passion and genuine care for others to even entertain the level of personal sacrifice we were familiar with in the hopes of making a difference for someone else. But truthfully, that is just who Sarah is. It is a real privilege to know her.

Hometown: Prince George, B.C.

Education: Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and Political Science – University of Northern British Columbia

Ministry Placement: Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

Caucus Placement: Official Opposition

Describe the Intern in Three Words: Compassionate, Resilient, and Lively

Favourite Memory: The first time a speech she wrote was read aloud in the House.

Post-Internship Plans: Sarah will be working for the Official Opposition as a Legislative Assistant after the internship and plans to eventually pursue a Masters degree.

# TRISTEN McCARTNEY

BY BEN RUTKOWSKI



**T**risten McCartney is a kind and clever friend to have. He is incredibly wise and he brought to the program his unique set of insights and experiences that helped us all to consider new ideas and perspectives. He excelled in his placement at the Ministry of Forests, where he worked in the Integrated Resource Operations Division and attended important meetings focused on forestry tenures as well as consultations with Indigenous partners. Moving into the Official Opposition caucus, he worked hard in the research department to develop Estimates questions that were incredibly valuable in holding the government to account. At intern hangouts and events, his dry, infectious sense of humour and hilarious stories kept spirits high and kept everyone laughing. Coming from rural B.C., Tristen has a passion for bringing a rural voice to the table. He has a deep knowledge of and appreciation for B.C.'s natural resource sector, and I wouldn't be at all surprised if he ends up playing an important role its sector's future. Above all, Tristen is a loyal and compassionate person, and we are all extremely grateful to count him among our friends.

Hometown: Kamloops, B.C.

Education: Bachelor of Economics and Political Studies, with a Minor in History, Thompson Rivers University

Ministry Placement: Ministry of Forests

Caucus Placement: Official Opposition

Describe the Intern in Three Words: Dedicated, Insightful, and Loyal

Favourite Memory: Going to Kamloops on constituency placement and touring sites like Adam's Lake Interfor and Quaaout Lodge with MLA Todd Stone.

Post-Internship Plans: After the internship, Tristen is hoping to gain more experience in the area of natural resources, whether it be in policy development, economic analysis, or the private sector.



# ZAINA KHAN

BY KAYLA BRENT



Zaina Khan is a radiant woman who brings unparalleled joy and deep belly laughs into every room she enters. Trying to encapsulate Zaina in a few hundred words is like trying to describe a rainbow to someone who has never seen one before. Her passion for her community is unmatched; she grew up in Surrey, though I am sure you already knew that. During her time as an intern, Zaina served the Ministry of Attorney General, which she was drawn to due to her innate commitment to justice and equity. She excelled in this role, and in her position with the Government caucus, undoubtedly due to her endless curiosity, ingenuity, and compassion. On our drives home to Gordon Head, Zaina and I would often discuss the issues of the day, with her never failing to provide me with a new way of looking at things or an argument that completely refreshed my perspective. Zaina is unique in her ability to convey immense knowledge, while simultaneously creating a sense of ease that makes conversations with her both mentally stimulating and comfortable. Anyone who calls Zaina a friend is a lucky person and, thankfully, her bubbly personality means many people fall under this category.

Hometown: Surrey, B.C.

Education: Bachelor of Arts Majoring in History, and Minors in Indigenous Studies, and Sociology with distinction, Simon Fraser University

Ministry Placement: Ministry of Attorney General

Caucus Placement: Government

Describe the Intern in three words: Loves, Rural, Communities

Favourite Memory: Celebrating an Iftar with the eleven other interns. While this was her first time celebrating Ramadan away from her family, Zaina found a community here amongst the other interns who have become a second family to her.

Post-Internship Plans: Being an educator at heart, Zaina hopes to continue to work in education, whether as a teacher, public servant, or eventually as a professor.



# MINISTRY PLACEMENTS

# KEEPING VOTING ACCESSIBLE

MY PLACEMENT AT ELECTIONS B.C.

By Jacob Schoeber

I have been interested in election work for a long time. On the encouragement of my mom, herself a longtime election poll worker, I took a job as an election official for a Vancouver civic by-election in 2017. I absolutely loved the work and since then have taken every chance to serve as an election official, both in public elections and in SFU's student elections. When the opportunity presented itself to serve in an independent office, I chose Elections B.C. without hesitation!

The first thing I learned during my placement was that the office really does a lot of work between elections! This was quite a surprise. Elections are generally once every four years, so what is there to do in the meantime? The answer is that there is an unbelievable amount of planning and coordination that goes into carrying out electoral events, from keeping datasets up to date to redrawing electoral district boundaries and even administering smaller scale electoral events between general elections, such as by-elections, referenda, and recall petitions. As a result, Elections B.C. has dozens of permanent staff who are equally as or more passionate than me about election administration.

The main project I worked on was helping Elections B.C. optimize their voters list update processes. This file contains information on millions of B.C. voters and is critical to ensuring that elections run smoothly. Drawing upon my experience as a census enumerator and with a lot of support from the Voter Services team, I was able to deliver a discussion paper and presentation to some of Elections B.C.'s senior management team, which was well received. I was well prepared,

however, thanks to the support I got from my mentor and his team.

I was able to meet with many corporate teams at Elections B.C. to learn more about their role within the organization. These "fireside chats" were an invaluable opportunity to gain a greater appreciation for election officials as well as discuss some of the contemporary issues in election organization that I was interested in, including an evolving legislative framework, pandemic-induced societal changes, and the ever-increasing use of misinformation and disinformation in our politics today. I am extremely grateful to every member of the team who took time to meet with me and explain what they do at Elections B.C.

I would like to, of course, give a huge THANK YOU to my mentor Dan Posey for his support, knowledge and time. All of the one-on-one time I received was invaluable and will no doubt help my future career growth. Thank you as well to all the staff from Elections B.C.'s many subdivisions who took the time to meet with me and educate me further on their roles within the organization. I will never forget my memorable, albeit brief, placement with Elections B.C.!



Jacob at Elections B.C. Head Office

# POWERING THE FUTURE, MEASURING INNOVATION

A FUN MONTH AT THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY, MINES, AND LOW

CARBON

By Kevin Wong

Imagine, for a moment, that you could watch ideas become reality. Now imagine those ideas were critical to keeping the global climate livable for future generations. While Tony Stark may have built his first Iron Man suit in only three months, it takes a lot more time, thought, and resources to bring clean technology innovation and policy forward in B.C.

I was fortunate enough to spend my placement at the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation (EMLI), observing and supporting some of the policy work in the energy and cleantech space. Within the ministry, I worked with two teams: the Energy Decarbonization Branch and the Innovative Clean Energy (ICE) Fund. Under the guidance of my two mentors, Kristen Littler (former intern alert!) and Kym Thrift, I set out to explore this complicated realm and take on my two biggest projects to date.

## *B.C.'s Energy Outlook – Room for Nuclear?*

Having studied nuclear weapons during my time at UBC, my focus never strayed far from nuclear energy. Kristen encouraged me to run with this and consider whether nuclear energy has a place in B.C., throwing me headfirst into a question that has many deep rabbit holes. I quickly started learning about B.C.'s historical aversion to nuclear energy, our ban on uranium exploration, and BC Hydro's outlook on our energy needs, among other things.

Given B.C.'s "no nuclear" stance, I turned toward Ontario, New Brunswick, and international



Kevin W with EMLI Team Members

contexts like France and Japan to figure out how their policy frameworks managed to make nuclear energy work. Turns out, the biggest concern on people's minds about nuclear energy is the potential for it to cause long-lasting and serious harm to people and the environment. However, while most renewable sources struggle to generate energy reliably, nuclear energy does not, rendering it a consistent and high-capacity source of electricity.

Writing a white paper exploring how nuclear energy could possibly fit into our existing energy framework was a major highlight of my placement, and the amount of quality writing feedback I received was invaluable. Thank you, Kristen!

### *Measuring Innovation*

Cleantech innovation is a huge umbrella that covers everything from carbon capture to testing new hydrogen-powered vehicles to industrial process improvements. Given the diverse array of projects funded by the ICE Fund, it can often be hard to explain how meaningful results are generated.

For example, a small pilot project testing out a relatively minor process improvement would have a very different impact than a full-scale demonstration project where a company might be building a full plant to test some new technology. Funding to bring together industry, academic, and investor networks goes through the same door as funding for innovations like battery and solar-powered semi-autonomous unmanned boats (which I got to see in action!). Traditional metrics used to measure success on cleantech projects, such as greenhouse gas emissions reductions, struggle to show the true impact of each innovation.

Taking a deeper look at this took me into the academic realm to find new ways to look at these issues. Kym's extensive experience in cleantech funding came in handy, and he helped me sound off ideas and find new measures, like mapping out connections, investor interest, funding concentration, and more. The final briefing note I produced let me explore much more of the thinking around measuring innovation than I ever expected.

### *Concluding Thoughts*

Cleantech is such an exciting realm, and even playing a small part in work relevant to it was a real privilege. I owe a very special thank you to Kristen, Kym, Guy, Rebecca, Ester, Dayah, Greg, Chris, Jack, and the many others along the way who put up with my ceaseless questions, no

matter how redundant or repetitive they were. It was a great pleasure to work with you all, and I am very grateful for the support I received along the way. I can't wait to cross paths again!



Kevin W Hard at Work at the Ministry



# A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

By Isabella Devereaux

When I entered the third grade, I had the reading comprehension of a kindergartener. In fact, my younger brother, who was in kindergarten, was reading chapter books, while I could not read at all. I soon learned I had a severe learning disability. Fortunately, with the support of my parents, teachers, and specialists, I became a proficient learner.

I am incredibly grateful for this experience, yet I recognize that if it were not for the many privileges I hold, I would not have been able to access this support. My first-hand struggles in education have inspired me to pursue a career advocating for those disadvantaged within the education system. That is why, when we were asked to submit a preference list on which ministry we would like to be placed with, there was no doubt in my mind. I wanted to be with the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Although my time with the ministry was short, the experience and knowledge I gained were invaluable. During my time in Education and Child Care, I worked within the Governance and Analytics Division on the Governance and Legislation team. I had the joy of working under former interns Senior Legislative Analyst Esther Rzeplinski and Assistant Deputy Minister Cloe Nicholls. While with the Governance and Legislation team, I was tasked with diving into the world of school board governance, a subject I studied during my undergraduate degree. I learned about student and trustee codes of conduct, school board meetings, the role of trustees, and good governance in school boards. Additionally, I got to meet and learn from individuals throughout the Governance and Analytics Division to discuss issues such as data in

BC schools and teacher regulation.

Throughout my month with Education and Child Care, I was lucky enough to have “mini placements” with other departments within the ministry. I had two mini placements, one with the Strategic Priorities team and the other within the Child Care Division. On the Strategic Priorities Team, I did research into anti-racism programming and school food programs in schools. Additionally, I was able to meet and learn from individuals working on SOGI initiatives, Indigenous education, and student mental health. The Child Care Division joined with the ministry in 2022 and is quickly growing to provide affordable, accessible child care across BC. I learned about the different ways families can save on child care in B.C., ways to support early childhood professionals, and the issues facing child care in B.C.

Other highlights of my placement included meeting with Minister Rachna Singh, Minister of State Grace Lore, Deputy Minister Christina Zacharuk, attending a minister briefing with Minister Lore, and coffee dates and after work drinks with the Governance and Legislation team, also known as the “Leg Ladies.”

Overall, my time in the Ministry of Education and Child Care was a highlight of the internship program and definitely taught and prepared me for the rest of the program. A very special thank you to Esther, Cloe, Christina, Nell, Karen, Sophie, Tyann, Julia, Erin, Robyn, Jeremy, and so many other people who supported me through my time in Education and Child Care.

# COMING UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLICITOR GENERAL

By Parnian Taheri

My passion regarding criminology, psychology, and law led me to the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG). I had the privilege to observe how high-priority government projects were strategically and swiftly coming to life. The Safer Communities Action Plan tasked the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General with the responsibility to address the public security challenges that the Province of B.C. has been facing in an expeditious and innovative manner.



Parnian with her Ministry Mentor

During the four weeks I spent at the ministry, I was brought into three different projects that were at different stages of their development and implementation. During this time, my supervisors, Ardys and Cole, provided me with the opportunity to work on tasks such as preparing documents for the Legislative Review Committee, finalizing regulations for Cabinet's consideration, stakeholder consultation meetings, drafting updates to the government website, and drafting Business and Economic Impact Assessments as well as Privacy Impact Assessments. Ardys and Cole arranged this schedule with the goal to enhance my legislative knowledge and serve as

an introduction to its process, or "Legislation 101," as they put it. Thus, as a proud graduate from the course of Legislation 101, I want to take the opportunity to thank them for their guidance and support on this journey.

One of the challenges that I encountered when I joined the Policing and Security Branch of the PSSG was deducing the meaning behind the acronyms that were used by my colleagues in assignments, emails, and meetings. Thankfully, this was an all-too-familiar challenge that I had encountered multiple times in my life while living in different countries and working in a variety of different industries. Thus, I relied on the contextual, familiarizing myself with the general framework and language of the legislative projects as well as reaching out to my supervisors and mentors for guidance and support. Two of the other mentors that supported my work on these projects were Sally and Mikolai. The knowledge that I gathered from working on all of these unique and interesting projects will be very useful to me in my future career.

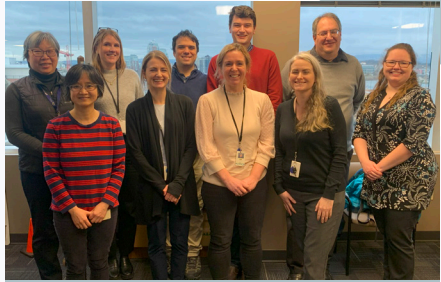
While writing this article I was trying to single out a specific day as the highlight of my experience in the Policing and Security Branch of the PSSG, but never have I ever had more trouble doing so. From the first day that I entered the office and was shown to a desk with my name next to it, to the coffee breaks at Discovery Café with their unforgettable donuts, to every single day that I got to meet amazing people at the office and ask them, "So what brought you to this place?" I can confidently say that every single day at PSSG was a highlight of my experience as a BCLIP intern.



B.C. Legislative Internship Program



Kayla with her Mentor at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food



Ben with his Team at the Ministry of Finance



Parnian with Team Members at the Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General



Sarah and her Mentor at the Ministry of Mental Health & Addictions



Kevin F by the Clean Growth Plan at the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation



Kevin W with Team Members at Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation

# THANK YOU!

## MINISTRY MENTORS & PUBLIC SERVANTS WHO SUPPORTED OUR MINISTRY PLACEMENTS

### Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

Anna Ehsan and Kelly Czmielewski

### Elections BC

Daniel Posey, Charlotte Lee, Christina Sullivan, Nancy Southcott, Aidan Brand, Jill Lawrance, Adam Barnes, Jodi Cooke

### Ministry of Attorney General

Alayna Van Leeuwen, Natalie Hepburn Barnes, Katie Armitage, Tarynn McKenzie, Isobel McIntyre, Lindsay Hack, Nancy Carter, Lisa Nakamura

### Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Lauren Yawney, Erin Kristianson, Arele Anderson, Tina Bodnar, James Long, Patrick Remillard, Yichuan Wang, Cassandra Jeffery, Andrea Hoerger

### Ministry of Health

Thomas Lange, Panmoli Sivananthan, Therese Harper

### Ministry of Finance

Mark Gunther, Zoey Poitras, Treana Clarke, Siobhan Kraljak, Claire Lovell, Michelle X Wang, Tonya Young, Nakita Rowat

### Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation

Kristen Littler, Kym Thrift, Guy Gensey, Ester Cunha, Rebecca Luedtke, Dayah Johal, Chris Krasowski, and Warren Walsh

### Ministry of Forests

Jean-Paul Salley, Darby Cameron, Matthew Creswick, Corie Kielbiski, Matt Austin, Shane Berg, Hilary Wheeler, Norah White

### Ministry of Education and Childcare

Esther Rzeplinski, Cloe Nicholls, Nell Hodges, Karen Loughran, Tyann Blewett, Sophie Bird, Julia Lloyd, Jeremy Higgs, Erin Oscienny, Linda Beddouche, Lina Branter, Robin Spilker, Patricia Boyle

### Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Ardys Baker, Cole Winegarden, Sally Reid, Mikolai Anselmi

### Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

Leah Squance, Daniel Huang, Natascha Lowcay, Chelsea Bowen, Michael Ross

### Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development, and Innovation

Valentina Yetskalo, David King, Danielle Grbavac



# CAUCUS PLACEMENTS



# GOVERNMENT CAUCUS

B.C. NEW DEMOCRATS



By Isabella Devereaux

From the work, MLA visits, and Legislative Assembly events, one of the most interesting parts of working within a caucus is that you never know what each day will bring. We learned this quickly while assigned with Government caucus.

Our role within caucus was to assist the Research and Communications department. This meant working on a wide range of tasks. Each day, we walked into the East Annex not knowing what new tasks were waiting for us. This brought excitement to the already electrifying atmosphere in our role as Legislative Interns. We helped write Private Member's Statements, MLA speaking notes, editorials, newsletters, Two-Minute Statements, mailers, radio ads and so much more. We also assisted MLAs filming videos for social media and virtual greetings for events. We attended many events such as government announcements, events in the Press Theatre, budget lock up, and special meetings with Ministers and their staff. These diverse experiences meant we gained an in-depth understanding of what working in caucus is like and this was invaluable.



Governors with John Horgan

With fifty-seven NDP MLAs, there were many members to meet and learn from. To entice the MLAs to visit us, we kept score (Government caucus intern tradition) of how many times MLAs came to the "intern basement" to chat.

## B.C. Legislative Internship Program

We thoroughly enjoyed learning about the different paths MLAs took to reach the Legislature and what topics and issues they are most passionate about. The Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, Selina Robinson topped the leaderboard (for the fourth year in a row) visiting us 13 times. Honourable mentions include MLAs Jimmy Sims, Adam Walker, Nicholas Simons, and Susie Chant who all tied for second place. We are so appreciative of all the MLAs who took time to visit us and share their thoughts on politics, social issues, advice and more!



Governors at High Tea

Another highlight of our time in caucus was the people. The Research and Communications team is full of bright and passionate people, and working alongside them was a joy. We were welcomed onto the team and from the start, and felt like we belonged. From watching Question Period with the Research and Communications Officers, playing bocce ball, or attending a slam poetry night, social time with our team was one of the unanticipated highlights with Government caucus. A huge thank you to Ed May, Maddie Field, Chelsea Williams, Devon Leathwood, Reece Avila, Astra Lund-Phillips, Laura Parent, Arjin Toor, Cailin Tyrrell, Pavan Sodhan and Julia Witte for their support, mentorship, and countless laughs.

Additionally, working alongside the Government interns was the biggest treat of all. The five of us became a family, often joking that Kevin was our dad (the most responsible of the bunch). Whether it was breaks on the couch, high tea at Abkhazi garden or Costco runs; moments of bonding and

laughing with the other interns brought us close together.



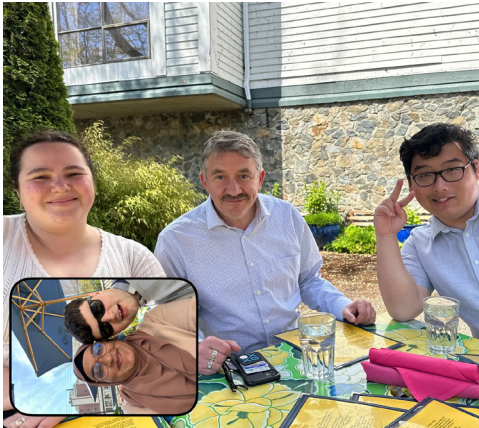
Hanging out at the Post-Budget Music Night

Our adventures were not only confined to Victoria. During our constituency weeks, we traveled across BC to learn more about the unique communities within our province. Bella travelled to Prince Rupert in the North Coast with MLA Jennifer Rice and learned about health care in the north. She also visited Victoria-Beacon Hill with Minister of State Grace Lore, learning more about the city we all live in as interns. Jenna explored the North Island with MLA Michele Babchuk visiting Port Hardy, Cortes Island and Campbell River and also visited Vernon-Monashee with MLA Harwinder Sandhu, attending multiple events in the community. Kevin went home to Richmond-Steveston to learn about his own community through a different lens with MLA Kelly Greene and later went to Smithers in Stikine with Minister Nathan Cullen on a childcare tour. Zaina explored Powell River-Sunshine Coast with MLA Nicholas Simons and attended community festivals with Speaker Raj Chouhan. Finally, Ben attended a breakfast celebrating queer activists in Vancouver-West End with MLA Spencer Chandra-Herbert and traveled to Grand Forks with MLA Roly Russell in Boundary-Similkameen. These visits opened our eyes to the countless unique communities within BC and inspired some future travel plans.

As we reflect on our time within Government caucus, we are humbled and honoured to have played a small role in such an important democratic institution. Thank you to all the caucus staff, Ministry office staff, Constituency Assistants, and MLAs who helped us along the way and made our experience in caucus wonderful. We are grateful and will carry the lessons we learn throughout our careers and beyond.



Governs on the Bridge



Being Real with MLA Nicholas Simons



Governs with Hon. Grace Lore



Zaina and the Boys - a Common Hangout



Enjoying Lunch Outside Before Spring



# LOVING AND LEARNING FROM RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

VISITING THE CONSTITUENCIES OF SUNSHINE COAST-POWELL RIVER AND  
BURNABY-EDMONDS

By Zaina Khan

Growing up in a truly diverse community like Surrey-Whalley influences my worldview and continues to shape the way I interact within different institutions and situations. When I accepted my offer into the 2023 BCLIP cohort, I knew I wanted to represent the community I grew up in and love dearly. Leaving my home, and the Lower Mainland, was both riveting and terrifying because my family, community, and entire life was concentrated within 200 km of the 49th parallel. Not only did meeting the other interns, who have become an important part of my community in Victoria and outside of it, give me an opportunity to grow in a political space, it also challenged me to reflect on my worldviews to expand or defend them.

BC, as a province, consists of a multitude of voices, perspectives, cultures, and communities – two being various rural and urban communities. As we all know, Surrey, and the Lower Mainland as a whole, are not rural. Looking back, I realize that while I grew up in a community made up of extensive worldviews, there will always be more for me to learn. Through conversations with the other interns, some of whom are from rural communities, I have gained a deeper understanding of rural issues that I previously had not learned. Therefore, it was important to me to use at least one of my constituency weeks to visit a rural community so that I could learn more about rural issues.



Zaina and Rob in Front of Local Art

In April, I visited Powell River-Sunshine Coast, MLA Nicholas Simon's riding. From the moment I needed to book my ferry tickets, I knew that I was going to a more rural community than one that I have visited before because the only way to visit the Sunshine Coast is to travel by ferry and continue to drive on a long, very windy road. When I arrived in both Sechelt and Powell River, I met Amy Clarke and Rob Hill, the Constituency Assistants for the riding! I owe both a huge thank you for showing me around their homes, a truly special place that has not only expanded my worldview, but also my heart.

During my time in Sechelt, Amy and I visited many places including the Gumboot Café, the Roberts Creek Mandala, Sechelt Nation, and many more! This was my first time on a self-governing

Nation's land and one of the first things I noticed was that the signs were not only in English, but also in the Sechelt Nation's language. I was also exposed to delicious local foods at various restaurants and still crave the delicious lavender and honey ice cream from E.B.'s ice cream. Gibsons and Sechelt are truly special places that have a community made up of local artisans, doctors, industry workers, and more. From friendship parks, to living examples of how totem poles return to Mother Earth, Sechelt is a place with many experiences and lessons that I will carry with me.

While I was in Sechelt, Amy showed me the local hospital and ambulance dispatch. I was surprised to learn that the ambulance dispatch was not adjacent to the hospital the way it is in major urban areas. Instead, the ambulance dispatch in Sechelt is in the heart of the community so that it can easily access distinct parts of the community between Earl's Cove and Gibsons – a truly large stretch of land. Living in Surrey, and now in Victoria, I never considered what it might be like to live in a place in which you might be kilometres away from the hospital, or in a place where there might not be service for the ambulance to easily get to you.



Zaina at Mile 0 in Lund

Many of the issues that constituents of the Sunshine Coast-Powell River riding experience are familiar to me. From the development of social housing to the development of local infrastructure, there are many common issues in various communities across BC. Despite these BC issues that stress communities, our ability to adapt, thrive, and continue to stay resilient as a province that consists of multitudes of communities and worldviews is something that unites us all.

Later in May, I had an opportunity to visit the Speaker, Hon. Raj Chouhan's, riding in Burnaby-Edmonds. I met Mr. Speaker's team, Amber Keane, Jason Blackman, and Lynn Hardy who were quick to show me around their beautiful community office. Growing up just over the bridge, I was quite familiar with the landscape of Burnaby. However, the sense of community that I felt every day at work with this talented team showed me why Burnaby-Edmonds is a special place. Their passion for their community and ability to connect with constituents reminded me of the particularly significant role of our MLAs in advocating for their



Zaina outside MLA Simons Community Office

B.C. Legislative Internship Program

During my visit with Speaker Raj Chouhan, I learned that Burnaby-Edmonds provincially, and Burnaby-South at the federal level, are the most diverse ridings in the nation with over one hundred languages spoken within the constituency. The community of Burnaby-Edmonds is comprised of citizens from distinct parts of the world with vastly different stories to share. At an Anti-Asian Hate Awareness event, I watched Mr. Speaker deliver a powerful speech about racism, his work as a labour rights advocate, and as someone who continues to advocate for his community. I was touched by his connection to his home which was abundantly clear.



Zaina and Amy enjoying E.B.'s Ice Cream



Zaina Trying to Show the WW2 Battleships...  
Showing Trees Instead



View from Lund, BC

I know that this article has not done justice to the beauty, uniqueness, and the sense of belonging both Sunshine Coast-Powell River and Burnaby-Edmonds bring to their constituents. I want to thank both MLA Nicholas Simons and Speaker Raj Chouhan and their teams for opening their doors and communities to welcome me, and for challenging me to expand my own worldview and consider new perspectives.



Stop Sign in Tla'amin Nation's Land,  
Showing the Use of Both English and  
Tla'amin

# CONSTITUENCY PLACEMENTS



Bella at Port Edward Sign



Ben on an Excavator in Princeton for B.C. Mining Days



Jenna and MLA Michele Babchuk



Kevin W with Hon. Nathan Cullen





By Sarah Ash

As the long-time tradition stands, the interns in the Official Opposition returned to the office known as Siberia. We were welcomed with notes from previous intern cohorts. While Siberia is best known as the intern’s den, it is also the place where you can expect to see Andrew Reeve enjoying an English muffin at four in the afternoon and calling it his breakfast. We began our caucus placement referring to our close-knit group as the “Libterns.” By April, we rebranded and had the honour of choosing a new name change to BC United.

The five “U-terns” were split into their respective research and communications teams. The research team consisted of Parnian Taheri and Tristen McCartney, a powerhouse duo whose work centered on the 2023 fiscal estimates. On Budget Day, they were immediately put to the task of fast research as it was all hands on deck to analyze the budget statements and stakeholder reactions. From there, the research interns’ work did not slow down. The two contributed to bill notes and estimates for several MLA critic portfolios, including Ministries such as Public Safety and Solicitor General, Attorney General, Finance, Housing, Education and Childcare, Labour, and Health. Parnian quickly became known for her exceptional skills in data input in major estimate spreadsheets. Tristen’s knowledge of the business community set a clear path for



Being Real in Siberia



files such as Trade, Forests, and Finance. Apart from their endless work on estimates, the two worked on special side projects that would arise on short notice in addition to Question Period research. Tristen and Parnian thoroughly enjoyed their time on the research team and were able to use their joint strengths to excel at their work. Without much formal communications experience, Kevin Franceschini and Sarah Ash joined the communications team and were thrown into the world of tweets, videos, and Private Members' speeches.



Parnian with MLA Bond

Often you would see the two running amongst the MLA offices finding any who were available for a quick video or rushing to stop an MLA for a post-Question Period recap before they took off to estimates. Sarah and Kevin each had their own strengths. Kevin's ability to think of snappy and creative phrasing showed in his ability to write tweets and provide impactful speeches. Sarah immediately went above and beyond expectations bringing forward her own video ideas and filming everything from budget videos to MLA interviews. Her natural writing ability and powerful phrasing complemented Kevin's quick wit.

We were very fortunate to be in this caucus at a time of major change. The shift from "BC Liberals" to "BC United" was exciting as interns and staff alike took guesses at the new colours. In the end,

only Ryan Mitton guessed correctly that it would be pink and teal. This led to excitement as new banners began to arrive and the full rebranding was completed. As part of the comms team, Sarah and Kevin got to have fun with the MLAs by filming a Ted Lasso-inspired video and asking them what being a part of BC United means to them.

There are many fond memories from our time in the Official Opposition. Due to there being three "Kevins" in the Official Opposition, intern Kevin quickly became known as either "old-growth Kev" or "Frankie," a name that will not be forgotten anytime soon. From Derek being passionate about politics to witnessing friendships such as the "Glizzy boys" and Stephanie and Abigail's, the Official Opposition was filled with lots of memories and created a welcoming environment for us interns.

While there were challenging moments, the five "U-terns" formed a close bond in our little office "Siberia." We are grateful to all the MLAs, research and communications officers, and Legislative Assistants that taught us valuable information and welcomed us wholeheartedly into their space.



Staying Fit Down in Siberia



U-terns on Nowruz



Sarah's Birthday Party in Siberia



U-terns with MLA Greg Kyllö Swag



Parnian Pumping Out the Estimates



Parnian and Tristen by the Library

# A BOY RETURNS HOME

A KAMLOOPS–SOUTH THOMPSON ADVENTURE

By Tristen McCartney

One great opportunity that the internship offers is a chance to spend some time in a constituency office. Every year, the interns rush off to connect with an MLA from their caucus for the opportunity to tour their riding. I had my eyes on the Kamloops–South Thompson riding, represented by MLA Todd Stone. The riding runs along the south side of the Thompson River and includes small rural communities and villages such as Chase, Westwold, and Savona, with the main urban centre being the City of Kamloops. Kamloops is home to approximately 115,000 people. The city itself is divided into two electoral districts. This riding is certainly one of the most beautiful and diverse ridings in the province. I would also like to point out that, as a Kamloopsian myself, this assessment is absolutely unbiased. The most frequent question

people asked me about my constituency preference is that if I am from Kamloops, why would I want to go back for my constituency trip? My answer has always been simple. From the day I applied to the BCLIP, I knew that I wanted to have an opportunity to represent my family, friends, former colleagues, and community in the B.C. Legislature.



Tristen and MLAs Stone and Milobar at the Kamloops Chamber of Commerce



Tristen and MLA Stone

The constituency component of the program provided me with the perfect chance to serve the people of my hometown. It also enhanced my understanding of politics and issues in the area. While the whole experience was fantastic, two memories stick out. On my first day, I was provided with an opportunity to travel to the village of Chase after a stop at Skwłāx. While at Skwłāx, I was fortunate enough to receive a tour of the Quaaout Lodge run by Skwłāx te Secwepemcúlecw. Upon arriving, one of the striking features was the carved animals all around the roof of the lodge. Another highlight was the tour of the sawmill on Adams Lake, owned by Interfor. Adams Lake Interfor employs people from Kamloops but also people from the smaller, closer communities.

This tour reminded me of all the years that I worked in forestry. The smell of the wood brought back feelings of nostalgia. Adams Lake Interfor is currently the third largest active sawmill in British Columbia and capitalizes on the lake for transportation, giving it an economic advantage over competitors. I was surprised to hear from management that the Interfor tugboat can move 900 semi-truck loads of wood from the north to the south end of the lake in one trip.

This experience allowed me to have a deeper view into my home community. From the city to the villages, it was a privilege to meet with business associations, chambers of commerce, municipal governments, and, most importantly, the constituents themselves. I would like to thank MLA Stone and his team for hosting me and planning an action-packed week.



Secwepemcúlec Pit House



# CONSTITUENCY PLACEMENTS



Sarah with MLA Sturko in Surrey-South



Kevin by the Alaska Highway



Parnian at MLA Michael Lee's Office



Tristen with MLAs Stone and Milobar





By Jacob Schoeber

As this year's Third Party interns, we, Kayla and Jacob, certainly felt from day one that we were a welcome addition to the team. Almost immediately, we were tasked with significant projects, taking the lead on the budget estimates process, writing clause-by-clause breakdowns of government bills for the entire team, summarising various reports, and helping to create a continuous stream of caucus social media content. The caucus staff relied heavily upon our work to hold the government to account for their actions, and it formed the basis of much of the party's legislative agenda during our placement with them. No pressure, right?

Both of us felt valued right from the get-go. After a gentle introduction to caucus work, the caucus team slowly assigned us more and more responsibilities. Jacob started working in communications, and Kayla began in research. We switched roughly halfway through our placement. The caucus team made sure to give us enough work to keep us busy, but they always kept on top of things to prevent either of us from feeling overwhelmed. They regularly sought

our input on things ranging from what policy issues to pursue and what things to ask about in Question Period to where to go for caucus social events.



Being Real in the B.C. Green Caucus Office

During our placement, we worked with a truly amazing, dedicated, and hard-working group of individuals at the Third Party caucus office. We were always so blown away by their depth of knowledge and commitment to their cause. When we were wrapping up our day at around 5 p.m., the caucus staff would be just getting started, prepared to put in a few hours more work to ensure that the Third Party caucus really punched above its weight in the Legislature. They always ensured we were well supported. We also really appreciated their great senses of humour, which, along with our donut days, brainstorming sessions on the (brand new) caucus couch, regular team lunch meetings, and Ted Lasso episode discussions, made each day in the office a blast. Without their humour, we don't know if we would have gotten through the caucus placement as easily as we did. Special shout outs and thanks to Maeve Maguire, JoJo Beattie, Federico Cerani, Stephanie Siddon, Hailey May, Laura Ferreira, and Emily Bishop for making the experience as enjoyable and fulfilling as it was for both of us.



Kayla and Jacob at the Salt Spring Ferry

partisan way, Adam Olsen and Sonia Furstenau are two of the smartest, most thoughtful people we have ever met. Their ability to absorb high amounts of material and then present it in the Legislature in an understandable manner was remarkable every single day. They knew more about the issues than anyone and always worked hard to ensure everyone was on the same page. At the same time, they didn't act like your stereotypical politicians, giving direction top-down and expecting everyone to follow blindly. They genuinely appreciated and respected everyone's contributions, and all of us had as much of a role in actual decision-making as the MLAs did. It was a pleasure to work with each of them. We were so impressed with both of them that Jacob was even able to overlook Adam being a fan of the Toronto Maple Leafs, one of his most disliked sports teams (as everyone knows)! Both Third Party interns this year greatly enjoyed their time in caucus. We both learned a great deal and gained valuable insights that we will take with us to our future careers. Thank you everyone!



Jacob and MLA Sonia Furstenau in Duncan

One of the most unique aspects of the Third Party caucus were the very regular interactions we got to have with the MLAs. In a completely non-

# A TALE OF TWO SEATS

VISITING SAANICH NORTH AND THE ISLANDS & COWICHAN VALLEY

By Kayla Brent

The B.C. Greens have held two seats in the B.C. Legislature since 2020, represented by Leader Sonia Furstenau in the Cowichan Valley and Adam Olsen in Saanich North and the Islands (SNI). A quick glance at the map reveals that these ridings have much in common: they're on Vancouver Island, they're coastal, and they're even connected by the Mill Bay-Brentwood Bay Ferry! However, Cowichan and SNI are both remarkably unique. In fact, they each house an incredible amount of diversity within their own electoral boundaries.

Within SNI, there are more than a dozen Gulf Islands. During our caucus placement, we had the opportunity to accompany MLA Olsen to Salt Spring Island for his monthly community meeting, "ASK Salt Spring". Throughout the day, we toured the Island, driving from Fulford to Ganges, and stopping to meet with constituents along the way. During the public forum, Salt Spring residents spoke mostly about housing, citing concerns about short-term vacation rentals, the Residential Tenancy Board, local bylaws, and the lack of supportive housing in their community. Community members were eager to interact with their representative, and appeared to have developed a trusting relationship with him; undoubtedly due to years of open dialogues such as this.

After a few more weeks working in the Third Party caucus, Jacob and I again ventured to SNI, this time to MLA Olsen's constituency office in Sidney. For five glorious days, we got to ride the double-decker bus all the way from Victoria and take in the views from the Patricia Bay Highway. During this time, we had the chance to work closely with

the talented team of constituency staff. They taught us the basics of casework, included us in meetings with constituents, and accompanied us on our lunch breaks to a handful of Sidney's many thrift stores and drool-worthy local bakeries. Next time you're on route to the ferry, make sure you stop at the Sidney Bakery for donuts!



Kayla and Jacob with the SNI Team

The following week, we made our way up to Cowichan, crossing the Malahat Highway with Duncan in our sights. As MLA Furstenau had just acquired her new office at the beginning of the month, we helped her assemble furniture and put our interior design skills to the test. We answered letters from constituents, created a calendar of summer events, and attended a meeting with the Cowichan Community Action Team; a group of passionate individuals working diligently to address homelessness and the toxic drug crisis.

With more than two dozen community advocates at the table, this group is forging innovative solutions to these complex problems.

By the end of our back-to-back constituency weeks, we felt no shortage of inspiration and gratitude for the support of both of MLAs and their wonderful teams. Jacob and I would like to thank William Kelly, Jerram Gawley, Laura Parker, Cole Smith, Julie Kay, Rose Williams, Tricia Datene, and Aaron and Marianna Padolsky for all their wisdom and generosity. Long live the world's largest hockey stick!



Jacob and Kayla Horsing Around in Ottawa



Kayla and Jacob Being Real in the Salt Spring Community Centre



The Greenerters Showing Off their Beautiful Smiles





# LEADERSHIP PROJECTS





# WASHINGTON EXCHANGE

VISITS WITH OUR AMERICAN INTERN COUNTERPARTS

By Jacob Schoeber

For the first time in three years, the BCLIP cohort was able to make an in-person trip to the Washington State Legislature in Olympia. This whirlwind three-day trip featured a tour of the legislative campus, meetings with state officials, and, most importantly, a chance to interact with our intern counterparts in Olympia.

It started with a turbulent ride on the Coho ferry over to Port Angeles, followed by lunch and a three-hour drive to Olympia. The route was scenic and gave us all a chance to bond as interns, jamming out to a playlist of carefully curated songs reflecting the tastes of all the interns.

Once we arrived in Olympia, we received a tour of the capitol building. The chance to compare our southern neighbours' legislative building to ours was fascinating. Unlike BC, the Washington State legislative, executive, and judicial branches

of the government head offices are all located on the same campus. This closeness between the Legislature, governor's mansion, and state courts really gave us the feeling that we were part of something significant and special. The day closed with a delicious pub dinner and, for some of us, an Uber trip down to Target for shopping.



Interns on the Stairs at the Washington State Capitol

## B.C. Legislative Internship Program

The next morning contained the most exciting part of the experience: the chance for the Washington interns to present to us about the structure of their state government, followed by us presenting to them about the structure of the parliamentary system and the B.C. provincial government. Both presentations provided opportunities for the two groups of interns to learn from each other and gain a better appreciation for their cross-border neighbours. Special thanks to Jacob and Jenna for organizing the presentation and to Sarah, Kayla, Tristen, Kevin F., Zaina and Ben for their contributions. The presentation looked fantastic and proved very interesting for our Washington counterparts. I believe that everyone's contributions made for an effective and engaging presentation. The highlight of this presentation was the ten-question quiz about British Columbia that we conducted for our audience. Despite the painful experience of hearing one of the questions rib my beloved Vancouver Canucks for their lack of championship wins, it was great to get the Washington interns engaged in a friendly competition to show off their trivia knowledge about B.C.

The lunch break provided a great opportunity for us to chat with our Washington counterparts directly over some delicious food generously provided by Washington State's House and Senate internship programs. This was an extremely rewarding experience. As someone who generally sees American media not paying much attention to Canadian issues, I was personally surprised by the degree of interest our Washington counterparts had in B.C. politics. Many of us had lengthy conversations with them about the intricacies of our respective governments and relevant political issues.

The trip also afforded us the opportunity to meet with several state executive officials. Special thanks to Washington Lieutenant Governor, Denny Heck for talking about his experience in federal and state politics, Department of Transportation Strategic Planning Manager, Jason Beloso for talking about his mission to create a

Vancouver-Seattle-Portland rail line, and Director of International Relations and Protocol, Geoff Potter for discussing B.C.-Washington relations with us. We appreciate the time they took to meet with us and answer our many questions. It is much appreciated.



Lunch with the Washington Interns

The trip ended with a highly anticipated visit to the Trader Joe's outlet store to buy snacks, an entertaining dinner at a Port Angeles hibachi restaurant, and an interns-only party at the Quality Inn motel, before taking the early Coho ferry back to Victoria on Tuesday, at which point we immediately returned to caucus. It was a great experience for all involved.

Finally, thank you so much to Karen and Leah for organizing this trip and driving all of us down to Olympia and back. This trip could not have happened without you!

A few weeks later, we hosted the Washington interns in Victoria for two days. It started with a fun scavenger hunt around the Legislature. We divided into teams and explored the precinct, bonding with our American counterparts while learning more about B.C.'s political history. I particularly enjoyed surprising them about the much-renowned jail cell in the Legislature's basement. Although my team lost this "friendly" competition, I enjoyed spending time with our guests and effectively serving as their tour guide to the B.C. Parliament Buildings. The night ended with a delicious dinner at Belleville's diner.

The next morning, the Washington interns met with former Premier Horgan to hear about

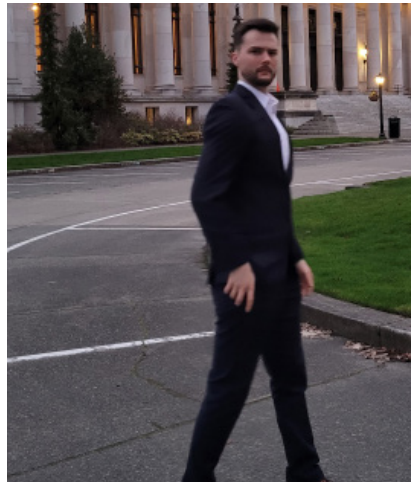
his experience working cooperatively with Washington's state government, and with Housing Minister Kahlon to hear about our efforts to combat the housing crisis that plagues both our jurisdictions. After lunch, they observed Question Period, the most intense part of B.C.'s legislative proceedings. From conversations I had with them afterwards, they found it to be an interesting experience. It was in contrast with their state government, which does not subject executive branch members to such daily scrutiny. It was a pleasure to host these interns in Victoria, and I hope we can reconnect in the future!



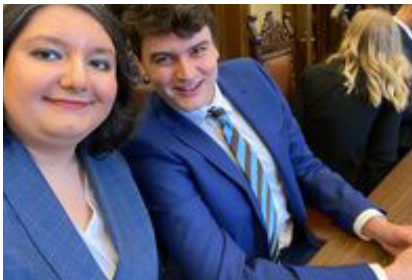
Getting Ready to Present to the Washington Interns



Teppanyaki at Port Angeles ft. Sarah's Amazement with Fire



Spotted at the Capitol



Hanging Out at the State Capitol



First Time for Some of Us at Target





# OTTAWA EXCHANGE

BCLIP ON THE HILL

By Kevin Wong

One of the most highly anticipated activities this year was our educational trip to Ottawa. Following the spring sitting and before the federal House of Commons rose, we took our learning and experience to compare notes with our federal counterparts and hear a variety of new perspectives. With a packed schedule of fourteen presenters, we set out to Parliament Hill, or as it is more simply known, 'the Hill'!

On our first day, we met with MP Julie Dabrusin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, who spoke of her role of bringing important conversations forward between two major and distinct departments. Assistant Deputy Minister Frank des Rosiers followed with a comprehensive presentation about the policy outlook and initiatives of Natural Resources Canada, along with a compelling advertisement for the Policy Analyst Recruitment and Development Program (PARDP – you are eligible if you have a graduate degree!). He took the time to answer some technical questions we had about the future of carbon capture, the two billion trees initiative, and offshore energy generation.

Former Bloc MP, Meili Faille then shared her experience of how politics had developed



Meeting with the Clerk of the House of Commons

We ended our day with the Commissioner of Lobbying of Canada, Nancy Belanger, and discussed ethical lobbying and her intentions to improve the system with a recently revised code of ethics.

Of course, BCLIP alumni are truly everywhere, even in the heart of Canadian politics. Tyler Norman (2017), who works on Western Canada files for Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, explaining his days at her office and covering everything from the parliamentary cycle to the budget process - truly a high-level overview. Faizel Gulamhussein (2007), now Chief of Staff to Minister of National Revenue, Diane Lebouthier, got us into a room with her where our second language competencies were tested. It was great to learn from them and how their careers had grown since the program!

Having worked at the Legislature, all of us were familiar with how quickly priorities and schedules change. It was no different on the Hill, with our trip being right in the middle of what they called “silly season,” the last weeks before the House of Commons rises (therefore, everyone is trying to get their last priorities, bills, and sound bites in). It was in this context that we found ourselves sitting down with the Speaker, Honourable Anthony Rota on Day 2 where we chatted about parliamentary practice in the federal House and the challenges of running sittings to midnight.



Interns Meeting Former MP Meili Faille



Meeting His Excellency Scott Ryan, High Commissioner of Australia



Interns with MP Erin O'Toole



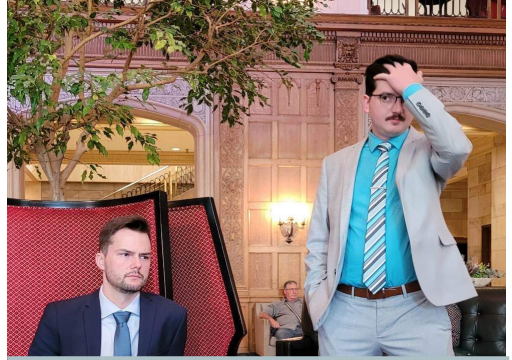
Meeting Hon. Diane Lebouthier, Minister of National Revenue



B.C. Legislative Internship Program



Zaina Seeing the World Through Ben's Height



Tristen and Kevin F Vibing in the Lobby of Chateau Laurier



Interns Learning More About CN Rail



Interns Learning About Renovations Happening in Centre Block



Interns Listening to Hon. Harjit Sajjan, Minister of International Development and Minister Responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada



In the Senate with Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard

# BACK TO CLASS

THE INTERNS' ACADEMIC DAY

By Ben Rutkowski

As Academic Day takes place in June each year, it had been at least six months since any of us sat down for a university lecture. I know if you took a poll of the interns, some might tell you that a prolonged absence from the classroom had been welcome. But with all of us looking at future careers and educational options, returning to the lecture hall had been somewhere in our minds throughout the internship.

Spending a day learning from some of the province's leading scholars was also a chance to reflect on our university years and think about how they informed our time in the internship program. With many of us having completed degrees in political science, sociology, economics, and other public policy related fields, we all wondered whether what we had learned in the classroom was related to the real decisions taken everyday by those who work in government. Academic day was a chance to learn about the relationship between scholarship and governance and about how scholarship forms part of the policy making process.

We began the day with a presentation from Dr. Sean Darling, an Adjunct Professor in the Gustavson School of Business, and an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria. Many of us are considering pursuing job opportunities in the civil service and speaking to Professor Darling gave all of us an opportunity to learn more about how to have a successful career in the public service.

Next, we had a presentation from Dr. Will Greaves,

an Assistant Professor of International Relations at the University of Victoria. An expert in the geopolitics of the Arctic, Dr. Greaves spoke to us about the Arctic's evolving security situation considering the Russian invasion of Ukraine which began in February of 2022. Having just returned from Ottawa, where we spoke to some of Canada's foreign policy leaders, learning about Arctic politics and Canada's place within them was of particular interest to all of us.



Interns Hearing from Dr. Clare McGovern

Dr. Clare McGovern, a senior lecturer at Simon Fraser University's Department of Political Science also provided us with a fascinating presentation comparing the approaches taken by the Canadian and UK supreme courts to the respective questions of Quebec and Scottish independence referendums. For those of us seeking to attend law school in the future, it was a chance to broaden our understanding of questions relating to the Canadian Constitution and the concept of sovereignty.

Finally, we heard from Dr. Jamie Lawson, our program's Academic Director and an Associate Professor at the University of Victoria's

## B.C. Legislative Internship Program

Department of Political Science. Dr. Lawson (or Jamie as he prefers to be called) spoke to us about his research on the politics of Canadian oil and gas and the degree to which Canadian energy resources influence our politics. With all of us understanding the importance of natural resources to Canada's economy, Dr. Lawson's presentation helped us all to deepen our understanding of natural resource issues in Canada.

It was my pleasure to support Dr. Lawson to organise this year's Academic Day. I know we will take what we have learned into our futures. And on behalf of all the interns, I want to express our profound thanks to the academics who took the time to join us and tell us about their exceptional research and experience in their fields.

# REYNOLDS HIGH SCHOOL

A CLASSROOM FULL OF PASSION, INTRIGUE, AND EAGERNESS

By Sarah Ash

The Flexible Studies Program at Reynolds Secondary School is a unique program in B.C.'s education system. Our first visit to Reynolds was at the end of February where grade 9 and 10 students greeted us with confusion, but excitement to learn how the Legislative Assembly operates. By the end of our first visit, the students were already thinking about what they might like to debate, and which roles are of interest to them.

By our second visit, it was clear that the Speaker role was extremely popular and discussions for a potential Speaker election began. In the end, an election did not proceed, but resulted in there being a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker. Following that decision, the class was divided into Government, Official Opposition, and Third Party with two students choosing to be Independent MLAs and a group of eager journalists ready to report on the politicians.

It was clear that the students genuinely believed in health and equitable access to educational resources for all. The Government caucus developed a School Inclusion Amendment Act, as an act to provide students with a safe and comfortable environment when they are experiencing mental health challenges. Their vision would require each school to have a room capable of hosting up to ten students with noise-canceling headphones, comfortable seating, and dim lighting.

On the other side of the floor, the Official Opposition put forward the Ractopamine Removal Act, where they hoped to ban the

addition of this growth hormone to the feed for livestock. The Official Opposition put up a strong defense of their bill in response to the Government's hard questioning on how they expect to spend no money implementing the Act.



Sarah, Zaina, and Kayla at the Reynolds Model Parliament

Lastly, the Third Party introduced the Magnet School Integration Act, a last-minute change to their original bill idea that still represented their hopes for increased education. If implemented, School Districts with more than 5,000 students would be required to transform three existing schools into magnet schools with each having a clearly defined focus in either fine arts, sports, or STEM. The Third Party faced harsh critiques from all sides of the House but lived up to the challenge and defended their bill with passion.

In the end, Government, and the Official Opposition both succeeded in having their bills receive Royal Assent; however, the Third-Party bill did not make it out of committee stage. Each party defended their bills and was able to use creativity to bring them to life in the Chamber. Kayla and I were grateful to be able to not only



## B.C. Legislative Internship Program

discuss the Internship program with the students, but also to pass on some of our passion for provincial politics. As someone who did not get the chance to enact a Model Parliament prior to the internship, I was thankful for the hands-on experience to get to know more about our parliamentary system. We would like to extend our gratitude to the students for their eagerness to learn and to Brad Cunningham and Adriana Ayers for their support in our project and for facilitating the Model Parliament.

# STUDENT EDUCATION DAY

LANDSLOWNE LANDS AT THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

By Kevin Franceschini

On June 16 2023, in the Press Theatre, the BC government dropped a bombshell, announcing they are cutting education funding and will operate under a 1000 to 1 student-teacher ratio. What's going on? The grade 8 students at Lansdowne Middle School have formed government and are making their priorities for the province known.

The BCLIP interns had the pleasure of welcoming two grade 8 classes from Lansdowne Middle School to the Parliament Buildings for Student Education Day. After a brief welcome and some impromptu stand-up comedy from the students, the educational fun began. Students were split into groups and took on two different activities: a scavenger hunt around the precinct and a government spending exercise.

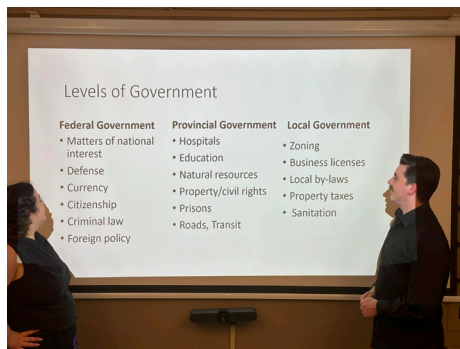
The scavenger hunt, inspired by one Tristen McCartney developed for the Washington State interns, led the students all around the Legislative Precinct, where they learned the story of Shxwtitostel, sat in the outdoor Speaker's chair, and found the portrait of the longest-serving Premier.

The real drama took place in the Press Theatre where students first learned the complexity of government jurisdiction and discovered what responsibilities fell under the umbrella of the provincial government. The students were split into groups and had their turn acting as the Cabinet and deciding how to spend provincial funds on the following categories: Ministry

of Environment (wildfire services), Ministry of Transportation (ferry services), Ministry of Housing (new homes built), Ministry of Health (walk-in clinic wait times), and the Ministry of Education (student-teacher ratios).

Each group had its own ideas and unique priorities and explained and defended its reasoning. All groups were then merged into one as the class become the Cabinet. Each student had one coin to spend and together they had to decide what was important to the government. This led to intense debates and thoughtful discussions as the Lansdowne Cabinet tried to decide how to best spend government money and serve the citizens of British Columbia. Their knowledge of the issues, overall high energy, and willingness to learn was very impressive to all interns.

We want to thank Mme. Jenne Martin and her colleague for facilitating this event and thanks to the students for their great interest.



Bella and Kevin F Presenting to Students

# LOOKING ACROSS(ING) THE AISLE

INTERNS' MODEL PARLIAMENT

By Jacob Schoeber

The world in 2043 is a worse place than it was in the past. Many problems facing previous generations persisted, including climate change, pandemics, and threats to democracy across the globe. While BC has completely reversed its carbon footprint, produces net negative carbon emissions, and has eliminated hunger in the province through unprecedented technological innovations, not all is well in Canada's westernmost province. BC was struck by the "big one" in 2026, a devastating earthquake which physically separated the province of BC from the rest of mainland North America. The province now forms its own island. Additionally, the quake resulted in landslides and floods that led to Southern Vancouver Island complete immersion underwater within a few months. Thankfully, this process took place slowly enough that no lives were lost.



Model Parliament Government Side

BC's success – and its literal separation from the rest of Canada - has led to a new form of Western alienation with many demanding that BC form its own country considering the new geographic, political, and economic realities the province faces. Regular protests support such a move, and

it remains a prevalent issue in provincial politics. The December 2042 election was unique within BC's new political climate. The BC Responsible Autonomy Party (BC RAP) won five seats in the Legislative Assembly, falling two seats short of a majority in the twelve-member Legislature. BC RAP narrowly ousted the BC Coastal Progressive Party (BC CPP) from power, who went from seven seats before the election to four after the election. In a shocking twist that stunned most observers, the BC Academic Socialist Society (BC ASS) rode a wave of support and won three seats, forming the first third-party caucus in the province in many years. This took us to the 48th Model Parliament Day with BC RAP presenting both their Speech from the Throne and Budget Speech. With only a plurality of seats in the Legislative Assembly, and a recent former Premier continuing to lead her party in the Opposition benches, BC RAP was hard-pressed to secure the necessary support to win the confidence of the House and prevent the Official Opposition from quickly returning to power.

Each party introduced one bill during, allowing members from all sides of the House to have their voices heard on issues that mattered to them most. BC RAP introduced the BC Floating to Freedom Act, hoping to designate BC as a semi-autonomous region within Canada by accepting devolved powers from the federal government on areas such as taxation and international trade. This bill was defeated at the second reading, with the BC CPP and BC ASS joining forces to vote it down.

Next, the BC CPP introduced the Food Insecurity and Coastal Initiatives Act, hoping to create new ports to support BC's fisheries industry using knowledge and techniques primarily acquired from local Indigenous peoples. This bill passed without government support.

Finally, BC ASS proposed the BC Universal Education for All Act, hoping to make all levels of education available to everyone in the province regardless of their socio-economic background to empower British Columbia towards an educated and innovative citizenry. It also passed without government support.

This year's Model Parliament featured its fair share of antics and shenanigans. Question Period contained a lively debate focused on government transparency, and everyone's individual statements were comical, keeping the mood light. The most shocking part of the day was when Zaina Khan, the Official Opposition House Leader, surprisingly crossed the floor to join the Government caucus. That change did not stop the Opposition parties from introducing a motion of non-confidence in the Government. Luckily for BC RAP, it was ruled out of order due to the lack of unanimous consent needed to proceed. The Government survived to fight another day against all odds.

Model Parliament was an informative and exciting experience for everyone. We will always appreciate this opportunity to demonstrate our experience and knowledge in parliamentary procedure gained throughout the program. Sitting in the chamber itself was a surreal experience and made us truly feel as if we were actually MLAs, debating and discussing important issues facing British Columbians.

Thank you to all the interns for their preparations for this event. Special thanks to Hansard Services, as well as to our Model Parliament Speaker, Matthew Creswick (intern 2018), Clerk Mary Heeg

(intern 2022) and Sergeant-at-Arms, Dr. Jamie Lawson together with our Lieutenant Governor, Karen Aitken, Page, Nathan Walsh, and Page, Emma Curtis.



Model Parliament Official Opposition Side



Model Parliament Third Party Side



# LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

## MENTOR APPRECIATION DAY

By Isabella Devereaux

One of the highlights, if not the highlight, of our ministry placements is our wonderful “ministry mentors”, without whom our ministry placements would not be possible.

At the beginning of the program, we were all asked what we were most looking forward to during the internship; the overwhelming answer was the ministry placement. The ministry placements occur in January; they are our introduction into the program and into work as interns. Embarking on a new experience can be both exciting and daunting. There are challenges and uncertainties, and it can seem a bit overwhelming. This is why it was so important to have great support and guidance from our ministry mentors. They played a crucial role in setting the foundation for the rest of the program, not only in our work abilities but also in our personal development.

These individuals dedicated their time and energy to ensure our experience at the ministry was both educational and fun! Our mentors guided us through our time in the ministry, teaching us the ropes of public service work. From giving advice on our briefing notes to letting us sit in on important meetings, our mentors played a critical role in our success within the ministry.

In June, we thanked our mentors for their support and guidance. The program hosted a “Mentor Appreciation Day” to allow mentors and mentees to connect before the program ended and to share our accomplishments during the rest of

the program. The mentees created a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting our learning and photos of some of the program since January. It was great to reconnect with our mentors and reiterate how instrumental they were during our time as interns. We are beyond grateful for their support and guidance.

# JUSTICE UNLEASHED

## THE SPECTACULAR INTERN MOCK TRIAL

By Ben Rutkowski

The courtroom was electrified on one of the final mornings of our internship program as the gripping case of *Rex v. Tavish* unfolded. This fictitious murder trial, inspired by real-life events, captivated everyone involved and delved into the intriguing question of a sleepwalker's responsibility for their actions.

Throughout our internship, the realm of law has remained a constant theme. From learning about legislative drafting to sharing pizza with the Attorney General, the significance of law and its role in democracy and governance was prominent. Thus, the opportunity to participate in a lively court case alongside fellow interns, gaining first-hand insights into legal proceedings, was an invaluable learning experience.

The day commenced with an intense meeting between the crown prosecution, led by the formidable Parnian Taheri, and the defense attorney, me. Discussions revolved around the possibility of a plea agreement, but alas, the mutual enthusiasm for a courtroom battle prevailed, rendering the meeting fruitless. As the proceedings kicked off, the Honourable Justice Jacob Schoeber set the tone with a warm and welcoming demeanor that quickly turned into an atmosphere of palpable tension as we delivered our opening statements.

Eyewitness accounts began with the emotionally charged testimony of the victim's wife, Isabella Devereaux, followed by the haunting words of the accused's wife, Jenna Hrechka, and the heartfelt account of the accused's father, Kevin Wong. Finally, the accused, Kevin Franceschini, took the stand with his words carrying the weight of an entire life at stake. Adding further

intrigue, two interns, Sarah Ash, and Zaina Khan, regarded as experts in sleepwalking, shared their compelling testimonies. These testimonies were complemented by meticulous police investigation accounts and captivating photo evidence, all painstakingly gathered from the very real (imaginary) crime scene, thanks to constable Tristen McCartney and forensic investigator Kayla Brent.

The day reached its climax with Justice Schoeber delivering a compassionate sentence, aiming to guide the accused towards a better path in life. The courtroom breathed a collective sigh of relief, recognizing the profound impact of justice and compassion intertwining.

In summary, the case of *Rex v. Tavish* helped us complete our internship with an engaging courtroom drama that taught us about legal proceedings and their profound impact on peoples' lives. The day's events concluded with a compassionate sentence that left us pondering the power of justice and the potential for redemption.



# MEMORIES & FUN ARTICLES

# GENERATION CHAT GPT

SOME LEGISLATIVE PROSE FROM 2023'S FINEST

By ChatGPT as directed by Kayla Brent

In BC, interns sought to excel,  
In the Legislative Program,  
they dwell.

Twelve minds intertwine, In  
friendships so fine, Bridging  
gaps, like a magical spell.

They research, they debate,  
and they share, In the halls of  
power, a vibrant affair.

From diverse backgrounds  
they hail, Their unity will  
never fail, Creating memories  
beyond compare.

In the kitchen, silly Jacob  
tried, To make cookies with  
ketchup as his guide.

With a giggle and a grin, He  
mixed it all in, But the taste  
made everyone run and hide!

Through long hours, they  
work side by side, With  
knowledge and passion as

their guide.

Bonds of friendship they've  
sown, In this program they've  
grown, Forever linked, their  
spirits can't hide.

The BC Legislative Internship  
Program, Fosters camaraderie  
like a beautiful anthem.

Through challenges they  
persist, As a team they exist, A  
bond unbreakable, a lifelong  
emblem.



# BRINGING US TWO SWORD-LENGTHS CLOSER

By Kayla Brent

Much like a reality TV show, Question Period takes up thirty minutes each day and often involves the same few dozen individuals, all of whom are vying to win the favour of the audience and avoid elimination. The exchanges between government and the opposition parties are highly charged. Accusations are hurled across the room, and new headlines emerge, crafted in accordance with the poetic buzzwords imagined by some unnamed staffer.

There were 43 episodes of Question Period during our brief six-month tenure in the B.C. Legislature and, as interns, we had the good fortune of holding reserved seats all season. I attended most days, but of course, on days I needed to miss in order to complete a time-sensitive task, the most dramatic things would happen: a supposed scandal, a sea shanty, a shoutout. Observing these in the Green Party's cave, deep beneath the Chamber in the Assembly's basement, had its own appeal but was certainly less glamorous.

Situated just above the Speaker, our intern seats offered an unforgettable view of B.C.'s political colosseum. Though the chairs were historically arranged to ensure Members were two sword-lengths apart, the most provocative activities in the House today are desk banging and heckling. While comparatively passive, these behaviours still rouse a commotion and amplify a sense of passion that penetrates the Chamber's walls.

In the eyes of some of the Members, the evocative conduct displayed during Question Period is seen as necessary to ensure Members fulfill their role to hold government to account.

For others, it is viewed less favourably and is perceived as a repeatedly disheartening event that allows Members to flex their partisan muscles on the Chamber floor. Also occurring in the federal House of Commons, Question Period has been shown to generate mixed responses from the public. According to a national survey commissioned by CTV in 2018, 65 percent of Canadians feel that Question Period is "politically charged theatre that should be improved."

At different times, groups have band together to formally discuss the merits of Question Period. In 2019, the Hon. Darryl Plecas established the Speaker's Forum on the Role of Members to examine this particular issue, amongst several others. The Forum included academics, political scientists, media, educators, former MLAs, parliamentary officials, and youth – one of whom was me. The participants recommended a wide range of changes to improve decorum, such as banning heckling, randomizing and rotating seating assignments, extending camera angles to display the entire Chamber, and incorporating the Talking Stick into Question Period. To date, none of these ideas have caught on, but their potential to be enacted or further developed remains.

In the era of social media, we know that public opinion can be greatly influenced by the snappy headlines and short, fiery sound bites that Question Period tends to produce. This year, a handful of topics were raised repeatedly during Question Period: the toxic drug crisis, housing affordability, and healthcare challenges were brought up almost daily by the opposition parties. So soon after the conclusion of session,

it's difficult to determine whether these questions spurred meaningful action, though they definitely attracted awareness and stimulated dialogue.

Throughout the internship, Question Period encouraged countless conversations between myself and the other interns, caucus staff, Members, and the media. While tense and partisan in the moment, our interactions outside of the Chamber could rarely be characterized as such. People from all political backgrounds had nuanced opinions on the issues of the day that helped expand my understanding and expose me to new perspectives. These "off-the-record" exchanges had a defining impact on my learning experience and reduced my impression of political polarization. Seeing politics away from the cameras enabled me to hear people's genuine thoughts, which were typically more sympathetic, contemplative, and inspiring than what is seen on Hansard TV. As interns, we get to see behind the curtain and, I believe, are better off because of it.

# AROUND THE LEG



Interns on BC Beef Day!



Having Lunch



Contemplating by the Window



Supporting our Favorite Teams!



A Special Meeting with Rob Shaw



Being Real in the Cabinet Room



Celebrating Mr. Speaker's Birthday



First Time in the Legislative Library



Interns on the Dome!



First Day as Interns!



Reuniting for Lunch at RedBarn



# MLA INTERVIEWS

A PERSPECTIVE FROM EACH CAUCUS

By Kevin Wong, Kevin Franceschini and Kayla Brent

These interviews have been edited for length and clarity.



**Minister Harry Bains**

By Kevin Wong

Minister Bains, thanks for taking the time to chat. Can you tell us about something you wish people knew about your community in Surrey-Newton?

I would say that the thing that stands out most about Surrey-Newton is how engaged they [citizens] are. We have one of the most diverse communities in Canada in terms of ethnicity, religion, and demographics, and it's only growing larger and larger. Everyone has something they care about, and they actively work to make things better.

Let's look at banquet halls. We have eight banquet halls, not including religious spaces, and they're almost always open. Major fundraisers for every cause from cancer to earthquake relief to anti-racism find a passionate community that rallies around [them] to show their support. During emergencies, local organizations fundraised and hired their own helicopters to deliver food and supplies to other communities. That sense of giving and of reaching beyond our own city and community to help those less fortunate is always inspiring to me.

What made you interested you in politics? What was your reason for change?

I understood that politics mattered while I was still working. Labour movements were about basic human and workers' rights, and I got very involved in that to highlight the racism and discrimination that many of us faced. From being passed up for promotions, being mistreated, making less money, and [having less] job security, racism in the workplace was a huge issue. But I knew politics mattered and was engaged with it, because I knew it was really politicians who made the rules that could protect people, especially for the workplace. It was government and politicians that could do something about it and force companies to behave a certain way. When I decided to run for politics, I saw the CCF as being



the most aligned with those values, and so that's the party I joined.

**How do you feel about B.C.'s relationship with other governments, and are there opportunities where we can take advantage of having learned from other jurisdictions?**

I would say we have a pretty good relationship with other governments, whether that's in Washington, other provinces, or the federal government. We can learn a lot from other jurisdictions, especially from different approaches to gig and precarious work. But in many ways, B.C. is a leader among many jurisdictions for workers' rights. Still, we put time into these relationships to learn and work on areas of federal jurisdictions, like temporary foreign workers.



**MLA Elenore Sturko**

By Kevin Franceschini

**What makes your community unique compared to other communities?**

Well, one of the things that's unique about

Surrey, is that it is so tremendously multicultural. We also have a really interesting, blended community where you have an opportunity as a community member to participate in so many different cultural events. For example, the Sikh community is very active in Surrey, and it's also a tremendously welcoming community. And so, you know, everything from the Vaisakhi parade to even at the gurdwaras, people are welcome to participate. And that goes for other cultures, within Surrey as well. There are just so many opportunities in our community to learn about, newcomers and people who've lived here for generations, but also continue to share their cultural practices from where they originated from. It's so unique here. And I think it's one of the most inclusive cities that I've ever been to. And I've lived in lots of places in my career, as an RCMP officer and when I was a kid, my dad worked for the government, and we lived everywhere, but I can honestly say that Surrey is probably the most inclusive, whether you're LGBT, or you're from a different religion or you're from anywhere in the world, I think you can find a sense of belonging and feel welcome in Surrey.

**As an elected official, what is something you think the public should know about the job you do at the Legislature?**

I always think this, especially on social media, that people always think I'm very negative. Because I'm always criticizing, they always question, "Why do you always say things that are wrong?". But literally, my job is to be the critic. My job is to criticize things that I feel could be done better. If the level of scrutiny isn't there, I will criticize, but I am not just being a naysayer; I've dished out plenty of praise for good initiatives too. But at the same time, it is my job to make sure that the public funds are being spent properly and that all of the questions on behalf of the public get answered.

## B.C. Legislative Internship Program

Also at the same time, I've only been in politics for seven months so even though I criticize, I also bring ideas forward, for example with the private member's bill to make changes to the BC Mental Health Act, because not only do I want to, critique the things that are being rolled out by the government, but I'm also willing to work together to offer solutions. I just want people to understand I'm not actually a Negative Nelly, I am a very positive person. I actually do believe that we can work together and get things done and make British Columbia, a healthier, stronger place, but it is my job to critique, hence, the critic for mental health addiction recovery and education. I'm actually quite a positive person.

**What's an opportunity for BC to take advantage of in the next few years having learned from other jurisdictions? (This could be trade, jobs, social developments, etc.)**

I really would love to see BC become a leader in producing rare earth minerals and the mining sector. We have an opportunity here with so much, and to partner with First Nations, partner with some of our rural communities as we're getting into things like producing electric batteries for vehicles and different types of power sources. Having mining projects in our province that can actually produce those elements that are needed for this growing industry, I think is a great opportunity for us. But not only that, I think that the pandemic really showed the importance of also supporting a strong manufacturing sector. So not only would I love to see British Columbia do more in terms of being able to create jobs and opportunities in harvesting some of our natural mineral resources, but I would love to see partnerships with universities and technology firms and manufacturing companies that are interested in developing new power sources, electric batteries, different kinds of green technologies, and I would love it if they would set up their factories in Surrey-South.



**MLA Sonia Furstenuu**

By Kayla Brent

**What is one thing you wish people knew about your community?**

I wish people could know and understand what an incredible, positive influence Cowichan Tribes has on the wider community. I think that one of the reasons Cowichan is so special is because Cowichan Tribes is a First Nation that's really embedded in the urban areas of Cowichan and Duncan. The culture, the wisdom, the ways of knowing, and ways of being of the Cowichan people really saturates the whole valley. I think it is what sets Cowichan apart in so many ways, and so for example, I met these people from Reconciliation Canada in 2017 – way back – and when I said I was the MLA for Cowichan, they were so excited and they said, "You have the Cowichan Watershed Board, right?". So, this is a co-governance model involving the Chief of Cowichan Tribes and the Chair of the CVRD. And this Ottawa-based organization, Reconciliation

a co-governance model involving the Chief of Cowichan Tribes and the Chair of the CVRD. And this Ottawa-based organization, Reconciliation Canada, holds Cowichan up as a model for reconciliation. What is recognized in Ottawa, and is often overlooked here in BC, is the leadership that we see on so many fronts out in Cowichan is that connected to the Cowichan Tribes and their people.

**As an elected official, what is something you think the public should know about the job you do at the Legislature?**

I think it would be good for people to know that the job within the Legislature is only one small, really one slice, of the whole job. The whole job is enormous, and it got even more enormous when I became the leader of a party. I really feel like I have three full-time jobs. I have a full-time job as a constituency MLA. I have a full-time job as a legislative MLA in here, and that is really informed by the issues that come up in Cowichan. They really inform the work in here, which is to try to look at the systemic solutions to these issues, which are symptoms of a problem. And then I have a full-time job as the leader of a party. Three full-time jobs. I think that's one thing that would be good for people to know that there's this perception that the work is all being done inside this Legislature. It's not.

**How would you describe your experience being the only current female leader in BC?**

It's given me a lot of insight into what is perceived as leadership, as opposed to what I believe leadership to be. I'm very committed to leadership being, again, something that is shared. It's a shared burden. So, you know, we have two deputy leaders, Adam is House Leader. The leadership in this party is about it being held in a number of different hands. That's an expression and a manifestation of how I think about leadership. It's never about one person,

but what I see is the kind of longstanding view and belief that leadership is all embodied in one person, typically one man. Again, along with my thinking on democracy and politics being more oriented towards power-sharing, I think that we really have to be willing to see leadership in completely different ways. I embody a kind of leadership and I'm not even saying that that's the only kind of leadership that I think is good. I think there's different styles and different approaches to leadership that would all help strengthen our politics and our democracy. For me, the reason I ran to be leader was because I really wanted to demonstrate something different. I also think I measure success differently than people typically do in politics. I think Adam and I have shown that even two people as a third party can affect change, like real, substantial, concrete change, and make things happen. I think that it would be awesome to see a kind of empowerment of all the MLAs in this place to be able to be the most effective changemakers that they can be. We're so much smarter when we're listening to each other. It's not rocket science.

# MEET & GREET

INTERNS MEETING WITH PROVINCIAL LEADERS



Honourable Janet Austin, OBC  
Lieutenant Governor



Honourable David Eby  
Premier



Kevin Falcon  
Official Opposition Leader



Sonia Furstenau  
Leader of the Third Party



Honourable Rob Fleming  
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure



Honourable Pam Alexis  
Minister of Agriculture and Food

# TWO OF B.C.'S FIRSTS

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FIRST WOMAN ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE FIRST SOUTH ASIAN CANADIAN WOMAN ATTORNEY GENERAL

By Parnian Taheri

**What are some of the hurdles or hardships that you have faced as the AG?**

*Shirley Bond, MLA, Prince George-Valemount:*

I think the hardest thing is that people dismiss your ability to do the job because you're not a lawyer or because you don't have that specific background. Although it was hard, all that made me do was work harder to prove that I had the capability of dealing with the ministry that I was given by the Premier. I often think that women are underestimated for their level of capability, and in this case, it is a very complex situation where you're not a lawyer and you're the first female to do the job. I think for me, it was already a tough, complex job and I had to develop the credibility necessary to make sure that I could provide good advice to the government, of course.

There is absolutely no doubt that there were people who were concerned about the appointment that the Premier made in choosing me. A lot of women face that no matter what job they do. Somehow, people think we are not capable, and it is rarely about that. It is about opportunity. Often, women are not given the opportunity to do many of the jobs that they excel at, and we still face very significant gender barriers in the workplace, no matter where your workplace is.

*Hon. Niki Sharma, K.C., MLA, Vancouver-Hastings:*

I have noticed that people are not used to seeing somebody like me in this role, and I think

sometimes they can react in a way that seems surprised. So I am constantly feeling the need to prove myself in the role and show people that somebody like me can actually do the job, and do it well. Maybe everybody does that when they're the Attorney General. This is a big role, so I think maybe everybody does, but I definitely think there is that aspect of me being the Attorney General that makes it different.

I think every time you start something new, there is always the way you have to show up, to understand and get yourself up to speed with everything. I think that was a big part of the learning curve that happened. In this place, it happens very quickly, because you're always doing something new. It is always like being put in a new position and learning everything anew, which is actually a really great part of the job as well.



Parnian with AG Sharma



## B.C. Legislative Internship Program

### What do you consider to be some of your accomplishments as the AG?

*Shirley Bond, MLA:* I think one of the most substantive things we did was the work on the *Family Law Act*.

It was long overdue, in terms of addressing the issues surrounding family and protection, and how families are represented. It was one thing that was great about the amazing team of people at the Attorney General's Ministry, who for many years, had been looking at that piece of legislation. For some of them, it was their life's work. The Family Law Act was substantive and significant, something that I still, to this day, think about, as well as how important that work was.

Because the Attorney General's Ministry was combined with the Ministry of Justice, I was able to work on issues like human trafficking. I was able to, first of all, become much more aware of the challenges regarding human trafficking in British Columbia. So the combined Ministry - although very difficult, because it really took two ministries and put them in one - really allowed for such issues to be addressed.

I did both jobs, so it was an extraordinary, extraordinarily difficult workload, but I think the Family Law Act was important legislation and also an opportunity to try to look at legislation and advice through the eyes of a layperson, because I'm not a lawyer. So in many ways, that brought a different perspective to the table and the Ministry of the Attorney General. I had a great team of people around me, really exceptional lawyers, that were there to help me to make sure that the work got done and that the government got the advice it needed. So, I think it contained lots of intense homework which led my staff and I to work long hours to make sure that we did our job well.

*Hon. Niki Sharma:* I feel very lucky and privileged to be in a position where I can make a difference

for people and my mandate letter really aligns with work that I have been doing.

As a lawyer, I used to practise in representing Indigenous people. We introduced legislation for protecting people against the distribution of their images without their consent, which is called the Intimate Images Protection Act. It is an example of how systems can help protect people, because I think the legislation that we are working on implementing will help with this. Before the introduction of this act, young people particularly were really impacted by things like this, and this sometimes led to unfortunate incidents of suicide.

Another thing that I am really proud of working on is the justice strategy. Although we have a



Parnian with MLA Bond

lot of work to do there, there's something really profound about taking this step into removing colonial systems that were impacting Indigenous communities. I think that work is just amazing to be a part of, so I feel very fortunate about that.

We are also doing some anti-racism work that we were just talking about today, and we are going to be introducing anti-racism legislation. There are a lot of things that I feel so proud to be a part of as the Attorney General, but the really amazing thing about this role is to think about how we can make the justice system work better for people. It is a real privilege and opportunity for me to be able to do that.

**What was your experience as a woman in a role that was previously male dominated?**

*Shirley Bond, MLA:* I think that many people celebrated the fact that there was now a woman in the role. In many people's minds, it was long overdue. For me, although it was an important milestone, I think the bigger challenge for me was less about gender and more about developing credibility in a role where there is typically a lawyer in that role, although I was not a lawyer. Also, my experience as a Cabinet Minister was definitely critical to being able to do the job.

Having said that, there were a lot of people who provided support, who were willing to give me the chance to do the job. In fact, the Attorney General critic of the day was asked about how I could do the job if I am not a lawyer and he said: "If there's anyone on that side of the House that can do it, I'm confident that it is her." That shows that, across party lines, there is a respect that can develop, and I am very grateful for the comments that he made at that time.

*Hon. Niki Sharma:* That is a really good question. I think what is interesting is that often when I meet people that are new and don't know me, they're very surprised that I'm the Attorney General. For example, today I had a bunch of people come to the office. They were getting a tour. I stood up and said: "Hi. Nice to meet you." Then somebody said: "Oh, this is our Attorney General." They were surprised.

Often, people do not expect that somebody that looks like me is in a role that is so established and institutionalized. You can see that, just outside the Attorney General's office, by the pictures that are hanging in the hallway. It is two long rows of men until you reach the photo of the first women Attorney Generals. So even if it is not intentional, people do not associate the role of Attorney General with somebody that looks like me, and I feel like that's just part of my daily experience in this role.

Also, I think it is part of breaking down barriers to be that person that sits in the role and says: "Yes, I am the Attorney General. Nice to meet you." I feel like there is a responsibility that comes with that, so I wake up every day trying to do the best job that I can in this role.

I think every woman that is in a role, especially a role that is associated with power, will tell you - and I can say this for myself - that I feel like I have to work ten times harder. I have this thought in my mind that I have to present myself as being exceptionally competent and ready to take on the role, because the assumption that I'm working against is that I didn't get the role because I was qualified or because I am able to do the job well. So, I think that's just part of the feeling that probably a lot of women have when they are in such roles.

# REACHING OUT TO BRING COMMUNITY IN

By Jenna Hrechka

On a snowy, wet Tuesday morning, I joined Community Integration Specialists (CIS) Terri Dorey and Brynn Tucker on a day trip to Salt Spring Island. CIS work out of the Service Delivery division of the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR). Their positions were created by SDPR in 2020 to better connect people in B.C. with supports to achieve better social outcomes. As I had been learning more about SDPR, I was eager to meet and learn from the people who were working on the front lines to support community members.

CIS are out in the community for 80-85% of their work week, using reflective in-reach approaches to build relationships and understandings with clients and outreach approaches to connect individuals in encampments, supportive housing sites, and community support hubs to support services. This often involves helping individuals who may be experiencing homelessness, trauma, or mental health and addiction issues with income assistance processes and navigating multiple support and treatment services. Being connected to the various government agencies, non-profit organizations, and Indigenous organizations in the community are key ways CIS ensures that people are accessing the supports that are available to them.

In the provincial budget 2022, it was announced that the branch would be more than doubling the number of CIS in B.C. from 73 to 190, making them available to help people in many more communities. One ongoing pilot project Terri mentioned was a mobile cheque office that would allow CIS to print income assistance

cheques right there in person for those who need it. This would allow people to receive these cheques immediately, saving those with no fixed addresses a trip to the B.C. Service Centre. As I shadowed Terri and Brynn on Salt Spring Island, it was clear that these services were making an important impact for those most vulnerable in B.C.

Our first stop on Salt Spring was at the Salt Spring Island Community Services Society, a non-profit organization that provides vital community services, including counseling, support, youth drop-in centres, and mental health services. Since Terri typically comes every Tuesday around 10am, the workers were anticipating our arrival. When we entered the building, we were met by a support worker who informed us that there was a gentleman there who had recently become homeless and was looking for support. He and Brynn went into a private office, and she began helping him file the necessary paperwork to get him onto income assistance.

Meanwhile, Terri and I sat in the lobby area and, slowly, several people began popping in, assumedly knowing that Terri would be there, as most of them seemed to have a friendly rapport with her. On that day, Terri would end up helping many of them apply for additional funding to purchase fuel to keep them warm as the weather began getting colder. I learned that many of the people experiencing homelessness on Salt Spring Island live on abandoned boats. These boats, Terri told me, often were no longer in service. Instead of doing the proper disposal process, owners would give them to people in the community to

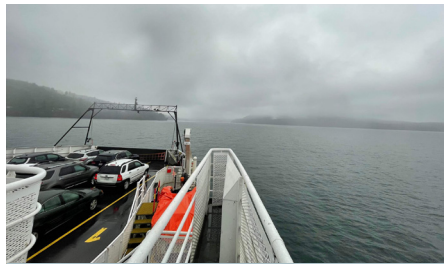
live on.

After this visit, we went on a bit of a tour of the community, with Terri pointing out the different supportive housing options and services available for people. This included temporary modular housing units that were created during the pandemic and where many people were still living. B.C. Housing is currently working on building 28 permanent supportive homes for Salt Spring Island residents who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness, with many people in these modular homes being prioritized for the new units. We stopped to say hi to a support worker, who filled us in on the current happenings in the building.

We ended our trip with some lunch at the local food trucks and drove to get into the line for the ferry back to Victoria. As we sat and waited, we chatted about the program and the different experiences that Terri and Brynn encountered in this job. It was clear that a big part of the job involved making meaningful connections and gaining the trust of the people they interacted with. Lisa recounted one story of a CIS worker in another area who had called her recently, rejoicing that she was finally able to convince a community member to get on income support and begin getting the support he needed to find stability.

However, it also struck me that many times there were not success stories. Unfortunately, many of the people CIS interact with are impacted by the opioid crisis. There are times when people CIS make connections with end up as victims of the toxic drug crisis, and it is essential that workers always carry Narcan with them. In tragic instances like an overdose of a client, Terri said that she leans on other CIS workers, knowing that they will be there to support each other and understand what each other are going through.

In the short period they have been around, Community Integration Specialists have become important links in communities. They create trust-based relationships to help people navigate complex government systems and access support services. My trip to Salt Spring Island left me thinking about how each community has their own set of unique needs and issues. Having support services that recognize this and individuals that take the time to learn and listen to people's needs is essential in supporting and advocating for those most vulnerable in our communities. I was grateful for the opportunity to learn from Terri and Brynn about the issues facing people on Salt Spring Island and the Community Integration Team's work. I look forward to using what I learned to educate people on the innovative ways we can support those most vulnerable in our communities and to potentially using it in a future career to help contribute to these policy ideas.



Jenna's Ferry Ride to Salt Spring

# AN INSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE BC LEGISLATURE

A CHAT WITH VAUGHN PALMER

By Jacob Schoeber



Vaughn Palmer

Vancouver Sun

In a world where misinformation and disinformation pose ever-increasing threats to democracy, the role of journalists in holding people in power accountable and bringing key issues to the public's attention is more important than ever. I was lucky enough to interview Vaughn Palmer, a respected columnist with the Vancouver Sun who has covered provincial politics for nearly four decades. He has also appeared regularly on CKNW for nearly 20 years with hosts like Jon McComb and Simi Sara. His daily op-ed column and frequent radio hits provide important insights

into the inner workings of the Legislature, and this interview was a valuable deep-dive into the mind of someone who knows provincial politics better than almost anyone. I am very appreciative that he took the time to speak to me.

**What is your experience with our internship program, given that your daughter was an intern and that you have been a supporter of the program for a long time?**

I am not sure exactly when I became aware of the program, but as you said, I have been a supporter of the program for a long time. My connection to the program goes back to professors like Dr. Patrick Smith and Dr. Norman Ruff who oversaw the academic side of the program back in the day. My daughter was an intern in the 2011 cohort. I usually try to attend the media panel [during intern orientation week], but was not able to make it this year, because it occurred during the deadline period for newscpeople [mid to late afternoon]. I hope to meet the rest of the interns during the last week [when the media lunch would be held].

**What have you learned about the Legislature having worked here for almost 40 years?**

This is my 40th year covering provincial politics and David Eby is the 11th premier I have covered. Much of the atmosphere and tone of [the Legislature] goes in cycles, but the adversarial nature of Question Period is constant, with the



parties attempting to trash each other's record and remind people of the differences between them. These differences are exaggerated in order to appeal to the electorate. But what we often see is that when the opposing party comes into government, they decide not to trash old policies because sometimes it is not always feasible. Two prominent examples of this are the Agricultural Land Reserve and ICBC, both creations of the 1970s Dave Barrett NDP government which are still with us today even though the NDP has not been in government the whole time since then.

Following up on that, do you see a different side of politics than what the general public sees on the news every night? Do you see politicians of different stripes getting along with each other?

Oh, yes, I have! [However], this goes in waves too. Often, when a governing party is way behind in the polls, we will see the tone inside [the Legislature] become more combative, and all parties adopt a "take no prisoners" approach as the opposition smells blood in the water and the government has to respond to that. During other times, however, I have often seen collaboration between parties to get things done with a certain amount of collegiality. This also depends on the unique personalities involved. For example, in the 1980s the then-Social Credit Party Premier Bill Bennett and then-BCNDP leader Dave Barrett hated each other and acted like it. Some of this, of course, is "theatre," and some of it is not.

One big change in recent years is the advent of social media, both as a forum for spreading legitimate news and (less fortunately) a forum for spreading misinformation. Social media gives a platform for people to heckle and harass politicians (and the media) and connect them with like-minded people. This [discourages people] from running for office, especially for prospective female and minority candidates, who tend to receive more online abuse than their [male and] white counterparts. The same can be

said of media reporters, too. Colleagues who are women and/or from a visible minority tend to receive more abuse than I do as a white man.

Are your personal relationships with the elected politicians here impacted by what you write about them? It is safe to say that no one has been immune from Vaughn Palmer critique over the years?

No, not really. Most elected politicians – unlike journalists – already have thick skins, and if they do not, they quickly learn it once they get into office. The wisest politicians, in fact, never let on that (or if) they read your work. They tend to view the media as a way to talk to the public. Essentially, everyone thinks that you have to talk to these people, [reporters], to get your message across.

Ultimately, any criticism politicians receive in the media pales in comparison to the criticism and abuse they get in public meetings or in social media. A few critical sentences in the Vancouver Sun will not really be top of mind for them at the end of the day.

How did COVID-19 shift the way you covered politics, if at all?

I personally had to hunker down, because I am immunocompromised, so for nearly two years I barely left the house and didn't visit the Legislature in person. I had to cover everything online, which included listening to basically all of Dr. Bonnie Henry's press briefs – all 200 or so of them. I have never experienced anything like this during my career, with increased isolation and less direct access to politicians. This was transformational for my job, especially in 2020 and 2021, when new, non-COVID stories would appear, and within two or three days COVID (what were case numbers like? When were restrictions easing? That kind of thing.... What was happening in our long-term care homes?)

would take over the public's attention again.

Then, suddenly, in 2022, the stories started coming back. These stories were always there, but during [the first two or so years of the pandemic] they just were not top of mind for people. Some of these issues, such as the backlog of waitlisted surgeries, the housing crisis, and the shortage of medical doctors, all [pre-dated] the pandemic but were exacerbated by the pandemic in ways nobody expected.

The print newspaper industry is often seen as a dying industry. Do you think the industry is doing enough to keep up with this trend in order to prevent your type of journalism from dying out?

You are right to suggest that the print newspaper is in decline. Many newspapers have closed, and those that are open continue to struggle on the revenue side. They have all been trying to come up with business models to replace the print newspaper, with some amounts of success. But despite that, newspapers all around the world have started to struggle over the past 20-30 years, even those with large amounts of proprietary material and [a] wealthy readership like the Wall Street Journal. To this point, nobody has come up with an economic model [for newspapers] that has been proven to be sustainable. Simply put, most people just do not get their news from traditional newspapers anymore. Cable companies are losing subscribers, and traditional mediums of radio and TV are in decline. That is the way these things are, and there is not much point in complaining about it.

Are you concerned about artificial intelligence programs like Chat GPT potentially rendering human journalists somewhat obsolete in the future?

[This trend] is really fascinating! I was once on a speaking panel with someone who does radio voiceovers, and he said that his industry

colleagues believe that one day they will be replaced by [AI] programs that sound like human beings, do not need to be paid, and do not get tired. There are already TV anchor and reporter programs being generated by AI, and before long [there will be] programs that can write political columns. The key issue is whether people will be able to tell if the columns are written by a human or a computer. [These AI programs] will probably be able to fool me! We should accept these changes, as they are full of promise, but we also need to be mindful of the big risk they pose to society, especially around fake news. Technology can be used for malicious purposes, and luckily, I do believe people who are developing these AI systems are mindful of these concerns! As long as we are aware of the risks, we can absorb the consequences!

# VISITING EVERY BRITISH COLUMBIAN'S HOUSE

A VISIT TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE

By Zaina Khan

British Columbia appears to be a province with close ties to the Crown. From our provincial flag to the name of our capital city, there are reminders all over BC of our historical relationship to the monarchy. In the heart of Victoria, Government House – the ceremonial home for all British Columbians, is full with symbols of history, tradition, and the enduring ties between the monarchy and our province. Meeting BC's Lieutenant Governor, Honourable Janet Austin, O.B.C. was an extraordinary privilege that our cohort was able to enjoy.

The Honourable Janet Austin is the 30th Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia and a former non-profit sector executive and public servant. As the 2023 Intern cohort, we would head up to the public galleries during the spring sitting to observe Royal Assent and to see the splash of pink that Her Honour would typically wear. We are very honoured and humbled to be the last intern cohort to have had an opportunity to meet with the Honourable Janet Austin as her term is expected to come to an end this fall.

Just like the Lieutenant Governor herself, every corner of Government House radiates charm and cordiality – it calls you in and reminds you that BC is your home. Walking in the gardens on the grounds of Government House reminded us of how unique our province is not only by its geographical region on the pacific coast, but also by the presence of the various flora and the return of the original camas.



The Fancy Ladies Washroom at Government House



Tristen and Kevin Getting Ready to Play Billiards at Government House

## B.C. Legislative Internship Program

As visitors at Government House, we were welcomed and treated to the classic British tradition of sharing tea and home-made delicious treats. In many cultures around the world, “breaking bread”, the sharing of food and refreshments is a way to connect with the people around you. Having the opportunity to speak with Her Honour was, without a doubt, a highlight of the program. As not only did we gain a deeper understanding of the role and significance of the Crown in the province, but we also fostered a profound appreciation for the values of duty, service, and the rich histories that continue to shape BC’s legislative landscape. Thank you to the Honourable Janet Austin and her wonderful staff for welcoming us and taking the time to share their immense knowledge with us.

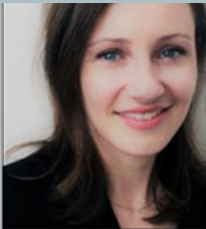


Interns Listening to Hon. Janet Austin, OBC

# ALUMNI INTERVIEW

CATCHING UP WITH NORAH WHITE

By Tristen McCartney



Name	Norah White
Cohort Year	2005
Ministry Placement	Ministry of Forests and Range
Caucus Placement	Government
Current Role	Executive Director, Provincial Old Growth Strategy
Current Location	Victoria, ON

## What have you been up to since the Internship?

Norah completed the internship in 2005 and then got married, had kids and settled down. Originally from Vancouver, Norah has stayed in Victoria ever since, other than some short work-related moves around the province.

The internship allowed Norah to discover how government worked and how policy is developed. Norah noted that the internship was her first foray into the workforce and that she found what she was looking for in her career through the internship. Her first job after the internship was working for the B.C. NDP caucus.

Norah also enhanced her education by becoming a Registered Professional Forester. To become an RPF, a person must have a sponsor, and Norah received her sponsorship from a mentor she had met in her Ministry placement. Norah entered the Ministry of Forests and Range. Focusing on the policy components of the ministry, she is now the Executive Director of the Provincial Old Growth Strategy under the Office of the Chief Forester.

Norah has dedicated most of her career to the Ministry of Forests and Range, only leaving for a year to be the Director of Regulatory Affairs at the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission, while also obtaining her Executive MBA online.

## How did the internship set you up for a career in the public service?

Norah found that one of the most valuable components of the internship was the vast and extremely well-connected intern network. Norah mentioned the 'intern halo', wearing hers proudly and using it as a method to connect with people. This halo has provided interns in the past and present with access to all sorts of experiences. Norah found that the intern network provided stability, commonality, and friendship throughout a variety of workplaces. This network provided her with a sense of protection and security in the early stages of her career development. Norah also appreciated the internship for showing her the nuances of how government and the public service work on projects and priorities.



### What was your fondest memory of the internship?

Norah had a few favourite memories from her time as an intern. She recalled going to the roof of the Legislature and seeing the great view of downtown Victoria and the Inner Harbour.

Norah also remembered regularly checking around corners for members of the media who were trying to get any information out of the interns and exercising caution to ensure that the legislative press were not able to get any information from them.

Another memory that stuck out for Norah was her constituency placement. Norah recalled arranging a large multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary meeting for over 100 people as part of her constituency week on the North Island with MLA Rod Visser.

### What was it like working in both opposition and then government immediately after the internship?

Norah had the opportunity to work in both a B.C. Liberal-led government as an intern and as an NDP opposition researcher one week after the internship ended. Norah and fellow intern Amy Higginbotham were the first two new hires for the NDP caucus after the 2005 election. Norah found that the workload as a government intern was lighter than being an opposition researcher. She pointed out that this was likely due to there being more interns to spread the workload around. Following her time as a researcher for the caucus, Norah proceeded to have a successful transition to the B.C. public service.

### How did you find transitioning from government work to working in the public sector?

Looking back at her experience in the Official Opposition, Norah recalled the extensive work hours. She mentioned how there would be an occasional 3 a.m. start. As an opposition

researcher on a small team, Norah was required to work diligently and at a fast pace. She pointed out the difficulties in accessing the information and became quite familiar with filing Freedom of Information requests.

Norah entered the public service following her time as an NDP caucus researcher, returning to the Ministry of Forests and Range as a RO 18, an entry-level position for a research officer. Coming from being an opposition researcher, she found the initial change of workload into the public service a bit slower. As her career developed, the pace and difficulty of the work increased. Now as the Executive Director of Old Growth, an extremely fast-paced and political file, she feels skills that were developed over her career are being used every day.

Another point that Norah highlighted was that she finds the public service to be a largely collaborative space. While the timelines are tight and the work can be stressful, Norah stated that she feels well-supported by her executive colleagues and her dedicated team.

# BCLIP ALUMNI CORNER

CATCHING UP AND STAYING IN TOUCH

By Jacob Schoeber

---

## ALUMNI MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

This year's intern cohort were fortunate to connect with BCLIP alumni volunteer mentors for guidance on navigating the program, caucus placements, ministry work, career advice, and much, much more. We are very grateful to the many alumni who offered their time and expertise. It means a great deal to each of us that you were willing to serve as guides and advisors.

Thank you very much for your dedication and commitment to the role of alumni mentor!

A big thank you, as well, to Esther Rzeplinski (2014) for organizing the alumni mentorship program once again this year. The following list showcases the knowledgeable and amazing mentor she assigned to each of us!

Emily Barner (2015)

Matthew Chan (2015)

Katie Comley (2011)

Faizel Gulamhussein (2007)

Jacob Helliwell (2012)

Thomas Lattimer (2013)

Renae Snell (2014)

Alissa Wrean (2015)

## BCLIP ALUMNI UPDATE

As always, our hard-working and intelligent BCLIP alumni have been up to some amazing things in the years following their internship at the Legislative Assembly. Taking a little time each year to catch up with our alumni allows us to stay connected as a community. We are SO PROUD of what everyone has accomplished and look forward to hearing more about their endeavours

in the years to come.

Now, time to highlight some specific people who shared their recent exploits with us:

---

### Geoff Gartshore (1990)

Geoff Gartshore is one year into the honour of serving as Canada's Ambassador to Cuba and is looking forward to meeting with any BCLIP alumni who may be travelling to Havana in the next while.



---

### Gianpola (John) Panusa, K.C. (1994)

John Panusa, K.C. was awarded his Queen's Counsel, now King's Counsel designation, as well as the Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal for contributions to the justice system and is the current Chair of the Association of Legal Aid Plans of Canada..



## Jamie Gillies (2001)

Jamie Gillies is a Professor of Communications and Public Policy and Chair of the Department of Journalism and Communications at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick. He is the editor of four book collections on political marketing in the 2016 and 2020 American presidential elections and the 2019 and 2021 Canadian federal elections. In 2022, he taught the first university-level communications and marketing course in the world focused entirely on Taylor Swift.

---



## Reverend Jacqueline Eaton (2002)

Reverend Jacqueline Eaton (2002) completed her Master of Divinity degree at the Vancouver School of Theology and is now serving at St. George Anglican Church in West Kelowna.

---



## Dr. Sarah Wiebe (2007)

Dr. Sarah Wiebe teaches public policy at UVic (any former interns want to be a guest speaker for her class?) running the “Design Justice Collaboratory” with the Royal B.C. Museum, doing research about extreme heat in the Capital Regional District and is about to celebrate a book launch at the RBCM. It really is true that there are BCLIP alumni everywhere if you know where to look!



Dr. Sarah Wiebe also had a son in 2021, Forest, who now attends child care with the daughter of 2014 intern Emma Carswell (small world, eh?).

## Mikayla Roberts (2016)

Mikayla Roberts was married last August at Whannock Lake, with intern colleagues Heather Clifford, Megan Parisotto, Rowan Laird and Alex Dauncey-Elwood in the audience cheering her on!



---

It inspires us each and every day to see what our amazing BCLIP alumni are up to.

On April 14, we were also fortunate to have a BCLIP alumni social event at the Bent Mast Pub in James Bay. Around thirty alumni attended, and many of the current 2023 interns were able to join the event. Over tasty food and drinks, it was awesome to connect and

reminisce about current (in our cases) and past (in their cases) experiences in the internship program.

I am greatly inspired by what everyone has accomplished in their post-BCLIP years, and I hope to reconnect with many of these amazing people again at a future reunion.

## STAY CONNECTED

To stay connected with the B.C. Legislative Internship Program and receive your annual Gazette publication (digital or printed copy), please contact us with your current contact information.

[BCLIP@leg.bc.ca](mailto:BCLIP@leg.bc.ca)



# BEAUTIFUL BRITISH COLUMBIAN MOUSTACHES

By Kevin Franceshini

The history of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia is vast, spanning over 163 years from the construction of the Birdcages. In that time, much has changed. The province joined Confederation, fought two world wars, and built a more inclusive province. Much of B.C.'s political history has been documented and explored, including eccentric politicians, primary debates, and major scandals.

Yet, one prominent area has yet to be properly explored and I have taken it upon myself to fill this gap in our collective provincial history. Who had the greatest moustache in the history of the B.C. Legislature?

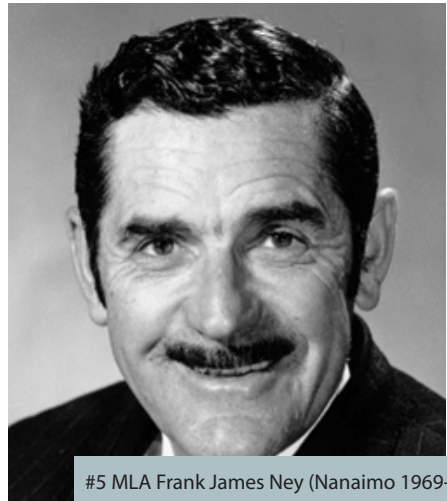
I began my search by looking through the photos available in the B.C. archives and the Legislative Assembly. In my search, a few trends became apparent: the early days after Confederation was the peak of facial hair prominence in the province. Moustaches, beards, and all in between were the norm with facial-haired Members vastly outnumbering those not. This continued into the next century, until gradually, by the 1950s, the dominance of facial hair began to decline. However, the moustache never went extinct and even returned to the Premier's office in 1991 under Mike Harcourt and his successor, Glen Clark, in 1996.

Is the moustache experiencing a revival? It's too early to tell. However, the results are promising - as moustaches gradually come back into style on the streets, they seem to be making a reappearance in the Legislature.

Finding the top moustache out of hundreds was no easy task, so I had to establish the criteria:

1. MLAs must have served after 1871 and must not be currently sitting as an MLA.
2. Factors included in my decisions include moustache style, uniqueness, thickness, and shape.

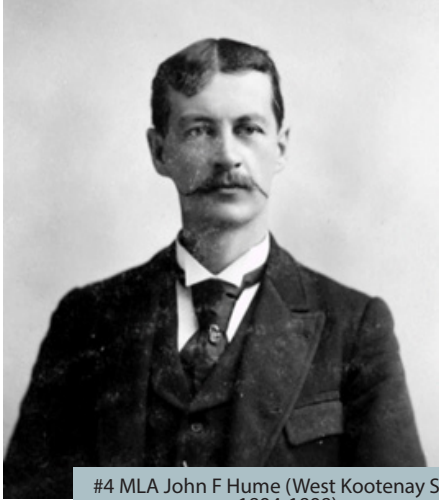
I want to thank all currently moustached MLAs for their inspiration to begin my search, especially Greg Kylo, Mike Morris, Garry Begg, Nicholas Simons, Speaker Raj Chouhan, and Doug Clovechok. Without further ado, I present my ranking of the top five moustaches in the history of the B.C. Legislature.



#5 MLA Frank James Ney (Nanaimo 1969-1972)

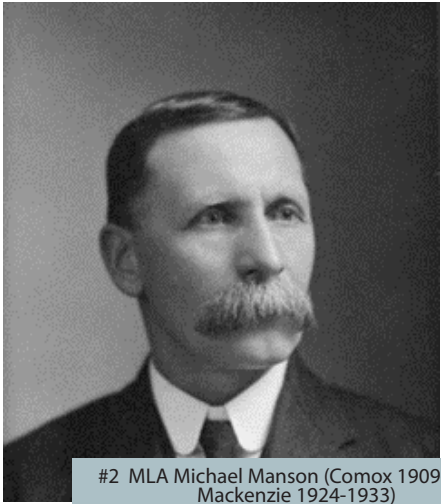
Image HP077141; 193501-001 courtesy of Royal BC Museum and Archives

B.C. Legislative Internship Program



#4 MLA John F Hume (West Kootenay South 1894-1898)

Image HP05977; 193501-001 courtesy of Royal BC Museum and Archives



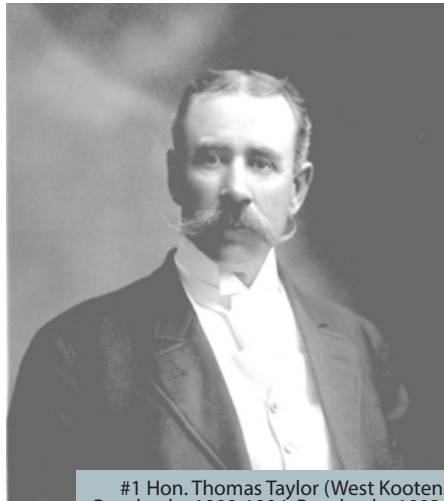
#2 MLA Michael Manson (Comox 1909-1916, Mackenzie 1924-1933)

Image HP006529; 193501-001 courtesy of Royal BC Museum and Archives



#3 Hon. Robert Garnett Tatlow (Vancouver City 1900-1909)

Image PDP00447 courtesy of Royal BC Museum and Archives



#1 Hon. Thomas Taylor (West Kootenay-Revelstoke 1900-1904, Revelstoke 1903-1916)

Image HP007314; 193501-001 courtesy of Royal BC Museum and Archives

# AFTER HOURS



Zaina at the Board Game Cafe



Tristen, Kayla, and Jenna before the TC10K



Visiting Cathedral Grove



Crabbing in the Sunset

B.C. Legislative Internship Program



Haunted Mini Golf



Interns' Trip to Tofino for May Long Weekend



First Happy Hour



Getting to Our Airbnb via a Water Taxi



The Interns First Sports Game Together -  
Royals v. Cougars



# THE INTERN DIALOGUE

THE COMMON DISCOURSE, MEMORABLE  
QUOTES, AND INSIDE JOKES

"Zaina for rural communities!"

"I look like a thumb!"

"In a non-partisan way..."

"Jacob, what's my curfew?"

"Respectfully, no."

"Where's my badge?"

"Say sike right now!"

"I like a nice average-size wiener"  
– referencing hot dogs at the  
#CancelJacob Grab 'n Go

#CancelJacob

"Oh, Ben left his sunglasses  
again!"

"I thought we were invited to  
speak at the Youth Parliament."

"I'm going to a mentor meeting  
– does anyone wanna come?"

"At first when I said I'm gonna  
start smoking again it was a  
joke... but now..."

"Manchu Wok makes me  
inclined to do insane things."

"That's a research nerd thingy."

"I'm the career bureaucrat of the  
group."

"Born to be a parliamentary  
player forced to be an intern."

"You're all family to me."

"They're gonna take away my  
laptop!"

"Let's go bow down to the  
statue!"

"Love you, ttyl, xoxo, Gossip Girl!"

The Gazette 2023



# THANK YOU

Before we finish this journey, we want to take a moment to thank you. As interns, we were very lucky to have access to many amazing people who guided us throughout our experience. Beyond our caucus, alumni, and ministry mentors, many people mentored us during our experience. Ministerial, caucus, the media, legislative staff, met with us during their own time and during three houses to share their wisdom and stories.

We are forever indebted to everyone for making us feel so welcome. Whether you intentionally mentored us or not, you shaped our experience in this incredible building. From moments before Question Period with the ushers sharing their own stories, officers guiding us in the hallways, to Keith Baldrey giving us personal tours of his workspace and sharing his memories, we will always be grateful to everyone. Thank you for continuous support and mentorship!

& FAREWELL!

We would also like to give a very special thank you to Todd Bryant, who not only supported us as interns and would visit the Governors in their den, but also took the time to show the interns around on very special tours. Your friendship will always be cherished.

While we say farewell to our mentors and friends, the hardest goodbye is to our fellow interns who shared similar challenges, triumphs, and memories throughout this journey. This experience would not have been the same at all without each one of you.

We know that these friendships that made us a family this year, will continue as we support each other in whatever lies ahead.

Goodbye for now, B.C. Legislative Assembly!

Thank you for the experience of a lifetime.

Design by Ben Rutkowski and Zaina Khan  
Edited by the Wonderful 2023 Interns