

2013

Annual Report

Our Mission

The Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan (PLEA) is a non-profit, non-government, charitable organization which exists to educate, inform, and empower through law-related education.

For more information visit our website at plea.org.



President's Message

Law affects us all, whether or not we know it. The Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan exists to ensure citizens of Saskatchewan know how the law affects them. This knowledge empowers us all as citizens in pursuit of justice in our society. In 2013, PLEA continued to provide new and revised plain language law-related resources.

The resources PLEA provides would not be possible without the long term support of the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan. Other agencies, including the federal and provincial Ministries of Justice, generously support our operations and special projects, many highlighted in this report. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank each for their support.

PLEA depends on many volunteers on an ongoing basis. I want to take this opportunity to thank the lawyers and other community members who have given hours as speakers and in other capacities throughout the year.

PLEA continues to have an engaged voluntary Board of Directors. In 2013, the Board and staff worked together to plan for a longer range strategic planning session which occurred early in 2014, to ensure PLEA continues to grow and change with the needs of the public.

As President of the Board, I would like to acknowledge and thank for their service to PLEA Julian Demkiw and Doug Surtees, who stepped down from the Board of Directors in 2013. I also welcome new Board members Craig Goebel and Melanie Hodges-Neufeld.

In 2013, I was pleased and honoured to recognize the 20 years of service of Executive Director Joel Janow. Joel has the respect and admiration of the Board and the PLEA staff, and the Board looks forward to many more years working together with Joel in pursuit of PLEA's mission to educate, inform and empower through law-related education. Under Joel's leadership, PLEA has grown into the successful organization it is because of the skills and dedication of its committed, talented and creative staff. I know I speak for all the Board of Directors when I thank Joel and all the staff for their excellent work promoting access to justice through relevant and timely public legal information.

Heather Jensen

Executive Director's Message

It was another very good year for PLEA. The need for our services continues to grow at a rapid rate. We see that visits to our website have again risen markedly over the previous year, this time by over 70%. We are certain that the need and demand for public legal education and information (PLEI) will only rise. Along with this, issues around access to justice for the public will increasingly become a focus. By the very nature of our mission and what we do, PLEA has always worked to address issues of access to justice. As time goes on, we expect to be an increasingly important and accessed resource for people facing everyday legal concerns.

This report highlights many PLEA activities and accomplishments in 2013. Many new resources were produced for our general and school communities. With PLEA materials and services, students learned about law in Social Studies, Law 30, and English Language Arts classrooms. Older adults received more information to raise awareness of legal issues more directly affecting their segment of the population. We helped the general public navigate their days with our print materials, through our phone and email help-lines, through presentations, and through our website. Moreover, we know that at times it may not be enough to simply deliver the information. We know we must also strive to make it readily understandable, engaging, useful, and even entertaining when appropriate. PLEA's work can help virtually anyone to better handle many of life's common (and not so common)

difficulties related to the rights and responsibilities of being a member of society.

I return to the matter of access to justice. Not everyone can qualify for legal aid or pro bono services, and not everyone can easily afford private legal representation. But virtually anyone can seek and find legal information that helps them understand their position or what further resources may be available with respect to handling a legal concern. The matter of access to justice (including access to legal information) is more and more a focus in the justice and wider community. It is an issue that will not be going away anytime soon. PLEA is fortunate and honoured to have been invited to join discussion tables of key stakeholders involved in addressing the issue. These included representatives from the College of Law, Ministries of Justice, all levels of court (including the Supreme Court of Canada), the Bar, community justice agencies, and the public. Commitment is very strong among all parties, and we very much look forward to working with our fellow-stakeholders in coming days on access to justice initiatives for Saskatchewan.

This year will see the launch of one such initiative, namely, our ground-breaking, interactive *Family Law Saskatchewan* website to assist those representing themselves in Family Court. We feel judges, opposing counsel and all parties involved will benefit from this important resource.

PLEA will aim to always be here to help people access the legal information and assistance they may need, and as is their right to receive.

With the support of the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan, our many other supporters, and the people of our province, we look forward to continuing our work with exciting new initiatives and enhancements in 2014.

Joel Janow



Highlights in 2013

General Public Resources

In 2013 PLEA continued to fulfill its goal of providing legal information for everyone, whether that individual was a senior dealing with the death of a loved one and the myriad of laws governing distributing estates, a sexual assault survivor facing the criminal justice system, or a young person renting their first apartment. With our Self-help Family Law Website PLEA will be taking legal information to the next level with interactive step-by-step assistance for unrepresented family law litigants who are taking their case to court.

Wills and Estates

Provides information about the legal requirements for a valid Will and things to consider, as well as guidance for executors, administrators and beneficiaries about the process of administering an estate.

The Straight Dope

A comprehensive examination of drugs, alcohol and the law targeted at youth, their parents and school communities.

Self-Help Family Law Website

2013 was the second year of this three-year project to provide access to justice to individuals experiencing family breakdown and its legal consequences. 2013 has been an exciting and busy year during which great strides were made towards transforming our vision for this website into a reality. Highlights include the development of a unique approach to court forms that uses plain-language questionnaires to gather the information required for a wide-range of family court forms as well as the supporting "Form Wizard" technology that takes those answers and creates the required court forms.

Renting a Home

Provides information to tenants and landlords about their rights and responsibilities and the process for resolving disputes.

Abusive Relationships

A resource that explores what constitutes abusive behaviour, as well as community and legal options to deal with abuse.

After Sexual Assault

A guide for survivors of sexual assault that provides information about the procedures for treating sexual assault victims at hospitals, what happens if the police are called, and what to expect if the case goes to court, as well as available supports for sexual assault victims.

Youth and Schools Resources

Working in partnership with school teachers, university faculty, Ministry officials, and the legal profession, PLEA's Youth and Schools program continued to advance our mandate in 2013. Learning resources educated students across the disciplines. Speaking tours informed law classes about becoming a lawyer. Rights cards empowered youth and youth-at-risk. Just a few highlights are below.

Lord of the Flies: The Novel Study

Uses William Golding's novel to understand what happens when the Rule of Law breaks down in a society.

Crosswalk Cred

Considers the law from a pedestrian's perspective, from road rules to laws governing neighbourhood design.

The Rule of Law

Explores the vital importance of the Rule of Law in democratic societies.

Rent: The Student's Guide

Educates young people about their rights and responsibilities as renters.

Rent: The Rights Cards

Answers the most-commonly asked questions young people have about renting.

Your Rights under the Youth Criminal Justice Act

Empowers young people by clearly defining their rights under the YCJA.

Partnerships

Saskatoon Public Library; Canadian Bar Association (Saskatchewan Branch)

Provided presentations at various public libraries in Saskatoon as well as CTV Morning Live Saskatoon for the Law Day "Law in Your Life" series.

Pro Bono Students Canada (U of S Chapter); Canadian Bar Association (Saskatchewan Branch)

Informed young people about the legal profession and becoming a lawyer through speaking sessions in classrooms across Saskatchewan.

257,080

*Website Pages
Viewed*

84,876

*Print Publications
Distributed*

593

*Individual Requests
for Legal Information
Handled*

25

*Presentations
Delivered Throughout
Saskatchewan*



The foundation of PLEA services is our wide-range of plain language legal information resources.

What people are saying about our services

I have been an Executor for a couple of estates but this publication enhanced my knowledge of the law.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and time in responding to my many questions.

This was exactly what I was looking for!! You guys are awesome!

I thought this site was very helpful. Thank you.

It answered my questions fully.

Excellent information, thank you

It was very helpful for me, I do appreciate the writer.

Thank you for making this article available to the public.

It's great that impartial info like this is available to people ...thank you!

An excellent resource book, full of very good information.

It was very helpful because it is a good site and you know that the tips and advice is reliable.

This is really a good resource for youth.

It helps people to know what to look for in our own loved ones - our parents and even grandparents. Gives us the tools to help them and ourselves to ensure they get quality care and a good life beyond their own home.

I just received a copy of "Rent: The Student's Guide". It is a fantastic resource.

Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Position Year Ended December 31, 2013

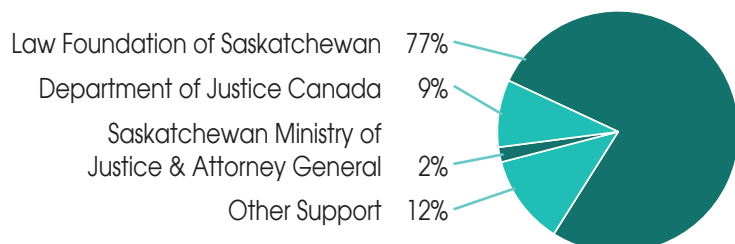
	2013	2012
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$ 2,236	\$ 707
Short term investments	175,336	175,911
Accounts receivable	4,420	-
GST receivable	1,529	1,436
Prepaid expense	7,124	6,660
	\$ 190,645	\$ 184,714
Capital Assets	3,976	4,878
	\$ 194,621	\$ 189,592
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 52,691	\$ 50,427
Deferred contributions	22,445	25,413
	\$ 75,136	75,840
Net Assets		
Unrestricted Net Assets	67,879	65,244
Internally Restricted Net Assets	47,630	43,630
Investment in Capital Assets	3,976	4,878
	\$ 119,485	\$ 113,752
	\$ 194,621	\$ 189,592

Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets Year Ended December 31, 2013

	2013	2012
Revenue		
Donations and Sponsorships	\$ 8,029	\$ 2,643
Grants (see breakdown below)	796,987	731,372
Interest	425	160
Memberships	-	40
Miscellaneous	599	1,000
Portfolio Program	1,080	1,920
Shipping and Handling	-	8
	\$ 807,120	\$ 737,143
Expenses		
	\$ 801,387	\$ 736,302
Excess of Revenue Over Expenses	\$ 5,733	\$ 841
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	113,752	112,911
Allocation to Internally Restricted Net Assets	(4,000)	-
Internally Restricted Net Assets	4,000	-
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ 119,485	\$ 113,752

To obtain a complete Financial Statement, please contact PLEA.

2013 Grants



PLEA is funded by

The Law Foundation of Saskatchewan

With grants and assistance from

Department of Justice Canada
Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice & Attorney General

And additional funding in 2013 from

Access to Justice Fund - The Law Foundation of Ontario
Fidelity Investments Canada
Mackie Research Capital Corporation
New Horizons for Seniors Program
Office of Residential Tenancies
Saskatchewan Abilities Council
Selected Independent Funeral Homes of Saskatchewan

Volunteer of the Year

The Cam Partridge Memorial PLEA Volunteer of the Year Award recipient for 2013 is Saskatoon lawyer Ms. Charmaine Panko. Charmaine attended the University of Saskatchewan and graduated from the College of Law with distinction in 2005.

Charmaine is an Associate with Miller Thomson LLP, where she is a collaborative lawyer with primary practice in conflict resolution. Charmaine is also a mediator, arbitrator, and trainer in this area of the law.

She has always had a passion for legal education – both for the profession, and for the public. She is a sessional lecturer at the College of Law, has presented a multitude of legal information sessions for the public, and has worked to inspire high-school students through coordination of moot-court competitions and presentations in classrooms around the province. Charmaine is a highly-valued volunteer with our Request a Speaker Program and has served on the PLEA Board of Directors. She also volunteers with Pro Bono Students Canada and is a mentor in the Canadian Bar Association's Student Mentoring Program. She is a Board member for the Alternative Dispute Resolution Institute of Saskatchewan, and is the provincial CBA's Professional Image Chair and Law Day Committee Chair. She is extremely active in and committed to community service work with a variety of causes.

Charmaine is truly a most committed, enthusiastic and esteemed contributor to the well-being of the legal profession, her clients, and her community.

We are very grateful and privileged to know and work with a person such as Charmaine. We are honoured to be able to present her with this year's Cam Partridge Memorial PLEA Volunteer of the Year Award. Congratulations and thank you, Charmaine.

Thank You

We thank foremost the members of the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan for their generous ongoing support and encouragement. We are also very grateful for the support of the Department of Justice Canada and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice. As always we thank the Saskatchewan legal profession – practitioners, judges, court staff, government counsel, academics, and many other key members – for their assistance and support.

We thank the PLEA Board of Directors, and the agencies that appoint many of them, for their strong support and guidance. We also thank our friends and colleagues associated with the Public Legal Education Association of Canada for all of their support and cooperative spirit in making us all better places in the PLEI world.

We are very grateful for the support of the Access to Justice Fund of the Law Foundation of Ontario, which will allow us to create Saskatchewan's first interactive website to help self-represented people find their way through our family courts. Also this year, Selected Independent Funeral Homes of Saskatchewan, Mackie Research Capital Corporation, Fidelity Investments Canada, and the Saskatchewan Abilities Council helped with the cost of printing perhaps our most valued and popular title, *Wills and Estates*. Additionally, the Office of Residential Tenancies and the Department of Justice Canada contributed towards the cost of printing, respectively, our *Renting a Home* booklet and *The Straight Dope* handbook. Project funding from the New Horizons for Seniors Program enabled us to revise and reprint *Abuse of Older Adults* and *Life after 60*, and develop a unique magnetic resource note-pad. Together these resources meet the particular legal information needs of older adults throughout the province and work towards improving their quality of life, safety and security. Thank you to these agencies for their most generous contributions.

Special thanks go to the PLEA staff team. Everyone here continues to do an extraordinary job of guiding and helping people to understand and more efficiently navigate our laws and legal system. In this sense PLEA is very fortunate to have the best of scouts, captains, engineers, conductors, strategists, and flight controllers – to name but of few of the types of tasks we assume. In the end, we feel that all hands working together at PLEA make navigating the system as smooth as it can be for people who are seeking a destination.

Finally, we thank the people of Saskatchewan for all of your ongoing support and appreciation of our work. The work could not be done without you. We all help one another see our way through the legal complexities and issues that touch everyday lives.



2013 Staff

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Administrative Assistant

Shannon Torwalt
Program Assistant

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Member at Large,
Law Society of Saskatchewan

Canadian Bar Association,
Saskatchewan Branch

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education

Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice

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