

FACL BC

FEDERATION OF ASIAN CANADIAN LAWYERS

2021-2022 FACL BC BOARD OF DIRECTORS - NOMINATION STATEMENTS

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Director-at-Large (Two Year Term)

Jessica Chung

I am a second-year associate at Pryke Lambert Leathley Russell LLP, where I maintain a broad solicitor practice in real estate, wills and estates, corporate and commercial law. I am running for a Director-at-Large position on the FACL BC Board.

The first FACL BC event that I attended was the 3rd Annual Gala back in 2014, when I was first introduced to the organization and the significant work it does to advocate for our Asian-Canadian legal community.

This past year, I had the privilege of serving on both the Gala Committee and the Membership Committee, through which I helped organize various events, including our first ever virtual gala and conference.

If elected, I will work to build upon initiatives that support mental health and wellness, and the empowerment of Asian-identifying female legal professionals. I will continue to help plan informative and varied events (e.g. further collaborations with other FACL chapters), with the goal of increasing member engagement. As an Asian-Canadian female who has faced discrimination herself, I recognize that there are still many barriers to equity and diversity in our legal profession and the wider community. The news that we have repeatedly heard in the last year have made it clear that there is still much work to be done. I firmly believe that by fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, we can, with our diverse experiences, strengthen our Asian-Canadian voice as a whole and build a stronger legal community.

As a regular attendee and volunteer at FACL BC's events, I have seen first-hand the organization's dedication to equity, advocacy, and mentorship. I hope to join FACL BC as a board member to further contribute to its mission and initiatives.

I appreciate your consideration and look forward to the opportunity to serving you further as a Director-at-Large. Thank you!

Jim Wu

My name is Jim Wu, I am an employment lawyer with Forte Law and I am running for the position of Director-at-Large.

I am proud to have been actively involved with FACL BC as a committee member of its Gala and membership committees. For 2020 and 2021, my contributions included:

- Recruiting the Honourable Mr. Justice Shizad Ahmed as the Gala's opening keynote speaker;
- Proudly having Forte Law be the Gala's Gold Sponsor and Sponsor of the FACL BC 2020 Student Scholarship;
- Co-presenting to members a webinar on virtual litigation with Kevin Loo of Nathanson Schachter Thompson; and
- Co-presenting to members a webinar on starting your own law practice with Sara Forte of Forte Law.

If elected, I wish to build on the amazing achievements of the membership committee, which despite facing logistical challenges did a phenomenal job in delivering a number of virtual events that not only kept our members engaged and connected but has also diversified and expanded the reach of our membership and our sponsors outside of Downtown Vancouver. Specifically, I will work with the committee to:

1. actively recruit more members and explore prospective sponsorship opportunities with law firms that are located outside of Downtown Vancouver;
2. continue to bring in speakers and develop more workshop offerings for our members on breaking the bamboo ceiling and offering such events in a hybrid form to maximize meaningful and accessible engagement to our members across all of British Columbia;
3. provide opportunities for our members to engage with larger, external organizations such as National Asian Pacific American Bar Association; and
4. continue to actively support initiatives that make FACL BC, "British Columbian" – this includes our Podcast series and our upcoming documentary, both of which highlight the experiences of Asian Canadian British Columbian lawyers.

Thank you for your vote.

Mark Iyengar

My name is Mark Iyengar, and I hope to join FACL BC's Board of Directors as a 2-year director-at-large.

I was called to the bar last year and since then I have practiced criminal law with Peck and Company. Before that, I articulated with the federal government and then clerked at the Supreme Court of Canada and B.C. Court of Appeal.

I attended law school because I wanted to advocate for the marginalized and vulnerable. That has taken a variety of forms, culminating in my current role as a criminal defence lawyer. I was co-chair of Vancouver Tenants' Union's steering committee for over a year, taking a lead role in drafting the VTU's bylaws and constitution and formally incorporating the VTU as a nonprofit society. I co-founded the Law Union of British Columbia, an organization that continues to seek to use the law as a tool for social change. I served on the LUBC's first elected steering committee, which led to my meeting Hasan Alam, who recently introduced me to FACL BC.

Although clerking was a rewarding experience in many ways, I found it difficult to limit my political and social engagement for two years. I am excited to find ways to get involved again. Joining FACL BC's Board of Directors would be a wonderful opportunity to promote equity and justice for legal professionals and the wider community. I would especially like to promote connections between FACL BC and Asian criminal lawyers, a group that is currently unrepresented on the Board.

Jenny Huang

My name is Jenny Huang and I am a first-year associate at Blakes. As a first-generation Asian-Canadian, FACL BC's mission resonates with me deeply. Since joining the Membership Committee in November 2020, I have had many meaningful experiences serving the Vancouver legal community, which encouraged me to run for the Director-at-Large position.

I recently graduated from Western and returned to Vancouver, where I have actively sought ways to strengthen connections within the Vancouver legal community. For instance, I co-hosted several FACL BC podcasts with the goal to spotlight the diversity and uniqueness of our community. I also organized FACL social events on Clubhouse, a social media app, to support members and create a safe space for reflection. The positive feedback from community members has ignited my passion to continue promoting FACL values such as diversity, inclusion, and representation in the legal community.

I believe I am well equipped to succeed as a Director-at-Large. In law school, I was the coordinator for Pro Bono Students' Canada Western Chapter, where I supervised 60 students volunteering in 22 legal clinics that sought to advance access to justice in the London community. Specifically, I implemented new programs that focused on delivering legal education seminars to new immigrants. Prior to law school, I worked as a research assistant at UBC, where I founded the Health and Wellness committee to promote mental health. As the president of the committee, I managed a team of colleagues to organize team-building events to promote a more understanding and connected workplace.

It has been a pleasure working alongside the outstanding individuals in the Membership Committee this past year. As a Director-at-Large, I will work to bolster FACL BC's presence throughout the province. I am confident that I will be a valuable addition to the board. Thank you for your consideration.

Director-at-Large (One Year Term)

Ming Lin

My name is Ming. I work with the BC General Employees' Union. I'm no longer a student, but like many others, I became aware of FACL in law school. Being part of a working class immigrant family, I had no clue about what to do to get the career I'd always wanted. I was unaware of this at the time.

A large part of having been able to secure my goals was due to the fact that lawyers and peers I'd met were encouraging and enthused in sharing their knowledge and experiences. I'm grateful to have been welcomed in conversations to discuss different interests, both in and outside of law.

Connecting people, creating spaces, and breaking down invisible barriers comes first and foremost. Through my work, I learn more each day about how necessary community is towards flourishing. I am now running to be a Director at Large for a one-year term so that I can help organize inclusive events and promote diverse perspectives.

Shane Ching

Hi! I'm Shane Ching, currently in-house counsel at BroadbandTV Corp. (BBTV), and my area of specialization is in digital media, tech, entertainment, and IP law. I love sports, music, and video games. The path I took to become a BC lawyer was rather unconventional, as I got my LLB from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, completed a masters at NYU, and worked in the music industry for about six years before beginning my articles in-house at BBTV. I'm interested in FACL because I'd like to give back to the legal community, through sharing my personal struggles and experiences as a young lawyer. I've been to several networking events that FACL has hosted over the past years, including the annual Galas, and AGMs. This year, the position I'm running for is the Director at Large (one year term) position.

Secretary

Brian Cheng

I am a litigation shareholder at Owen Bird Law Corporation and the incumbent secretary for FACL BC.

As a first-generation Asian Canadian lawyer, I believe that access to justice requires the bench and bar to reflect the mosaic of Canadian society. This is why FACL's mission—in promoting equity, justice, and opportunity for the Asian Canadian legal community—is one that resonates with me.

As the present secretary, I bring governance and managerial experience to FACL. I was a past Deputy National Commissioner of Scouts Canada, a non-profit nationwide youth organization. Currently, I am a director-at-large of the Law Courts Inn. I am also a director-at-large for South Fraser Search and Rescue.

I have been a persistent proponent of diversity as a means towards access to justice. To that end, my experiences include the following:

- I was a guest on FACL's podcast in early 2021.
- I was a panelist at FACL's virtual gala in 2020.
- I was a panelist at FACL's mentorship roundtable in 2020.
- I am a founding member of my firm's Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Involvement Committee.
- I am a volunteer lawyer for UBC's Law Students' Legal Advice Program.
- I am a volunteer courthouse clinician with Access Pro Bono.
- I have represented tenants as a volunteer for the residential tenancy clinic at the Superior Court in Seattle.
- I have presented professional development programs for CLEBC and the CBA.

When I am not busy practising law, I volunteer for search and rescue. I am a certified swiftwater technician (a rescue swimmer for operations in whitewater rapids) and an acting team leader for ground search teams.

I hope that my commitment to diversity, access to justice, and volunteerism will continue to be assets to the FACL board. I humbly ask for your vote.

Area Representative - Victoria

Sarah Reid

I had the privilege of acting as the Victoria Area Representative for the past year, and am running to continue in the same role in the next term.

My goal is to build a community for Asian Canadian lawyers in Victoria. Pursuing this goal in the past year has been challenging, because the pandemic limited opportunities for organic social interactions that are key to building a nascent community. Despite the challenges, I believe Asian Canadian lawyers in Victoria can grow into a strong community offering professional support and personal connections. To facilitate in-person connections once the pandemic restrictions are lifted, I organized [two events](#) that featured speakers based in Victoria within the past year. My aim was to create a sense of familiarity with FACL BC among potential members in Victoria, and to foster a connection with the speakers for future FACL BC events. With loosening COVID-19 restrictions, there is an opportunity to capitalize on the appetite for social gatherings by organizing regular in-person events in Victoria.

In the past year, I took part in the Mentorship Committee, and I came away with valuable operational knowledge and personal connections. Next, my goal is to use that experience and lay the groundwork for a mentorship network in Victoria. This is another goal that I believe will be much easier and more realistic to achieve next year.

Professionally, I practise immigration and refugee law at Crease Harman. Having spent the past two and a half years in Victoria, I find myself putting down roots in terms of my personal life, and hope to provide some continuity of FACL BC's presence in Victoria in one capacity or another for the foreseeable future.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to contributing to the Board as the Victoria Area Representative.

Student Director (Peter A. Allard School of Law at UBC)

Diana Wang

Hello FACL! My name is Diana Wang, and I am a 3L student at the UBC Allard School of Law vying to be your next UBC Student Director. FACL has been an amazing resource and community for me as I navigated through law school. Its powerful statements, generous mentors, thoughtful women- and BIPOC-centered conferences, and tailored recruitment events that led me to my dream law firm are just a few examples of how FACL has impacted my life. Most importantly, FACL has witnessed and propelled my growth from a timid law student to a confident aspiring litigator, and introduced me to an invaluable community in a profession that disadvantages BIPOC. It is especially comforting and empowering during a time of turmoil to belong to this warm and familiar community, and now I am ready to join the leadership table. Having recently finished my term as co-president of the Asia Pacific Law Club at UBC, where my team and I successfully navigated a year of online community-building, I am excited to play a greater role in creating opportunity and advocating for the Asian community. I hope to have the privilege of being your UBC student director and overwhelming you with my enthusiasm, ideas, and arsenal of Spotify playlists.

Maggie Lee

My name is Maggie Lee, and I am an incoming second-year student at the Peter A. Allard School of Law. I am running for the Student Director position for UBC.

Having been raised in a Chinese family, I grew up constantly reminded of the barriers that racialized minorities faced in the workplace. After my great-grandfather worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway, he settled in Canada and experienced the Chinese Exclusion Act and the head tax. As a consequence, my family was acutely aware of the tangible effects of discrimination. Furthermore, it wasn't until the 1950s that Asian-Canadians could practice law in BC. Naturally, the "bamboo ceiling" allowed us to grow up without many legal connections in our communities. Coming into law school, I longed to find a community where I could meet people who shared my experiences and cultural identity.

FACL provided the strong sense of community that I was looking for. Being a member of FACL BC this past year has allowed me to make meaningful connections with amazing mentors and other like-minded students, some of which have become my closest friends. The mentors that I have met through FACL have not only given me invaluable advice on professional development but have also shared genuine conversations with me about life, culture, self-improvement, work-life balance, and so on.

I am so excited for the opportunity to contribute to FACL's vision of promoting equity and opportunity for Asian-Canadians. I truly hope to give back to the community and help build bridges between students and FACL. I hope to share my experiences and create space for incoming students to grow and support one another.

Thank you so much for your consideration!

Student Director (Thompson Rivers University Faculty of Law)

Chanel Pabla

I would like to nominate myself, Chanel Pabla, for the Student Director position for TRU. As an Indo-Canadian law student, I would be honoured to be a part of a coalition focused on addressing the intersectional nature of the issues faced by Asian Canadian legal professionals.

As a first generation university student, I believe my experiences have equipped me with the passion and tools that would be effective in fostering equity and diversity in the legal community. In my role as Head of Events with the First Generation Network (FGN), I communicated with the FGN law school chapters across Canada, while also representing and promoting FGN at TRU. I planned four national events during a pandemic, which challenged me to think of ways to keep students engaged on our online platforms and addressed technical difficulties. This also refined my public speaking abilities and professional acumen.

As a member of FACL BC, I attended various informative webinars and interactive workshops, which I found motivating and inspiring. I also volunteered to work on the FACL BC Equity and Diversity in the Legal Profession Project through Pro Bono Students Canada. For this project, I researched diversity and inclusivity initiatives of Canadian Law Societies and firms. This project was important to me because when I attended firm tours for the OCI recruitment, I noticed that some firms did not have substantive diversity and inclusivity initiatives. I would like to continue working on initiatives that increase equity within our Law Society, and I believe the skills and knowledge I acquired through my law school journey will allow me to contribute meaningfully to the FACL BC team.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to hearing from you.

Saad Patel

My name is Saad Patel, and I am a second-year law student at Thompson Rivers University, Faculty of Law ("TRU Law"). Over the course of my education, I have constantly sought opportunities to connect with those around me. During my time at UBC as an undergraduate student, I gained invaluable experience with community building and minority advocacy through my time with the UBC Muslim Students Association. Through these experiences I learned the importance of minority representation and inclusion.

Completing my first year of law school virtually was a uniquely challenging situation. The importance of community and networking were made clearer than ever through the isolating and difficult nature of virtual law school. However, this past year was made less challenging through the connections I was able to make during my experience working with the previous TRU Law Student Director as an executive member of the TRU Pan-Asian Law Students Society. It was also made easier by attending Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers ("FACL BC") events this past year such as the Navigating Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion event. Events like those gave me the opportunity to benefit from the wealth of knowledge and experience FACL can provide.

FACL BC provides a strong network and support system which makes navigating the legal profession easier, especially for minorities and first-generation lawyers. If selected as the TRU Law Student Director for FACL, my primary aim would be to promote and advance the opportunities for mentorship and community provided by FACL. I hope to apply my skillset and experiences to expand FACL's reach even further, and to help provide equitable opportunities to TRU Law students.

Student Director (University of Victoria Faculty of Law)

Russell Chiong

My name is Russell Chiong (pronouns: he/him/his) and I am running for Student Director at the University of Victoria (UVic). I am entering my third year of studies in the JD program, and before law school, I studied environmental science at UBC. My Asian-Canadian identity informs my belief in the importance of community and interracial solidarity, values that I have sought to promote as co-president of the Pan-Asian Law Society at UVic, and in my capacity on the board of Chinatown Today, a community group based in Vancouver's Chinatown.

I joined FACL BC in 1L, and I thoroughly appreciate the mentorship and education that has come with being a member. It was inspiring to discover this community of Asian-Canadians in law while attending my first event, the 2019 Gala. Since the start of the pandemic early last year, FACL events have been an important part of my online life; attending webinars, interview prep sessions, and the conference, helped me feel a sense of community despite our inability to gather in-person.

Being a member of FACL has shaped my experience of the legal field, exemplified through the support it has provided in this difficult year and the work it continues to do in promoting the values of social justice within and beyond our communities. I am running for Student Director because I would like to help contribute to this important work, and to help ensure that my fellow students at UVic can experience the same opportunities that I have benefitted from in my two years of membership with FACL. If elected, I hope to help build a stronger FACL presence in Victoria, by working hard to connect the wonderful community that is FACL BC with Asian-Canadian law students and with other communities to foster reciprocal relationships of support and solidarity.