



Date: September 19, 2019

# The Women of Cassels Brock

## Ranked and Recognized

Many of our women lawyers are ranked by *Chambers Global* (a directory that identifies the world's leading lawyers and law firms) and *Lexpert* magazine. In addition to being recognized by these publications, our women lawyers are regularly recognized as outstanding by a variety of other organizations and publications. In fact, Cassels Brock is proud to have been named the best Canadian firm for women in business law at the third annual IFLR Americas Women in Business Law Awards. More recently, Cathy Mercer was one of only five Canadians to be named among Latin America's Top 100 Female Lawyers by *Latinvex*.

Other recent accolades are noted below.

**Suhuyini Abudulai**  
*Financial Services*

2016 "Precedent Setter" Award Winner

2016 Canadian Business Magazine Change Agent

**Wendy Berman**  
*Advocacy*

Chambers Global (Dispute Resolution)

Chambers Canada (Dispute Resolution; Class)

Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory (Securities Litigation; Corporate/Commercial Litigation)

The Best Lawyers in Canada (Securities Law; Class Actions Litigation)

Lexpert Zenith Award Recipient (Leading Women Lawyers) (2013)

International Law Office Client Choice Award Recipient (2010 & 2011)

**Mary Buttery**

*Financial Services*

Benchmark Canada (Litigation Star, Insolvency)

Best Lawyers in Canada (Insolvency and  
Financial Restructuring Law [Corporate  
Reorganizations, Creditors' Remedies])

Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory  
(Insolvency Litigation; Financial Restructuring)

Chambers Canada (Restructuring/Insolvency)

Chambers Global (Restructuring/Insolvency)

The Legal 500 Canada  
(Restructuring and Insolvency)

Winner, Lexpert "Zenith" Award

Winner, Lexpert "Rising Star" Award

Martindale-Hubbell, Distinguished® Peer Review  
Rated

**Jane Dietrich**

*Restructuring + Insolvency*

TMA Toronto Women of Excellence Award  
Recipient ("Today's Leader")

Chambers Global (Restructuring/Insolvency)

Chambers Canada (Restructuring/Insolvency)

Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory  
(Insolvency & Financial Restructuring;  
Insolvency Litigation)

Lexpert Guide to the Leading US/Canada  
Cross-Border Corporate Lawyers in Canada  
("Corporate Lawyer to Watch")

The Best Lawyers in Canada  
(Insolvency and Financial Restructuring Law)

**Andrea Fitzgerald**

*Securities*

Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory (Mining)

The Best Lawyers in Canada (Mining Law)

**Alison Hayman**

*Intellectual Property*

Managing Intellectual Property (IP Star)

Managing Intellectual Property  
(Top 250 Women in IP)

**Lara Jackson**

*Securities*

Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory  
(Securities Litigation)

The Best Lawyers in Canada  
(Securities Law - Litigation)

**Bernice Karn**

*Business Law*

Chambers Global  
(Information Technology)

Chambers Canada  
(Information Technology)

Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory  
(Technology Transactions; Computer & IT)

The Legal 500 Canada  
(Technology, Media and Telecoms)

National Law Journal 2015 (Cybersecurity & Data Privacy Trailblazer Award Recipient)

Expert Guide to the World's Leading Technology, Media & Telecommunications Lawyers (Information Technology)

Expert Guide to the Leading Women in Business Law (Technology, Media & Telecommunications)

The Best Lawyers in Canada (Information Technology Law)

**Laurie LaPalme**

*Corporate & Regulatory Insurance*

Chambers Canada  
(Insurance: Transactional & Regulatory)

Who's Who Legal: Canada  
(Insurance & Reinsurance)

The International Who's Who of Insurance & Reinsurance Lawyers

Expert Guide to the World's Leading Insurance and Reinsurance Lawyers

**Signe Leisk**

*Municipal*

Lexpert Guide to the Leading US/Canada Cross-Border Corporate Lawyers in Canada 2014 ("Corporate Lawyer to Watch")

Lexpert Rising Stars: Leading Lawyers Under 40 Award Recipient (2013)

**Emily Larose**

*Litigation*

Chambers Canada  
(Litigation: Products Liability)

**Alison Manzer**

*Financial Services*

Chambers Global (Banking & Finance)

Chambers Canada (Banking & Finance)

Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory (Asset Equipment Finance/Leasing; Banking & Financial Institutions)

The Best Lawyers in Canada  
(Equipment Finance Law)

The Legal 500 Canada (Banking & Finance)

IFLR1000 (Banking)

Expert Guide to the World's Leading Banking Lawyers

Expert Guide to the World's  
Leading Women in Business Law

Lexpert Zenith Award Recipient (Leading  
Women Lawyers) (2009)

**Cathy Mercer**

*Mining*

Chambers Global (Projects: Mining - Leading  
Canadian Firms in Latin America)

Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory (Mining)

The Best Lawyers in Canada  
(Natural Resources Law)

**Kristin Taylor**

*Employment & Labour*

The Best Lawyers in Canada  
(Labour & Employment Law)

The Legal 500 Canada  
(Labour & Employment)

Lexpert Zenith Award Recipient  
(Leading Women Lawyers) (2017)

**Jennifer Traub**

*Securities*

Chambers Canada  
(Energy & Natural Resources: Mining)

Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory  
(Corporate Finance & Securities; Mining)

Lexpert Guide to the Leading US/Canada  
Cross-Border Corporate Lawyers in Canada  
2012 ("Corporate Lawyer to Watch")

The Best Lawyers in Canada  
(Mining Law; Natural Resources Law)

Lexpert Rising Stars: Leading Lawyers Under 40  
Award Recipient (2011)

**A History of Inspirational Women**

Cassels Brock has a long history of women lawyers who have broken gender barriers, starting with Margaret Hyndman. Margaret Hyndman's call to the bar in 1926 was greeted with, as she described it, "apprehension". However, her ability, intelligence and integrity won her the respect of the legal profession and the judiciary, which she enjoyed for the rest of her life. She was an important part of Cassels Brock until her retirement in 1984.

Margaret's many accomplishments included being appointed a King's Counsel in 1938, only the second woman in the British Commonwealth to receive this honour.

Margaret was the first Canadian woman to appear before the Imperial Privy Council. She was made an officer of the Order of Canada in 1973.

Margaret organized the first legal aid in Ontario for the families of soldiers during World War II. She received the City of Paris Medal from General de Gaulle for work for the Free French. She became president of the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Canada and of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women.

Cassels Brock has a boardroom named in honour of Margaret Hyndman.

## The Evolution of Women's Groups at Cassels Brock

To learn more about the evolution of women's groups at Cassels Brock, [see an interview here](#).

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## Justicia Project

Cassels Brock has pledged its support to the Law Society of Upper Canada's Justicia Project, designed to retain and advance women lawyers in private practice. The project is the first of its kind in Canada and is committed to identifying and adopting principles and best practices that promote the retention and advancement of women.

Cassels Brock has been an active participant in this project.

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## The 30% club

Cassels Brock is proud to be a member of the 30% Club. Members of this club are listed companies or leading professional services firms. By joining the 30% Club, we publicly indicate our support for the notion that it is

good business practice to have women holding 30% of board seats and share the aspiration to collectively reach this goal. We believe businesses, business leaders and law firms should drive this change.

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## IN THE LEAD

We are proud that our women hold significant leaderships at the firm.

- Kristin Taylor is the firm's Deputy Managing Partner
  - Eva Bellissimo is the Chair of our Practice Excellence Committee
  - Wendy Berman is Chair of our Audit & Risk Management Committee
  - Emily Larose is the Chair of our Corporate Responsibility Committee
  - Jane Dietrich is Chair of our Women's Practice Development Committee
  - Laurie Jessome is the Chair of our Advocacy Group and Lara Jackson is the Deputy Chair
  - Laurie LaPalme is the Deputy Chair of our Financial Services Group
  - Alexandra Iliopoulos is the Deputy Chair of our Business Law Group
  - Patricia Southern is our Chief Financial Officer
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## Women's Practice Development Committee (WPDC)

Cassels Brock strives to ensure that all lawyers in the firm are given the support required to assist in their practice development, and the opportunity and training required to become strong contributors to the partnership. The WPDC was formed in recognition of the particular challenges facing women lawyers in this regard, and to implement strategies to mentor, train, and otherwise assist the women lawyers in the firm with all aspects of their practice development including their professional and business development requirements.

The WPDC's objectives include:

- increasing the profile of our talented women lawyers
  - providing initiatives that address development, training, and the mentoring needs of our women lawyers
  - providing programs that bring together women lawyers with potential clients
  - benchmarking other organizations regarding women's initiatives, particularly professional service firms
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## Mentor Lunches

WPDC mentor lunches are held outside of the office and hosted by two CBB women partners for small groups of women associates. The lunches give the associates an opportunity to meet senior women throughout the firm in an informal environment, broaden their internal networks, and gain support and insight into how our partners have achieved success at the firm.

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## Recent Training Initiatives

### CLIENT DEVELOPMENT THROUGH NETWORKING

This seminar underscored the importance of advance preparation for a networking event and the necessity of following up with contacts in order to make attendance at a networking event worthwhile.

### Briefcase Moms

This program presented a broad approach to addressing the emotional and practical issues of being a woman in the workplace. It targeted women facing the many competing priorities of career and life (caring for children, step-children, family members with disabilities, aging parents, etc.). The program was based upon Lisa Martin's best-selling book Briefcase Moms. The program, presented by Lisa Martin, invited our women lawyers to:

- 1) understand what career-life harmony means to each of them
- 2) improve their well-being and fulfil their leadership potential
- 3) increase productivity by better managing guilt, perfection and stress
- 4) and learn best practices from each other

### She Speaks; He Speaks

Do men and women really communicate differently? Many researchers believe that men and women use unique language styles and have distinct goals. For women, language is a social medium. For men, it's primarily to exchange information. These differences have consequences for both sexes at work. Language strategies that women may consider polite can be perceived as tentative and under-confident by men.

In this program, we addressed speech patterns that undermine a woman's credibility and authority. The goal was to heighten awareness so that women can be more mindful of communicating with confidence and professionalism. Women need to be heard before they can assume leadership roles in the firm, the profession and in client matters. This program was designed to assist women in leading results-oriented meetings as well as sharing authority and responsibility in their practice group, the firm and with clients.

### Bridging the Gender Gap: Leadership Communication Skills

There is a great deal of scholarship that suggests men and women communicate differently. The seminar's objective was to achieve better communication and, thus, better business results. We discussed the key differences between the communication styles of men and women, including attribution, confidence, qualification and non-verbal communication.

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## Events

### WPDC Cassels casino toronto event

On November 2, 2016, the WPDC held its annual Cassels Casino in Toronto. This event combines casino games and designer prizes in a fun-filled evening that empowers our female clients and women within our firm as well as women in our local communities through donations to Dress for Success Toronto.

### CBB Women Welcome CBB Women

One of the firm's best traditions occurs in September of each year when the women lawyers of the firm gather to welcome all of the new women lawyers who have joined us in the past year. This includes women who have moved up the ranks from our student program as well as women lawyers who have left other firms to join us. The 2016 event was held on the patio at SpeakEasy21.

### Cassels Brock Supports OWN Your Career

Cassels Brock is proud to have been a title sponsor for the recent OWN Your Career event which took place at Rosehill Venue Lounge on February 26, 2015. OWN Your Career is an annual networking event hosted by the Osgoode Women's Network (OWN). This year, the keynote address was delivered by Robyn Collver and was followed by meaningful discussions between students and practitioners, including Cassels Brock lawyers Carly Cohen, Alison Hayman, Stefanie Holland and Ann Watterworth. OWN is a student association located at Osgoode Hall Law School, dedicated to the advancement of women in law through networking, mentorship and skills building. A few photos from the event are below.

### An Evening with Lawrence Hill, Author of the Award-winning Novel, *The Book of Negroes*

The WPDC was proud to host an evening with Lawrence Hill, author of the award-winning novel *The Book of Negroes*. Deemed "... a masterpiece, daring and impressive..." by *The Globe & Mail*, listening to Lawrence Hill discuss *The Book of Negroes* made for a thrilling evening for everyone in attendance. This event was held in support of the [Aminata Fund](#) the charity supporting girls and women in Africa, and named after the protagonist in Hill's novel. A few photos from the event are below.

## Breakfast with Ellen Schwartz, Teacher, Philanthropist and Author

Jacob was diagnosed with a fatal, inherited neurodegenerative disorder at the age of two months. While death usually comes by age four, Jacob is now a happy 12-year old and an inspiration to his mother, Ellen Schwartz. Ellen is an inspiration herself. Together with her husband, Jeff, she founded [Jacob's Ladder](#), a charity to promote awareness and research for neurodegenerative diseases that has already raised \$1.7 million. She is also the author of [Lessons Learned from Jacob](#) and has launched [Project Give Back](#), a course designed to instill a true love of giving back and community outreach in children. The story of her life was an inspiration for our lawyers.

## Maternity Leave Lawyers

In order to stay connected to all of our lawyers on maternity leave, we host lunches at the firm for all of our maternity leave lawyers and their babies. The lunch is attended by firm lawyers who have returned from mat leave in the past few years to offer their support and advice about how to smoothly transition back to work from a mat leave, and tips on how to juggle work and motherhood. It also offers the firm an opportunity to meet the newest members of our extended family!

## WPDC PUB NIGHTS

The WPDC hosts pub nights at local restaurants throughout the year to discuss topics of importance to women lawyers. Here are a few of our most recent topics.

### **SPONSORSHIP**

Many corporations encourage women executives to find a sponsor to help advance their careers. This concept is slowly making its way to law firms. At our October 2016 pub night, we discussed the concept and how it is different from mentoring: a mentor advises; a sponsor acts. We heard from sponsors who explained why they sponsor, and from their protégées who explained how their sponsor had made a positive difference in their career growth.

### **DIFFICULT SITUATIONS, DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS**

What do you do when others repeatedly talk over you at meetings? How about if someone advances your great idea as their own? Why does the Cleveland Clinic suggest using rehearsal imagery to prepare for difficult conversations? These and other real life experiences were covered in this lively and informative evening.

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## Programs & Policies

## Mat Leave Buddies

Parents preparing to return to work after a parental leave (particularly a first parental leave) face a number of challenges and potential anxieties. Some of these are centred around managing logistics on the home front and others are centred around the transition back to work. This program pairs new parents with lawyers who have navigated one, two or sometimes three maternity leaves from Cassels Brock in order to provide guidance and support to the new parent. The support of a “buddy” who understands those challenges can really help. The buddy can also identify strategies that will reduce the stress associated with leaving for, and returning from, maternity leave.

The firm also provides a checklist to help parents taking a leave to transition in and out of the firm as seamlessly as possible.

## Mat Leave Top Up

The firm “tops up” government provided maternity leave benefits so that our lawyers can continue on a full salary while on leave.

## Emergency Care

The firm provides emergency day care and elder care for all employees.

## Alternative Work Arrangement Policy

The firm has a written policy to encourage lawyers to consider alternative work arrangements in circumstances where such an arrangement may be of benefit to them. This policy recognizes the need for flexibility in order to retain lawyers who make valuable contributions to the firm and whose circumstances, including parental responsibilities, may require an alternative work arrangement.

“Alternative work arrangements” refer to any arrangement that provides a lawyer with flexibility in one or more of the following:

- office hours
- billable hours
- place of work
- employment status

## Diversity & Inclusion Policy

The firm has adopted a Diversity & Inclusion Policy, [find out more here](#).