

FACL BC

FEDERATION OF ASIAN CANADIAN LAWYERS

2023-2024 FACL BC BOARD OF DIRECTORS - NOMINATION STATEMENTS

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Director-at-Large (Two Year Term)

Asha Young

Hello! I am nominating myself (unsure if I was supposed to get someone else to nominate me, if I was then Kayla Siu is nominating me). I am a corporate commercial lawyer at Lawson Lundell and I have been an on and off member of FACL since I was a student. I am interested in joining the board, as I would like to get to know the FACL community better and generally enjoy planning events and connecting with people. As a mixed race individual I think I can bring another perspective to the table (not ground breaking but what I have to offer).

As a Allard student I was an academic director and sat on the Hiring Committee and formed part of Faculty Counsel. All of that to say, I had the chance to interview candidates for positions that were much more qualified than I was, but I have experience in bringing different perspectives to the table. I am currently the sole member of the 2019 Allard 5 Year Reunion Committee - any 2019 grads let me know if you want to join.

Thank you for your consideration!

Catherine Yue Ji Wong

My name is Catherine Wong, and I am running for a two-year director-at-large role with FACL BC. In the last year, I served on the FACL BC board as the 2022-2023 Student Director for UBC, and I am passionate about FACL BC's mission of promoting equity, justice, and opportunity for Asian Canadian legal professionals and the wider community. I am keen on continuing to be involved with the Board as I enter my articling year with Guild Yule LLP.

Previously, I have been a member of the Gala, Membership, and Mentorship subcommittees in FACL BC. I have attended numerous FACL BC events since my first year of law school, and the organization provided me with my first connections to the legal community. I attribute a lot of my growth in the legal profession to FACL BC and, therefore, wish to give back to the organization. FACL BC has offered me immense opportunities, and I would like to take the opportunity to provide the same to other members in the community.

As a Student Director, I have supported numerous events and have had the opportunity to take the lead on certain events. Initiatives that I led, with the support of FACL, include: "FACL BC x APLC: Lunar New Year Food Fest" and "TGIF: Thank Goodness It's (Boba) Friday". I have also been active in contributing to the compilation of the monthly newsletter and creating event graphics.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my application.

Cen Yang

My name is Cen and I am running for a Director at Large position with FACL BC. I am a litigation associate at Singleton Reynolds. I was born in northeastern China, raised in Edmonton, and fled to Vancouver to attend Allard Law (and finally live somewhere warm). When I started law school, I did not know anyone in Vancouver, and it was through FACL that I found a community in this new city and met some of my absolute best friends.

Over the past five years, I made it a personal commitment to attend as many FACL events and respond to as many FACL initiatives as I can. During law school, I was a mentee, and since being called, I have had the privilege of mentoring several law students through FACL's mentorship drive. By running for the Director position, I hope to give back to the Asian Canadian legal community. I have lots of ideas to offer, and am experienced in event planning, community outreach and legal recruit. Prior to joining FACL, I helped plan several national debating events with hundreds of attendees.

Having grown up in an immigrant household, I understand the importance of FACL in community building, fostering connections, and welcoming people to a new profession/city. FACL is uniquely positioned to advocate for us and connect us - its ever-diversifying membership base - with each other and with the community at large. If elected as a Director, I hope to broaden our initiatives to better serve our diverse group. For instance, we could host an event for international students to better support our peers who are attending law school or job hunting while facing cultural differences, immigration complexities, and/or language barriers.

Thank you for your consideration and friendship!

Shanna Gu

My name is Shanna Gu, and I am a criminal defence lawyer at Narwal Litigation LLP. I am running for a Director-at-Large position at FACL BC.

I became involved with FACL BC in 2020, where I volunteered with the Gala Committee and helped organize the first remote annual gala. Currently, I am a fellow of the Leadership Academy and have been actively contributing to the Advocacy Committee. Through my involvement with FACL BC and witnessing its impactful work, I am inspired to take on a greater role as a board member.

To further our mission, I wish to focus on the following key objectives:

- **Intervening at the SCC:** I will support FACL BC in obtaining intervenor status before the Supreme Court of Canada in cases that impact the rights and interests of the Asian-Canadian community. I strongly believe that shaping legal precedents is essential to achieving equity, justice, and inclusivity at a fundamental level.
- **Increasing Access to Justice:** I am dedicated to reducing language and cultural barriers faced by new immigrants within the Asian-Canadian community. By collaborating with local organizations, we can offer interpretation services, legal workshops, seminars, and pro bono clinics. As an example, I would like to expand upon the Language Support Program that I initiated at the Rise Women's Legal Centre, providing interpretation services for low-income, language minority clients seeking legal assistance.
- **Collaborating for Policy Changes:** I believe in the power of collective action. I aim to foster collaboration between FACL BC, other legal organizations, bar associations, and community groups to amplify our voice and advocate for policy changes addressing systemic barriers, discrimination, and access to justice challenges.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tiffany Ho

Who am I?

My name is Tiffany Ho (she/her). I am one of the 12 selected participants of the inaugural year of FACL BC's Leadership Academy. I was also one of the three panellists for FACL BC's NCA/LLM Q&A event this year. In the past, I have served on the SFU Alumni Association board of directors. Currently, I am serving on the Charlford Housing Society for Women board of directors.

What Position am I interested in?

I am writing to express my interest in the Director at Large (Two-Year Term) position.

Why am I Interested in FACL BC?

As an UK law graduate, I did not know many lawyers in Vancouver. FACL BC was able to broaden my network in the legal profession. Because of this, FACL BC has given me a strong sense of belonging in the legal industry. My deep appreciation for the support and opportunities FACL BC has provided me fuels my desire to give back to FACL BC.

What I Can Contribute to FACL BC?

Through my educational journey in the UK, my accreditation through the NCA, and my time articling at two boutique law firms in downtown Vancouver, I would help FACL BC organize events and resources to help other internationally trained lawyers and law graduates to get called to the BC Bar.

Furthermore, I wish to contribute my skills and dedication as a Director at Large, as well as contribute to the Gala Committee and the Mentorship Committee.

With my previous board experiences, leadership abilities, and genuine passion for promoting opportunities for Asian Canadian legal professionals and the wider community, I humbly believe that I can make a meaningful contribution to the future success of FACL BC.

In conclusion, it would be an incredible honour to be elected as a Director at Large and to give back to an organization and community that I have already received so much from. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Xue Zhang

My name is Xue Zhang, and I am an articling student at Lawson Lundell LLP. I am running for the Director at Large position. Despite the challenges I face as I just started my article in May, I have a strong desire to actively promote the values of EDI and be with like-minded people.

I spent one and a half years as a volunteer with FACL BC's membership committee. During that time, I worked on podcast preparation, editing, and co-hosting. Additionally, I helped organize the Espresso Chat event, volunteered at the after-party of the Gala, and along with Jessica, am planning on the Hometown Eat event at Jang Mo Jib. To me, FACL BC feels like a family of like-minded people who advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion and foster a sense of belonging. If I am chosen to be the Director at Large, I aim to foster member connections, provide networking opportunities, and strengthen our values of EDI through events and communications.

My previous work with FACL BC has given me a deep understanding of the organization's values and mission, and I am ready to hit the ground running in the Director at Large position. I resonate with Fiona's ideas on collaborating with other organizations for future events to expand FACL's current impacts and network. I would be eager to contribute to the advocacy or the mentorship committee, to advocate for changes that promote our values or to carry forward the tradition of caring and sharing through mentorship.

Thank you for considering my candidacy!

Zheng-Yi Ong

My name is Zheng-Yi Ong, and I am seeking your vote for a Director-at-Large position. I was born and raised in Singapore, now call Vancouver my home, and am articling at Harper Grey. I am looking forward to giving back to an organization that has been instrumental to my growth as a law student and soon-to-be lawyer.

Since I completed my undergraduate and law studies outside of BC, I never established a professional network in Vancouver, and that's when FACL came into the picture for me. I joined FACL in 2020, when I started law school amidst the pandemic, and thanks to the kind support and mentorship of many lawyers in FACL, I have since been able to grow start my legal career here. I will forever be grateful to the lawyers who supported me on my legal journey, and I am hoping to give back to the community and do the same.

My involvement in FACL in the last three years demonstrates my commitment to the organization and supports a natural transition into a Director-at-large role. I have been heavily involved in the gala committee since 2020, and helped the team organize FACL's first ever online gala. It was rewarding seeing so many people attend, and it was even better seeing everyone when we finally returned to an in-person format in 2022. I was also given the opportunity to spearhead the women's social last year and helped create lasting connections amongst female lawyers in the Vancouver.

I would like to serve on FACL's Board and continue furthering FACL's initiatives and influence in the Asian-Canadian legal community. I particularly would love to see more cohesion with the other FACL chapters across Canada and see us take up our space in the Canadian legal community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Secretary

Lily Zhang

My name is Lily Zhang. I am a litigation associate at Owen Bird Law Corporation. I am seeking to be re-elected as the Secretary for a second term.

I was a FACL BC student member while in law school and became a full member after being called to the bar. I have attended numerous FACL BC events and volunteered on the Gala Committee in 2021 and on the Governance Committee in 2022. This past year, I served as the Secretary and a member of the Membership Committee and its Newsletter and Merch Subcommittees. For me, FACL BC is one of the main ways I stay connected with the legal community—it is a place for mentorship, friendship, and growth.

With my increased involvement in FACL BC over the years, I have experienced and seen first-hand the support the organization has for its members and others in our community. My passion for mentorship and advocacy for diversity and equality in the legal profession aligns with FACL BC's mandate, and I wish to continue my contribution to furthering the reach of FACL BC's initiatives and their impact on the legal community and beyond.

As the Secretary, I assisted FACL BC in meeting its governance requirements, conducting monthly board meetings, reviewing its bylaws, and planning the annual board retreat. As a member of the Membership Committee, I prepared a number of our monthly newsletters and assisted with the launching of our merch store. If I am re-elected, I will continue to fulfill the role of Secretary, assist the Membership Committee with providing resources and opportunities for our members, and support the work of our committees through participation and volunteering to make the FACL BC experience enriching and inspirational for everyone.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Area Director (Victoria)

Wen He

I am an Asian-Canadian lawyer who went to law school and practiced in Victoria, with a focus on accessible, unbundled litigation services. Outside my practice and work, I'm also a member of the Victoria chapter of FACL and the board of the Victoria Bar Association. In the past year, I've helped with FACL Victoria's documentary viewing event, and organized some social events for the legal community. I look forward to supporting FACL's initiatives in Victoria in the coming year.

Area Director (Kamloops)

Shazia Hosenbocus

I was born and raised in Kamloops and am a first-generation Mauritian-Canadian. I attended the Bachelor of Business Administration program at Thompson Rivers University before obtaining my Juris Doctor from the University of Calgary in 2020. Since returning to Kamloops and completing my articles in 2021, I have managed a diverse practice of both civil litigation and solicitors work.

I am very passionate about advocacy and giving back to the community. During law school, I volunteered with the University of Calgary's pro-bono legal clinic. From 2021 to 2023, I held a board position with STEPS Kamloops, a society targeted at providing comprehensive health care services to the Kamloops community. At the present time, I utilize my background in competitive powerlifting to coach Kamloops' Special Olympics powerlifting team. I also currently hold a board position with the Kamloops Bar Association, which is targeted at organizing social events and advancing and protecting the interests of the Kamloops legal community.

Although I have not been involved with FACL BC in the past, I attended FACL events in Calgary during law school. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to plan and promote such events in Kamloops, while becoming involved with FACL BC's advocacy committees.

I have a vocational background in event planning and marketing. I also have strong connections with the Kamloops Bar and Bench. I believe my background, experience and desire to promote the interests of the legal community, and in particular the Asian Canadian legal community, make me a viable candidate for the FACL BC Kamloops Area Representative position.

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

Miguel Oreta

My name is Miguel Oreta, and I am a student entering my third year at the Peter A. Allard School of Law at UBC.

I am passionate about working with FACL because my values strongly align with FACL's mission to promote equity, justice, and opportunity. Throughout my education, I have focused my work on furthering these values. In recognition of my extensive community involvement and leadership, FACL awarded me with their scholarship at the 2022 FACL BC Gala. Since then, I have actively participated in FACL's Advocacy Committee and Case Commentary Subcommittee.

In addition to my involvement with FACL, I have been extensively involved in the wider community. As the co-president of Allard's Asia Pacific Law Club, I organised events, including the Lunar New Year Food Fest collaboration with FACL, and many professional development programs, including panel discussions and a mentorship program. I have also advocated for the interests of racialised students, the 2SLGBTBQ+ community, and other marginalised populations as an active member of Allard's Equity and Diversity Committee and Allard's Outlaws. As a volunteer with the Law Students' Legal Advice Program and Pro Bono Students Canada, I have assisted people from varied backgrounds facing criminal charges. I have also worked to break down barriers for youth in underrepresented populations to achieve careers in law and other professions as an executive for UBC Legal Education Outreach and a coordinator for UBC Geering Up Engineering Outreach.

As a student director, I will use my experience and skills to help FACL continue to build a strong community and to advocate for equity and justice. I believe that the network and supports that FACL is building are vital to the continuous growth and development of the legal profession, and I am eager for the opportunity to contribute to these efforts.

Richard Jiang

I am incoming 2L at the Peter A. Allard School of Law. As a visible minority and the first in my family to attend law school, I was unsure if I would fit in. Many of my Allard friends also had similar concerns, but we all found a sense of community through FACL and APLC. Specifically, I really experienced a sense of belonging through informal events such as the monthly Write On sessions and Hometown Eats, where I connected with people over good food, relatable backgrounds, and shared interests.

Having experienced first-hand a sense of community and having found the FACL mentorship program and APLC x FACL BC: Social Skills and Networking in the Modern World to be particularly empowering, I am very grateful for all the support I have received throughout my 1L year and want to contribute to ensuring that fellow Asian Canadians at Allard can have the support they need too.

Furthermore, after attending my first few firm events, it immediately became apparent to me just how rare Asian lawyers are, especially at a more senior level. It initially mystified me, but after reading Asian Canadian underrepresentation in leadership across all industries and the prevalent bias that Asians are great subordinates, I became more concerned and realized that it will take a collective effort to ensure that there is equity and opportunity for Asian Canadian professionals. After attending the FACL Gala and through my involvement with FACL BC's mentorship committee, I came to appreciate first-hand FACL BC's efforts in addressing these issues and empowering all Asians in the legal profession.

I could not be more excited about this opportunity to be a student director and work alongside passionate and bright team members to ensure that fellow Asian Canadians in the legal community have the support they need.

Student Director (Thompson Rivers University Faculty of Law)

Allan Hsu

My name is Allan Hsu, and I am an incoming 2L at Thompson Rivers University (TRU), Faculty of Law. Prior to law school, I attended Western University where I completed my undergraduate degree. Having grown up in the South Surrey area, I am excited to be back in British Columbia after experiencing the relentless Ontario winters.

When my family immigrated from Taiwan, I was exposed to challenges that many immigrant children face. Between filling out complex legal forms or translating for my parents, I often shared in their frustration and confusion. From these experiences, I quickly learned about the importance of advocacy. At Western, I was an Orientation Leader and President of the Canadian Asian International Students Association. Through these roles, I worked to break down systemic barriers for students and racialized groups in my community. Now that I am in law school, I want to use my experience to help organizations like FACL BC do the same.

The support and insight I have received from FACL BC has furthered my desire to get involved. I was granted an opportunity to work with FACL BC through Pro Bono Students Canada. As an executive on TRU's Pan-Asian Law Student Society, I led the organization of a career panel where members of FACL BC shared advice. The mentorship program has also been a major highlight of my 1L. I am eager to continue learning from Asian Canadian lawyers that are fighting to build a space for individuals like me in the legal profession.

As a Student Director, I would be excited to assist in the planning and execution of FACL BC initiatives. I hope to expand the reach of FACL BC and support the underserved interior.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sharon K. Malhi

Dear FACL BC community,

My name is Sharon and I am a student member. I will be entering my second year of law school at TRU. I am thrilled to be writing to you to nominate myself for the TRU Student Director Position. I believe I have the necessary experience to contribute meaningfully to your organization and be successful in this role should I be given the chance!

A FACL BC student director necessarily needs to be involved in their school community. I am an active member of TRU's South Asian Law Student Association Club, Business Law Club, and Human Rights Club. I am also a student mentor and orientation leader. These roles have allowed me to develop relations with law students across all three years in the Faculty of Law. This is a great asset as it will allow me to effectively and efficiently relay FACL BC objectives to the broader TRU Law community.

Moreover, collaboration amongst board members is also essential as it will allow the entire team to achieve a common purpose. To this point, I have extensive experience working in team settings. My work founding and spearheading campaigns has developed my leadership skills. Working as a lifeguard at one of the busiest facilities in the city of Surrey has sharpened my diagnostic and communication skills. As a daughter of small business owners, I have learned the importance of working with integrity and nurturing relations. These individual skills put together under the role of student director will allow me to collaborate meaningfully with the rest of the board.

I have volunteered with other legal non-profit organizations and thus I understand the work that needs to be done and the purpose behind it. Thus, I am ready to join the team and get to work!

Thank you for your consideration.

Warmly,

Sharon K Malhi

Student Director (University of Victoria Faculty of Law)

Jaspreet Kaur Mann

My name is Jaspreet Kaur Mann (she/her), and I will be entering my second year of law school at the University of Victoria.

When I was 8 years old, my parents brought my siblings and I from Malaysia to Canada. They hoped for a higher quality education for us. Unfortunately, we were confronted with racial discrimination. My siblings and I were quickly thrown into ESL because we had a strong Malaysian accent. My name was stripped off its letters by my classmates and turned into Jazzy, because Jaspreet was hard to pronounce. The hokkien mee my mother graciously packed for our lunch was labelled as worms. These negative experiences ignited my passion in ensuring that I do my part in the community, advocate for equality, and protect my identity.

Volunteerism is an essential part of my identity as a Sikh. The term "sewa" means selfless service, and performing sewa demonstrates equality and community. These are qualities that are part of FACL's values and are ones that I incorporate in my life. For example, volunteering at organizations, where working with individuals from diverse and disadvantaged groups is the focus. In particular, I coached soccer to adults and children with intellectual and physical disabilities.

Throughout 1L, I have been a member of FACL BC and SALSA (South Asian Law Students Association). I have attended FACL events and I'm proud to be a mentee in the Mentorship Program. I am running for Student Director because I want to be able to support UVic's Asian-Canadian law students and strengthen FACL's community. I am confident that my experience in student engagement and event planning will allow me to foster connections amongst students. It would be an honour to give back to an organization that faces racism and stereotyping in the legal field head on.

Moora Paw

I am deeply committed to fostering inclusivity, valuing every individual, and empowering meaningful contributions. As a displaced indigenous person, former refugee, and immigrant, my personal journey has shaped my perspective and instilled a profound appreciation for the transformative power of diversity and inclusion. Despite facing obstacles and discrimination, I refuse to be confined by labels like "stateless refugee," "immigrant," and "minority woman." I firmly believe in dismantling the weight of racism and sexism, advocating for a more inclusive environment where everyone is respected and valued.

These experiences have reinforced my unyielding belief that diversity and inclusion have the power to drive significant change. I strongly advocate for the importance of representation. As a representative figure within the Karen community and other marginalized groups, my ultimate goal is to inspire and instill hope. By sharing my unique experiences and perspectives, I aim to contribute to the legal profession's evolution into the inclusive and empathetic field that addresses the diverse needs and concerns of all communities.

Diversity and inclusion are not abstract ideals to me; they serve as catalysts for positive change that can shape lives, uplift communities, and drive profound transformations in society. I am eager to apply for the position of Student Director at the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers, as it offers a distinct opportunity to advance diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. Through active engagement in this role, I aim to promote equal representation, amplify marginalized voices, and dismantle systemic barriers that impede progress. With my passion, commitment, and firsthand experiences, I am confident in my ability to make a meaningful impact and contribute to shaping a more inclusive and equitable legal landscape.

Thank you for considering my application, and I look forward to the opportunity to contribute my skills, perspectives, and unwavering dedication to the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers.

Nina Fernando

My name is Nina Fernando and I am a 2nd year Law student at UVIC law. I have been elected as Co- president for the Pan Asian Student Club at UVic for the upcoming year. As a mature student I bring along a wealth of life and work experience. I worked with the Government of Alberta for the past 9 years in various capacities, lastly as a judicial clerk for Regional Provincial Courts. I also hold a BA in Law and Society and an ASB in Business Administration. I also have extensive volunteer experience as well. I have been volunteering the Calgary Immigrant Services for over 7 years and also held a volunteer board member post for years at my Condo Corporation in Calgary. While in first year law school I volunteered with PBSC – the Amici Cuare program and assisted new immigrants with legal document completion for family claims and continue to volunteer with them.

In all of my endeavors I have exhibited strong administrative skills and organizational skills. I have a very positive and optimistic view of the world that is still steeped in the realities visible minorities face in Canadian Society. I have a strong sense of solidarity with my fellow students who share similar life experiences due to race and firmly believe in taking on a leadership role to propel them forward for success. I am choosing to put my name forward for this role as I believe I can be an understanding, accountable and responsible point of contact for racialized students at Uvic on behalf of FACL. Thank you for the opportunity.