

PRESS RELEASE

CELEBRATE LAW DAY 2017

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2017 and FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2017

The Thunder Bay Law Association is proud to announce a number of activities and events to be held in Thunder Bay in support of Law Day 2017.

Law Day is a national event which celebrates the signing of Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Originated by the Canadian Bar Association (CBA) and first held in Canada in 1983, Law Day is aimed at educating and informing the public about the role and importance of the law. Since many people have a limited knowledge about the law and how the legal system works, Law Day empowers the public at large. It provides an excellent opportunity for the profession to educate the public about the vital role that lawyers and the judiciary serve in guaranteeing an open, independent and unbiased judicial system.

Law Day is a collaborative project organized through the partnership of the Ontario Bar Association (OBA) and the Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN). The Thunder Bay Law Association recognizes the importance of this initiative, and through the effort of local lawyers and other volunteers from the Thunder Bay area, plays host to a number of activities to promote the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, as well as the legal profession, in Thunder Bay.

Law Day is celebrated annually and will be held this year on Thursday April 6, 2017 and Friday, April 7, 2017 in Thunder Bay. Local activities include the Secondary School Mock Trial competition, and an Open House at the new Thunder Bay Consolidated Courthouse.

Thunder Bay Consolidated Courthouse Open House

The public is invited to stroll through this new facility on Thursday, April 6, 2017. Local judiciary and members of the Bar, as well as courthouse staff, will be on hand from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. to greet the public and answer questions as they walk through the new state of the art Courthouse.

High School Mock Trials

The Secondary School Mock Trial experience provides an opportunity for Thunder Bay secondary students to flex their legal minds!

Students are given a scenario that outlines an alleged criminal offence and they will act out the roles of crown attorneys, defence lawyers, witnesses and various accused. This exercise demonstrates how Canadian law not only guarantees rights but also imposes responsibilities on the members of our society.

Participants will learn about the *Criminal Code*, the rules of evidence and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The tournament will also allow students to develop public speaking skills, build self-confidence and learn how to effectively organize and deliver oral and written presentations.

The Thunder Bay Law Association arranges for local lawyers to volunteer as advisors and a justice from the Superior Court of Justice to act as the judge in the Mock Trial sessions. Students are then guided through the rules and protocols of the court as they all present their case within the court room setting of the Superior Court of Justice.

Four local high schools - Westgate, Superior CVI, St. Ignatius and St. Patrick's - will be involved in the Mock Trial session to be held on Friday, April 7, 2017. Superior CVI and St. Patrick's will go head to head during the morning session from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and Westgate and St. Ignatius will compete in the afternoon from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. Both Mock Trial events will be held at the Thunder Bay Consolidated Courthouse located at 125 N. Brodie Street, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

This is the thirteenth year that Law Day will be formally celebrated in Thunder Bay, which has now become an annual event. All members of the public are invited and encouraged to come out and participate in this year's celebration.

For more information, please contact Christin Marrello at 344-9191 or Beth Calonego at 623-4342, Co-Chairs of the TBLA Law Day Committee.