



The Speaker

YOUTH PARLIAMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA ALUMNI SOCIETY

Volume 2013
Issue I

84TH SESSION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

First of all, congratulations to the three house leaders for making Session such a success. Sarah O'Connor did an excellent job leading a very junior Cabinet through Session. I was impressed with how well cabinet rose to the challenge. Allie Dickson also did a great job of leading shadow cabinet with very thoughtful debate. Ambrose Yung also did a fine job as Deputy Speaker.

This has been a very productive year on Senate with the majority of Senators staying on for another year. Their continued support is appreciated. I especially wanted to thank some Senators who have stepped up into new leadership roles. First of all thank you to Dora Turje who has taken on the role of CRO to add to her pre-existing Registrar duties. Our outgoing CRO, Jenn Jay did a fantastic job over the last few years and we appreciate the fact that she has stayed on Senate and taken on new leadership roles such as chair of the Risk Management Committee.

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BC Youth Parliament Alumni



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I would also like to thank Saša Pudar for taking on the role of Executive Director. Without Saša and Dora coming forward Session would not have been the success that it was. Finally, a big thank you goes out to Karen Ratchford who has taken on the job of Senate Treasurer in addition to continuing on as Secretary.

I would like to thank the two Senators who have had to move on this year. Travis Wong served as Treasurer for two years and was a great asset to the organization. Although he has not been able to continue on as a Senator this year he has continued to provide support to Senate and Karen.

Although Percy Lee was only a Senator for one year, he made a significant contribution to the organization by serving as Executive Director in his first year on Senate. He also worked hard on our ongoing grant applications.

Congratulations also to Kerry Simmons our second recipient of the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Award for Outstanding Leadership. It was an honour to present the award to her at Session. For more detail about how Kerry has contributed to the organization please see the write up by Danica Wong Awards Committee Chair elsewhere in this newsletter. I would encourage all alumni to nominate other deserving alumni when the time comes in the fall.

Finally, I would like to invite any interested alumni to attend a Senate meeting or to offer your experience and advice to BCYP's cabinet. We can always benefit from a new or different perspective. Please email me at jasrhon@shaw.ca if you would like to be added to the email list about upcoming Senate meetings.

- Rhonda Vanderfluit, Chair -



MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

I am happy to say that Session went very well and BCYP is off to a great year this year. We had a full House of 95 Members and they debated and were more engaged in Parliament than I have seen in my five years of Youth Parliament.

Cabinet has been very active in planning events throughout the province and we are once again into RYP season. We have six RYPs that we intend to run this year. North Shore Youth Parliament and Lower Mainland East Youth Parliament both happened very successfully, with Vancouver Island Youth Parliament, Vancouver Youth Parliament, Southern Interior Youth Parliament and Northern BC Youth Parliament on the horizon over the next few months.

If anyone has any suggestions for things Parliament can do throughout the year, we would love to hear them.

- Sarah O'Connor, Premier-





BOARD OF DIRECTOR UPDATES

On behalf of the Alumni Society, the current Board of Directors would like to extend our gratitude to our our retiring peers:

- Percy Lee
- Travis Wong



BCYP House Leaders 84TH Parliament

Premier

- Sarah O'Connor

Leader of the Opposition

- Alexandra Dickson

Deputy Speaker

- Ambrose Yung

BCYP House Leaders 85TH Parliament

Premier

- Ambrose Yung

Leader of the Opposition

- Karina Pelayo

Deputy Speaker

- Darya Ali



MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

In this era of increasing charity organizations and non-for-profits, funding opportunities have become scarce. Our grants have decreased. At the same time, our operating expenses for the session, including transportation and accommodation for members have continued to rise. We are attempting to keep session fees at reasonable levels to encourage a diverse group of participants, and are actively pursuing alternative fundraising opportunities. Alumni contributions to BCYP are of tremendous help to keep Parliament's initiatives alive!

If you are able to make a contribution to Senate, you are encouraged to make a donation at the following website: <http://www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?CharityID=s36109>. We accept all major credit cards and a tax receipt is instantly generated.

- Karen Ratchford, Treasurer -





MESSAGE FROM THE REGISTRAR

At Session this year we had a full 95 members, a full House for the first time in a number of years. There were 61 members from the Lower Mainland, 21 from the Interior, and 13 from the Island. More than half of this year's Interior members are from the north of the province, with applications coming from quite a wide spread of communities in both the North and Columbia-Kootenays. Island members are split almost evenly between greater Victoria and the north-central Island. The registration fee this year was \$270, thanks to a grant from Coast Capital Savings.

This year as for many years now, transportation of Lower Mainland and Interior members between Vancouver and Victoria was arranged with Pacific Coach Lines. A special "thank you" is due to PCL for providing the Society with a generous discount on the charter rate for their services, allowing us to continue to provide members with a comfortable and efficient travel experience. PCL's excellent service and generosity is greatly appreciated.



- Dora Turje, Registrar -



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER

Session this past December saw 95 members gathering in Victoria to debate and legislate. As Chief Returning Officer this year it was my duty to ensure the safety and well-being of all members during their time in Victoria. I am pleased to report that the 84th British Columbia Youth Parliament Parliamentary Session occurred without any major event detrimentally affecting the Society or Parliament.

Thanks are due to Senators Corrigan Cassidy, Neil Chahal, Susie da Silva, Jeremy McElroy, and Rhonda Vanderluit, alumni Aniz Alani, Alan Ip, and Nicole Stewart, and friends of Parliament Richard Cooper, Brian Dutkewich, and Danielle Jarvis for taking time from their busy schedules to help with supervision during Session. I would also like to commend the senior members on Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet for setting a great example for the younger members, a more difficult job than usual given the small number of members in their third year and above this year.

In our 9th year of using the curfew system at Session, whereby members are required to check in with the CRO or a designated supervisor by 1:00am in a specific location, no significant issues arose with check-in and curfew enforcement. In addition, I can happily report that there were no significant problems with regard to members' behaviour that were raised with me by the hotel staff.

This year I continued the practice started by my predecessor of preparing a "Guide to Supervision" package for Senators, alumni, and friends who were assisting with supervision. The package included information about key supervision locations, member room lists, reminders of what to look out for during hall and common room patrols, and copies of the Codes of Conduct for members and house servants. Although I was lucky enough to have some very experienced supervisors throughout the week as well as some who were new to the role, I believe that the package was useful to help keep everyone on the same page.

The House Leader elections went smoothly, with the positions of Premier and Leader of the Opposition being contested. The position of Leader of the Opposition, in particular, saw five candidates standing for election, which I found quite heartening given recent trends in House Leader elections. Three deserving members were presented with awards as part of the Provincial Capital Commission-sponsored banquet on the last evening of Session. More information on election results and award recipients can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

- Dora Turje, Chief Returning Officer -



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to report a successful, safe and fun session was had this year. Members arrived on December 27th at Harbour Towers Hotel in Victoria, where they had a mixer following an afternoon and evening of opening ceremonies and Reply to the Speech from the Throne. We were very fortunate to have Gary Lenz, the Sergeant at Arms of the BC Legislature speak to the members prior to the opening sitting. While he had done this in years past, this year we had the added treat of being able to see British Columbia's first ever black rod. Mr. Lenz is BC's first Usher of the Black Rod, which was instituted in 2012. Members and present Alumni received a valuable history lesson and an explanation of the unique carvings on BC's Black Rod from Mr. Lenz.



The following day members continued their parliamentary education with a visit to Government House, where the role of the Crown was discussed with them by Colonel James Hammond, the Private Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor. Following Colonel Hammond's speech members received a tour and had tea time in the ballroom. In the evening members had workshops on Parliamentary skills run by Alumni.



Beta Sigma Phi continues to provide a fantastic luncheon for our members, and support our organization. It was a pleasure to see so many familiar faces from the sorority come to meet members, share experiences, and have some laughs over a pleasant lunch spread.

On the last night of session, the Provincial Capital Commission (PCC) held the 7th Annual PCC Sponsored Awards Banquet. The PCC is a self sustaining Crown Corporation charged with preserving heritage areas in the Capital, as well as connecting the Capital to all British Columbians. In this vein, the PCC had also sponsored debate over a Private Members Resolution to do with the Capital, specifically to move it to New Westminster. The membership vigorously debated whether or not to move to capital, but ultimately it was decided that we would support it staying in beautiful Victoria, BC. Our relationship with the PCC has blossomed over these last 7 years and we are looking for opportunities to expand it in the following years.



I'd like to thank the alumni that helped with the organization of session, as well as our community sponsors and supporters whose continued assistance has resulted in a high quality educational experience being provided to our members.

- Saša Pudar, Executive Director -



We are doing our part to minimize our carbon footprint by reducing the number of mailed out print copies of this newsletter. *The Speaker* is now available in electronic format direct to your inbox and online at bcyp.org. **If you currently receive this newsletter in print by mail, we encourage you to switch to electronic format by sending a request to alumni.affairs@bcyp.org.**



MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHAIR

On behalf of the Senate Awards Committee, it is my pleasure to announce that the following awards were conferred on the following individuals at Session:

Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society Award for Outstanding Leadership – Kerry Simmons

Kerry's contributions to BCYP and the Society have been both numerous and far in excess of what can reasonably be expected of a director, let alone a member, of the Society.

A strong supporter of Camp Phoenix, Kerry led the Incident Investigation Committee in 2000 that resulted in the formation of the Camp Phoenix Steering Committee, which proved to be a key element in the project's subsequent success. Personally sacrificing much time and energy, she also served as Camp Director a total of five times. Kerry was a critical player in the establishment of the Victoria Foundation endowment, navigating the necessary bureaucracy while also making personal donations accounting for approximately 10% of the funds contributed in the first two years. Kerry spearheaded the Senate-run Vancouver Island Youth Parliament in 2004, effectively revitalizing Island recruitment as well as the RYP itself, which continues to run today. As Chair of the Alumni Society, Kerry led the first modern strategic-planning session and was instrumental in developing the Society's current relationship with Coast Capital Savings and the Provincial Capital Commission. In addition to these project-specific accomplishments, Kerry's personal mentorship of parliamentarians over the years has helped numerous individuals reach their own leadership potential and educational goals, both within and outside of BCYP.

Kerry's community leadership outside BCYP is also remarkable. She is currently President of the BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association. She has also taught as a Sessional Instructor at the University of Victoria Faculty of Law and served as a community leader for the Minerva Foundation for women.

Inspiring New Member Award – Madeline Gallard

A passionate debater with strong interests in environment issues and social justice, Mady stood out from day one of Session as thoughtful orator and promising parliamentarian. Despite being the youngest member of the 83rd Parliament, Mady rose quickly to a leadership role as Attorney General for the Vancouver Island Youth Parliament. She dove headlong into the project, exercising the parliamentary procedure knowledge she had gained in just a few short months with dexterity and aplomb to provide members with a rewarding and educational RYP experience. In May, Mady attended the Western Canada Youth Parliament drafting two PMRs for the event, one of which was passed by the House. With a fellow member from her community, Mady also canvassed local businesses for donations, raising community awareness of the organization while fulfilling much of her donation total. This year, Mady has returned to BCYP as Minister of New Member Relations and Minister of the Island.

Fisi Award for Service – Alexandra Dickson

Throughout her time in BCYP, Allie has exemplified the ideal of selfless service unto others. She has held numerous Cabinet portfolios over the years, including Interior, Service, and Regional Youth Parliaments, all of which focus on serving and educating others. As Leader of the Opposition this year, one of Allie's main focuses has been on ensuring that Cabinet continues to help members provide a high level of service to their communities. Outside of BCYP, Allie has been involved with Rotary International since high school. As president of her secondary school's Interact club, she spearheaded the Rotary project ShelterBox which, due in large part to her personal efforts has developed into an international campaign.* A competitive athlete, Allie also volunteers as a biathlon coach with a local ski club and higher-level biathletes.

* ShelterBoxes are essentially disaster kits that a family can live off for a period of time after a disaster. The kits include food, a tent and basic living essentials. For more information, visit <http://www.shelterboxcanada.org/>

Youth Parliament Bond Shield – Fatima Al-Fahim

Despite being a first-year member, Fatimah raised a total of \$1,000 for the 83rd Parliament – well above and beyond the \$145 individual donation total expected of last year's members as per the Supply Act passed at Session. Fatimah solicited her father's company, The Lumex Inc., as well as another relative's company for substantial donations. As a member of her student council, she also arranged for the proceeds of several bake sales to be forwarded to BCYP.

- Danica Wong, Vice-Chair -



Moving soon? Update your records with BCYP! Email alumni.affairs@bcyp.org



THANKS FOR SHOWING YOUR SUPPORT

For decades, the Youth Parliament Alumni Society has provided valuable support for BCYP. As the official sponsor, we organize and resource the annual session in Victoria for youth from across our province.

Your donation to the Youth Parliament Alumni Society ensures that young people from around our province can participate in an organization that benefits not only themselves, but also their communities. Donations can be made by cheque, payable to Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society, and sent to:

The Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society
c/o Karen Ratchford, Treasurer
8325 Hudson Street
Vancouver, BC V6P 4M3



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BY-LAWS REVIEW CMTE

The By-laws of the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society will be reviewed this year, and recommendations for changes will be submitted before the Alumni Society at the following Annual General Meeting. The By-laws are outdated and require some work to modernize and make consistent with the present day requirements of our Board of Directors. If you are interested in joining the By-laws Review Committee please e-mail me at sasapudar@gmail.com. The Committee will function entirely over e-mail, and the level of commitment requires responding to e-mails and reading over proposed changes.

- Saša Pudar, Chair of the By-Laws Review Committee -