

LEAFlet

RAISING OUR VOICES FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY



LITIGATION UPDATE, PAGE 2.

West Coast LEAF's Kendra Milne speaks with media.



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WEST COAST LEAF'S YOUTH OUTREACH NOW REACHES EVEN FURTHER — TO KAMLOOPS!

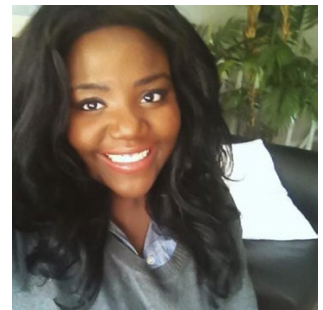
For more than 15 years, West Coast LEAF's peer-led No Means No workshop has been educating youth about their legal rights and responsibilities when it comes to consent, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. Last year alone, our passionate team of youth facilitators presented to more than 1,000 youth in the Lower Mainland and the Nanaimo region. Now, we're thrilled to be expanding No Means No to Kamloops and the surrounding area, just in time for the start of the new school year.

The newest member of the West Coast LEAF team, Kamloops Youth Trainer/Facilitator Magalie Knopf, will be recruiting, training and supporting the team of local volunteer facilitators who will engage their peers in conversation through No Means No.

Magalie, a social work student and long-time Kamloops resident, said the role is a great match with her passions and goals: "For as long as I can remember, I've had a desire to educate others, especially youth, on causes that matter."

West Coast LEAF believes in offering education opportunities where none might otherwise be available, so it seemed like a natural step to expand No Means No to Kamloops, a community that has been without a peer-based youth program on sexual assault and consent until now. "What's exciting about being the first Kamloops Youth Trainer/Facilitator with West Coast LEAF," said Magalie, "is the task of being able to bring the workshops to a new audience who [might never be] exposed to the material otherwise."

The timing of our Kamloops launch could not be better, as West Coast LEAF's youth programs are entering an exciting time of growth. We have just welcomed a new Vancouver Youth Program Coordinator, Afie Bozorgebrahimi, and we are looking forward to harnessing the energy and vision of two new youth program workers to propel our workshops to ever greater heights. Early this month, we hosted a training



Magalie Knopf is West Coast LEAF's new Kamloops Youth Trainer/Facilitator

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EQUALITY IN THE COURTS

It's been a busy summer for our litigation team as we gear up for what looks to be a very active year in court.

In August, West Coast LEAF headed into BC Supreme Court to intervene in the ongoing case about Trinity Western University's proposed law school. At issue is the requirement that incoming students and faculty sign a Community Covenant that prohibits sexual expression outside of heterosexual marriage and, in our view, denies women autonomy over their bodies. TWU is challenging the Law Society of BC's decision to deny the school accreditation.

In *Trinity Western University and Brayden Volkenant v. Law Society of British Columbia*, West Coast LEAF argued that BC's legal profession must remain discrimination-free and accessible to everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or marital status. West Coast LEAF is the only intervener arguing that TWU's Covenant leads to differential treatment on the basis of sex and would infringe upon women's reproductive freedom, including the constitutionally protected right to seek an abortion.

Also in August, West Coast LEAF continued its involvement in a human rights case that began with a complaint filed by Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users (VANDU) against the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association for its treatment of people who are homeless in Vancouver's downtown core. The complaint stemmed from attempts by DVBIAs workers (called Downtown Ambassadors) to "remove" this population from public space, including sidewalks.



West Coast LEAF Director of Law Reform Kendra Milne speaks with media before the Aug. 24 hearing in BC Supreme Court.

In April 2015, the BC Supreme Court found that the Downtown Ambassadors program had engaged in discriminatory conduct. West Coast LEAF, in coalition with the Community Legal Assistance Society, intervened to argue that evidence requirements for discrimination cases should not unfairly disadvantage already marginalized people. DVBIAs and the City of Vancouver have appealed the decision.


West Coast LEAF, again in coalition with CLAS, has just received leave to intervene in the appeal. We intend to argue that decision-makers must take a flexible approach to discrimination claims, one that allows for evidence of social context. This case, which is expected to be heard in March 2016, has potential ramifications for all marginalized groups that may need human rights protections.

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and team-building session at our Vancouver office for Afe, Magalie, and longstanding Nanaimo Youth Trainer/Facilitator Lea Silver.

All three women are looking forward to the opportunity to learn from one another and bond as colleagues. Said Afe, "I hope that we'll be able to share our experiences and collaborate on our favourite facilitation methods so we can all work on ways to make the experience

better for the youth at the workshops." Lea, too, is "ecstatic to connect with the other youth program staff. Delivering these workshops takes a lot of energy; getting together to give each other support, learn from each other, and explore the workshop content as a team will give me the chance to get energized for the new school year and increase my skills as a facilitator. I am so excited!" So are we!

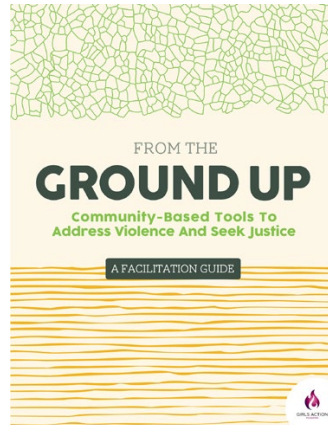
To learn more or to book a workshop, visit westcoastleaf.org/workshop-categories/youth-workshops 

KNOWING OUR LEGAL RIGHTS FROM THE GROUND UP

Girls and women aged 16 to 24 are one of the groups most at risk of experiencing intimate-partner violence. Now, frontline support workers and violence-prevention educators have a new tool to help young women resist a culture of violence, access justice, and find systems of support.

West Coast LEAF is proud to have contributed to Girls Action Foundation's new youth anti-violence workshop guide as a public legal education partner. This resource, *From the Ground Up*, is designed to spark discussion among service providers about how best to respond to violence and to inform young women about their rights and about the services and resources available to them.


The activities in the guide, intended for facilitators with expertise in violence prevention and in supporting survivors, are adaptable to the needs and



interests of diverse participants. Activities include highlights from West Coast LEAF's long-running No Means No workshop, which empowers youth to understand sexual consent and assault, while affirming the legal right to say no.

The guide grew out of Building Bridges to Justice, a project that brought together facilitators, frontline workers, educators, advocates, activists, members of the RCMP, and others from across the country in 2014. Our public legal education team attended the meeting near Montreal to help develop the building blocks of what

we're pleased has become *From the Ground Up*.

Download a copy at westcoastleaf.org/2015/07/21/from-the-ground-up-a-workshop-guide-by-girls-action-foundation 

WARM GREETINGS


It seems we are together again! Executive Director Kasari Govender is on parental leave with baby Shailen and to help make that possible, I have rejoined the staff at West Coast LEAF as Interim Executive Director until April 2016.



Alison Brewin

For the past four years, I have had great success as a consultant to the nonprofit sector in BC — and will be continuing that work part-time — but I couldn't say no when the Board asked me to consider coming back. I am especially excited to work with newer staff members Basya, Kendra, Alana, Victoria, Afie, Magalie, and Lea and to rejoin my old friends Sharon and Shahnaz.

Since first joining West Coast LEAF in 1999, I saw the important role the organization could one day play in providing direct legal services to BC women. It took Kasari's incredible talent and perseverance to get that vision off the ground and to engage a core group of donors and funders to make that dream a reality. I now have the great pleasure of supporting the initial implementation of our new Women's Legal Clinic, in partnership with the law schools at the University of British Columbia and Thompson Rivers University. Stay tuned for more details on this groundbreaking project.

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. Great work, great people, great social change. It's a pleasure to be back! 

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**West Coast LEAF**
(Women's Legal Education
and Action Fund)
www.westcoastleaf.org
www.youth.westcoastleaf.org

Please join us on Tuesday, September 29, 2015

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INVESTING IN WOMEN'S EQUALITY

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