

# Pride Toronto Dispute Resolution Process – Officers

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**The Board of Pride Toronto has appointed a roster of independent, professional, impartial Dispute Resolution Officers who are members in good standing with the Law Society of Upper Canada or have relevant professional experience and training in human rights issues, mediation or adjudication.**

**The officers act on a voluntary basis and are governed by the *Arbitrations Act, 1991*, its relevant regulations, alternative dispute resolution codes of ethics/conduct and best practices.**

**The officers are objective and impartial and do not advocate, act on behalf of or represent any party in dispute (complainant, respondent, management). All complaints to the DRP will be dealt with in an unbiased manner.**

**Pride Toronto will continue to recruit Dispute Resolution experts to assist in this important complaint resolution process. Details will be made available in the future.**

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## Chair, Dispute Resolution Process

### R. Douglas Elliott

Douglas Elliott is a founding partner in Roy Elliott O'Connor LLP, with a litigation practice that is increasingly focused on class actions. He is rated by his peers as one of the Best Class Action Lawyers in Canada through "The Best Lawyers in Canada". His peers have also recognized him as an expert in public law through Lexpert. "Who's Who in Canada", published by the University of Toronto, has also recognized him. In 2010, the Law Society of Upper Canada awarded Douglas the Law Society Medal, granted each year by to a select group of lawyers whose careers "represent the highest level of achievement and commitment to serving society and the profession." Douglas has played a leadership role in some of Canada's most significant class actions, as well as landmark constitutional, government liability and health law cases with national impact.

Douglas has received numerous awards for his legal work and community service, including the Lawyer of the Year Award, presented by Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped, the Community Service Award of the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto, the Founders Award of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, the SOGIC Hero Award of the Canadian Bar Association, the Distinguished Service Award of the Association of Lesbian and Gay Psychiatrists, the Salah Bachir Award for Community Service, the Leadership Award of the Canadian AIDS Society and The Lifetime Achievement Award from Pride Toronto. The Canadian AIDS Society has also awarded Roy Elliott O'Connor LLP the Corporate Leadership Award, the first time a law firm has been so recognized.

Douglas has instructed in civil litigation at the Bar Admission Course of the Law Society of Upper Canada, and has been a guest lecturer at the University of California San Francisco School of Law, University of Southern California School of Law, New England School of Law, University of Toronto Faculty of Law, University of Western Ontario Faculty of Law, University of Windsor Faculty of Law, and the University of Niigata Faculty of Law in Japan. He has presented at various legal symposiums throughout Canada and abroad, including presentations to the Ontario Bar Association, Law Society of Upper Canada, Ontario Human Rights Commission, Ontario Hospital Association, Osgoode Hall Law School Continuing Legal Education, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association, Canadian Institute, Canadian Bar Association, Commonwealth Lawyers Association, the American Society of International Law, the National Lesbian and Gay Lawyers Association (USA), International Lesbian and Gay Law Association and the International Bar Association.

Douglas is currently a candidate for an LL.M in Constitutional Law through Osgoode Hall Law School. He speaks English and French. In 2010/11 Douglas also served on the Community Advisory Panel for Pride Toronto and was instrumental in researching and developing the recommended Dispute Resolution Process as a means to provide an objective, transparent mechanism to review and resolve complaints about participation in the Pride parade and march.

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## Dispute Resolution Officers

### Andrew Pinto

Andrew Pinto is a partner in the Toronto law firm Pinto Wray James LLP. He has appeared in the Supreme Court of Canada and before all levels of court in Ontario. He practices primarily in the areas of workplace law, civil litigation, human rights and constitutional law. Andrew has assisted many LGBTQ clients and organizations over the years including Marc Hall (the gay teen who took his date to a prom), EGALE and the Foundation for Equal Families.

Andrew is an Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto teaching the Administrative Law course which deals with fairness and governance issues at tribunals, boards and agencies. He is an experienced workplace and human rights investigator.

Andrew has provided media commentary to print, television and radio programs including several appearances on the Michael Coren show concerning LGBTQ rights. He is a past member of ASAAP, the Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention. Andrew received the inaugural Lawyer of the Year award from the South Asian Bar Association for his contributions to the legal profession and wider community.

### **Raja Khouri**

Raja G. Khouri has been a commissioner with the Ontario Human Rights Commission since 2006. He is managing consultant at The Knowledge Centre, established in 1995 and specializing in organizational development and capacity building. Raja recently served on the Pride Toronto Community Advisory Panel.

Raja is co-chair of the advocacy committee and a member of the executive committee of Human Rights Watch Canada, and co-founder of the Canadian Arab-Jewish Leadership Dialogue Group. He formerly served on Ontario's Hate Crimes Community Working Group and the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy Roundtable. Raja is a former president of the Canadian Arab Federation and board member at the Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs. His earlier career included senior management and consulting tenures in corporations in Canada and overseas. Raja has chaired conferences, given and moderated lectures, given numerous media interviews, and published commentaries in journals and major Canadian dailies.

### **Brad Berg**

Brad has a wide-ranging counsel practice that includes both complex commercial cases and precedent-setting public interest litigation. He has appeared as lead counsel before various administrative tribunals, arbitration panels, inquests and at all levels of court, including all Ontario civil courts, the Tax Court, the federal courts and the Supreme Court of Canada.

**Litigation Experience:** Brad's extensive experience in commercial and civil litigation includes business disputes, agency and distributorship conflicts, fiduciary obligations, real estate and leasing, taxation, procurement, injunctions, the regulation of professionals, constitutional and administrative law and all types of contract and negligence actions. Brad has acted on a wide range of corporate law and securities matters, including shareholder disputes, directors' and officers' actions and plans of arrangement. He is regularly consulted on corporate transactions and opinions, and frequently advises on complex questions of legal privilege, jurisdiction and cross-border regulation. A representative list of Brad's retainers can be seen at [www.blakes.com](http://www.blakes.com). Prior to joining Blakes, Brad clerked to the Court of Appeal for Saskatchewan and worked in a small law firm in his hometown of Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. He is a member of the bar in both Saskatchewan and Ontario.

**Academic Involvement:** Brad regularly teaches trial advocacy at Osgoode Hall Law School and is an active mentor for law students and young lawyers. He is a regular coach and judge for law school moot court competitions. Brad is the author of many publications and is a contributing editor to *Barristers & Solicitors in Practice*. In 1995, his graduate thesis was jointly awarded the Alan Marks Medal as the best thesis in law, masters or doctorate, at the University of Toronto.

**Community Contribution:** Brad is very active in The Advocates' Society and the profession generally. He is the past co-chair of a CBA committee on equality and human rights. Brad often acts on a pro bono basis, including in the landmark "three-parent case" (Ont. C.A.) and regularly for CCLA at the Supreme Court of Canada. Brad is a member of and advocate for the AIDS Committee of Toronto, the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto, and Egale Canada, and for many years served on the board of directors of Family Services Toronto. Within Blakes, Brad serves on the Partnership Committee and is Co-chair of the Legal Personnel Committee.

### **Maurice Green**

Maurice Green graduated from the University of London with an LL.B in 1967, before emigrating to Canada in 1968, and obtaining a J.D. from York University in 1970. He has practiced extensively in the areas of labour and employment law, and education law, since his call to the bar in 1972.

Over the course of his career he has represented unions and employee associations from all sectors of the economy, including teachers, engineers and scientists, professional educational support staff, construction workers, and industrial employees. He has also represented clients in the area of health law.

He has appeared before labour boards, both provincial and federal, arbitration boards, human rights tribunals, professional Colleges, and other administrative tribunals, all level of courts in Ontario, and the Supreme Court of Canada. He was particularly active in the constitutional law challenges, and Charter challenges arising from the

educational sector, especially those which attempted to defend a degree of independence for the public school system, and the right to collective bargaining. As an example he was co-counsel in the Trinity Western University case [2001] 1 S.C.R. 772, for the intervenor, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, which supported the B.C. College of Teachers refusal to recognize the Trinity Western University teacher training program, due to its policy of identifying homosexual behaviour as a sin, and therefore unacceptable conduct by its students.

He is case editor for the Education and Law Journal. He has spoken at numerous labour law and educational law conferences and seminars over the years. He has been closely involved with the New Israel Fund for many years, having been its Canadian President, and on the International Board in the 90's. NIF is the organization responsible for most of the growth in NGO's in Israel. Its main grantee is the Association of Civil Liberties. It was also instrumental in getting Agudah (LGBT Association) off the ground and it remains a grantee. When not litigating Maurice has been active in the community and charitable work, including support for social action and civil liberty groups.

### **Julie Lee**

Julie Lee is a lawyer, practicing family and criminal law in St. Thomas, Ontario. Julie clerked for the Honourable Mr Justice Iacobucci at the Supreme Court of Canada in 1999/2000. Prior to her legal education, she worked in the anti-violence movement as an educator, administrator and advocate. She is the co-founder of second stage housing in Huron County and the past executive director of the London Abused Women's Centre in London, Ontario. Julie's advocacy has also been directed at achieving equity and dignity for same-sex families.

### **Robert Coates**

Robert G. Coates attended Queen's University, at Kingston, Ontario. From 1971 to 1975 he was enrolled in the Faculty of Arts & Science. In 1975 he obtained a Bachelor of Science (Honours Biology) degree.

He studied at Queen's University Law School from 1976 to 1979, at which time he obtained his LLB (Bachelor of Law). Mr. Coates articulated in Guelph, Ontario, at the firm of Kearns, McKinnon. He attended the Ontario Bar Admission Course in Toronto. Upon his call to the Ontario Bar, he taught a course in law at Humber College of Applied Art and Technology. He worked for the Ontario Legal Aid Plan for two years, prior to opening his practice in 1984. Since 1984, Mr. Coates has practiced law in downtown Toronto.

### **Andre Goh**

André has been in the human rights and diversity field both professionally and from a community perspective, for over two decades.

- 8 years with the Ontario Human Rights Commission as a Senior Human Rights Officer in investigation, mediation, training and negotiation.
- 5 years with the Western Australia (WA) Police Service as the Equal Employment Opportunity Manager
- Senior Consultant in the Western Australia Office of Equal Employment Opportunity
- Coordinator of Recruitment and Aboriginal Promotional Services at the Western Australia Department of Justice.
- 3 years with Ryerson University as the Equity Advisor
- And currently, Manager, Diversity Management Unit with the Toronto Police Service

André has also been involved with a number of community groups both in Canada and Australia, including:

- DiverseCity Steering Committee
- Community Advisory Committee for Pride Toronto
- Asian Community AIDS Services
- Toronto Chinese Community Advisory Committee,
- Chinese Canadian National Council,
- Toronto Mayor's Committee on Race and Community Relations,
- Gay Asians of Toronto,
- LGBT Youth Line,
- Khush
- Australian National Council on Race Relations,
- Gay Asians Perth,
- Spectrum, and
- The Western Australian Community Committee on Ethnic Relations.

André is a Masters graduate in Immigration and Settlement Studies and has international experience and long-term commitment to equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression in the public and community sectors

## **Marlys Edwardh**

Marlys Edwardh, C.M. practices criminal, constitutional and administrative/regulatory law, with an emphasis on civil and human rights and national security litigation. Marlys has been counsel in many leading constitutional cases and high-profile criminal matters. Some of her leading cases are listed below. Marlys appears regularly before all levels of court in Ontario, the Federal Court and Federal Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court of Canada. She has also served as counsel to and before several Commissions of Inquiry, including the Marshall inquiry, the Krever inquiry, and most recently the Arar inquiry.

Marlys has lectured at both Osgoode Hall Law School and the University of Toronto Faculty of Law, been on the faculty of the Federation of Law Societies' National Criminal Law Program, and acted as co-director of the professional LL.M. program in criminal law at Osgoode Hall. She continues to be a regular contributor to legal education programs.

Marlys has also served as a Director, Secretary, Treasurer and Second Vice President of the Advocates' Society, a Director of the Criminal Lawyers' Association, a Director of and subsequently Special Advisor to the Association in Defence of the Wrongly Convicted, and a Director and currently Vice President of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association.

Marlys' commitment to social justice and her contributions to the profession have been widely recognized. She has received numerous awards and honours, including the Law Society of Upper Canada Medal, the Criminal Lawyers' Association G. Arthur Martin Criminal Justice Award, the Vox Libera award from Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, the Women's Law Association President's Award, the Toronto Lawyers' Association Award of Distinction, Professional Recognition Awards from the Midwifery Education Programme and the Canadian Muslim Network, and the inaugural Dianne Martin Medal for Social Justice Through Law. Marlys is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and in 2010 was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada.

Marlys received her law degree from Osgoode Hall Law School and was called to the bar in 1976. She also holds a bachelor of arts degree in political science from Carleton University, a master of laws degree from Boalt Hall, and honorary doctor of laws degrees from the Law Society of Upper Canada and York University.

## **Val Edwards**

Valerie Edwards was called to the bar in 1983, after graduating from the University of Toronto. In addition to her extensive experience as trial counsel, she has appeared as appellate counsel in both the Ontario Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada. With more than 28 years of experience at the Bar, Valerie has demonstrated established expertise in damages analysis, including business loss claims, business and share valuations, and real property valuations. She has experience in commercial litigation, including partnership and shareholder lawsuits, contract disputes, real estate litigation matters, and lawsuits involving fiduciaries and departing employees. She also has an extensive professional liability practice.

Ms. Edwards has been involved in employment law and human rights cases. She acted for the Reverend James Ferry in the first Bishop's Court trial convened by the Anglican Church of Canada.

Ms. Edwards was on the organizing committee of Canada's first lesbian and gay pride event, called Gaydays, held over three days in August, 1979. She also co-founded the Gay and Lesbian Community Appeal, the Notso Amazon Softball League, and the Woman's Common.

## **Martha McCarthy**

Martha McCarthy was the winner of the Ontario Bar Association 2007 Award of Excellence in Family Law. Martha was called to the Bar in Ontario in 1991, winning the Silver Medal and the Family Law and Advocacy Prizes. Martha has practiced family law since her call, first in a large Bay Street firm, then the largest family law specialist boutique in Canada, and now with her own firm.

Martha was counsel for M. in M. v. H. which after eight years and a decision from the Supreme Court of Canada resulted in widespread amendments to include same-sex couples as spouses in both federal and provincial legislation. In 2000, she commenced the equal marriage case Halpern, which resulted in the first decision in the country and internationally calling for immediate same-sex marriage, effective June 10, 2003. Martha later acted for the Hendricks couple in Quebec, and the Dunbar couple in the Yukon in cases that opened up equal marriage in those provinces as well. She was counsel to the Ontario and Quebec couples on the Supreme Court Marriage Reference and, just to complete the circle, was counsel to the applicant in the first same-sex divorce in Canada. In 2006, Martha acted for lesbian families who won the right to immediately register both mothers as their children's parents, and intervened on behalf of these families in AA v. BB v. CC, a case achieving legal recognition for a three parent family.

Apart from gay and lesbian equality issues, Martha's areas of specialty include the interaction of family issues with business organization and valuation, shareholders' remedies, marriage contracts, equality claims in family law,

child representation and the effect of divorce on children. She is a Fellow of the International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers and a frequent advocate, author and commentator on issues of gay and lesbian equality, and our evolving concept of family.

### **Liz McIntyre**

As a senior member of the firm, Liz practices civil and administrative law with particular expertise in labour and employment law, human rights, occupational health and safety and health care. She has been recognized by her peers as one of the "Best lawyers in Canada" in the practice areas of labour, employment and human rights. In 2006, she was selected by the Law Society of Upper Canada as a recipient of the Law Society Medal. In 2007 she was inducted into the American College of Trial Lawyers. Liz was recently honoured by LEAF as one of 15 women lawyers who have made difference for women and girls in Canada.

Liz, together with Freya Kristjanson, is currently representing Mayor Hazel McCallion at the Mississauga Inquiry. In 2008 she was counsel at the inquest into the murder of nurse Lori Dupont and the suicide of Dr. Marc Daniel at Hotel Dieu Grace Hospital, in Windsor, a case that has led to significant amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act regarding violence in the workplace. Liz acted as counsel to interested parties before the Grange Inquiry into deaths at the Hospital for Sick Children and the SARS Commission conducted by Justice Campbell. Liz is well known for her work representing nurses and other professionals in a wide range of settings, including professional discipline/regulation, medical malpractice, inquests, inquiries and criminal proceedings.

Liz appears before all levels of the courts and administrative tribunals. She has been counsel in numerous precedent-setting cases, including the well-known Orillia Soldiers case, the only Canadian appellate court decision on compensation-related disability discrimination and the duty to accommodate. Liz represented LEAF at the Supreme Court of Canada in the K.M. case dealing with the application of limitation periods to victims of sexual assault. She also argued *Mt. Sinai v. Tilley*, a case in which the Ontario Court of Appeal quashed a provision of the Employment Standards Act disentitling disabled workers to severance pay based on a violation of s.15 of the Charter.

Liz is a frequent speaker and author of articles on human rights, privacy, health professionals, and violence in the workplace. She has co-authored the firm's Guides to the Local Health System Integration Act, the Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act and a book on the College of Teachers Act.

Liz has been very active in the legal community as a Council Member of the Medical Legal Society of Toronto, Member of the Advisory Committee for the Women's Future Fund, Member of the Advocate's Society, a Member of the University of Toronto Law School Planning Task Force, past Chair of the Law Society of Upper Canada Labour Law Specialty Committee, former Executive Member of the Canadian Association of Labour Lawyers and past Chair of the Labour Law Section of the Canadian Bar Association, Ontario.

### **Cynthia Petersen**

Cynthia Petersen practices in the areas of constitutional litigation, administrative law, and labour law and specializes in human rights and equality rights issues. She joined the firm in 1995 after teaching in the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa for several years.

Cynthia has represented clients in numerous ground-breaking Charter cases, including *Jane Doe v. Metropolitan Toronto Police* and almost all of the lesbian and gay rights cases that have been litigated before the Supreme Court of Canada, including *Egan v. Canada*, *Vriend v. Alberta*, *M. v. H.*, *Little Sisters Bookstore v. Canada* (No.1 and no.2), *Chamberlain v. Surrey District School Board*, Reference re: Same-Sex Marriage and *Hislop v. Canada*. In 2000, Cynthia was awarded the Canadian Bar Association's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Conference Hero award for her work advancing the equality rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. In addition to her appellate advocacy work, Cynthia regularly appears before a variety of tribunals and lower courts.

Cynthia also acts as the discrimination and harassment counsel for the Law Society of Upper Canada. As such, she provides confidential information and advice to individuals who have complaints of discrimination or harassment against lawyers in Ontario.

Cynthia is a regular speaker on a wide variety of subjects relating to social justice issues and often conducts educational workshops on human rights issues for various associations and organizations. She has also published several articles on equity issues, including racism in the criminal jury selection process, the role of trade unions in the lesbian and gay rights movement, and feminist pedagogy in law schools. Cynthia has been qualified as an expert witness in a number of legal proceedings on the topics of institutionalized racism in the criminal jury selection process, the constitutional rights of lesbian and gay Canadians, and sexual harassment and workplace sensitivity.

Cynthia received a bachelor of laws degree from Queen's University in 1989 and a master of laws degree from Harvard Law School in 1990. She was called to the Ontario Bar in 1994.

### **Linda Plumpton**

Linda Plumpton is a partner in the Litigation and Dispute Resolution practice of Torys LLP and a member of the firm's Executive Committee. From 2004 to 2010, she led the firm's litigation department in Toronto. Her practice focuses on class action litigation, corporate/commercial disputes and competition litigation. She also practises in the areas of public and constitutional law and employment litigation. Linda has appeared as counsel in the Supreme Court of Canada, in all levels of court in Ontario, and in the Federal Court, as well as before the Competition Tribunal, the Ontario Securities Commission, a variety of other administrative tribunals and in arbitration proceedings. Linda was previously named one of Canada's top 40 lawyers under 40 and she is repeatedly recognized as a leading corporate and commercial litigator in Canada. She is a director of The Advocates' Society and an active member of the Canadian Bar Association. Linda is also a former director of the Foundation for Equal Families. Among other things, Linda appeared as counsel for an intervenor at the Supreme Court of Canada on the same-sex marriage reference.

### **Professor Simon Stern**

Simon Stern completed his Ph.D. in English Literature at UC Berkeley in 1999 and graduated from Yale Law School in 2002, where he was Editor-in-Chief of the Yale Journal of Law & the Humanities. After law school he clerked for Ronald M. Gould on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, practiced litigation at Shea & Gardner in Washington, D.C., and then served as a Climenko Fellow and Lecturer on Law at Harvard Law School.

Prof. Stern's areas of teaching and research include the intellectual history of Anglo-American common law, law and literature, civil procedure, criminal law, and law and sexuality. He also writes on the history of copyright law and its relation to contemporary issues in intellectual property. In addition to his appointment on the Faculty of Law, Prof. Stern is also an Associate Member of the graduate faculty in the Department of English and the Centre for Comparative Literature, an affiliate member of the Centre for Innovation Law and Policy and the collaborative program in Book History and Print Culture, and a member of the Advisory Board for the International Society for the History and Theory of Intellectual Property. Professor Stern is also a member of the steering committee of the Sexual Diversity Studies program, and is the Law Faculty's LGBTQ Advisor for students.

Prof. Stern is co-chair (with Professor Ed Morgan) of the Law and Humanities Workshop and the Combined Degree Program in Law and English.

### **Susan Ursel**

Susan Ursel is a partner with the law firm of Green & Chercover. A graduate of the University of Toronto in 1979, she received her B.A. with high honours. Subsequently, she completed her LL.B. at Osgoode Hall Law School in 1984 and was called to the Bar in 1986. Ms Ursel has practiced in the areas of labour, employment, employment equity and human rights law since then. Her work also includes the development of educational seminars and presentations for clients with respect to issues on labour, human rights and employment equity. She has also served as a nominee on arbitration panels, and in that capacity, mediated settlements on a variety of issues.

Her work has included a variety of Supreme Court of Canada appearances, including working as co-counsel for the Metropolitan Community Church: Toronto on *Egan and Nesbitt*, the first Supreme Court decision to deal with the equality rights of gay men and lesbians; counsel to the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation on the *Trinity Western* case which dealt with the issue of training teachers; and counsel to the Foundation for Equal Families in the *Chamberlain* case, which dealt with the educational rights of children in gay and lesbian families. In addition, Ms. Ursel was also one of a team of lawyers who worked on the case of "*Jane Doe*" v. *Metropolitan Toronto Police*, a challenge to the police practices in Toronto regarding sexual assaults. She has acted as complainant's counsel in a number of important human rights cases in Ontario, including the *Hamilton Gay Pride Day* case, the *Sims* case which dealt with employment rights of gay men and lesbians, the *Thorton* case which asserted the rights of persons with HIV/AIDS, and most recently, the human right challenge to the delisting of sex reassignment surgery.

In addition to a busy labour and human rights practice, Ms. Ursel is active in the area of pensions and benefits, providing advice and undertaking litigation with respect to pension and benefits issues. She was court appointed counsel to Air Canada union retirees in the recent Air Canada *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act* proceedings. She is a past member of the Advisory Committee to the Employment Equity Commissioner, past director and president of the Emily Stowe Shelter for Women, a past member of the Steering Committee for the Campaign for Equal Families and she is a founding Director of the Foundation for Equal Families. She was also among the founding members of the Feminist Legal Analysis Committee and the Gay and Lesbian Issues and Rights Committee of the Canadian Bar Association: Ontario, now the Ontario Bar Association. She participated as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Toronto Board of Education's Triangle Program.

Professional memberships include the Ontario Bar Association; the Canadian Association of Labour Lawyers; Founding member, Coalition for the Reform of the Ontario Human Rights Commission; Founding member, the Association of Human Rights Lawyers and the National Association of Women and the Law. Ms. Ursel was also a founding director and past member of the executive of Pro Bono Law Ontario. She has been honoured for her contribution to pro bono legal culture by the Canadian Bar Association as the first recipient of the Young Lawyer's Pro Bono Service Award, 1998. She is also an inductee in the *Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives - Builders of Tolerance: Portraits from the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives - 2000*.

### **Zahra Binbrek**

Zahra is a human rights lawyer. Until recently, she worked at a boutique law firm that specializes in disability and human rights law. She has represented clients before several administrative tribunals on a range of issues related to disability, social benefits, human rights, employment, mental health and special education. Her cases focused on discrimination and the duty to accommodate in employment, education, and services. Her practice also included securing OHIP funding for out of country treatment of adolescents with addiction and mental health issues. Zahra has also represented clients who challenge findings of incapacity to consent to medical treatment and involuntary admission to psychiatric hospitals before the Consent and Capacity Board and has represented clients detained pursuant to dispositions of the Ontario Review Board.

Prior to law school Zahra managed settlement programs and various community projects related to access and equity, civic engagement and organizational capacity. She decided to go to law school as a way to enhance her advocacy skills and to learn how to use the law as a tool for positive social change. During her first year at law school, Zahra was awarded the University of Windsor Alumni Social Justice Fellowship and worked at the African Canadian Legal Clinic. She also completed the intensive clinic program at Legal Assistance of Windsor where she represented clients before the Social Benefits Tribunal and the Landlord and Tenant Board. While in law school Zahra was a founding member of the Criminal Law and Social Justice Group and Students Against Anti-Black Racism; organizations that were formed in response to discrimination, racism and homophobia on campus.

Zahra is a member of the Mental Health Legal Committee and is an executive member of the Arab Canadian Lawyers Association. She is also a board member of Across Boundaries, a mental health centre that provides services to people of colour experiencing severe mental health illness. She was also a member of the Equity Advisory Group of the Law Society of Upper Canada for three years.