



SUPREME COURT OF NOVA SCOTIA WELCOMES THREE NEW JUDGES

Tuesday, April 6, 2021 (Halifax, NS) – Three judges were appointed to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia earlier today. Two of those appointments fill new positions on the province’s Unified Family Court.

Justice Jean M. DeWolfe and Justice Lloyd I. Berliner will sit on the Supreme Court (Family Division) and Justice Gail L. Gatchalian will sit on the Supreme Court (General Division).

Federal Justice Minister David Lametti announced the appointments in a news release this morning. The appointments are effective immediately.

“These appointments are a bright spot in what has been a difficult and challenging year for the Supreme Court,” said The Hon. Deborah K. Smith, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia. “Although these judges are joining the Bench in the midst of a pandemic and the unprecedented changes that have come with it, I am confident their experience and expertise will help them step seamlessly into their new roles. On behalf of the entire Court, I want to congratulate them on this significant achievement.”

Justice Jean M. Dewolfe



Justice Jean Dewolfe received a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from Acadia University in 1981 and a Bachelor of Laws from Dalhousie University in 1985.

She was admitted to the Nova Scotia Bar in 1986 and joined the firm Muttart Tufts Dewolfe and Coyle, where she was made partner in 1990. During her time there, she primarily practiced family law.

Justice DeWolfe was first appointed a judge of the Provincial and Family Courts of Nova Scotia in November 2009. Since then, she has presided primarily in Family Court in Kentville, Truro and Amherst.

As a judge, she has served as Chair of the Family Court Rules Committee and is a past president of the Nova Scotia Provincial Judges Association.

Justice Lloyd I. Berliner



Justice Lloyd I. Berliner was born and raised in Montreal. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from McGill University in 1985. He went on to enrol at the University of New Brunswick, where he received his LLB in 1988. He was admitted to the Nova Scotia Bar in 1990.

At the time of his appointment, Justice Berliner had completed almost 31 years of practice at Patterson Law in Truro, where he built an extensive family law practice. He represented clients throughout the province and appeared at all levels of court in Nova Scotia, as well as the Supreme Court of Canada.

Prior to becoming a judge, Justice Berliner volunteered extensively with the Children's Wish Foundation of Canada, now known as Make a Wish Canada. He established the local sub-chapter in Truro, sat on the Provincial Board, represented Nova Scotia on the National Board, and at the time of his appointment was a member of Nova Scotia Chapter Advisory Board. He was recognized for his dedication to the organization when presented with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2013.

Justice Gail L. Gatchalian



Justice Gail L. Gatchalian graduated with a Bachelor of Science (Honours) from Dalhousie University in 1993, and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Toronto Faculty of Law in 1996.

She articulated with Cavalluzzo Hayes Shilton McIntyre and Cornish in Toronto before returning to Nova Scotia in 1999 to join Pink Larkin in Halifax. During her 22 years with the firm, she practiced labour, employment, human rights and constitutional law. She received her Queen's Counsel designation in 2018.

Justice Gatchalian is a former President of the Canadian Bar Association – Nova Scotia Branch, a former Chair of the CBA National Labour and Employment Law Section, and former Equity Chair of the CBA-NS. Most recently, she was the Chair of the CBANS Sexual Harassment Work Group, having led the development and delivery of Empowering Bystanders training to address sexual harassment in legal workplaces. She also served as a Nova Scotia Human Rights Board of Inquiry Chair.

For more information on the Nova Scotia Judiciary and the Courts in this province, please visit www.courts.ns.ca.

Media Contact:

Jennifer Stairs
Communications Director
Nova Scotia Judiciary
Cell: 902-221-5257
Email: stairsjl@courts.ns.ca