

OSGOODE'S INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED LAWYERS DAY (OITLD)

AGENDA & SPEAKER BIOS

MAY 28, 2025

Registration

8:00 – 8:45 am ET Osgoode Professional Development
1 Dundas St W Suite #2602, Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3

Morning Sessions (available online)

8:45 – 12:00 pm ET Land Acknowledgments & Opening Remarks

Representatives from the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA), Law Society of Ontario (LSO), and the Law Practice Program (LPP) walk you through everything you need to know about the accreditation and licensing process.

National Committee on Accreditation (NCA) (available online)

9:00 – 10:00 am ET Discover what the process for all internationally trained lawyers hoping to get accredited in Canada is like as well as the various types of assessments you may receive and options on how to complete your requirements



Deborah Wolfe, P.Eng., FEC, CAE
Executive Director, NCA and Law Schools Programs

Deborah Wolfe, P.Eng., is the Executive Director, National Committee on Accreditation and Law Schools Programs with the Federation of Law Societies of Canada. The NCA is a certification program for internationally educated lawyers and law graduates, or graduates of a Canadian civil law program, who wish to be admitted to a common law bar in Canada. Ms. Wolfe also leads the process to approve Canadian common law, law school programs. Ms. Wolfe is the Past Chair of the Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada, a board member of the Vimy Foundation, a former President of the Canadian Engineering Memorial Foundation (a charity that encourages girls to become engineers), and a former Chair of the Canadian Network of Agencies for Regulation. Ms. Wolfe is a civil engineer licensed in the province of Ontario and is a former Military Engineer having served with the Canadian Armed Forces.

Law Society of Ontario (available online)

10:00 – 11:00 am ET Get a better understanding of the pathways to becoming a lawyer in Ontario and the entire licensing process including the new LSO Connects, experiential training, licensing exams, and resources you can access throughout the process.



Jessica Weiss

Acting Director, Licensing and Accreditation

Jessica Weiss is the Acting Director of the Licensing and Accreditation department at the Law Society of Ontario. Jessica began at the Law Society in 2018 and has worked in several roles, including as Counsel in Licensing and Accreditation, when she worked to review the paralegal licensing examinations and study materials; as Team Lead, Paralegal Education, when she oversaw all aspects of paralegal education; and as Counsel to the Executive Director, Professional Development and Competence, when she worked to develop and launch the Guide to Experiential Training; and as Senior Counsel and Manager, Entry-Level Competence, when she led the team of licensees involved in all aspects of lawyer and paralegal licensing and paralegal education program accreditation. Before joining the Law Society, Jessica worked in private practice as a commercial litigator.

Paul Opolski

Counsel and Team Lead, Licensing and Accreditation

Paul Opolski graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School in 2010. He articulated at a large litigation firm before being called to the bar in 2011. After getting licensed, he spent 8 years as a staff lawyer at Legal Aid Ontario, first as a duty counsel in various GTA criminal courts, and then as a research lawyer until January 2020, when he joined the Law Society. In his present role as Counsel and Team Lead, Licensing and Accreditation, he provides legal and policy guidance to the director, management team, and departmental staff on matters that impact experiential training programs and licensing and accreditation.

Law Practice Program (LPP) (available online)

11:00 – 12:00 pm ET Learn how the LPP works: the training component, the simulated work environment, and the placements.



Fariya Walji

Senior Program Director, LPP

Fariya Walji is the Senior Program Director of the Law Practice Program. She is focused on the implementation and innovation of high-quality legal skills training, for licensing candidates in Ontario. She works with stakeholders across the province, in addition to leading a team and frequent public speaking.

Application Tips Session and Q&A (available online)

12:00 – 1:00 pm ET Learn more about the LLM application process at Osgoode Professional Development. This session will cover what makes a strong application, how to showcase your qualifications effectively, and offer guidance directly from our Admissions Team. It's a great opportunity to ask questions and gain clarity on how the program can support your professional journey.



Lauren Abramson

Recruitment Coordinator, Osgoode Professional Development

Lauren Abramson is a dynamic and results-driven professional currently serving as the Recruitment Coordinator at Osgoode Professional Development. With over 6 years of experience in Admissions/Talent Acquisition, Lauren excels in attracting and engaging both students and experienced talent throughout the recruitment lifecycle, from initial screening to onboarding and orientation. In her current role at Osgoode PD, Lauren plays a pivotal role in recruiting and attracting prospective students to LLM programs, offering valuable guidance on program fit based on individual goals, interests, and backgrounds.

Networking Lunch (in-person only)

12:00 – 1:00 pm ET Osgoode Professional Development
1 Dundas St W Suite #2602, Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3

Art of the CV and Cover Letter Workshop (in-person only)

1:00 – 2:00 pm ET The best way for an Internationally Trained Lawyer to stand out during the formal job recruitment processes is to have the best possible Résumé and Cover Letter as part of your application.

In her workshop, the Art of the Cover Letter and CV, Madori will focus on how to prepare application materials for law student recruitment, how to educate the audience about your legal journey and will discuss the timeline for securing Summer and Articling positions in Ontario.



Madori Sakamoto

Senior Manager, Professional Recruitment and Student Programs, Borden Ladner Gervais (Toronto)

After summering and articling in the Toronto office of Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (BLG), Madori returned to the firm as an associate in the Construction group. She now works as Senior Manager of Professional Recruitment and Student Programs, facilitating the office's law student program and recruitment processes. Madori received a Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science from Laurentian University prior to attending law school at Osgoode Hall Law School.

Art of Networking

2:00 – 3:00 pm ET Networking is essential in getting a job, unavoidable as a part of your own development, and key to having a successful career in the Canadian legal profession. Our panellists will cover how networking is related to but also different from job hunting, tips for how to get started networking, how to move beyond just a first interaction, and how networking has been a vital part of accreditation, licensing, and beyond.



Gina Alexandris, Legal Career Coach

A wide variety of experiences have shaped me and offer me helpful insights that I bring to the role of Coach & Consultant for the Legal Profession. Over the years, I have had the privilege to work with thousands of individuals, including emerging leaders, to support them in their professional development, at various stages, and with a number of organizations. My beliefs and values have been shaped by my professional and academic experiences, as well as by my experience as the daughter of Greek immigrants to Canada. I live with my husband, son and our dog, Milo, in Toronto.

Past formal leadership roles include Senior Director, Law Practice Program at TMU (formerly Ryerson University); and Special Advisor to the Lincoln Alexander School of Law; Director of the Strategic Planning Unit with the Legal Services Division at the Ministry of the Attorney General; Director of the Internationally Trained Lawyers Program at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law; and Assistant Dean and Director of Career Services at Osgoode Hall Law School. Prior to these roles, I practised civil litigation and family law. With an entrepreneurial lens, most of my roles were inaugural roles, creating and developing the innovative position and/or program.

Lifelong learning is a core, fundamental value and passion of mine. Training and certification include a law degree from Osgoode Hall Law School, a Master of Education Degree in Adult Education from OISE, a Certificate of Completion for the Art and Practice of Leadership Development Program at the Harvard Kennedy School. I am also a Certified Professional Co-

Active Coach (CPCC), having completed the Coaching program from the Co-Active Training Institute (CTI) and in 2022 earned my Associate Certified Coach (ACC) credential from the International Coaching Federation. I am passionate about personal and professional success and development, leadership, diversity and inclusion and developing strong relationships and networks. Clients include various Canadian law firms, the Law Society of Ontario, the Toronto Lawyers Association, Peel Law Association, Rotman's Intercultural Skills Lab, Refugee Jump Start and Lady Justice Initiative (a global leadership capacity building program).

In 2022, I was honoured to receive the Stronger Together Award by the Women in Law Leadership. In 2023 I was presented with the Women's Law Association of Ontario President's Award, for my contribution to the legal community and demonstrated commitment and leadership to the promotion of women in the law. And in 2025, the ITL Conference honoured me with the inaugural Leadership in Legal Education Award, for outstanding leadership and innovation in educational support and resources for internationally trained lawyers.



Lotus Menezes, Staff Lawyer, Blakes inSource

Lotus Tahirih Menezes is a legal professional currently working at Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP. She completed the Master of Laws in Canadian Common Law at Osgoode Hall Law School and is an alumna of the Law Practice Program (LPP), which supported her transition into the Canadian legal profession. As someone who has navigated the internationally trained lawyer (ITL) pathway herself, Lotus values the importance of mentorship and community. In her spare time, she offers support to other ITLs and students going through the licensing process, sharing insights and encouragement from her own experience. She remains actively engaged with both the Osgoode and LPP alumni communities and is committed to helping others feel seen, supported, and capable as they build their legal careers in Canada.



Rasna Islam, Student-at-Law, Laurel Family Law

Rasna Islam is an internationally trained legal professional with comprehensive experience in both South Asian and Canadian legal systems. She holds an LLB (Honours) and an LLM with high academic distinction from Bangladesh, as well as a second Master of Laws (LLM) in Canadian Common Law from Osgoode Hall Law School, York University. Rasna brings over five years of legal experience in family law, real estate, and debt collection from her practice in Bangladesh. In Canada, she successfully completed all components of the Law Society of Ontario's licensing process, including the Law Practice Program (LPP) and its work placement at Maddalena Fuller Family Law. She is currently serving as a Student-at-Law at Laurel Family Law LLP and is scheduled to be called to the Ontario Bar in June.



Cláudio Antônio Klaus Júnior, Summer law student

Claudio Klaus is a current student in the Global Professional Master of Laws program at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law and a 2025 summer student at the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee. He hosts the podcast *Studying Law Around the World* and is a former Visiting Research Trainee at Osgoode Hall Law School. Claudio currently serves as Communications Officer for the Law Students' Section of the Canadian Bar Association and as Newsletter Editor for the Student Section Executive Committee of the Ontario Bar Association.

Keynote (in-person only)

3:00 – 3:30 pm ET

Priscila Jales Atkinson



Priscila Jales Atkinson, Crown Counsel at the Ministry of the Solicitor General

Priscila Jales Atkinson is Crown Counsel at the Ministry of the Solicitor General (SolGen), where she provides support on class actions involving corrections and prosecutes appeals under the *Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act*. Before joining SolGen, Priscila was an Assistant Crown Attorney at the Central Toronto Crown Attorney's Office and Crown Counsel at the Constitutional Law Branch, where she was also a summer and articling student. In Brazil,

Priscila was a Judicial Law Clerk at the Federal Court of Appeal and Electoral Court of Appeal of Pernambuco and worked in the Homicide Division at the Duty Counsel Office of Pernambuco.

Beyond her legal practice, Priscila is committed to supporting Internationally Trained Lawyers through her volunteer work. She co-founded two non-profit organizations aimed at helping ITLs navigate their legal careers in Canada – The Brazilian Canadian Bar Association (BCBA) and the ITLNCA NetworkS. She has also served as Director of the Canadian Hispanic Bar Association and during her LL.M., she was Vice-President of the Osgoode Latin American Students.

Priscila holds a Master of Laws in Canadian Common Law from Osgoode Hall Law School and a Bachelor of Laws from the Federal University of Pernambuco in Brazil, where she graduated with the Gold Medal for academic excellence.

ITLNCA NetworkS Speed Mentoring (in-person only)

3:30 – 5:00 pm ET

ITLNCA NetworkS is hosting a Speed Mentoring event for all OITLD Day One in-person registrants. A unique assortment of Internationally Trained Lawyer mentors will be available to provide mentorship and advice on topics like: accreditation, licensing, job recruitment, practice area, professional development, etc. and more!

ITLNCA NetworkS started as a joint effort of equality seeking legal professional associations and stakeholders committed to improving the experience of Internationally Trained Lawyers in their career exploration, accreditation, and licensing processes in Canada. They serve as a resource centre for ITLs, as advocates for ITL interests before regulatory authorities and institutions, a safe space for ITL events, and an organizing body for ITL careers to start. ITLNCA NetworkS runs the Canada wide 2L Summer On Campus Interview process for all NCA candidates and this year they are launching a unique legal placement opportunity for an NCA candidate to gain valuable Canadian legal experience.

[Meet the mentors here!](#)

Reception

5:00 – 7:00 pm ET

Osgoode Professional Development
1 Dundas St W Suite #2602, Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3

Osgoode Professional Development



Host and Moderator

Michael Tam

Michael Tam is the Program Lawyer, Professional Graduate & International Programs at Osgoode Professional Development. In this role he develops degree programs, graduate courses, and non-degree education options for lawyers and law students. He is also the academic and career advisor to all OsgoodePD students. Michael holds an Honours B.Sc (Hons) in Psychology, an LL.B. from the United Kingdom, and a research stream LL.M with a focus on human rights. He received his Certificate of Qualification from the NCA in 2013 and was called to the Ontario Bar in 2015.