

SUMMER 2023

THE LEGALESE

*A Semi-Annual Newsletter Publication of
the Hellenic Canadian Lawyers' Association*

Volume 5

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Christine Arruda, HCLA President

Welcome to the latest edition of The Legalese! The HCLA's 2022-2023 Board year is well underway and we have so much to share with you.

Annual General Meeting, President's Social and CPD

Path to the Judiciary

This past October the HCLA held its first in-person Annual General Meeting, President's Social and continuing professional development (CPD) event since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were honoured to host an intimate and engaging panel discussion, "Making the Jump to the Judiciary" with the Honourable Justice Peter Pamel of the Federal Court and the Honourable Justice James Stribopoulos of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. The justices shared their personal experiences navigating the path to the judiciary and provided candid career advice to members. Although unable to join the panel discussion in-person, the Honourable Justice Ria Tzimas of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice sent her warm wishes and shared guidance on career development in a beautifully written note to members. The CPD was a wonderful opportunity to

FEATURED STORIES:

President's Message

Congratulations to our 2022 Calls!

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learn from some of the most esteemed and accomplished members of our community. The Board and the HCLA are grateful to the justices for their invaluable insight and for sharing their time with us.

Announcing Our New Board

After an exciting election that resulted in two voting rounds, the HCLA successfully appointed its new Board for 2022-2023. The Board was pleased to announce that Mary Arzoumanidis (Secretary), Steve Lyberopoulos (Treasurer), Agapi Mavridis (Director, Social), Danielle Tavernese (Director, Communications), and James Trougakos (Director, Membership) would be returning as directors; and welcomed Sam Presvelos, (Vice-President), Niki Kanavas (Director, Community Relations) and Alexandra Psellas (Director, Student) as new directors. Following the meeting, the Board appointed this year’s Honorary Directors including Gina Alexandris, George Bougadis, George Karayannides, Tom Karvanis and John Yiokaris. Thank you to all who participated in the election and those who put their names forward for Board positions. We encourage you to stay involved with the HCLA and we hope to see your nomination again.

Honouring Outgoing Directors

The HCLA expresses our sincerest gratitude to outgoing directors Francie Smirnakis, former President, and Trish Vrotsos, former Vice-President/Treasurer, for their exceptional service to the HCLA.

Francie was a long-standing director, serving the HCLA since 2009, and making an outstanding impact on the association. Holding every office during her tenure, Francie successfully led many meaningful initiatives including, increasing student engagement; driving membership growth; relaunching The Legalese; managing the association’s finances; chairing numerous committees; engaging with RODA; spearheading the HCLA gala, including securing significant sponsorship dollars; and working diligently to raise the profile of the HCLA and its individual members. Francie’s tireless dedication, effective leadership and overall enthusiasm for the community advanced the HCLA in immeasurable ways.

Trish was appointed to the HCLA Board in 2018 and most recently held the office of the Vice-President/Treasurer. Trish meticulously managed the finances of the association, bringing discipline to reporting, budgeting and cash flow management. Under Trish’s financial leadership, the HCLA successfully met its obligations and sustained its financial health. Trish was also integral to the operation of the website and was a significant contributor to the success of the HCLA gala helping not only in organizational matters but also in fundraising. Trish was willing to assist in any task or project put forward by the Board and executed in a wonderfully methodical and patient manner.



Both Francie (left) and Trish (right) were instrumental to the success of the HCLA and will be greatly missed. We wish them both all the best and hope they will be back to serve the Board in the future.



Announcing Our Scholarship Winners

We were pleased to award three scholarships at the AGM. Congratulations to Kaliopi Dimitrakoudis and Theoni Kapetaneas for earning the 2022 Justice Karakatsanis Scholarship; and Alexandra Tsiofas for earning the 2022 First Year Law Student Scholarship. We look forward to all you will accomplish! We extend a very special thank you to former HCLA president Nikiforou Iatrou for sponsoring the 2022 First Year Scholarship. Nikiforou’s generous sponsorship not only helps to reduce the financial burden that comes with a law school education, but provides our students with the opportunity to advance not only themselves but our community as a whole. We welcome sponsors for our 2023 First Year Scholarship at hcla.information@gmail.com.

It was a wonderful evening to reconnect with members and learn valuable lessons from our panel. Thank you to the HCLA Board for their hard work in organizing the event and to Agapi Mavridis for chairing the panel discussion.

Looking Forward

We are excited for the initiatives we have planned and look forward to another successful year. We encourage members of all experience levels to volunteer with the HCLA, whether it be to provide guidance, assist in a discrete task, or participate in a more significant initiative. The HCLA remains committed to advancing and strengthening the Hellenic Canadian legal community so that our members can attain new heights of professional success and achievement. We believe the more we engage as a community the more we can achieve.

Wishing you all a wonderful summer,

Christine Arruda
President



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2022 CALLS!



**Kassidy
Doherty**
University of
Ottawa



**George
Ikonomou**
University of
Exeter



**Amalia
Keramari**
Osgoode Hall
Law School
(LLM)



**Melinda
Marghetis**
University of
Ottawa

Sophia Alexandra Cripouris
University of Windsor

Patricia Georgina Dimakos
University of Windsor

Kristen Marie Andie Kephalas
University of Toronto

Jonathan James Kyriacou
University of Western Ontario

Alexandra Simone Potamianos
Osgoode Hall Law School

Nicole Catherine Angelica Tzannidakis
University of Western Ontario

HCLA'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ROUNDTABLE OF DIVERSITY ASSOCIATIONS (RODA)

By Alexandra Psellas and Theoni Kapetaneas, HCLA RODA Committee Members

Introduction

The HCLA is a founding member of the Roundtable of Legal Diversity Associations (“RODA”), which was established in November 2011. RODA is an umbrella organization that connects a coalition of Canadian legal associations to share views and ideas, support each other, and collectively discuss and promote diversity and inclusion activities. RODA has the goal of fostering dialogue and promoting initiatives relating to the advancement of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility within the legal profession, judiciary, and the broader legal community. RODA monitors and provides input on policy developments within the legal profession and legal systems.

RODA not only allows associations to support each other in their own diversity and inclusion initiatives, but also allows associations to work together to support broader diversity and inclusion or equity seeking mandates. RODA’s membership includes legal associations of ethnic backgrounds, religious backgrounds, nationalities, and sexual identities. Representatives of RODA’s member organizations meet monthly to discuss diversity and inclusion initiatives as well as concerns within the legal community related to diversity and inclusion. Membership in RODA allows legal associations to share events, job and award opportunities, and educational workshops with each other and their respective organizations.

HCLA Involvement and RODA Meetings

As one of the founding members of RODA, the HCLA selects members to act as representatives at RODA’s monthly meetings. We have acted as the HCLA’s representatives to RODA since September 2021. The RODA monthly meetings include representatives from each of the member organizations. We have greatly enjoyed attending these monthly meetings, which typically include a guest speaker and organizational updates on RODA’s initiatives. RODA regularly engages with the LSO on IDEA issues, and former LSO Treasurer Teresa Donnelly regularly attended RODA meetings to discuss the LSO’s actions. We expect that LSO Treasurer Jacqueline Horvat will continue to engage with RODA on equity issues.

Since becoming involved with RODA, we have had the opportunity to discuss and contribute to RODA submissions on a variety of issues, including:

- Responding to a call for comment on the continuing competence framework proposed by the LSO’s Competence Task Force; and
- Responding to a call for submissions on the proposed mandatory minimum compensation for articling students.

RODA also regularly promotes skills training opportunities, conferences, job postings, and other opportunities. For example, Alexandra had the opportunity to attend the South Asian Bar Association's International Women's Day Symposium, which included Marie Henein as a speaker as well as a workshop on financial planning for young lawyers. As well, Niki Kanavas was able to attend a three-part Advocacy Skills Training Series that was made available to RODA members and organized by The Advocates' Society. These opportunities are distributed to HCLA members through the HCLA Administrator email blasts.

Looking Forward

RODA celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2022 and hosted its annual diversity conference in November 2022 with the theme "Respect in the Law: Understanding and Action". RODA also hosted a 10th anniversary celebration in Spring 2023. RODA also continues to engage with the LSO on an ongoing basis, including involvement with The Action Group on Access to Justice ("TAG"), an Emergency Protocol Working Group, and the LSO Equity Advisory Group ("EAG"). Finally, RODA hopes to launch its new website in 2023.

If you are interested in becoming involved in RODA initiatives, please contact a member of HCLA's RODA Committee: Alexandra Psellas, Niki Kanavas, and Theoni Kapetaneas



Alexandra Psellas is an associate at the Toronto offices of Gowling WLG LLP and the chair of the HCLA RODA Committee.

Theoni Kapetaneas recently completed her law degree at the University of Ottawa and is a member of the HCLA RODA Committee



IS BANKRUPTCY THE ANSWER TO YOUR TAX DEBT?

By Mary Plahouras, BA (Hons.), LL.M., CFE

Few things strike fear in a person's heart like tax debt. There's a long-held belief that you can't fight the government, so most people resign to not even bother. Instead, they suffer under the weight of high interest rates and penalties, often in silence and often for years, hoping maybe they'll pay it off one day.

Fortunately, the outlook is rarely as bleak as most people imagine. It is possible to overcome tax debt. In fact, debtors can include most tax debts in a bankruptcy and often be free of those debts when they receive their discharge.

With that said, every situation is different. So, to help you understand how this process might work for your unique situation, below are a few factors to consider.



A creditor like any other

Like many things, the common knowledge that you can't escape your tax debt is rooted in a historic truth. The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) was a preferred creditor under the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* (BIA) until 1992. And it was common for it to use that status against debtors.

In situations where a bankrupt individual owed substantial personal income tax arrears, the CRA would often oppose their discharge and request the courts make it conditional on payment of all or part of the tax debt.

However, the CRA has ranked as an ordinary unsecured creditor under the BIA since 1992. That means it can no longer petition the courts for preferential debt repayment. And, in most cases, once a bankrupt individual receives their discharge, they will be free of any tax debts they owed when they began the process.

Some exceptions

Unfortunately, not every person who includes income tax debt in a bankruptcy will receive an automatic discharge once they have fulfilled their statutory duties. There is one notable exception to be aware of.

High-tax debtors, whose tax arrears exceed \$200,000 (including principal, penalties and interest) and represent 75 percent or more of their proven debts, face a slightly more complicated process. These individuals will not qualify for an automatic discharge from their bankruptcy and must attend a special hearing.

At this hearing, the courts have a wide range of powers, including the ability to:

1. Grant an absolute order of discharge
2. Impose a conditional order of discharge (e.g. repay a portion of the outstanding taxes, attend additional financial counselling sessions, etc.)
3. Suspend the discharge for specified timeframe
4. Suspend the discharge and attach concurrent or consecutive conditions
5. Adjourn the hearing to a future date
6. Refuse the discharge altogether

Deciding on conditions

If the Court decides to issue a conditional order of discharge, it will often be contingent on the bankrupt individual paying a fair and reasonable amount toward their outstanding debts.

The courts will consider several factors in deciding how much of the bankrupt's income meets those criteria, including:

1. Causes of the bankruptcy
2. The bankrupt's personal and family situation — both at the time of the bankruptcy and the court hearing
3. Nature of the bankrupt's creditors (i.e. unsecured, secured, preferred)
4. Amount owing to each creditor
5. Total amount owing to all creditors
6. Whether a Consumer Proposal could have been a viable alternative to bankruptcy
7. Prior history of bankruptcy or consumer proposals
8. The bankrupt's tax compliance history, both pre- and post- bankruptcy

Determining tax compliance

There are two key factors the courts will use to evaluate a bankrupt individual's tax compliance before and since they filed for bankruptcy:

1. Did they file all personal income tax returns as required under the *Income Tax Act*?
2. Have they paid (or made an effort to pay) the assessed income tax debt?

Additionally, even though these falls outside of the scope of income tax debt, the Court may also look at any outstanding GST / HST liability and whether the bankrupt has made similar efforts to file and pay these returns as required.

How this works in practice

Courts take an extremely contextual approach to high-tax debtors. The case law contains numerous examples highlighting the different circumstances and potential outcomes. To see how these can vary from person to person, consider the following two examples:

Leaning toward leniency: in one case, the courts determined repaying 10 percent of the income tax principal would strike the fairest possible balance between the bankrupt's need for a fresh start and his responsibility to contribute to society

Protecting the integrity of the bankruptcy process: in another case, the courts considered an individual's two previous bankruptcies as an affront to the spirit of the law. It ordered the bankrupt to pay the entirety of their outstanding tax debt, less penalties and interest.

NATIONAL HELLENIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION HOSTS THIRD SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

By Fotis Karantonis, NHSA Toronto Convention Chair

Last Fall, over two hundred young Hellenes across North America joined the National Hellenic Student Association (NHSA) of North America to rejoice in the organization's return to Canada after ten years since the last NHSA Toronto Convention.

The convention kicked-off on Friday, October 14th at Papermill Theatre with introductory remarks by the Hellenic Heritage Foundation's Next Gen Committee's Chair, Kosta Kalogiros and Vice Chair, Vicki Alexopoulos. Attendees enjoyed a private screening of critically acclaimed film featured at last year's Hellenic Film Society Festival, *Defunct*. A reception followed shortly thereafter.

"With the support of the Hellenic Heritage Foundation, attendees from all over North America were provided with a unique welcome to Toronto." says Fotis Karantonis, former NHSA President and Toronto Convention Chair. "It was both a warm and refined way to bring everyone together and properly start the weekend!"

Saturday's conference welcomed some of Toronto's most prominent leaders to the stage, as panelists provided insight in entrepreneurship, negotiation tactics, and networking. Quite fittingly, the conference's theme "Navigating Leadership," captured the diverse experience offered by attendees and speakers alike.



Lecturer of modern Greek language, literature & culture at the University of Toronto Professor Themistoklis Aravossitas, offered opening remarks and discussed the importance of promoting Hellenism within educational systems and in our local communities.

"Wherever you are, look around and see...you did what we have today. You can communicate the methodology because you did it. We must celebrate these conventions and continue this incredible work," Aravossitas boasts.

Emceed by NHSA board members Thomas Psarianos and Stephanie Papoutsakis, the conference continued with several key speakers, including negotiation strategist to Fortune 500 companies, Fotini Iconomopoulos and President of Ergo Holdings Peter Polydor.

The first key-speaker discussion included Polydor and NHSA Chairman, Konstantine Ouranitsas, who discussed the importance of time management and decision-making.

"Define the demand of you; Distinguish your priorities, or your needs in life, from your urgencies—everything else," says Polydor. "When you do, you understand that you can have everything in life, but not the time."



NATIONAL HELLENIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION HOSTS THIRD SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION (CON'T)

Our Defining Success Panel Discussion welcomed Toronto-trailblazers, Mr. Anastasios Moussas, Dr. George Soleas, Mr. Steve Kriaris, and Mr. Tony Lourakis. Moderated by NHSA Vice President Irene Coritsidis, the speakers addressed the depth and challenges faced by entrepreneurs as well as advice for young philhellenes.

“Failure might feel like a set-back in the moment, but it will set you up for something greater,” emphasizes Lourakis. “You will fail, but fail smart. Always make the best of it.”

In concluding the panel, the panelists addressed the importance of giving back. “We spend much of our lives listening to people give advice, mentor us, and even coach us, it’s not often that we get to give back to the community at large. Today that dream became a reality,” quotes Steve Kriaris, Founder of the Kolonaki Group.

Following lunch sponsored by The Greek Grill, attendees subsequently participated in an interactive icebreaker and networking session with our conference mentors. The conference closed with remarks by the first Greek Canadian to serve on the Supreme Court of Canada, Justice Andromache Karakatsanis.

“Our conventions’ mechanics: panel discussions, networking, social events, and cultural opportunities — they do more than broadcasting,” says Georgios Araujo, NHSA President. “They provide today’s young Hellenic leaders the tools to succeed — directly from those who already have, in a unique place where those tools can be practiced. After two years of trial and error in planning this event, our board couldn’t be more proud of its result.”



About the NHSA

The National Hellenic Student Association (“NHSA”) of North America, Inc. serves as an umbrella for Hellenic student organizations of universities across the United States and Canada. Since its founding in 2004, NHSA has crafted an extraordinary environment that combines the Hellenic community’s interests with professional and academic disciplines. With over fifty university member chapters, NHSA is the largest nonprofit Hellenic student and young professional organization in North America.

HCLA WEBSITE UPDATE

By Alexander Plagiannakos, Thinkbound Marketing Solutions Inc.

In 2022, the HCLA engaged Thinkbound Marketing Solutions Inc. to assisting in enhancing the HCLA.ca website. Thinkbound is a [web development company](#) in Toronto that has been serving the Greek community for over 15 years. Leading the project with the HCLA.ca staff is the Founder of Thinkbound, Alexander Plagiannakos. His work experience spans across a number of Greek organizations including the Hellenic Heritage Foundation, Hellenic Home for the Aged, the Greek Community of Toronto, among others.



With this new partnership we are excited to share some significant improvements to our website that streamlines the membership process for students and lawyers.

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

One of the main new features is the ability for members to self-administer their accounts online. This means users have an updated dashboard where they can view past invoices and payments, manage payment methods, check the status of their membership, and renew their membership manually from the comfort of their computer or mobile device. Members have the option to set their membership to automatically renew the subsequent year(s). Members will stay notified via email reminders of upcoming membership renewal or if a declined payment occurred.

Streamlining the membership collection process for the HCLA means less time managing memberships and more time focusing on organizational objectives.

INCREASED SECURITY MEASURES

Website security is of ever-increasing importance. As part of our update, the HCLA.ca website and supporting website plugins, modules and libraries have been updated to the latest stable versions and several new security measures have been implemented to protect against malware and other online threats.

DIGITAL ROADMAP

Having a digital roadmap is important to guide the development and evolution of our website over time. By linking the website's development to broader organizational goals, the HCLA.ca can ensure that the online presence is effectively supporting its mission and helping to achieve its long-term objectives and being accessible to a wider range of users.

Some of the key features in our digital roadmap include multi language support (French and Greek), converting PDFs to fillable online forms to make it easier for members to complete and submit documents, and introducing exclusive member privileges such as special events, exclusive content, and other perks.

WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK

The new website improvements on HCLA.ca are an exciting opportunity for its members. Not only will members benefit from a more streamlined and user-friendly membership experience, but they'll also be able to access new members-only resources in time. We're committed to providing the best possible service to our members and making sure the online experience is as enriching as possible. If you have any questions or would like to offer feedback or request new features, please share with us at hcla.information@gmail.com.

AGM, PRESIDENT'S SOCIAL & CPD IN PHOTOS

Thank you to everyone who attended our in-person AGM, President's Social and CPD in the Fall of 2022!



AGM, PRESIDENT'S SOCIAL & CPD IN PHOTOS

Thank you to everyone who attended our in-person AGM, President's Social and CPD in the Fall of 2022!



2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Christine Arruda
President



Sam Presvelos
Vice-President



Steve Lyberopoulos
Treasurer



James Trougakos
Membership Director



Agapi Mavridis
Social Director



Danielle Tavernese
Communications Director



Niki Kanavas
Community Relations Director



Alexandra Psellas
Student Director

Not Pictured: Mary Arzoumanidis, Secretary

Honourary Director

Gina Alexandris
George Bougadis
Tom Karvanis
John Yiokaris
George Karayannides, Q.Arb

Member Volunteers:

Athan Papadas
Olivia Paleologos
Andreas Present
Theoni Kapetaneas
Melinda Marghetis
Gabriella Panayotidis
Phillip Paschali

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2022

In 2022, the Board focused on increasing the the association's membership and gaining greater representation across the country. Through its membership drive and outreach activities the Board almost doubled its membership from the prior year. We encourage all members to renew their memberships and invite members of the Hellenic legal community to join the HCLA.

The Board also focused on updating and enhancing its website. After a thorough vendor search, the HCLA retained web developer, Alexander Plagiannakos, Thinkbound, to update the website, including enhancing the membership payment process, adding additional security measures and expanding the membership portal. The work began in late 2022 and continues into 2023.

The HCLA continues to remain active with the Roundtable of Legal Diversity Associations (RODA). To assist the Board with RODA initiatives, a committee led by **Christine Arruda**, then Community Relations Director, was established and included members **Alexandra Psellas** and **Theoni Kapetaneas**. Alexandra and Theoni kept the Board abreast of RODA initiatives and professionally represented the HCLA at various meetings and events. The HCLA will continue to share valuable opportunities for training, education and employment as we receive them from RODA, including advocacy training skills sessions. The Board also remains active with the OBA Diversity Council with volunteer member **Andreas Present** as representative.

In addition to hosting a number of networking events, the HCLA also provided educational sessions to members, including a CPD workshop hosted by HCLA member and former director, **Paul Karvanis**, on the subject of Changing Your Critical Self-Talk. We also extended an invitation to The Return of the Parthenon Marbles webinar, hosted by our colleagues at the Hellenic Law Society of California. Key speaker, Professor David Rudenstine, professor and former dean of Cardozo Law School, Yeshiva University, provided an engaging discussion on the dispute

between Greece and England over the Parthenon sculptures in the British museum and the legal and cultural issues regarding their ownership.

As part of our Annual General Meeting and President's Social, the HCLA also hosted an LSO CPD-accredited judge's panel entitled "Making the Jump to the Judiciary." We were honoured to have the **Honourable Justice James Stribopoulos of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice** and the **Honourable Justice Peter Pamel of the Federal Court** speak to members about their journey to the judiciary. They were candid about their personal experiences, and strongly encouraged anyone that has thought about making the jump to go for it! The **Honourable Justice Ria Tzimas of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice** sent her well wishes and shared her advice for those contemplating becoming a judge in a beautifully written letter to the HCLA. We are incredibly grateful to Justices Stribopoulos, Pamel and Tzimas for their unwavering support of our Association - thank you for an amazing event!

The HCLA attended numerous legal and community events over the past year including: Ontario Court of Appeal Opening of the Courts; swearing-in ceremonies for Justice Steve A. Coroza and Justice Lorne Sossin; Ontario Court of Appeal Appreciation BBQ; memorial service for the Anniversary of the Turkish Invasion of Cyprus hosted by the Cypriot Community of Toronto; and the Royal Ontario Museum opening of the Kore 670 Exhibit hosted by the Hellenic Heritage Foundation. The HCLA also participated as speakers at the Ryerson Law LLP breakout session and as mentors at the National Hellenic Students Association Conference at the University of Toronto. The HCLA was recognized and received a special medallion from the Court of Appeal for Ontario expressing their gratitude to organizations who assisted the court in its operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The HCLA continues to maintain a robust referrals network and has successfully connected our community to lawyers in Canada and in Greece, and in various practice areas, including wills and estates, criminal and civil matters. Thank you to our volunteer members **Olivia Paleologos** for building and maintaining our referrals list and **Athan Papadas** for continuing to connect our community to lawyers in Greece.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2023

The HCLA welcomed 2023 with the New Year's Cheer and vasilopita cutting at Birotecca, Eataly. Congratulations to **Sam Presvelos** and **Linda Manziaris** for winning the "flourie". We wish you both a year of good luck! Thank you to **Niki Kanavas** for donating the vasilopita.

The HCLA re-established our pro bono committee to focus on legal education and access to justice initiatives. Board members **Christine Arruda**, **Mary Arzoumanidis** and **Niki Kanavas**, and student members, **Gabriella Panagiotidis** and **Phillip Paschali**, hosted a webinar introducing the Canadian legal system to Hellenic youth across the country. Panel members included HCLA Directors **Agapi Mavridis** and **Niki Kanavas**. A special thank you to **Niki Kanavas** for sponsoring this event in part. The committee has plans to offer other educational seminars to the Hellenic community. Stay tuned!

In May we hosted an in-person CPD, The Happy Lawyer Signature Talk, with **Paul Karvanis** at the Ontario Bar Association. The HCLA also participated in a webinar with the newly formed Canadian-Ukrainian Legal Alliance covering topics of interest to foreign trained lawyers. Thank you to Honorary Director, **Gina Alexandris** and former Director, **Yonida Koukio**, for kindly sharing their experiences and knowledge with this group. For those who missed the webinar, a replay is available. <https://lnkd.in/g2wpgk2t>

Our mentorship program is also well underway and we thank those members who put their names forward as mentors and mentees. We recently received applications for the Justice Karakatsanis Student Scholarships and will be making student educational webinars available shortly. Thank you to **Melinda Marghetis** for volunteering with our student committee.

The HCLA continues to host numerous networking events. We held a successful Summer Cocktail Mixer in June, are working towards hosting a gala in 2024 and are in discussions with each of the Hellenic Jurists Association of Quebec and Hellenic Board of Trade for upcoming events. We will, of course, continue to host our popular Under 8 After 8 and with thanks to **Gina Alexandris**, the HCLA Women Presidents Dinner.



FOUR QUESTIONS WITH FOTINI GAGAOUidakis

By James D. Trougakos, Legalese Co-Editor and HCLA Board Member

We sat down with Fotini Gagaoudakis, former Corporate Partner at Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg LLP, to reflect on her legal career as she plans her next steps. Fotini was recently named a 2022 Lexpert Rising Star - Leading Lawyers Under 40, recognizing her exceptional contributions to the legal profession and the community.

What made you choose law? When did you know you wanted to be a lawyer?

Well, my dad always told me that I talk too much so I should be a lawyer! But after CEGEP, I picked a different route and went to business school. In one of my final semesters, I took an international business law course and really fell in love. The course had very little legal content, but the professor invited frequent guest speakers who were all practitioners from different areas of law (including a lot of transactional lawyers). It was exciting to hear them describe their practice and work, and I felt far more inspired than the rest of my business courses. After I finished my degree I started law school and I knew right away in the first semester that I had made the right choice. It was the first time in my life I could actually imagine myself working in a field.

What was a marking moment during your early development as a lawyer?

When I did *Course aux Stages* (the OCI equivalent in Québec), I found the process very intimidating. One of the first lawyers I met at Davies was Justin Vineberg, who was instrumental in my decision to join Davies and became a formal and informal mentor throughout my career. I think this connection was crucial to my early development as a lawyer.

When I learned I had won the Lexpert Rising Star award, it was a full-circle moment for me. The first time I heard about "Leading Lawyers Under 40" was while reading about it on the online bio of my interviewer, the one and only Justin Vineberg. Years later, if I am receiving the same recognition it is because of forces of nature like him and so many others that I have had the privilege to work alongside.

Can you tell us a memorable story from your practice?

We represented Wattpad Corp. (a Canadian multi-platform entertainment company) in its acquisition by a South Korean Internet company. Our client was receiving cash and Korean stock as consideration, which meant we had to close the transaction when the Korean markets finished trading, at 3AM EST!



It was a surreal moment; we had the entire Davies and client teams on a Zoom call waiting for confirmation of closing. When we got that confirmation, it was a sheer mix of emotions: excitement, exhaustion, pride, and a sense of accomplishment. In that moment we were celebrating with our client as their advisors but also as their friends after such a long time negotiating the deal. It was pure euphoria. Moments like these are why I love M&A.

What advice do you have for junior lawyers?

Talk less. Listen more.

For junior lawyers, this means sitting back and thinking more, rather than trying to respond instinctively to an issue. It also has application with clients. Clients feel more engaged when they're being listened to, not when they're being lectured to. That's how you create bonds. We often think as lawyers that we must be on the offensive, but that's not always the case.

Bonus questions!

Moussaka or pastitsio? Pastitsio
Kourabiedes or melomakarona? Melomakarona
Frappe or Freddo? Frappe
Chorio (village) or beachside? Chorio

HAPPENINGS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Awards, Distinctions & Appointments

The HCLA recognizes **Jeanie Theoharis**, former HCLA director, for her appointment as Associate Chair of the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario and **Eleni Yiannakis**, Partner at IMK LLP in Montréal, for her appointment as a Judge of the Superior Court of Quebec. Well deserved!

We congratulate **Chris Tzekas**, former HCLA President, and **Nicholas P. Kapelos** for being honored by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew with the office of Archon of the Ecumenical Throne! Chris and Nicholas were both recognized for their significant and long-standing contributions to their local Greek Orthodox communities, as well as to the Archdiocese of Canada. They are worthy! Αξιοι!

Compliments also go to **John Polyzogopoulos**, former HCLA President, who has once again been recognized by Lexology as a Legal Influencer in the future of legal services - Canada category for Q2 2022 for his weekly contributions to Blaneys Appeals. The blog provides timely summaries of every civil law decision released by the Court of Appeal for Ontario on a weekly basis.

Gina Alexandris, Honourary Director and former HCLA President, received the 2023 Women's Law Association of Ontario (WLAO) President's Award for her outstanding contribution to the legal community. She has actively promoted the advancement of women in law and actively addressed the challenges they face. Congratulations!

Finally, congratulations to **Supreme Court Justice Andromache Karakatsanis** who, at the June 22, 2022 Call to the Bar ceremony in Toronto, was presented with a degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa by the LSO.

Request for Historical Photos: Greek-Canadian Heritage Museum

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada, on behalf of the Greek-Canadian Heritage Museum Planning Committee, is requesting historical photos from the Greek and Cypriot Diaspora across Canada for possible inclusion in the Museum.

For more information, please contact the HCLA by email: hcla.information@gmail.com.

2023 Career Conversations Book Club

In her new Coaching role, **Gina Alexandris**, HCLA Honourary Director and former HCLA President, is offering an exciting initiative in 2023 - the Career Conversations Book Club. The Book Club is a free, monthly, evening and online book club with great authors featuring books relevant to professional careers (not all authors are lawyers). The Club includes a book on personal finances by a Globe & Mail journalist and a novel about a Perfumist which allows us to think differently about our own career journeys.

The Club launched its first Conversation January 25th and over half of the year's books and authors have been confirmed and the remaining are in the works! Look here for details and the registration link: <https://ginaalexandris.com/reading-list/>.

Corporate Counsel: Expert Advice on Becoming a Successful In-House Lawyer

The HCLA congratulates **Peter Carayiannis**, former HCLA President, on the publication of his book, available now on Amazon. A must read for anyone interested in learning more about the move from law firm to corporate counsel or for general counsel that wants a resource for their team of lawyers.



FROM THE EDITORS

We are excited to release this edition of The Legalese to showcase all of great events and activities happening in our community over the past several months. We hope that you and your loved ones have had a wonderful start to 2023!

We would like to thank all of the contributors to this edition. Your perspectives, insights, and contributions make this publication possible and allow our community to stay connected. We continue to welcome articles, photos, and comments from all members and friends on any topic to be included in future volumes of The Legalese. As always, we would love to hear from you - please email us at hcla.information@gmail.com with any thoughts or feedback!

As we head into the summer, the entire Board of Directors would like to thank you for your support of the HCLA this year. We have been thrilled to see so many of our members at events so far in 2023, and are looking forward to more fantastic events and initiatives as the year goes on.

We wish you all a fun and relaxing summer, safe travels, and we can't wait to see you again in the Fall!

Yours truly,

Alexandra Psellas and James Trougakos



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