

*National Judicial Institute (NJI) – President’s Fall Board Report – September 2022*

As mentioned in my prior President’s reports, I was appointed by the Chief Justice of Canada, Richard Wagner, who is the Chair of the NJI Board of Governors to be the CAPCJ representative on that Board on March 10, 2021. In addition to being a member of the NJI Board of Governors, I was also appointed to be a member of the Provincial Court Funding Working Group which is co-chaired by Chief Justice Lise Maisonneuve of the Ontario Court of Justice.

Last year, the NJI Provincial Court Funding Working Group held meetings which ultimately resulted in a draft Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] between the Canadian Judicial Council, the Canadian Council of Chief Judges [CCCJ] and NJI with a view to securing dedicated seats for Provincial and Territorial Courts Judges at NJI programs. The draft MOU was reviewed by the three parties and, earlier this year, rather than signing that draft MOU, the parties decided to implement the proposed terms and conditions of that MOU on a “pilot project” basis.

Chief Justice Maisonneuve explained that the rationale for proceeding with a “pilot project” would allow time for the parties of the MOU to determine how the pilot project, which would guarantee up to 175 seats at NJI programs for PCJ’s, was actually working. She advised that the CCCJ had developed a formula for allocating seats to PCJ’s at several key programs and that they have allocated seats for NJI programming through to the end of August 2022 is fully subscribed. Over these first few months, she advised the Board that the “pilot project” basis for implementing the MOU is on the right track and going well.

During the NJI Board meeting in May 2022, the Board of Governors were advised that NJI has made significant progress in opening a Montréal office and being able to deliver judicial education to judges in French. While it was made clear that NJI recognizes all the added benefits of in-person training sessions, the Covid-19 Pandemic and public health restrictions greatly impacted that service delivery model. However, NJI recognized the need to continue to deliver judicial education during the pandemic and quickly pivoted to develop online programs, webinars or podcasts on specific topics or some hybrid presentation of programs.

The Director of Digital Education highlighted some of those webinars, self-study programs and podcasts which cover a wide range of topics. As mentioned in my previous NJI report, PCJ’s are working with NJI to develop and present a series of on-line webinars, podcasts, or self study programs. As an example, I note that our Past President, Marco LaBrie has done a webinar on Internet child luring, which is available on the NJI website.

In addition, PCJ’s are also involved as a Judicial Advisory Committee in NJI’s development of a series of self-study on-line programs. The NJI self study course entitled “Anti-Black Racism Sentencing Considerations” is now available on the NJI website and in addition to myself, the other PCJ’s on its Judicial Advisory Committee are Judge David St. Pierre (BC) and Judge Jean Whalen (NS). The Board of Governors were also advised that NJI was planning to prepare a similar digital program covering **Gladue** Reports and the overrepresentation of indigenous peoples in jails as well as an Indigenous Law Bench Book.

Finally, I should also mention that, as part of the “pilot project” and from cost savings made from a previous cancellation of the Newly Appointed PCJ Skills Seminar, NJI will contribute the registration costs for up to 25 PCJ’s for a judicial training conference hosted by NJI in Ottawa, from October 30-November 3, 2022. The program is designed to be a “train the trainers” program and the theme of the conference will be “*Effective Judicial Education: Understanding Vulnerable Populations.*” The Canadian Judicial Council will be able to allocate up to 40 seats for federally appointed judges.

The NJI Fall Board of Governors Meeting will be held on October 25, 2022 and the NJI Spring Board of Governors Meeting will be held on March 16, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted

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