

# 2010 West Coast LEAF ANNUAL REPORT

Making the promise of the Charter a reality for women since 1985



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Nitya Iyer



This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of West Coast LEAF. In reflecting on this, I am reminded of the proverb, "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose." Much

about the legal landscape of equality for women and children has changed. However, in the wake of the economic recession, the more we seem to be stuck in the same place, re-waging the same battles for economic security and equal opportunity that in 1985 we were confident we could win.

Women's access to effective legal representation in civil and family law matters remains critical. In coalition with others, we are pressuring government to act. We are updating and re-releasing our "Legal Aid Denied" report, helped to launch a province-wide petition to reform legal aid, and are supporting the "Love is Not Enough" cross-Canada cycling tour. We are participating in a test case on the definition of "indigency" for the purposes of determining access to state-funded counsel, and we have intervened in the "Bountiful"-based polygamy case to highlight the economic and other barriers that keep women from leaving. We have asked the Ombudsperson of BC to investigate reductions in shelter allowances for families with children in temporary foster care. In these ways, we are striving to make concrete advances in economic security for some vulnerable women.

More needs to be done. We continue our work in education, law reform and litigation in the face of our own struggles for funding. On that note, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to our members, funders, donors, volunteers, our staff and our Board. Without you, there would be no change. Thank you for your support.

## 2009-2010 HIGHLIGHTS

West Coast LEAF's twenty-fifth anniversary year has been one of celebration and hard work!

### Litigation

In January 2010, West Coast LEAF intervened in **SWUAV v. AG Canada** in support of "public interest standing". West Coast LEAF was granted leave to intervene at the BC Supreme Court trial in the Reference on the constitutionality of section 293, the "**Polygamy Provision**," of the *Criminal Code*

West Coast LEAF has applied to intervene in the "TL" legal aid test case that deals with the interpretation of indigency for the purpose of determining who can access state funded counsel

### Law Reform

West Coast LEAF and Pivot Legal Society called on the Ombudsperson of British Columbia to investigate **shelter allowance** reductions for families with children in temporary foster care

West Coast LEAF and ProMOTION Plus released a joint statement condemning the Vancouver Organizing Olympics Committee's discriminatory decision to exclude **women's ski jumping** from the 2010 Games

### Legal Aid

Established **Access to Justice** fund at the Vancity Community Foundation to support test case litigation that advances constitutional rights to legal representation in complex family law and other civil matters

Supporting the **Love is Not Enough** cycling tour across Canada to raise awareness of inaccessibility to legal services

**Legal Aid Denied – Update** report written

**Access to Justice – Reform Legal Aid in BC** petition launched

### Family Law Project

Launched a study about the application and use of so-called **Section 15 reports in family law** cases

Released the 2010 **Mapping the Gap** report about BC family law resources

### International Law

The BC CEDAW Group released **Nothing to Report** in February 2010

West Coast LEAF released 2009 **CEDAW Report Card** in October 2009

### Public Legal Education

We delivered 21 **youth education workshops** and coordinated 27 speaking engagements

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In June 2009, West Coast LEAF's **No Means No** education program was successfully completed by every eighth grade student in Nelson BC

The **Youth website** is officially launched this month

### Events

Sponsored the film **Africa Rising** in Vancouver's 2010 Documentary Film Festival

The 2009 Persons Day marked the 80th year that many women in Canada have been considered "persons" under the law and eligible for appointment to Senate. Mary Eberts, human rights lawyer and West Coast LEAF co-founder, spoke at **2009 Persons Day Breakfasts** in Kamloops and Victoria

The **2010 Equality Breakfast** featured Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Prize recipient and co-founder of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines

Co-organized the first annual **law and social justice conference** in October 2009

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## GOODBYE

We say a fond farewell to outgoing board and staff members: Sara Gortari (above, left), Jan O'Brien, Mehrak Mehrvar, Mary Salaysay, Karey Brooks, and Michelle Hopkins. Thank you for all your wonderful contributions!

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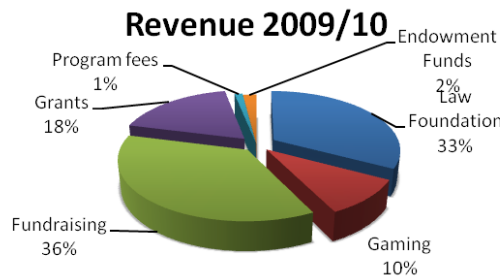
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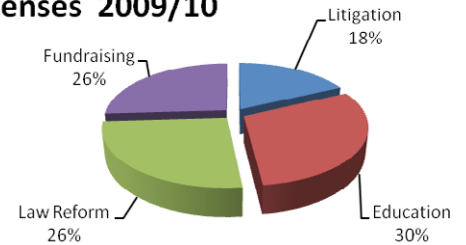
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# BREAKDOWN OF WEST COAST LEAF REVENUE AND EXPENSES



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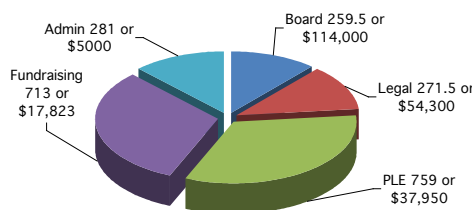
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 Sara Gortari, Director of Development  
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## Consultants, students and contractors

Mia Taghizadeh, Policy Intern  
 Hasan Alam, Legal Intern  
 Lara Yeo, Communications Intern  
 Nicole Point, Family Law Intern  
 Rachel Mathisen, PLE Intern

## West Coast LEAF Volunteer Hours 2009/10



Area	Revenue
Law Foundation	167,550.00
Grants	99,488.00
Events	53,240.00
Gaming	50,000.00
Sponsorships	40,000.00
Monthly Giving	34,920.75
Major Gifts	24,780.00
Board Fund Development	7,840.00
Donations - Other	7,518.48
Memberships	4,680.00
Direct Mail	3,360.00
Online Donations	2,922.00
Planned Giving	0.00
	<u>496,299.23</u>

Complete audited statements available upon request. Please email Alison Brewin, Executive Director, at [exec@westcoastleaf.org](mailto:exec@westcoastleaf.org).

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