



C. INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Expand Miller Thomson's Existing Student Hiring Program

Miller Thomson intent has always been to increase recruitment and retention of Indigenous students into the legal profession. We were the first national firm to put in place a targeted student hiring program and want to expand that program to include more opportunities for students and also to attract recruitment and retention in all roles within the legal profession. We believe that targeted programs will help remove policies and practices that are barriers to Indigenous employment and retention.

Our current Student Hiring Program hires students in the second year of law school and provides a stipend to each student. The program is limited to one student each year across all locations. There will be phases to expanding our existing program including:

- Review how the Student Hiring Program is working in each office for the purposes of tracking progress and promoting accountability going forward
- Adopt a policy of hiring at least one Indigenous articulated student each year in at least two of our offices.
- Identify the barriers to long-term success and arrange for sponsorship of partners or appropriate mentors within the firm.
- Consider whether the program can be expanded to hire students from first year in the summer and whether a stipend is required in every case.
- Further develop the program to expand to recruit and retain Indigenous staff and paralegals into the legal profession.

The Miller Thomson Essay Contest on Indigenous Laws & Governance

We strive to increase awareness of Indigenous laws and governance and to engage with Indigenous students. The addition of a Miller Thomson Essay Contest will involve firm members in reviewing and judging the essays and selecting a winner to be announced as part of the education curriculum.

Addressing Potential Bias in Our Hiring

Bias exists in hiring generally and the IRC believes it to be useful to know how to incorporate the Indigenous perspective into our hiring practise to ensure there is no potential for bias in our hiring. Steps to review and ensure no potential for bias include:

- Review how the hiring of Indigenous peoples is working in each office for the purposes of tracking progress and promoting accountability going forward.
- Consider an outreach program for advertising for staff in the legal profession, legal assistants/shared services/IT/paralegals.
- Revising applications to ensure there is an opportunity to self-identify as Indigenous on all applications and, if you identify as Indigenous or visible minority, and ensure we recognize and value life and work experience as well as grades.
- Consider teaming up with a college to target/practicum training.
- Review the success of the Vaughn office Co-Op Program for legal assistants as a possible mechanism for a Co-Op Program for hiring.
- Provide annual funding for an Indigenous law student to attend a legal conference or event of the CBA, CBABC or Aboriginal Lawyers Forum (ALF) for promotion purposes.

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