

# **EVELYN J. BAXTER, B.A., LL.B.**

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## **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

### **2008**

#### **Sole Practitioner**

Presently self-employed offering contractual and legal services to a variety of clients in the field of Aboriginal law and related issues. Areas currently being addressed are consultation and accommodation in resource development issues for Maurice Law clients, Residential School survivors as an Adjudicator for the Independent Assessment Process, Legal Aid Ontario as criminal duty counsel in the Thunder Bay court, and Nishnawbe Aski Nation on Ipperwash-related matters.

### **2003 – 2008**

#### **Executive Director,**

#### ***Nishnawbe-Aski Legal Services Corporation, Thunder Bay, Ontario***

The corporation provides Legal Aid Ontario services, legal/policy advice, public legal education and Aboriginal sensitive justice alternative services to the 49 First Nations of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation. The Executive Director oversees all aspects of the day to day operations of the corporation while reporting to the Board of Directors and Chiefs of Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Responsible for supervising staff of 38 (including 4 staff lawyers), managing budgets, developing and overseeing programs and services for delivery to the First Nations served, conducting visits to First Nations for public education, presentations, events; developing and implementing policies, preparing reports, liaising/negotiating with federal and provincial governments on all issues affecting the corporation, networking and promoting the corporation and Aboriginal access to justice issues provincially and nationally, taking part in committees and other activities, providing legal advice to Aboriginal clients, ensuring corporation is adhering to its mandate, overseeing and implementing the Board's vision and direction for the corporation.

### **2001- 2003**

#### **Lands and Resources Coordinator, Legal Advisor**

#### ***Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Thunder Bay***

Management position. Worked directly with Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chiefs on issues related to Aboriginal and Treaty rights over Lands and Resources issues in the NAN territory. In regular contact with First Nations of NAN and assisted them with resource development issues affecting their rights on the land. Assisted Chiefs' committee in developing a consultation policy and procedure for First Nations and

industry involved in resource development based on rights, jurisprudence and community requirements. Was responsible for providing legal and policy advice to First Nation and NAN leadership. Attended meetings in First Nation communities, presented issues and updates at Chiefs' conferences, prepared documents on various matters, provided advice to NAN executive when required, liaised with federal and provincial governments up to Ministerial levels, spoke at conferences about Aboriginal issues, managed program budget and staff, networked with industry and other Aboriginal organizations, and raised funds for projects.

## **1999- 2001**

### **Sole Practitioner, *Toronto/Thunder Bay***

Practice restricted to Criminal Law. Busy practice with wide variety of cases. Attended court on a daily basis throughout the Greater Toronto Area. Focused on assisting Aboriginal clients whenever possible. Attendances included bail hearings, set dates, motions, bail reviews, disposition reviews, trials, Judicial pretrials, preliminary inquiries. Dealt with youth and adult offenders. Appeared in Youth, Provincial and Superior Courts. Maintained files, managed practice, trust and general accounts, developed clientele. Familiar with LAO procedures. In Thunder Bay, attended provincial court in Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout, travelled to remote First Nations for clinic and court days.

## **1998**

### **Associate Lawyer *Harris & Harris, Toronto***

Worked in Civil Litigation and Aboriginal Law departments. Maintained files, drafted documents, attended court when required, participated in discoveries, settlement conferences, and assisted First Nation clients with various issues including Hydro grievances, resource management, residential school issues, negotiations, and land claims matters.

## **1997-1998**

### **Policy Analyst *Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy, Toronto***

Worked on justice issues related to the mandate of this program overseen by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Was responsible for management, preparing reports, researching alternatives to justice and healing for Aboriginal people, assisted Aboriginal communities and groups to implement healing and justice projects. Reported to the Joint Steering Committee, comprised of representatives of the Ontario First Nations representatives and the provincial government.

## **1994-1997**

### **Associate Lawyer *Morris/Rose/Ledgett, Toronto***

Worked in Aboriginal Law and litigation departments. Maintained files, drafted documents, legal research, attend court, conducted negotiations, dealt with clients,

drafted opinions. Files dealt mainly with Aboriginal land claims, self-government issues, resource development/negotiations, joint ventures, personal injury and general litigation matters. Was also directly involved in the NAN file related to their self-government negotiations as the Chief Negotiator (see below).

### **1992-1997**

#### **Negotiator**

##### ***Self-Government/Resource Negotiations***

##### ***Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Thunder Bay***

Chief Negotiator from June, 1994. Previously held Coordinator and Assistant Negotiator positions. Responsible for spearheading self-government and resource negotiations with Canada and Ontario under the tripartite Memorandum of Understanding and the Interim Measures Agreement. Took direction from Chiefs' Negotiating Team and NAN Executive. Conducted meetings, travelled to communities, worked with legal counsel (Morris, Rose, Ledgett), supervised staff and managed budget.

### **1993**

#### **Associate Lawyer**

##### ***Buset & Partners, Thunder Bay***

General practice covering family, criminal, real estate and litigation areas. Prepared documents, did research, prepared opinions, managed files, dealt with clients, and attend court when required. Also participated in First Nation northern duty counsel rotation for court and clinic days.

## **EDUCATION**

### **1993**

Law Society of Upper Canada

Bar Admission Course – Called to Ontario Bar February, 1993

Member in good standing of the Law Society of Upper Canada

### **1991-1992**

Articling year – Department of Justice, Toronto

Completed rotations in criminal prosecutions, taxation, civil litigation, and Aboriginal matters.

### **1991**

Queen's University, Kingston

Bachelor of Laws

### **1988 – Summer**

University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

Program of Legal Studies for Native People

### **1988**

Lakehead University, Thunder Bay

## **OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INTERESTS**

- Extensive knowledge and lived experience of First Nations issues and culture
- Regularly requested to speak at conferences and gatherings on various topics, generally related to Aboriginal issues, access to justice, lands and resource development, and consultation. Have spoken at the United Nations, Native Investment and Trade Association, Law Society of Upper Canada, National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, Western Mining Activists Network, Mining Watch Canada, National Boreal Gathering, National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation “Taking Pulse” conference, among others
- Main/principle author of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation consultation guide/policy for resource development.
- Written papers for various groups when requested, such as Indian Claims Commission, Madam Justice Wilson’s Task Force on Gender Equality, World Trade Organization and United Nations
- Continue to provide advice to the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation Executive on matters related to Aboriginal issues –lands and resources, Aboriginal and Treaty rights and political matters
- Current NAN Representative on the Ipperwash Implementation Task Force
- Obtained certificates in Mediation and Advanced Mediation from the Stitt Feld Handy group in 2005.
- Member of the Indigenous Bar Association
- Enjoy reading, travel, crafts, fishing, hunting and other outdoor activities

## **VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

**2004-Present**

**Law Society of Upper Canada**

Member of 3 Society working groups: the Aboriginal Working Group; the Equity Advisory Group (until 2008); and the Skills and Professional Development Group (until 2006).

**2003-2008**

**Legal Aid Ontario**

Member of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee (until 2008)

**2000-2004**

**National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation**

Juror – Education Scholarships Committee

**2001- 2003**

**Mining Watch Canada**

Board of Directors