

While I have thoroughly enjoyed my past two terms as the York Region Director of the Criminal Lawyers Association. I am now seeking election to the Executive of the C:A.

The past 4 years have been extremely challenging for Criminal Lawyers. We were beset by a worldwide virus that devastated the law practices of many of us, and caused some to quit or find new careers. I still recall the eerie sensation I felt the first time I re-entered the Newmarket Courthouse for a "Covid" Committee meeting. I was shocking and sad to see this vast empty building during a time when it would have been busy and full of people.

We have all had to adjust to a new practice style. While there are numerous benefits to the implementation of modernization protocols, including the rise of zoom proceedings, we seemed to have lost the comradery from in person interactions. Many feel somewhat detached and isolated. The current mixture of in person proceedings, primarily for significant parts of a criminal case and/or where court ordered, along with the maintaining of the ability to appear remotely in other circumstances, appears to be the way of the future.

My role in the CLA has been primarily on three fronts:

#### **Co-Chair LAO Committee**

For the past few years we have with representatives from Legal Aid Ontario and Minister Downey's office to advocate for a better funded and certificate friendly program. The result of those efforts was the increased pay for Defense counsel on all matters, by way of a pay increase as well as a tariff increase all aspects of defence representation. The Phase 1 increases are now in effect. While all of the Committee Co Chairs and members worked to obtain this result, to be clear, the person most worthy of credit is our outgoing President Daniel Brown, who skillfully and articulately, led us in seeking these negotiations and meetings. We all owe him a big thank you.

#### **Mentorship Committee**

I had the opportunity to Co-Chair this Committee initially with Jennifer Penman, a strong advocate of this program and subsequently Katie Heathcote. Through my four years we developed a matching system which ensured that every "junior" Criminal lawyer had the opportunity to regularly interact with an individual senior "mentor" as they navigate issues in their practice. The Mentorship program has increased and flourished by attracting more junior lawyers. It has been a success.

#### **York Region Director**

A very challenging role. When you act as a courthouse representative, there are many and significant obligations. You are part of numerous court house Committees, intermingling with all participants, including Judges, Justices of the Peace, Court staff, Police, the TC office and many others. In addition to these obligations there is the need to both regularly update members as well as respond to their inquiries.

While the role has been very interesting and a "joy", it is time for me to move on to a more involved and challenging position with the CLA. I am therefore seeking this new role and hope you will support me.