

Dear Class of 2021,

Congratulations on your admission to Robson Hall, University of Manitoba's Faculty of Law! On behalf of the entire Manitoba Law Students' Executive team I would like to take this opportunity to extend a heartfelt welcome to each of you. We're looking forward to meeting you in September!

We also wanted to take the opportunity to share a few pieces of information and advice.

The first, is to let you know about the Manitoba Law Students' Association, and our role at Robson Hall. The Manitoba Law Students' Association (MLSA) is comprised of an executive (a president and three vice-presidents) and representatives (for each class, as well as various external bodies) who are elected by the student body each spring. The executive also appoints groups of students to form committees who oversee and coordinate the various aspects of student life at Robson Hall (including, without limitation, academics, social, accessibility, community outreach, etc.). For a full listing of our executive, elected representatives and committee members – and for more information about the MLSA generally, please visit our website at robsonmlsa.com.

As a student entering the Faculty of Law, you are automatically a member of the MLSA (by virtue of the student fees you pay to the Association, and your enrollment in the faculty). You are therefore entitled to our student services, activities and advocacy – as well as a say in the work that we do! The MLSA hosts monthly Council meetings open to all students and regularly communicates important information via email and Facebook. If you haven't done so already, please be sure to join our Facebook page: MLSA Robson Hall. The objectives of the MLSA (as per part 3, section 10 of our constitution) are:

- a. to support the academic interests and performance of members;
- b. to support the professional development of members;
- c. to support the positive well-being of members; and
- d. to achieve effective self-governance and strong representation of interests necessary to achieve all other MLSA objectives.

The second piece of information we would like to share has to do with orientation, and your first few weeks of classes. As an incoming law student this will undoubtedly be a very exciting time in your life, and we are happy to inform you it's only about to get more exciting! The start of your legal education will be unique because it starts at the same time as Robson Hall's 50th Anniversary at the Fort Garry campus, and coincides with the Supreme Court of Canada's visit to Winnipeg! Together with the faculty and staff of Robson Hall, the MLSA has endeavoured to make your first few weeks of law school a memorable one, which will set the stage for your year ahead. To be more specific for your first week; each day of your orientation week will feature events and activities that provide ample opportunity to get to know your fellow classmates and upper year students.

On your first day at Robson Hall you will receive a guided tour from an upper year student buddy. You will also have the chance to attend a number of receptions, meet and greets and other social events as a way to get to know your classmates in a relaxed and casual environment. As we are sure you will soon find, your classmates are really what will make your law school experience one-of-a-kind, and that is simply because they themselves are one-of-a-kind. The students of Robson Hall come from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Getting to know your classmates now will be key to making your experience the best it can be. When you want to form study groups, share outlines or just swap stories about your classes later on, your classmates will be the ones you can depend on. As upper year students (and many practicing lawyers) will attest – many life-long friendships, and connections have been forged at Robson Hall.

As your MLSA executive, but more importantly, as involved students ourselves, we also strongly encourage you to take advantage of all of the opportunities that Robson Hall and the legal community has to offer. A full list of student groups and activities can be found on our website, and many of these groups will be hosting information booths during the lunch hours of your first several days. Stop by the booths, say hi to the students who are running them and get to know a little bit about the ways you can get involved and kick-start your career in an area of law you're interested in. In the first month of classes you will also have the opportunity to run for one of three "1L Representative" positions on the MLSA that will allow you to represent your fellow first year students on the MLSA Council. If you're interested, we encourage you to get in touch with a member of the MLSA to find out more! Not only are there tons of opportunities to get involved at Robson Hall, you will learn of the many extra-curricular opportunities, such as Pro Bono Students Canada, that will get you promptly engaged

in your new role as a law student!

The third thing we'd like to share is a few words of advice. Always remember that attending law school, and becoming a lawyer, is a great privilege. Despite the fact that law school may be challenging at times, you will have great times and create fun and amazing memories in your time at Robson Hall. Being a student at Robson Hall is great, and I hope that after your first few weeks, you will draw the same conclusion!

To put it more poignantly, a legal education is unlike any other, and it will forever change your perception of "the way things are". You are about to undertake an education which will equip you with the tools to think critically about the world around you. You will be challenged to consider laws as the "rules" of our society – and what that means for everyone who is bound by them – for better or for worse. This will not be easy, nor will it be something that comes naturally. I dare say the "law" does not come naturally to anyone, and that is half the fun of it! As a first year student you are diving head first into a completely new way of thinking – and in time you will learn how to not only keep afloat, but also to enjoy yourself as you do. In the interim, be patient and kind with yourself, create study groups, make use of the resources offered by the faculty, and ask others for help. In our experience, the faculty, staff and your fellow students will always be willing to lend a hand.

My final piece of advice to each of you is this: enjoy the rest of your summer and take some time for yourself. Travel, try new foods, go outside, spend time with friends and family, or take time to rest in whichever ways that you prefer to. You are about to embark on an adventure – and we can't wait to meet you when you get here!

Sincerely,

Victoria Truong

2019-2020 MLSA Executive:

President - Victoria Truong

Vice-President External - Kaylen Noga

Vice-President Internal - Meghan Payment

Vice-President Finance - Parker Neil