



Edmonton Community  
Legal Centre

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2008

## our volunteers

Deborah Alessandro  
 Joanne Archibald  
 Carl Argo  
 Yoko Azumaya  
 Terri Badiou  
 Chelsey Bailey  
 Jason Bodnar  
 Lyle Brookes  
 Stewart Brownlee  
 Yessy Byl  
 Dennis Callihoo  
 Alec Campbell  
 Arman Chak  
 Alex Coombes  
 Craig Corbett  
 Donald Cranston  
 Brenda Davis  
 Catherine Duxbury  
 Ted Feehan  
 Jon Faulds  
 Jeff Fitzgerald  
 D.K. Fraser  
 Penny Frederiksen  
 Kismet Fung  
 Christina Gauk  
 Marie Gordon  
 Ron Haggett  
 Scott Hammond  
 John Henderson  
 Lyndsey Henderson  
 Greg Heinrichs  
 Chris Holmes  
 Ron Hopp  
 Andrea Jarman  
 Allyson Jeffs  
 Bill Katz  
 Priscilla Kennedy  
 Jeananne Kirwin  
 Dale Knisely  
 Brent Kornack  
 Jeremiah Kowalchuk  
 Anna Kuranicheva  
 Bryan Kwan  
 Marcel Labbe  
 Julie Lee  
 Brian Loewen

Doug Mah  
 Anne Magusin  
 James McGinnis  
 Ross McLeod  
 Kim Melnyk  
 Dan Morrow  
 Jim Neilson  
 Angus Ng  
 Holly Norwig  
 Jennifer Ornstein  
 Don Padget  
 Rakhi Pancholi  
 Lynn Parish  
 Tim Patterson  
 Joanne Pawluk  
 Dawn Pentelechuk  
 Michael Phair  
 Nicole Pfeifer  
 Catrinel Popescu  
 Greg Pratch  
 Christine Pratt  
 Matt Pruski  
 Michael Pucylo  
 John Radosh  
 Andrea Remington  
 Baljinder Rattan  
 Sharon Roberts  
 Jackie Rohel  
 Terry Rostad  
 Alex Rozmus  
 Howard Samoil  
 Kari Sejr  
 Greg Sim  
 Andrea Simmonds  
 Sean Smith  
 Eric Spink  
 Shayna Staniloff  
 Vivian Stevenson  
 Brian Summers  
 Michael Teeling  
 Dione Thomas  
 Holly Turner  
 Alex Varela  
 Stephanie Wanke  
 David Wedge  
 David Woo

*“The volunteer lawyer was helpful and understood my situation. Now I feel comfortable dealing with the situation myself.”*

ECLC Client

Clinic Services		
	2008	2002 to 2008
Volunteer Hours	2115	5263
Clients Served	642	4854
Volunteers	92	399

I have volunteered at the Edmonton Community Legal Centre for almost seven years. I volunteer about once a month at the evening clinic, and from time to time I take a *pro bono* file. Volunteering at ECLC is personally rewarding because after every clinic I feel as if I have made an important, direct impact on people’s lives. In my experience, the people who seek ECLC’s help are often overwhelmed, sometimes confused, and generally in need of someone on their side who can help them see a solution, legal or otherwise, to a daunting problem. Sometimes I do nothing more than listen to the person’s story and offer some simple, reassuring guidance. Each clinic experience is different, but after each clinic I hope that I have made a positive difference.

Jeremiah Kowalchuk  
 Volunteer Lawyer

***The ECLC is proud of the work it has done over the past seven years, providing access to justice and free legal education, information, support, advice, and representation to the poorest and most vulnerable in our community.***

**a client's story**

A single mother has a long term lease at a low rent that includes utilities. Subsequently the landlords sell the property to a large corporation.

That new landlord misplaces the lease, and purports to increase the rent. The woman repeatedly tells the landlord's staff that her rent is lower and her lease includes utilities, and the staff tell her they will look into it and get back to her. The woman pays the rent she truly owes, and no one gets back to her.

The woman and her children go on vacation. A few days after they return, a Sheriff forcibly removes them from their home, without their belongings, in front of their neighbours. She moves in with someone her son knows, and calls her landlord repeatedly to explain their error. No one listens.

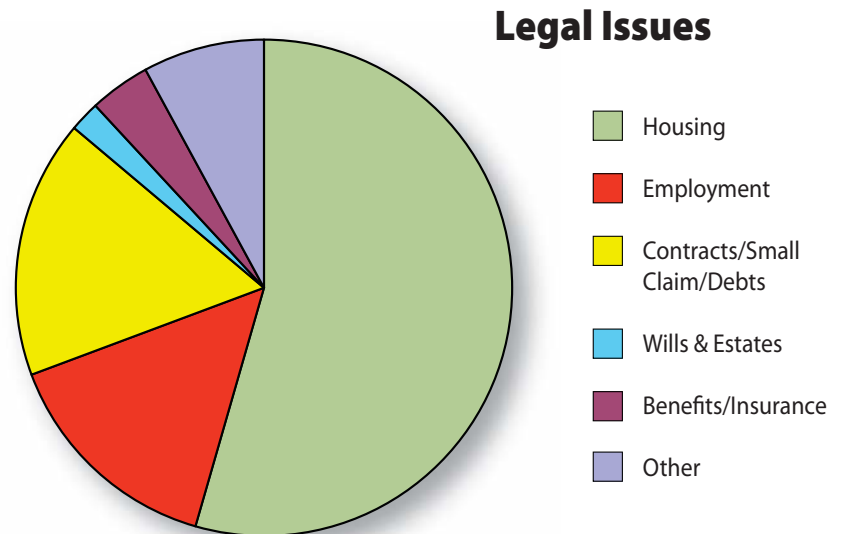
When the woman comes to the Edmonton Community Legal Centre, we investigate. There was a hearing at the Residential Tenancies Dispute Resolution Service, while the woman was on vacation. In accordance with the regulation, the Notice of Hearing had been posted to the woman's door. When she did not attend the hearing, a tenancy dispute officer had made an order that the woman owed months of back rent and thousands of dollars in utility payments.

Talking to the landlord accomplishes nothing. Under the current regulatory scheme, there is no ability to adduce new evidence on appeal from

the RTDRS, and no right of re-hearing. We draft, file and serve a Notice of Motion and lengthy Affidavit returnable in the Court of Queen's Bench, relying on the Judicature Act. Finally, the landlord consents to staying the RTDRS order and the Writ of Possession.

Over a month after they were initially locked out of their home, the woman and her children are allowed to return home (where their possessions, thankfully, await them). The ECLC continues to advocate for changes to the RTDRS regulation.

***The Edmonton Community Legal Centre provides free legal services, advice, representation and education in the areas of civil and administrative law to persons living with low income in the Edmonton area.***



## message from the executive director - debbie klein

Our seventh year of operation was marked by growth and transition. We said farewell to John Henderson, ECLC Board Chair since 2002, and Lori Shortreed, ECLC Executive Director since 2004. Both of them exemplified the passion and dedication that has been true of our board, volunteers, and staff over the years. We welcomed four new Board members, nineteen new volunteers, and six new staff members. We expanded our client services, opening our first “satellite” legal clinic, and adding a Temporary Foreign Worker Project. As the year ends, we are looking ahead to continued growth, with plans for a second satellite clinic, and preparing for a move to new and larger office space.

For several months in 2008, the ECLC was without a full-time staff lawyer, a crucial position to our service-delivery model. Sincere and heartfelt thanks to Don Cranston, Brian Summers, John Henderson, Lyle Brookes, and Ron Hopp, who devoted many additional hours beyond their board and volunteer commitment to provide ongoing legal support to ECLC clients, as well as professional support to the new ECLC staff lawyer. Thanks to Dianne Henderson, who led the ECLC staff team during the transition to a new executive director. Thanks to all the ECLC volunteers, board, and staff for their commitment to the ECLC this past year, and as we continue to evolve.

Although funding is never completely secure in the not-for-profit sector, the ECLC is very fortunate that its revenues and funding base have increased each year, which enabled us to take a bold step in 2008. That bold step was the addition of a second full-time staff lawyer toward the end of the year, effectively doubling our capacity for legal advice and representation beyond the legal clinics. As we look ahead to 2009, with seven years of experience and credibility behind us, we are better positioned than ever before to fulfill our mission of providing access to justice to low income Edmontonians.

## pro bono file lawyers

Joanne Archibald  
Andrew Bachelder  
Jason Bodnar  
Lyle Brookes  
Yessy Byl  
Arman Chak  
Don Cranston  
Zachary Elias  
Fiona Fjeldheim  
Penny Frederiksen  
John Henderson  
Ron Hopp  
Allyson Jeffs  
Bill Katz  
Priscilla Kennedy  
Jeremiah Kowalchuk  
Douglas Mah  
Dan Morrow  
Jim Neilson  
Lynn Parish  
Tim Patterson  
Dawn Pentelechuk  
Nicole Pfeifer  
Greg Pratch  
Christine Pratt  
Matt Pruski  
Michael Pucylo  
Baljie Rattan  
Sharon Roberts  
Howard Samoil  
Kari Sejr  
Greg Sim  
Sean Smith  
Eric Spinc  
Shayna Staniloff  
Vivian Stevenson  
Brian Summers  
Stephanie Wanke  
Matthew Woodley

**10 staff,  
12 board members,  
and 92 volunteers  
provided service to  
4356 low-income  
Edmontonians.**

## our process

The ECLC is unique in its holistic approach to legal problems, situating the individual and family within the broader picture of their financial, personal, and social circumstances.

All clients have an initial interview with a social worker who assists them to identify if they have a legal concern and provides appropriate referrals and information.

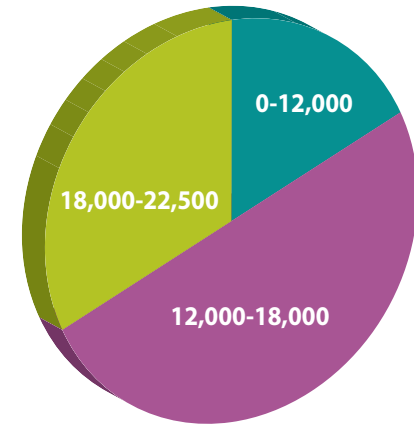
Clients receive legal information and advice at no cost at a volunteer legal clinic. Volunteers may refer clients with complex legal issues for free legal representation by an ECLC Staff Lawyer.

The Volunteer Lawyers and Staff Lawyers work in partnership with the Outreach Worker to identify and address social and personal factors that may have contributed to the legal problem. This multi-disciplinary approach facilitates client access to community resources and service providers, expands opportunities for the negotiation of non-legal remedies, and ensures skilled guidance in the handling of disputes.

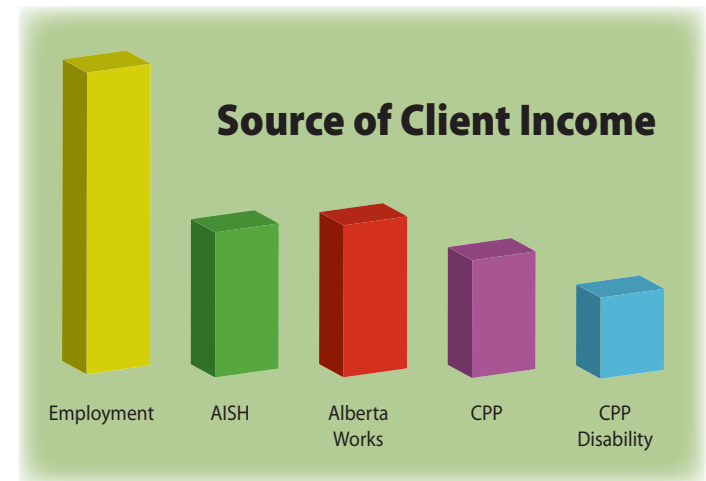
## support to temporary foreign workers

In September 2008, the ECLC hired a Temporary Foreign Worker Project Coordinator, who works in partnership with the ECLC staff and volunteer team to assist low income foreign workers to better understand their legal rights and with legal problems regarding work permits and their legal status in Canada. The Coordinator works closely with Catholic Social Services, the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, and the Temporary Foreign Workers Advisory Office to coordinate service provision to foreign workers. Catholic Social Services and Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers provide settlement services. The Temporary Foreign Workers Advisory Office provides information and referral services and help resolving employment standards or occupational health and safety issues.

### Client Income



### Source of Client Income



## message from the board chair - don cranston

The Edmonton Community Legal Centre began as a project of the Edmonton Social Planning Council in 2002, and in 2004, was incorporated as an independent society with charitable status. 2008 saw the departure of the Honourable Judge John Henderson (formerly John Henderson, Q.C.) as Chair of ECLC, and Lori Shortreed as the longstanding Executive Director of ECLC. Both contributed immeasurably to the creation and growth of the Centre.

As 2008 drew to a close, we found ourselves with a new Executive Director, two new full-time staff lawyers, a strong staff complement and many supportive volunteer lawyers.

As I write this brief message, ECLC has just moved into new premises, a significant step forward for our Centre. The new premises are far more visible, provide better access to our clientele and a better working environment for our staff and volunteer lawyers. The location is in the heart of downtown, and a short walk from the Courthouse.

Built upon the strong foundation laid by those who preceded us, our Board of Directors and senior management have recently undertaken a strategic planning exercise, and as a result have further embedded a strong governance model, which will incorporate some important advocacy functions as we move forward.

A message such as this would not be complete without a heartfelt thanks to our funders. The Alberta Law Foundation has shown significant commitment to the Centre, which is greatly appreciated.

I would like to end this message with a further thanks to two Board members who retired in 2008, Lyle Brookes and Dennis Callihoo. Their contributions were significant, and they will be missed.

## financial supporters

Alberta Federation of Labour  
Alberta Law Foundation  
Alberta Solicitor General  
Bennett Jones LLP  
Brownlee LLP  
Canadian Bar Association  
Christine Pratt  
City of Edmonton  
Donald and Nancy Cranston  
Douglas Mah  
Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association  
Edmonton Community Foundation  
Edmonton Housing Trust Fund  
Field LLP  
Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP  
John Henderson  
Kim Wakefield  
Lyle Brookes  
Marie Gordon  
McLennan Ross LLP  
Miller Thompson LLP  
Minerva Foundation  
Parlee McLaws LLP  
Pro Bono Law Alberta  
Service Canada  
Schizophrenia Society of Alberta  
Union 52 Benevolent Society  
Victoria Laidlaw  
Wild Rose Foundation

**54% of ECLC clients are female and 69% are single. 40% are between the ages of 26 and 45. 17% are 56 or older. All clients are living with a limited income, 68% with a gross income of less than \$1500 per month.**

**statement of financial position**

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
Current	311,348	319,895
Equipment	10,863	9,190
	<b>322,211</b>	<b>329,085</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current	193,570	223,352
Deferred contributions (equipment)	4,614	1,185
	<b>198,184</b>	<b>224,537</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Unrestricted	117,778	96,543
Invested in equipment	6,249	8,005
	<b>124,027</b>	<b>104,548</b>
	<b>322,211</b>	<b>329,085</b>

year ended December 31, 2008

**statement of operations**

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Grants, fundraising, donations	755,996	546,659
Interest	1,965	1,868
	<b>757,961</b>	<b>548,527</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Consulting fees	48,274	26,790
Facility costs	71,820	56,558
Office supplies and equipment	44,966	49,302
Program costs	44,632	28,644
Salaries and benefits	528,790	330,357
	<b>738,482</b>	<b>491,651</b>
<b>Revenue over expenses</b>	<b>19,479</b>	<b>56,876</b>

year ended December 31, 2008

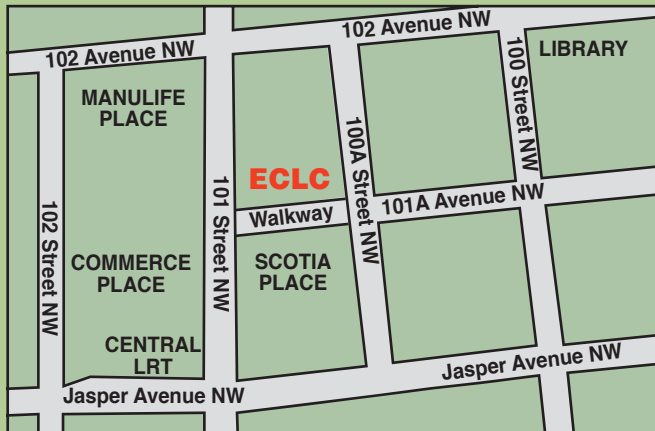
**1707 referrals were made to outside agencies.**

**40% of ECLC intake calls received in 2008 have been concerning landlord and tenant matters, as compared to 26% in 2007.**

**Staff lawyers provided support to 507 people, including direct service on 279 files.**

## our board

Donald Cranston, QC, *Chair* Bennett Jones LLP  
Michael Phair, *Vice Chair* University of Alberta  
Marcel Labbe, *Treasurer* Servus Credit Union  
Christine Pratt, *Secretary* Field LLP  
Yessy Byl, Private Practice Lawyer  
Jon Faulds, QC, Field LLP  
Penny Frederiksen, Ackroyd LLP  
Marie Gordon, QC, Gordon Zwaenepoel  
Allyson Jeffs, Ackroyd LLP  
James McGinnis, Parlee McLaws LLP  
Joanne Pawluk, University of Alberta  
Brian Summers, Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP



## our staff

*Administrative Coordinator*  
IK Ero/Catherine Tan

*Intake Coordinator*  
Jacquie L'Hirondelle

*Legal Assistant*  
Solmaz Taheri

*Legal Researcher*  
Deborah Alessandro  
Tess VanWeelden  
Lindsey Hanoski

*Outreach Worker*  
Shelley McGowan

*Satellite Clinic Coordinator*  
Sonia Melgar

*Staff Lawyer*  
Cindy Want/Sarah Eadie  
Tim Patterson

*Temporary Foreign Worker Project Coordinator*  
Susan Wood

*Volunteer/Program Coordinator*  
Dianne Henshaw

*Executive Director*  
Lori Shortreed/Debbie Klein

## our office

Phone 780.702.1725  
Fax 780.702.1726  
www.eclc.ca  
10056 - 101A Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0C8

## our mission

*The Edmonton Community Legal Centre provides effective advocacy and access to justice in a supportive environment to persons living with low income.*