

## 2011-2012 ANNUAL REPORT

### National Advisory Committee

The Honourable Frank Iacobucci, C.C., Q.C.,  
*Chairperson*

The Honourable Gérard V. La Forest, C.C., Q.C., *Honorary Chairperson*

The Honourable Peter Cory, C.C., C.D. Q.C., *Honorary Chairperson*

The Honourable John C. Major, C.C., Q.C., *Honorary Chairperson*

The Honourable Michel Bastarache, C.C., *Honorary Chairperson*

The Honourable Louise Charron, *Honorary Chairperson*

The Honourable Ian Binnie, C.C., Q.C., *Honorary Chairperson*

Sheila Block, L.S.M., *Member for Ontario*

Frank R. Foran, Q.C., *Member for Alberta*

Daniel Jutras, *Member for Quebec*

Richard Peck, Q.C., *Member for British Columbia*

Richard J. Scott, Q.C., *Member for Atlantic Canada*

Shantona Chaudhury, *Executive Director*

Grégoire Webber, *Executive Director*

In 2011-2012, the Supreme Court Advocacy Institute completed its fifth Supreme Court of Canada term, during which it continued to provide counsel appearing for argument before the Court with rigorous practice sessions. The Institute's advocacy program aims to increase the effectiveness and quality of advocacy before the Court by simulating for counsel the experience of oral argument before the highest court. A panel of seasoned Supreme Court advocates listens to counsel's argument and offers candid and constructive feedback to help maximize counsel's opportunity to present informative and effective oral submissions.

During the 2011-2012 year, the Institute provided free, non-partisan advocacy sessions in approximately 47% of cases before the Supreme Court of Canada, an important increase over previous years. Counsel from both government and private practice used the Institute's advocacy program in a wide array of civil and criminal appeals, including constitutional cases. During some Court sessions, the Institute organized practice sessions for more than half of the appeals from a given province. Over the course of the year, the Institute provided advocacy sessions in 77% of appeals from Quebec and 56% of appeals from British Columbia.

Counsel making use of the Institute in 2011-2012 included seasoned advocates as well as first time counsel before the Court. Counsel from British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada relied on the Institute as part of their preparations.

Sixty-four (64) lawyers donated their time as advocacy advisors for their colleagues, offering advice based on their own experience before the Court. Many participated in more than one session, illustrating the commitment of our advocacy advisors to the bar and to the public. The Institute has expanded its rosters in select regions to accommodate the increasing demand for its advocacy program.

Numerous changes within the Institute took place during the past year. Following their retirement from the Court, the Honourable Ian Binnie, C.C., Q.C., and the Honourable Louise Charron joined the Institute as Honorary Chairpersons. In addition, following the appointment of Michael J. Wood, Q.C., to the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, Richard J. Scott, Q.C., became the new chairperson for the Atlantic provinces regional committee and David Coles, Q.C., joined the committee as the member for Nova Scotia. Shantona Chaudhury of Pape Barristers joined the Institute as Executive Director following the end of

Owen Rees's term in that position. Effective September 2012, Mr. Rees will be Executive Legal Officer at the Supreme Court of Canada.

We estimate that since 2006, the Institute's advocacy advisors, committee members, and executive directors have collectively contributed over \$1,800,000 of *pro bono* services to the benefit of parties and their counsel before the Supreme Court of Canada. We continue to receive positive feedback from counsel who have used the Institute's advocacy program on the level of preparation of our advisors for practice sessions.

The Institute remains in a good financial position, but will soon require additional funding to ensure the sustainability of its activities. Thanks to the willingness of all members to donate their time on a *pro bono* basis, the Institute maintains low-cost operations. We thank Torys LLP for providing the Institute with *pro bono* services in support of our charitable status.