

**Legal Supplier**

Ryerson's LPP helps future lawyers flex their networking muscles

By Kathy Rumleski, AdvocateDaily.com Contributor



A successful law practice relies on relationships, so one of the most important skills future lawyers must develop is the ability to build connections, says [André Bacchus](#), the assistant director of Ryerson's [Law Practice Program \(LPP\)](#).

"We share with LPP candidates that as part of joining this profession, you have to be able to expand your networking ability to uncover opportunities for yourself and to develop your client market as well," Bacchus tells

[AdvocateDaily.com](#).

Ryerson's LPP — the first of its kind in Ontario — provides an innovative option to traditional articling and includes a four-month work placement.

LPP candidates grow their professional community through outreach, attending industry events and becoming engaged members of the legal community, Bacchus says.

"We offer candidates strategies around networking and help them to identify the various networks they already have access to and can tap into."

Bacchus says those networks should include their undergraduate classmates, law school colleagues, as well as family and friends.

"It's all about getting to know as many people as you can, and at the same time creating quality relationships," Bacchus explains.

He recommends staying a little longer in a conversation in a social setting and developing a meaningful discussion rather than just shaking hands and moving on.

"Find out about a lawyer's practice area and let them know about the LPP. It could turn into a work placement opportunity in which a firm brings the candidate on for four months and provides them with the ability to contribute to the firm as well," Bacchus says.

The program offers a number of events where students can meet lawyers, including facilitated speaking sessions and workshops that are part of the LPP's training component, he says.

"At different times in the program, as many as 200 lawyers are here with us. They are getting to meet practitioners on a regular basis. It's their opportunity to shine and expand the community around them."

The LPP also enables candidates to work with mentors for two months, Bacchus says.

"A mentor will be able to introduce you to other people in his or her network and perhaps with a focus on a candidate's particular area of interest."

Bacchus says like many things in life, practice makes perfect when it comes to networking.

"The more people you talk to, the more opportunity you have to develop the skill set and the higher the likelihood of you connecting to people with whom you have common interests."

He recognizes that for some, networking doesn't come easy.

Bacchus recommends using a so-called elevator pitch to make it less difficult.

"Have an idea of what you're looking for and what you want to share with folks. Consider phrases such as, 'I'm looking to learn more about this' or 'I'd love to learn about how you got involved.' Take a nuanced approach. Don't come right out and ask for a job," he says.

Bacchus also says it's important for candidates to do their homework.

“You don’t want to ask questions that could be answered by looking at a firm’s website.”

He says by regularly attending social events and networking, it will become easier.

“Some nights you just want to go home and plunk yourself in front of the TV and relax, but it’s worth the effort to get out there,” Bacchus says.

“If you find it difficult, getting into a routine will help because it won’t feel as much like a chore.”

Once you mix and mingle in the legal community, you’ll find that there are so many connections to different lawyers, Bacchus says.

“Despite the fact that there are 50,000 lawyers in this province, many of us know each other through someone else, so be mindful of every conversation and carry yourself in a professional manner.”

He says 80 per cent of jobs aren’t advertised, so chances are you’ll find out about a position by talking to people.

“Through your networking, you’re going to gain access to a much wider marketplace of opportunities.”

[To Read More Ryerson Law Practice Program Posts Click Here](#)

AdvocatePlus >

- [The Fund Library publishes Samantha Prasad's "Year-end tax tips"](#)
- [Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario awards \\$120,000 award for discrimination in hiring process](#)
- [IIROC mandatory cybersecurity breach reporting](#)
- [Join Littler LLP for its 2019 Canada Conference](#)

[View more AdvocatePlus posts](#)

[HOME](#)

[POSTS](#)

[OPINION](#)

[EVENTS/RELEASES](#)

[TV](#)

[PLUS](#)

[ABOUT](#)

[CONTACT](#)



[@ADVOCATEDAILY](#)

[ADVOCATEDAILY](#)

Copyright © 2019 AdvocateDaily.com All Rights Reserved

[Privacy Policy](#)

▲ Return to Top ▲