Your First Civil Trial

Civil Litigation / Young Lawyers Division

In person **Live Online**

Date: Tuesday, March 02, 2027 | 1:00 pm to 4:45 pm

Location: OBA Conference Centre, 20 Toronto St.

Agenda:
12:30 pm Registration Opens
1:00 pm Program Commences
4:45 pm Program Concludes

This program contains:
0 hr 30m of Professionalism Content
3 h 15 m of Substantive Content
The OBA has been approved as an Accredited Provider of Professionalism Content by The Law Society of Ontario.

Your first civil trial can be both an exciting and daunting prospect. Ensure you are ready to tackle it confidently with this valuable program as you gather the preparation, knowledge, and advocacy skills you need to succeed. Our faculty of prominent litigators will demystify the civil trial process and share their experience and insights on the fundamentals of trial preparation and technique. Plus, don't miss our popular Views from the Bench to hear a judge's perspective on essential trial dos and don'ts.

This is a "must not miss" program for newer litigators and advocates. Hear time-tested strategies and practical advice on the core topics you need to know from opening to closing argument and beyond.

Program Chairs: **David Milosevic**, Milosevic & Associates
Sarah Naughton, Soloway Wright LLP
Maria Arabella Robles, Sotos LLP

1:00 pm Welcome and Opening Remarks

1:05 pm **Trial Considerations: From the Beginning of Your Case**
Ewa Krajewska, Henein Hutchison Robitaille LLP
- Checking limitation periods and jurisdiction
- Drafting your pleadings with a view to trial
- Identifying witnesses
- Calculating time estimates
- Trauma-informed trials

1:25 pm **Trial Preparation: Strategies and Tactics**
- Establishing a case theory
- Preparing yourself, your client and witnesses
- Effectively using case management
- Interacting with opposing counsel and opposing witnesses
- Insights on jury selection

1:50 pm **Opening and Closing Statements**
- Road mapping - knowing your audience and setting the theme and tone
- Anticipating your opponent's opening and theme
- Differences between opening and closing statements
- Implications of inconsistencies in your opening/closing and the actual evidence
- Considerations for written opening/closing arguments and visual aids

2:15 pm **Evidence Essentials**
- How to introduce exhibits, including in virtual proceedings
- Issues of admissibility
- Evidence Act fundamentals include required notices and "business records' exception
- Using Requests to Admit, Agreed Statements of Facts and discovery evidence
- Ethical issues and professional responsibilities

2:40 pm Networking Break

2:55 pm **Expert Witnesses**
- Determining when you need an expert
- Participant experts
- Navigating expert reports and qualification
- What you need to know about *voir dires*

3:20 pm **The Art of Examination**
- Direct versus Cross Examination: skills and approaches
- Impeachment and confrontation (Rule in *Browne v. Dunn*)
- Developing your cross-examination strategy
- Effective use of exhibits and visual aids
- Ethical considerations during examination and cross-examinations for yourself and your client

3:45 pm **Objections and Appeal-Proofing Your Case**
- Making and responding to objections
- Strategic use of objections, including pre-trail objections to expert reports or qualifications
- Setting up/protecting your case for an appeal through use of objections and other means

4:10 pm **A View from the Bench**
The Honourable Paul Schabas, Superior Court of Justice
Hear directly from the Bench on critical do's and don'ts, effective trial advocacy and best practices.

4:40 pm Questions and Concluding Remarks

4:45pm Program Concludes

REGISTER NOW