

# National Self-Represented Litigants Project

## Year in Review 2016



**"The National Self-Represented Litigants Project at the University of Windsor is at once perhaps the most important and most unsung access to justice initiative in North America."**

*- Canadian Law Blog Awards*

**"Thank you for all you do for SRLs."**

*- Self-Represented Litigant*

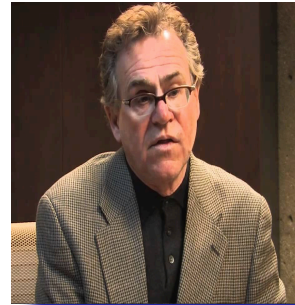
# 2016 Advisory Board



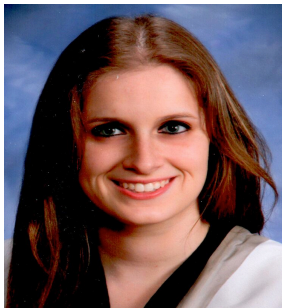
NSRLP Board Members are a source of expertise and collegial support for the NSRLP. They work with the NSRLP team to monitor emerging SRL initiatives and to communicate the work of the NSRLP to their constituencies.



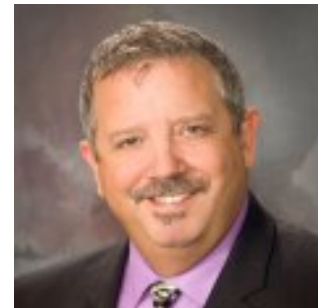
**Jennifer Muller**  
*SRL Advocate*



**W.A. Bogart**  
*University  
Professor and  
Professor of Law,  
University of  
Windsor*



**Erin Chesney**  
*Former NSRLP RA,  
Articling at  
McCarthy Tétrault*



**Robert Harvie**  
*Partner, Huckvale  
Wilde Harvie  
MacLennan*



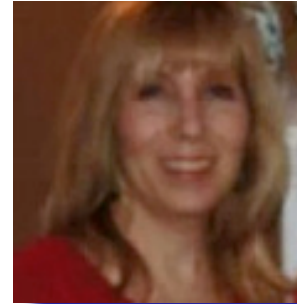
**Sherry  
MacLennan**  
*Director Public  
Legal  
Information,  
Legal Services  
Society of B.C.*



**Trevor C.W.  
Farrow**  
*Professor,  
Osgoode Hall  
Law School*



**Noel Semple**  
*Associate  
Professor,  
Faculty of  
Law,  
University of  
Windsor*



**Mary Anne  
Docherty**  
*Supervisor,  
Superior Court,  
Windsor*



**John  
Manwaring**  
*Professor of  
Law,  
Common Law  
Section, U of  
Ottawa*



**Valarie Waboose**  
*Assistant  
Professor, Faculty  
of Law,  
University of  
Windsor*

# 2016 NSRLP Team



**Dr. Julie Macfarlane**  
**Project Director**



**Gurleen Gill 3L**  
**Research Assistant**



**Lidia Imbrogno 2L**  
**Research Assistant**

# 2016 NSRLP Team



**Modasir Rajabali**  
**Graphic Designer**



**Cynthia Eagan**  
**Editor**

# Welcome to the NSRLP Team



**Nikki Gershbain**

Nikki is the National Director of Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC) and has been awarded a Community Leadership in Justice Fellowship by the Law Foundation of Ontario. Nikki will be working with the NSRLP from January – December 2017.



**Dayna Cornwall**

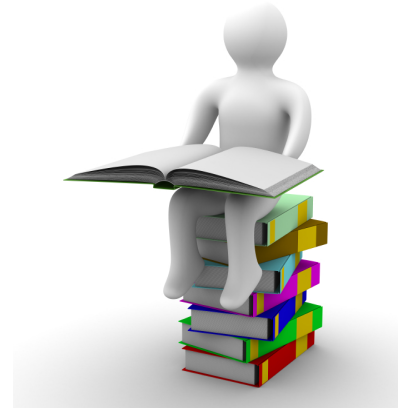
Joining NSRLP as our new Project Coordinator, Dayna has a background in librarianship and education. With experience in not-for-profit and public service work, she has a longstanding interest in social justice issues.

# NSRLP Year in Review



- RESEARCH

- RESOURCES



- DIALOGUE  
& COLLABORATION



# 2016 January

**The NSRLP Blog** wins a Clawbie for Best Canadian Law Blog for a non-Lawyer audience. “... a runaway winner in this category.”

**CBC's *The National* Documentary:** [“The New Litigants”](#) filmed during the summer of 2015 with the facilitation of NSRLP is first aired on New Year's Eve 2015 (and again in August 2016).

**#WhyUnbundle?:** NSRLP launches a social media campaign disseminating information about and promoting limited scope retainer and unbundled legal services to followers on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.

# February 2016

## *Two New SRL Resources*

**The McKenzie Friend: Choosing and Presenting a Courtroom Companion:** This [resource](#) is based on interviews with Canadian judges on whether, and when, they would permit a MF in their courtroom, and written by Judith daSilva (LLM student at Osgoode Hall Law School) with Julie Macfarlane.

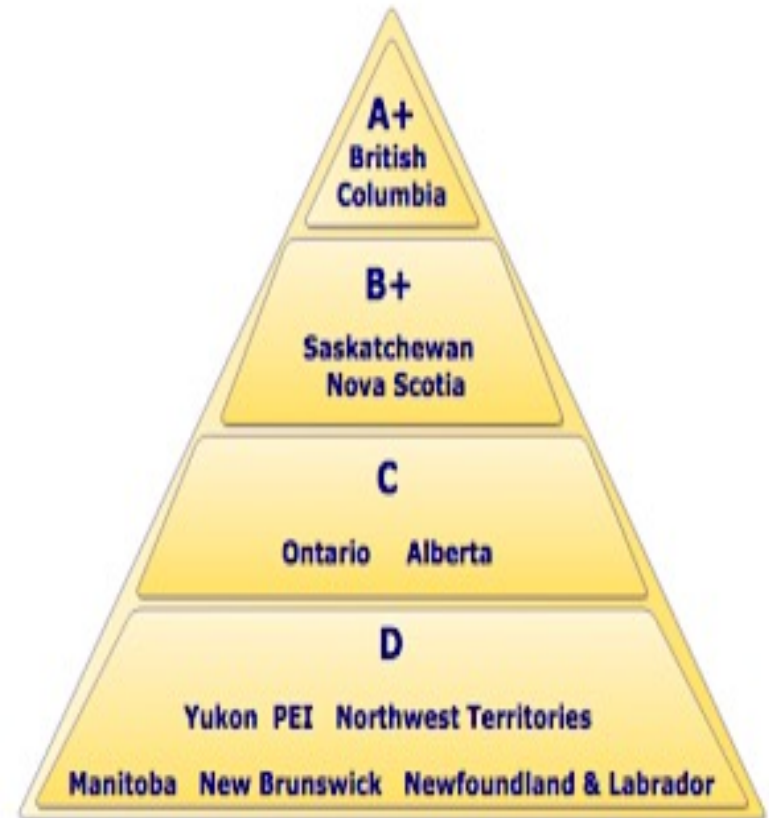
**What Can Mindfulness Training Do for You? A Resource for Self-Represented Litigants:** Designed and written – along with an accompanying video – by NSRLP and Mindfulness Trainer Charlotte Thaarup-Owen, this [resource](#) aims to make mindfulness practice a practical and concrete stress-reduction tool for SRLs.

# March 2016

## *Public Participation Survey & Another Award for the Blog*

Board member Rob Harvie explored whether A2J initiatives throughout Canada were engaging litigants / self-represented litigants in consultations over system reforms. A survey was mailed out to 44 respondents including provincial and territorial governments, law societies, the DOJ, and CBA branches. Each province was awarded a “grade” based on their responses.

**The NSRLP Blog** was named as a primary factor in awarding the David Mundell Medal for Legal Writing to Julie Macfarlane, presented by the Ontario Attorney-General (Julie was jointly nominated by Heather Hui-Litwin, a former SRL, and Dean Chris Waters).




# March 2016

## *Educating Law Students (1)*

**2016 Bring a SRL to School Day** is held at Windsor Law, and expanded this year to Osgoode Hall and Ottawa U, facilitated by the NSRLP.

**Poster Campaign:** Enlisting the help of SRLs and student volunteers, NSRLP created a poster campaign leading up to *Bring a SRL to School Day* where pictured SRLs described the impact on them of self-representation.



NSRLP [www.representingyourselfcanada.com](http://www.representingyourselfcanada.com)

### Bring a **Self-Represented Litigant** To Law School Day!

April | Chartered Accountant

**Family Law Litigant:**  
“Totally **disillusioned**, completely drained emotionally, **physically**. Not able to **help** my son dealing with his depression and **anxiety**.”

**March 14, 2016**  
Come to the Moot Court at Noon!

f / NationalSelfRepresentedLitigantsProject

## April 2016 *Starting to recruit to the National Database of Professionals Assisting SRLs*

NSRLP begins to create a *National Database of Professionals Assisting SRLs*, promoting the database to professionals through networking, social media, and alumni engagement. A sign-up form is created and we begin to populate the database. Regular contact is established with two other groups – one in BC and one in Alberta – planning similar projects.

# 2016 Summer Research / Research Collaborations

“Evaluation  
of the  
Impact of  
Training for  
Court  
Services  
Staff on  
Legal  
Information/  
Legal  
Advice”

Updated  
Edition (V4) of  
the NSRLP  
Access to  
Justice  
Annotated  
Bibliography

“Cases  
without  
Counsel”  
IAALS Final  
Report

Unbundled  
legal services  
survey  
(for Bonkalo  
review)

# September 2016

**“My Learned Friend”** is the first NSRLP Resource we have written that is addressed to *both* SRLs and legal counsel. [MLF](#) is an overview of the problems articulated by both SRLs and counsel, and practical advice based on real-life experiences on how to create a good working relationship between counsel and SRL. This resource has received a lot of attention on social media and was promoted by the BC Continuing Legal Education Society with a [short video](#).

**2016 PBSC Coaching Project:** NSRLP and Pro Bono Students Canada continue to collaborate on a Family SRL Coaching Project at Windsor Law. NSRLP provides training and ongoing guidance to this project.

# September 2016 cont.

## *Educating Law Students (2)*

**SRL and A2J Certificate Workshop:** A capacity workshop was held on September 17<sup>th</sup> for Windsor law students featuring a full day of education, participation, and dialogue surrounding the SRL phenomenon and the A2J crisis.

**NSRLP in the classroom:** NSRLP research assistants addressed [1L Access to Justice classes](#) and organized a panel of local SRLs and a lawyer who assists SRLs.





# November 2016 *Launching the National Database of Professionals Assisting SRLs*

NSRLP launches the first iteration of the [National Database of Professionals Assisting SRLs](#). We have been promoting and slowly growing the National Database since April and began the original social media campaign in #WhyUnbundle in January. The database currently consists of 80+ professionals from across British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario. Since the launch last week, it has been growing steadily.

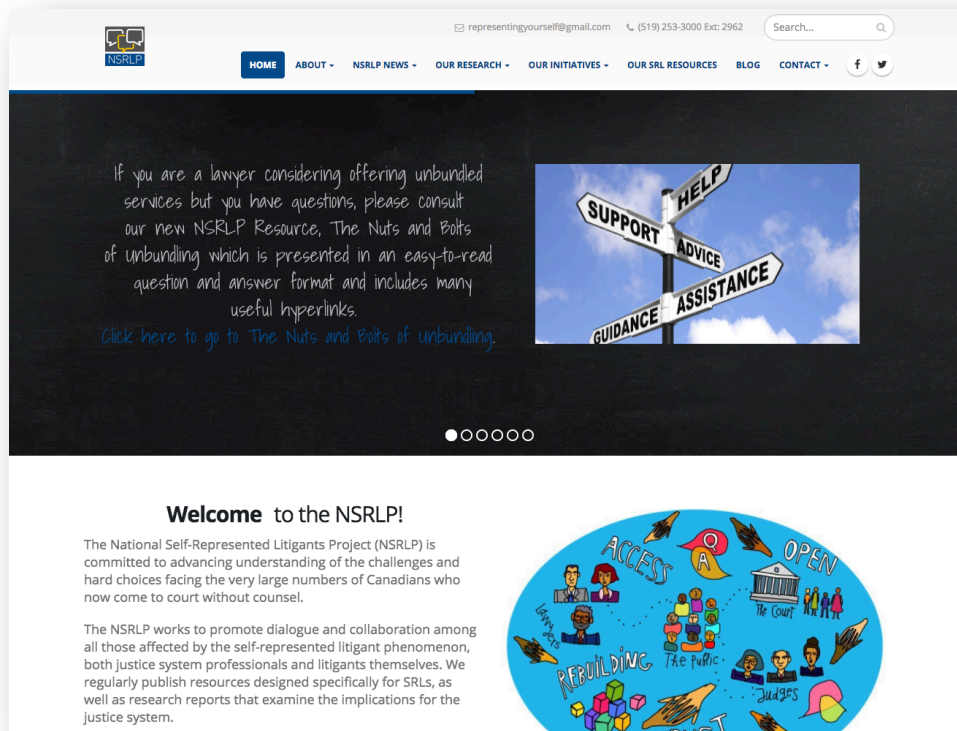
[NSRLP has created a promotional video](#) for the National Database with CJ Bauman of British Columbia, CJ Macdonald of Nova Scotia and ACJ Marrocco of the Ontario Superior Court.

This week NSRLP also published the [The Nuts and Bolts of Unbundling](#), a companion to the National Database, providing lawyers with answers to their most common questions about unbundling and links to many further resources.

# November 2016

## *Launching our new website*

Last week we launched our beautiful [new website](#)!



The screenshot shows the NSRLP website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for HOME, ABOUT, NSRLP NEWS, OUR RESEARCH, OUR INITIATIVES, OUR SRL RESOURCES, BLOG, and CONTACT. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area features a dark background with a white text box on the left and a photograph of a signpost on the right. The signpost has four directional signs: SUPPORT, HELP, ADVICE, and GUIDANCE ASSISTANCE. Below the text box, there is a row of five small circles, with the first one filled. The bottom section of the page has a white background with the heading "Welcome to the NSRLP!" and two paragraphs of text. To the right of the text is a colorful circular graphic with various icons and labels like "ACCESS", "OPEN", "REBUILDING", "The Public", "JUDGES", and "LAWYERS".

If you are a lawyer considering offering unbundled services but you have questions, please consult our new NSRLP Resource, *The Nuts and Bolts of unbundling* which is presented in an easy-to-read question and answer format and includes many useful hyperlinks.  
[Click here to go to The Nuts and Bolts of unbundling.](#)

**Welcome to the NSRLP!**

The National Self-Represented Litigants Project (NSRLP) is committed to advancing understanding of the challenges and hard choices facing the very large numbers of Canadians who now come to court without counsel.

The NSRLP works to promote dialogue and collaboration among all those affected by the self-represented litigant phenomenon, both justice system professionals and litigants themselves. We regularly publish resources designed specifically for SRLs, as well as research reports that examine the implications for the justice system.

- Cleaner, more modern
- Sliding banner promotes content
- Streamlined navigation
- Large SRL intake button
- Multiple, prominent ways to access resources
- Graphics with stats/facts
- New National Database featured prominently

# NSRLP's 2016 Access to Justice All-Stars



Our 2016 All-Star Inductees!



## Calgary LInC Team

Law Information Centre  
at the Calgary Courts  
Centre. Cynthia Sawyer,  
Lisa Paul, and  
Melissa Molyneux



## Shannon Salter

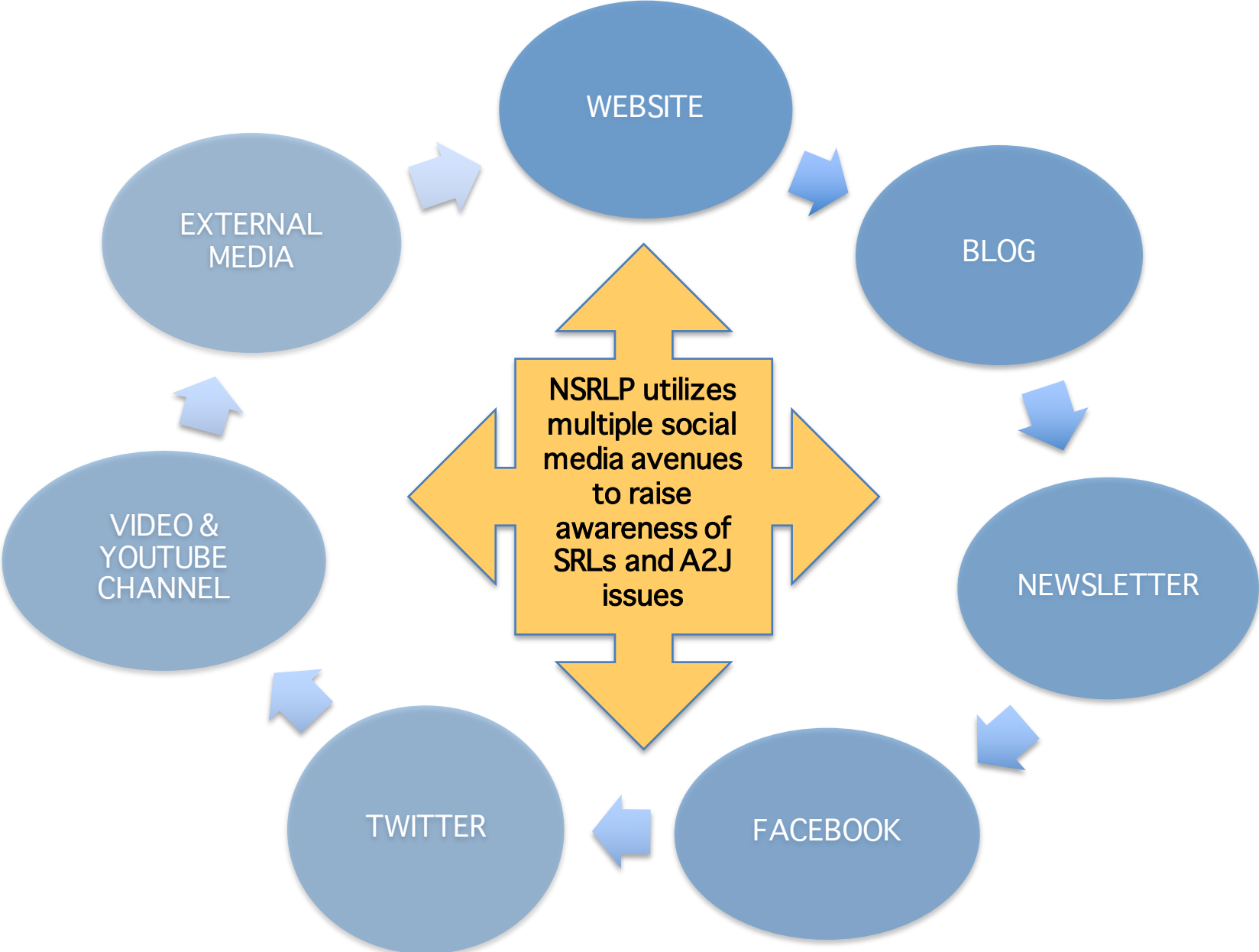
Chair of the  
British Columbia  
Civil Resolution  
Tribunal.



## Jennifer M. Lin





Associate at Boughton Law  
and Amici Curiae Pro Bono  
Program Supervising  
Volunteer

# USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO FURTHER DIALOGUE



# Website Analytics

## 2016 Highlights

	2015	2016	Growth
 Page Views	27,757	32,892	19%
 Highest Month Views	April 3,660	September 5,222	43%
 Unique Visitors	7,617	9,015	18%
 Most Popular Post	CanLII Primer	National Database	

25,766 unique visitors to the website to date

# Website Analytics

## 2016 Highlights

### Views

### Country

30,081

 Canada

1,804

 United States


273

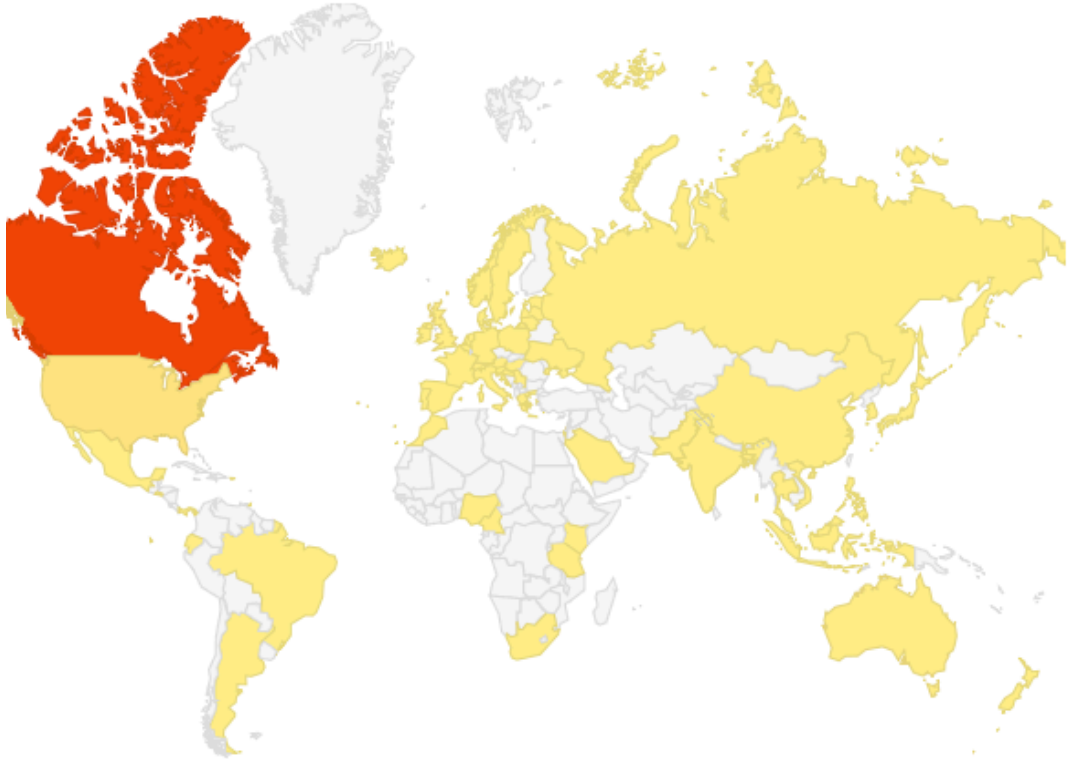
 Australia

248

 United Kingdom

55

 New Zealand



1  30,081

# NSRLP Social Media – Metrics

Platform	2015	2016	Growth
Newsletter	670	759	13%
Twitter	1,278	1,739	36%
Facebook	731	868	19%
Website Followers	78	177	127%
LinkedIn Connections	NA	235	NA
<b>Total Social Media Followers</b>	<b>2757</b>	<b>3778</b>	<b>37%</b>
“The New Litigants” views	979*	5,910	503%

\*2015 youtube views on NSRLP channel

# 2016 Workshop, speaking, and media highlights

- Family Dispute Resolution Institute keynote and SRL panel
- International Client Counselling Competition Masterclass
- Advocacy Centre for Tenants keynote
- BC Continuing Legal Education series on unbundled legal services (CLETV)
- Series of 21 syndicated interviews for local CBC radio, April



# **SRL PARTICIPATION**

## **2016 HIGHLIGHTS**

- **SRL panel for Family Dispute Resolution Institute of Ontario**
- **Community Legal Education Ontario – providing feedback on online resource for Ontario family SRLs**
- **BC Civil Resolutions Tribunal – testing online platforms**
- **SRL speakers for SRL certification course, Bring a SRL to School Day for Windsor Law, Osgoode Hall, and Ottawa Law, and 1L A2J classes.**
- **Our continued work with the National Self-Represented Litigants Support Network (NSSN)**