

Calgary Legal Guidance has been a fundamental part of my life. I was fortunate to article for Calgary Legal Guidance in 1990. It was exactly the type of articles that suited me. Law school was made bearable by being able to be involved with Student Legal Assistance and the direct impact that I could see being a lawyer had on people's lives. It was a natural progression to article at Calgary Legal Guidance.

Within fifteen minutes of my first day at Calgary Legal Guidance as an articling student, I was sent off to Court by Colleen Nichols, my principal. It was an excellent education in hands on "lawyering" and I learned many important lessons from my experience at Calgary Legal Guidance that served me well throughout my legal career.

As well as setting my course as a lawyer, I also met my wife at Calgary Legal Guidance during my articling year. Calgary Legal Guidance employed summer students. The executive director at the time, Marcia Clark, had provided me with the resumes of the summer students to look over. After looking them over, I indicated to Marcia Clark that I did not believe she should hire Marija because I had a "bad feeling" that I was going to marry her. I was 26 at the time and not looking to get married. Marcia Clark informed me that she had already hired her. Marija and I got married two years later and I can advise that we are still happily married 23 years later. I can also happily report that I am still happily a lawyer, doing more or less the same type of work that I was doing as at Student Legal Assistance and Calgary Legal Guidance. Therefore, I owe a debt of gratitude to the organization in both my professional and personal lives.

I have been involved in the evening clinic at Calgary Immigrant Women's Association for the past number of years. The individuals who are assisted at CIWA are, for the most part, recent immigrants to Canada. They are Canada's future and the self sacrifice and often insurmountable odds that they need to overcome, take heroic effort on their part. I always come away from my sessions at CIWA humbled. The obstacles that some face on their odyssey through Canadian Society and through the legal system are daunting and often overwhelming. I often wonder how I would fare in their shoes living in a different country, communication in a language that I was not all that familiar with, raising children and going through legal difficulties. To be able to assist in some small way is a privilege that we all have as members of the legal community and having the opportunity to do so through Calgary Legal Guidance has been a large part of my life and I am grateful for it.

Robert Knight
Barrister and Solicitor