



COURT OF APPEAL FOR ONTARIO  
COUR D'APPEL DE L'ONTARIO

March 1, 2024

Dear Braiding Diversity into Justice Program Participants,

Congratulations on participating in this year's program!

You see yourself as someone who could belong in the legal profession, and you do belong here.

The bench and bar – judges and lawyers – must be reflective of society if our justice system is to remain relevant and if people, especially young people, are to have confidence in our laws.

The Ontario Justice Education Network has created this wonderful event to connect young women between the ages of 16 and 20 with women working in the legal sector. In doing so, you are learning, I hope, that the legal profession is a profession for every person, regardless of where you come from, how you identify, what you believe, or how much money you have.

This is vitally important. You, as a young person, should see yourself where I am and where others are. You must never look at the goal of being a lawyer or a judge as a goal you cannot reach.

That was not the case for me. I was born in Jamaica and immigrated to Canada at the age of nine. Growing up in Toronto in the 1970s, there were very few Black or other racialized lawyers, and I certainly did not know any of them.

While this is changing, there is still room for more and greater diversity. Such diversity can only enhance the legitimacy of the profession and increase understanding and appreciation for the Rule of Law.

When I meet new lawyers entering the profession, there are increasing numbers of bright women like yourselves who are transforming the face and nature of the legal profession. This is very encouraging.

Whether you choose a career in law or decide on using your talents elsewhere, I trust the things you learn today about law and the justice system will help you in your life and career.

Today would not be possible without the exceptional dedication and diligence of the organizers and those who are sharing their time and experience with you, and I thank them for their participation.

It is my hope that you will end this day with a greater knowledge of the justice system and, most importantly, feel inspired.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael H. Tulloch', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael H. Tulloch  
Chief Justice of Ontario  
Court of Appeal for Ontario