

OUR WHOLE SOCIETY: BRIDGING THE RELIGIOUS-SECULAR DIVIDE

March 22-24, 2015 – UBC Robson Square – Vancouver, BC

TIME	SESSION & ROOM	DESCRIPTION	SPEAKERS
SUNDAY			
7:00-7:30pm	Opening C300 Theatre	Conference welcome	<p>The Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton – <i>General Secretary, Canadian Council of Churches</i></p> <p>Farid Rohani – <i>Chair, The Laurier Institution</i></p> <p>Wade Grant – <i>Musqueam Indian Band; Board of Directors, The Laurier Institution</i></p>
7:30-9:00pm	OPENING PLENARY: Reconciling religion, secularism and the common good C300 Theatre	Religion and secularism are often spoken about as a dichotomy. For instance, one is religious or one is secular, or the secular is public and the religious is private. But how do we define secularism and the secular? Is it possible to reconcile religion and secularism? Are there limits to secularism? What does religion contribute to the common good? How might we re-conceptualize the role of religion in Canadian public life?	<p>Chair: Farid Rohani – <i>Chair, The Laurier Institution</i></p> <p>Speaker: Prof. John G. Stackhouse – <i>Sangwoo Youtong Chee Professor of Theology and Culture, Regent College</i></p> <p>Speaker: Rabbi Dr. Lisa Grushcow – <i>Senior Rabbi, Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, Montreal</i></p>
MONDAY			
9:00-9:30am	Devotions and Reflections Opening C300 Theatre	Welcome and outline vision of the conference	<p>The Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton – <i>Chair, Conference Steering Committee</i></p> <p>Geoffrey Cameron – <i>Chair, Conference Program Committee</i></p>
9:30-10:45am	PLENARY 1: Building our whole society	From its inception as a country, Canada been made up of diverse peoples, cultures and religions. The process of building relations and understanding between Aboriginal and settler, French and English,	<p>Chair: Bruce Clemenger – <i>President, Evangelical Fellowship of Canada</i></p> <p>Speaker: Dr. Marie Wilson – <i>Commissioner, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada</i></p>

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	C300 Theatre	newcomer and native-born, are at the heart of our collective narrative. Religion and spiritual diversity has also been a part of this story. How can religion and spirituality inform this process of building unity amidst diversity? What does religion offer to the promotion of reconciliation and mutual understanding amongst Canada's diverse population?	<p>Speaker: Rabbi Dr. Yosef Wosk – former Director, Interdisciplinary Programs, Department of Continuing Studies, Simon Fraser University.</p> <p>Speaker: The Rev Dr. James Christie – Professor of Whole World Ecumenism and Dialogue Theology, University of Winnipeg</p>
10:45-11:15am	BREAK		
11:15-12:30pm	<p>WORKSHOP 1.1: Youth and the spirit of social change</p> <p>Room C400</p>	Youth are often at the forefront of movements for social change. How do young people think about the relationship between their views on moral, ethical and spiritual issues and their motivation to contribute to social change? What is the connection between their beliefs and actions? What does it take to motivate and inspire youth to contribute to the betterment of the world?	<p>Facilitator: Salima Ebrahim – Board member, Inspirit Foundation; Executive Director, Banff Forum</p> <p>Speaker: Eric Farr – Project Coordinator, Junior Youth Empowerment Program, Baha'i Community of Toronto</p> <p>Speaker: Christine Boyle – Director, Spirited Social Change</p>
	<p>WORKSHOP 1.2: Walking the path of reconciliation</p> <p>Room C485</p>	Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission has helped to promote a national conversation about how to reckon with the past and build a common future. How do we promote mutual respect and understanding between Canada's Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, and overcome the negative forces of paternalism and prejudice? What changes do we need to make to our governing structures and use of material resources to redress past injustices and	<p>Facilitator: George E. Lafond – Treaty Commissioner, Saskatchewan</p> <p>Speaker: Jessica Bolduc – Coordinator, 4Rs Initiative</p> <p>Speaker: Sukhvinder Vinning – Through Our Eyes Project</p>

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March 22-24, 2015 – UBC Robson Square – Vancouver, BC

		social inequalities? These are questions that we ask ourselves as citizens of a country that seeks reconciliation.	
12:30-1:30pm	LUNCH		
1:30-2:45pm	<p>PLENARY 2: Religious pluralism in a secular society</p> <p>C300 Theatre</p>	<p>It is often assumed that a secular society has no need for religion in its public affairs, and that faith ought to be left to the private lives of individuals. And yet, Canadian public discourse is increasingly preoccupied with the role of religion in society. Can we have a public sphere that leaves room for religious language or symbols? How do we avoid creating barriers to participation in Canadian society that divide people and generate resentment and hostility? How can we create appropriate space for religion in public discourse, in a society that is increasingly diverse?</p>	<p>Chair: Salima Ebrahim – Board member, Inspirit Foundation; Executive Director, Banff Forum</p> <p>Speaker: Balpreet Singh – Legal Counsel, World Sikh Organization – Canada</p> <p>Speaker: Prof. Shawn Flynn - Assistant Professor of Religion and Theology; Director of Theology Programs, St Mark's College</p> <p>Speaker: Prof. Paul Bramadat – Director, Centre for Studies in Religion and Society, University of Victoria</p>
2:45-3:00pm	BREAK		
3:00-4:15pm	<p>WORKSHOP 2.1: Building community in our cities</p> <p>Room C400</p>	<p>More than 80% of Canadians live in cities, and 35% live in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. Our cities are incredibly diverse. What can we learn from initiatives aimed at building community in our cities? How do we avoid social separation and inward-looking communities, so that everyone is participating in the life of society? What are religious communities learning about promoting good citizenship?</p>	<p>Facilitator: Rabbi Dr. Laura Duhan Kaplan – Interim Director, Iona Pacific Inter-Religious Centre, Vancouver School of Theology</p> <p>Speaker: Ginger Gosnell-Myers – Board member, Inspirit Foundation; Aboriginal City Planner, City of Vancouver</p> <p>Speaker: Naveen Girn – Board member, Laurier Institution; Project manager, 100th anniversary of the Komagata Maru</p>

OUR WHOLE SOCIETY: BRIDGING THE RELIGIOUS-SECULAR DIVIDE

March 22-24, 2015 – UBC Robson Square – Vancouver, BC

	<p>WORKSHOP 2.2: The value and limits of religious accommodation</p> <p>Room C485</p>	<p>Debates over ‘reasonable accommodation’ have raised questions about the extent of religious toleration in Canadian society. What is the value of religious accommodation, in a society as diverse as ours? What are its limits? How should these limits be justified?</p>	<p>Facilitator: The Hon. Victor Goldbloom – <i>Former CEO, Canadian Council of Christians and Jews; former Commissioner of Official Languages</i></p> <p>Speaker: Balpreet Singh – <i>Legal Counsel, World Sikh Organization – Canada</i></p> <p>Speaker: Anita Bromberg – <i>Executive Director, Canadian Race Relations Foundation</i></p>
4:15-4:30pm	BREAK		
4:30-6:00pm	<p>PLENARY 3: The challenge of the ‘post-secular’ in Canada</p> <p>C300 Theatre</p>	<p>Jürgen Habermas describes the persistence of religious belief and communities as signifying a ‘post-secular society’. The persistence of religion in advanced modern societies challenges citizens of different religious and secular backgrounds to communicate in new ways. How can we learn to talk together about the issues of the day without marginalizing religious or secular voices?</p>	<p>Chair: The Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton – <i>General Secretary, Canadian Council of Churches</i></p> <p>Speaker: Prof. Clifford Orwin – <i>Professor of Political Science, Classics and Jewish Studies, University of Toronto; distinguished fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University</i></p> <p>Speaker: Dr. Andrew Bennett – <i>Canadian Ambassador of Religious Freedom</i></p>
TUESDAY			
8:30-9:00am	<p>Devotions and Reflections</p> <p>Opening</p> <p>C300 Theatre</p>	<p>Welcome and overview of the second day of the conference</p>	<p>The Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton – <i>Chair, Conference Steering Committee</i></p> <p>Geoffrey Cameron – <i>Chair, Conference Program Committee</i></p>
9:00-10:15am	<p>PLENARY 4: Secularism in Canada: Freedom of religion, or freedom</p>	<p>Secularism promotes peaceful coexistence by ensuring that no religious group dominates civic affairs, and it safeguards religion from government interference.</p>	<p>Chair: Geoffrey Cameron – <i>Principal Researcher, Baha’i Community of Canada; PhD Student and Trudeau Scholar, University of Toronto</i></p> <p>Speaker: Doug Todd – <i>Award-winning writer on ethics,</i></p>

OUR WHOLE SOCIETY: BRIDGING THE RELIGIOUS-SECULAR DIVIDE

March 22-24, 2015 – UBC Robson Square – Vancouver, BC

	from religion? C300 Theatre	What does secularism look like in Canada? What are the benefits and limits of secularism, and its relationship to religious freedom? How do we navigate these limits to promote a more vibrant society and engaged citizenry?	<i>spirituality and diversity, Vancouver Sun</i> Speaker: Dr. Paul Marshall – Senior Fellow, Center for Religious Freedom, Hudson Institute Speaker: Alia Hogben – Executive Director, Canadian Council of Muslim Women
10:15-10:30am	BREAK		
10:30-11:45am	WORKSHOP 4.1: Religion and the Canadian newsroom Room C400	Canada’s media landscape is undergoing rapid change, and so is the coverage of religion. Are journalists sufficiently ‘literate’ in religion? How does religion, and religious diversity get represented in the press? How are religious communities using (new and old) media to enter the public sphere?	Facilitator: Dr. Jack Jedwab – Executive Vice-President, Association for Canadian Studies and Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration Speaker: Doug Todd – Award-winning writer on ethics, spirituality and diversity; Vancouver Sun Speaker: Dr. Suresh Kurl – Columnist
	WORKSHOP 4.2: Religious freedom in a secular society: The way forward Room C485	The concept of religious freedom has been central to the development of modern democratic societies, and yet it continues to be a lightning rod for public debate. How can we introduce more civility and mutual respect into these debates? Are there perspectives that can be reconciled?	Facilitator: Prof. John Dyck – Assistant Professor of Political Studies, Trinity Western University Speaker: Alia Hogben – Executive Director, Canadian Council of Muslim Women Speaker: Dr. Gerald Filson – Director of Public Affairs, Baha’i Community of Canada; Chair, Canadian Interfaith Conversation
11:45-1:00pm	LUNCH		
1:00-2:15pm	PLENARY 5: The future of interfaith in Canada C300 Theatre	The interfaith movement in Canada has deep roots at the local and provincial levels, but it has been more modest in its achievements at the national level. Why is this the case? Is the framework of ‘interfaith dialogue’ still relevant to the needs of Canadian society? Do we need to	Chair: Aileen Van Ginkel – Vice-President, Evangelical Fellowship of Canada Speaker: Andrea Nemtin – CEO, Inspirit Foundation Speaker: Imam Dr. Zijad Delic – Author, <i>Canadian Islam: Belonging and Loyalty</i> Speaker: Rabbi Dr. Robert Daum – Advisor, UBC Office of

OUR WHOLE SOCIETY: BRIDGING THE RELIGIOUS-SECULAR DIVIDE

March 22-24, 2015 – UBC Robson Square – Vancouver, BC

		have a new conversation about the role of religion in society? What would this look like?	<i>Vice President, Students; Board member, Laurier Institution</i>
2:15-2:30pm	BREAK		
2:30-3:45pm	WORKSHOP 5.1: Doing interfaith in a secular age Room C400	Our secular age, as Charles Taylor describes it, is one where religion is optional – it is no longer assumed that one is or ought to be religious. Our perspective and concerns become limited to the world as we observe it. How can interfaith dialogue get out of this ‘immanent’ frame to bring back the language of the spiritual and the sacred to public discourse? How do secular perspectives get incorporated into interfaith dialogue?	Facilitator: Peter G. Elliott – <i>Dean and Rector, Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver</i> Speaker: Gianni Castiglione – <i>President, University of Toronto Secular Alliance</i> Speaker: Dr. Justin K.H. Tse – <i>SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow, Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington</i>
	WORKSHOP 5.2: Interfaith in action: Working for social justice Room C485	The goal of social justice is one pursued by religious and secular organizations alike. How are their approaches to social justice different? How are they alike? What opportunities are there for collaboration across religious-secular lines?	Facilitator: Danny Richmond – <i>Program Manager, Inspirit Foundation</i> Speaker: Prof. Ronald A. Kuipers – <i>Director, Centre for Philosophy, Religion and Social Ethics, Institute for Christian Studies</i> Speaker: Gugan Kaur – <i>Abbotsford Community Services</i>
4:00-5:00pm	PLENARY 6: Recognizing our oneness: Reconciliation as the challenge of our time C300 Theatre		Chair: Prof. Paul Rowe – <i>Associate Professor and Coordinator of Political and International Studies, Trinity Western University</i> Speaker: Doug White – <i>Interim Director, Centre for Pre-Confederation Treaties and Reconciliation, Vancouver Island University</i>
	Closing remarks		

Speaker Biographies

Dr. Andrew P.W. Bennett is Canada's first Ambassador for Religious Freedom and heads the Office of Religious Freedom in the Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Development, a position he has held since February 19, 2013. As of March 2014, Ambassador Bennett serves concurrently as Head of the Canadian Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Ambassador Bennett is a public servant and academic with an extensive educational background in history, political science, and theology. He is Professor of Church History and volunteer Dean at Augustine College in Ottawa and is also a religious leader in his capacity as Subdeacon and Cantor at St. John the Baptist Ukrainian-Catholic Shrine in Ottawa.

Jessica Bolduc is of Anishinaabe and French ancestry from Sault Ste. Marie, ON, Batchewana First Nation. She holds an Hons. BA in Economics and has been working in community economic development in Northern Ontario for the last five years. Jessica is the Executive Director for the 4Rs Youth Movement, a collaboration of fourteen national organizations who are working with youth to rebuild Canada by creating opportunity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people to come together, and through dialogue and learning, reconcile our relationships in support of a better future. She is also the National Youth Representative for the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, which advocates for urban, off-reserve Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

Christine Boyle is a community organizer, activist, and communicator, on unceded Coast Salish Territory in Vancouver, BC. She was raised in the United Church, and completed an MA in 'Religious Leadership for Social Change' at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA. Christine directs Spirited Social Change (spiritedsocialchange.org), an initiative aimed at engaging people across generations to explore the intersections between spirituality and our work for a better world. She also supports faith communities interested in taking action on climate justice and fossil fuel divestment through Fossil Free Faith (fossilfreefaith.ca). She tweets @christineboyle.

Prof. Paul Bramadat is the Director of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria. His research and teaching both address the complex ways in which secular societies respond to and in some senses shape the religious communities and commitments of religious minorities.

Anita Bromberg is the Executive Director of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, a Canadian Crown Agency dedicated to eliminating racism and maintaining harmonious relations across diverse communities. Anita brings to the position three decades of experience working on issues of racism and discrimination, as well as human rights law, countering hate and intergroup relations. She is a frequent spokesperson, lecturer, trainer and media representative on topical issues of the day, particularly as they relate to racialized communities. A court recognized expert on racism and extremism, she has also instituted and participated in numerous intercultural outreach and educational initiatives.

Geoffrey Cameron is Principal Researcher with the Baha'i Community of Canada. He is also a PhD student at the University of Toronto and a Trudeau Scholar. Geoffrey has been a senior policy advisor with the Department of Foreign Affairs and he has taught politics at Oxford University. He serves on the program and steering committees for *Our Whole Society*.

Gianni Castiglione is the President of the University of Toronto Secular Alliance (UTSA). The prime objective of the UTSA is to create a safe space for difficult but regular discussions on a range of political, religious and humanist topics. Through UTSA, Gianni has worked closely with community spiritual leaders to host discussions, debates and presentations on a range of topics, often focusing on secular identities and politics. He is also a PhD candidate working on the molecular basis of vision at the University. Gianni has an Hons. BSc with a double major in Bioethics and Philosophy and Cellular and Molecular Biology from the University of Toronto.

The Rev. Dr. James Christie is Professor of Dialogue Theology in the United Centre for Theological Studies, and Director of the Ridd Institute for Religion and Global Policy in the Global College of the University of Winnipeg. He was Theologian to the Justice Department of Canada Forum on Genetic Futures, participated in the first Canadian Church Leaders' Study Mission on HIV/AIDS to East Africa and is a visiting Fellow of the International Islamic University in Malaysia. He serves as Convener of The Advisory Committee

Speaker Biographies

for the Lt. Governor's Award for the Advancement of Interreligious Understanding, and is a Board member of the Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Foundation, as well as the Manitoba Multifaith Council.

Bruce Clemenger has served on the staff of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada since 1992 and was appointed President in 2003. He is a member of the Interfaith Committee for Canadian Military Chaplaincy and a member of the International Council of the World Evangelical Alliance. He speaks and writes on religion, culture, ethics and politics and has been interviewed by secular and religious media. He is a Ph.D. candidate in the field of Political Theory. He and his wife Tracy live on a small farm in the Ottawa valley with their two daughters and creatures great and small.

Dr. Robert A. Daum is an advisor at UBC's Office of Vice-President, Students; where he is a faculty associate with the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality & Social Justice; and a faculty member of Green College. At Simon Fraser University, he is a dialogue associate and member of the Academic Steering Committee. Rabbi Daum is a director of The Laurier Institution and a director of Reconciliation Canada. For the city's Vancouver Immigration Partnership, he co-convenes the Intercultural and Civic Engagement Strategy Group. With a UBC colleague, he co-leads a new international research consortium of 30 scholars at 20 universities in nine countries.

Imam Dr. Zijad Delic is a religious authority on Islam and an academic who has studied and served Muslim communities in Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Pakistan, and North America. A Resident Scholar and Imam at Ottawa's South Nepean Muslim Community, he works with diverse stakeholders, speaking and publishing regularly on Islam, education, Western Muslims, and integration, identity and citizenship in Western societies. His book *"Canadian Islam: Belonging & Loyalty"* (2014) contributes a much-needed understanding of Islam in Canada. A well-known opponent of extremism, Imam Dr. Delic is researching "neo-ijtihad" and antidotes to radicalization in modern Islam. Twice listed among the world's 500 most influential Muslims, he received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2013.

Prof. John Dyck was born in Manitoba. Before teaching at Trinity Western he taught at the University of Manitoba for ten years, University College of Cariboo for six years and the Canadian Mennonite University for one year. His academic focus has been on political philosophy and Canadian and American Government. John is married to Carol who is a public health nurse in Abbotsford BC and together they have three children. John also has coached wheelchair basketball.

Salima Ebrahim is the Executive Director of the Banff Forum, a diverse community of young leaders from across Canada engaged in issues of national importance. She previously worked as a management consultant and was a fellow with the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. She holds an MSc in Public Policy from the London School of Economics, and a BA from the University of Alberta. She currently sits on the Board of Inspirit Foundation and authored a paper on the Interfaith Movement and Youth Engagement.

Peter G. Elliott has been Dean of Christ Church Anglican Cathedral in downtown Vancouver since 1994. During his time there he has been involved in a variety of ecumenical and interfaith initiatives. Active nationally and internationally in the Anglican Communion, Dean Elliott's interests and skills include strategic planning and restorative justice. Vancouver School of Theology awarded him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 2009, and in 2013, Premier Christy Clark awarded him with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal.

Eric Farr currently works as the coordinator of the Junior Youth Empowerment Program, which operates in 35 neighbourhoods in Toronto. The program applies insights from the Baha'i teachings to promote the empowerment of some 400 adolescents of different religious and social backgrounds throughout the city. Eric previously served as a Faiths Act Fellow for the Tony Blair Faith Foundation where he helped foster collective interfaith action to improve maternal health conditions throughout the world. Eric holds a Master's degree in New Testament Studies from McGill University where he studied the rhetorical role of children and childhood in the literature of early Christianity.

Speaker Biographies

Dr. Gerald Filson (PhD, Toronto) is the Director of Public Affairs with the Bahá'í Community of Canada. Raised in Saskatchewan, he taught school for six years in rural Quebec. He has previously served as Chair of the Canadian Network on International Human Rights, Co-Chair of the Mosaic Management Group of VisionTV, and Board Member of the Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs. He is the current Chair of the Canadian Interfaith Conversation. He is married with three children.

Prof. Shawn Flynn's broad area of research focuses on the Hebrew Bible and the world of the ancient near East, specifically around the formation of deities and divinity. Shawn also explores the intersections between faith and critical scholarship in Catholic biblical studies. He completed a PhD at the University of Toronto and has been a researcher in residence in Jerusalem. He has published one book, 8 academic articles, and multiple book reviews and dictionary entries. With his academic work Shawn maintains a regular popular speaking schedule.

Naveen Girn is a cultural researcher and community engagement specialist whose interests center on Vancouver's South Asian community, intercultural history and curation. Naveen co-curated the award-winning Bhangra.me: Vancouver's Bhangra Story at the Museum of Vancouver and Spectacular Sangeet at the Surrey Art Gallery and was Project Manager for the Komagata Maru 1914-2014: Generations, Geographies and Echoes project. As principal at Digital Handloom, Naveen leads a community storytelling practice that engages with and shares untold community stories.

The Hon. Dr. Victor C. Goldbloom, a Montreal native and a paediatrician by profession, has been involved in Christian-Jewish and multi-religious dialogue for some sixty years. He is the current chairperson of the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montreal, and a member of the steering committee for the present conference and for its predecessor two years ago at McGill University in Montreal. He is a past president of the International Council of Christians and Jews (1982-1990) and a Papal Knight of the Order of Saint Sylvester, awarded by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012. He is a past president (2000-2004) of his synagogue, Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, Montreal's Reform Congregation.

Ginger Gosnell-Myers is of Nisga'a and Kwakwak'awakw heritage and is passionate about advancing Aboriginal rights and knowledge, while breaking down barriers between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Ginger is the Aboriginal City Planner with the City of Vancouver where she is central to advancing the Year of Reconciliation, and working to make Vancouver an official City of Reconciliation. Ginger sits as a Board of Director for the Inspirit Foundation.

Rabbi Dr. Lisa Grushcow is the Senior Rabbi at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom in Montreal. She is an active member of the Christian Jewish Dialogue of Montreal, the Montreal Board of Rabbis, the Canadian Rabbinic Caucus, and the Human Rights Committee of the Montreal Holocaust Museum. She is a member of the President's Rabbinic Council of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, and is involved in the Reform movement on an international level. She is the author of *Writing the Wayward Wife: Rabbinic Interpretations of Sotah*, and the editor of *The Sacred Encounter: Jewish Perspectives on Sexuality*. She is a regular columnist with the Canadian Jewish News.

The Rev. Dr. Karen A. Hamilton is the General Secretary of The Canadian Council of Churches. The CCC is composed of 25 member denominations, representing more than 85% of the Christians in Canada, and is one of the most inclusive church councils in the world. She is the Canadian Co-President of Religions for Peace, Past Chair of the Canadian Christian Jewish Consultation and recipient of the Heritage Award from the Progressive Association of Muslims of Ontario and the Canadian Interfaith Leadership Award. Her award-winning book is entitled "*The Acceptable Year of the Lord*" and she is the Chair of the "Our Whole Society" Conference.

Alia Hogben is the Executive Director of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, a national organization whose goals are the equality, equity and empowerment of Canadian Muslim women. As a social worker she has worked with diverse social service agencies, and has taught at a community college. She writes a regular column for the Kingston Whig Standard on Islam, women, and other related topics. Queen's University has conferred a doctorate in divinity on Alia, and last year she was honoured with an Order of Canada.

Speaker Biographies

Dr. Jack Jedwab is currently the President of the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS) and the newly established Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration. He has been at the ACS since 1998. From 1994-1998 he served as Executive Director of the Quebec Branch of the Canadian Jewish Congress. Mr. Jedwab earned a BA McGill University and completed an MA and PhD in Canadian History from Concordia University. He lectured at McGill University between 1983 and 2008. He is widely quoted in newspapers across the country and has also authored numerous publications and government reports on issues of immigration, multiculturalism, human rights and official languages.

Rabbi Laura Duhan Kaplan, PhD, is Interim Director of the Iona Pacific Inter-Religious Centre at the Vancouver School of Theology. Originally from New York City, she served as Professor of Philosophy at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (1989-2004), and as Rabbi of Vancouver's Or Shalom Synagogue (2005-2014). Laura, an award-winning educator, has helped diverse groups explore life's critical questions, and has published extensively on the philosophy of peace.

Gugan Kaur is a community developer at Abbotsford Community Services in the Diversity Education Program. Gugan holds diverse community events and workshops related to diversity, interfaith, racism, and inclusion. Gugan is also the chair of The Fraser Valley Human Dignity Coalition, a group of community members advocating for all marginalized groups and providing them with support. Gugan also volunteers with many Sikh organizations such as Sikh Feminist Research Institute, Kaur's United, Azaadi, working with various topics from social justice and feminist work, building relationships and creating allyship with marginalized groups, to organizing youth leadership retreats.

Prof. Ronald A. Kuipers is an associate professor of Philosophy of Religion and the Director of Philosophy Religion and Social Ethics at the University of Toronto. He specializes in the philosophy of religion, in conversation with the intellectual traditions of American pragmatism, critical theory, and hermeneutics. His research and teaching focus on the continuing social and political relevance of religious life patterns in pluralistic Western societies, and asks how this cultural context shapes the different ways that religion comes to expression today. He is the author of *Critical Faith: Toward a Renewed Understanding of Religious Life and its Public Accountability* (Rodopi, 2002), and, most recently, *Richard Rorty* (Bloomsbury, 2013), a volume in Bloomsbury's *Contemporary American Thinkers* series.

Dr. Suresh Kurl is a writer and contributor to the Vancouver Sun, the Province, the LINK, the Vancouver Desi.Com, HuffingtonPost.Com and Desi Today, a South Asian Quarterly Magazine, since 1990. His writing presents an analysis of socio-religious, socio-political similarities among different religious groups. He writes about aspects of South Asian living, similarities between religions, hate crimes and racism, and pluralism. His articles include: "A Hindu's plea for a celebration of Christmas", "My encounter with caste-prejudice in B.C." and "God is one and religions are many". He is known for his long-standing efforts in inter-faith harmony, cultural bridge building, democracy and governance in the wider community of the Vancouver Lower Mainland.

Treaty Commissioner George E. Lafond is the Treaty Commissioner for Saskatchewan and is a member of the Muskeg Lake (Treaty 6) Cree Nation. George has sought out partnerships and encouraged community initiatives to better serve and reflect the participation and involvement of First Nations peoples in all aspects of the life of Saskatchewan. George believes that reconciliation is a key theme for the work of this generation of leaders, and that building a common understanding of the treaty relationship, treaty history, and the spirit and intent of treaties is at the core of what reconciliation means.

Dr. Paul Marshall is a Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom in Washington DC, a Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Religion at Baylor University, a Senior Fellow at the Leimena Institute in Jakarta, and a visiting professor at the Graduate School of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (UIN) in Jakarta, Indonesia. He is the author and editor of more than twenty books on religion and politics – especially religious freedom – and his writings have been translated into 22 languages.

Speaker Biographies

Andrea Nemtin is the President and CEO of Inspirit Foundation. A social entrepreneur for over 15 years, she is an experienced leader and is an active participant in the charitable sector. As President and CEO of PTV Productions from 1995 - 2011, Andrea created and managed relationships with Canadian and International broadcast partners, government organizations and NGO's including Heritage Canada Foundation, Faith and Values Media, and the International Federation of Red Cross. Andrea has been chair of the Abilities Arts Festival, an executive board member of Hot Docs, the past national chair of the Documentary Organization of Canada, a member of the CFTPA, WIFT and the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television.

Prof. Clifford Orwin is Professor of Political Science, Classics, and Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto, Fellow of St. Michael's College (the Catholic foundation at the university), and a Senior Fellow of Massey College. He is affiliated with other institutions in the U.S., Germany, Portugal, and Israel. Born and educated in the U.S., he has taught at Toronto since 1973, and nothing could tear him away from there. He believes that professors should put teaching (both graduate and undergraduate) first. His most recent interfaith venture was to lecture on the Hebrew Bible at Brigham Young University in Utah.

Danny Richmond is the Program Manager at the Inspirit Foundation. In his role, Danny manages the delivery and evaluation of partnership initiatives and national projects. Before joining the foundation, Danny worked in the non-profit sector for 10 years in public engagement around social justice issues, youth leadership and interfaith relations.

Farid Rohani is a Board member of the Laurier Institution. Farid has devoted many years to building social, cultural and economic bridges to facilitate the integration of immigrants into the wider Canadian society and brings a lifelong passion and commitment to promoting the value of cultural diversity to the organization. An entrepreneur, he has recently been involved in founding import-export companies for the distribution of Asian products into the North American market. He served as Vice-President of Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society, which hosts the annual ExplorASIAN festival. He has also served on the Scouts Canada Diversity Advisory Committee, the Scouts Canada Provincial Marketing Committee and the Channel M Advisory Board.

Prof. Paul S. Rowe is an associate professor of Political and International Studies at Trinity Western University and a senior research fellow with the Religion, Culture, and Conflict Research Group. He completed his PhD in Political Science at McGill University in 2003. His research interests surround the politics of religion in developing countries and at the global level. He has also written extensively on the politics of Christian minority communities in Middle Eastern states. Dr. Rowe is the author of *Religion and Global Politics* (Oxford University Press Canada, 2012), and co-editor of *Christians and the Middle East Conflict* (Routledge UK, 2014) and *Politics and the Religious Imagination* (Routledge UK, 2010).

Balpreet Boparai Singh is the legal counsel for the World Sikh Organization of Canada. His practice focuses on human rights law and religious accommodation. Balpreet has helped resolve several key accommodation issues for Sikhs in Canada, including the accommodation of the kirpan in courthouses in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia, on VIA Rail trains, as well as in Canadian embassies and consulates internationally. He serves as spokesperson for the WSO and is regularly consulted on Sikh issues in Canada by national media outlets. Balpreet Singh has worked with various public and private sector organizations to create resources and provide training on religious accommodation issues and best practices when interacting with persons of the Sikh faith.

Prof. John G. Stackhouse (PhD, Chicago) holds the Sangwoo Youtong Chee Chair of Theology and Culture at Regent College, UBC. This summer he will take the Samuel J. Mikolaski Chair of Religious Studies at Crandall University in Moncton, NB. He has authored 8 books and 600+ articles and reviews, and his work has been featured in The New York Times, The Atlantic, and Time, as well as in most major Canadian media. He has discussed religious diversity at Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Edinburgh, Fudan, and Hong Kong universities, and in Israel, Australia, Malaysia, and Korea—as well as in Canadian institutions from Acadia to UBC.

Speaker Biographies

Douglas Todd - Although raised in a family of atheists, Todd has become one of the most decorated spirituality and diversity writers in North America. Writing for The Vancouver Sun and Religion News Service, based in New York, he has won 32 journalism prizes. He has also produced three successful books. Internationally, Todd has twice taken first place in the Templeton Religion Reporter of the Year Award. As well, Todd has won first, second and third prizes for commentary from the American Academy of Religion. Todd's lively blog, The Search (www.vancouversun.com/thesearch), draws more than half a million readers each year.

Dr. Justin K.H. Tse is a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada postdoctoral fellow in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington in Seattle. He earned his PhD in Geography at the University of British Columbia at Vancouver in 2014. He is interested in how theological narratives are part and parcel of secularizing processes in Pacific Rim global cities. His publications can be found in *Population, Space, and Place*, *Global Networks*, *Progress in Human Geography*, the *Bulletin for the Study of Religion*, and *Review of Religion in Chinese Society*.

Dr. Aileen Van Ginkel is Vice-President, Ministry Services at The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. She has training and wide experience in facilitating group dialogue and partnership development. She completed her Doctor of Ministry degree in 2012 at Tyndale Seminary, where she focused her research on practices of communal discernment. Aileen and her husband, Edward, are parents to three children, and live in King City, Ontario.

Sukhvinder Kaur Vinning - Inspired by an ever-deepening love affair with Sikhi (the Sikh faith), Sukhvinder actively works with partners from diverse backgrounds to catalyze social change for the greater empowerment of all. She is a member of the United Religions Initiative North America Leadership Council and brings a wealth of experience in fostering trust and understanding between diverse faith communities. Partnering with Reconciliation Canada and the Aboriginal, Baha'i, Christian, Muslim, Scientology, and Sikh communities, Sukhvinder helped design and deliver Through Our Eyes: Changing the Canadian Lens. This dialogue based program focused on transforming relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous young adults.

Douglas S. White, BA, JD, is a member and former Chief of the Snuneymuxw First Nation in Nanaimo, BC (2009-2014). His Coast Salish name is Kwul'a'sul'tun and his Nuuchah-nulth name is Tlii'shin. He has been a director of the Indigenous Bar Association of Canada and an associate lawyer at Mandell Pinder. He is currently the Director of the Centre for Pre-Confederation Treaties and Reconciliation at Vancouver Island University and practices as a lawyer and negotiator across the country for First Nations governments. He is also an associate at First Peoples Law where he is counsel for First Nations across the country. He lectures frequently at universities on Indigenous legal issues.

Commissioner Dr. Marie Wilson is a Commissioner with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. She has worked as an award-winning journalist, trainer, and senior executive manager. As a journalist, Dr. Wilson worked in print, radio and television as a regional and national reporter. She was the first host of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation flagship television program, Focus North, and the corporation's senior manager for northern Quebec and the northern Territories. As a Regional Director for the CBC, she launched the first daily television news service for northern Canada and developed the Arctic Winter Games and True North Concert series. She delivered training through the South African Broadcasting Corporation and served as an associate board member of what became the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network.

Rabbi Dr. Yosef Wosk was the Director of Interdisciplinary Programs in Continuing Studies and still serves as Adjunct Professor and Shadbolt Fellow in the Department of Humanities at Simon Fraser University. Yosef has founded and supported hundreds of libraries worldwide, endowed Vancouver's Poet Laureate, and has lectured at a number of universities and institutes of higher learning throughout the world. Identified as one of the top ten thinkers and most thoughtful citizens in the province, he is an appointed member of *The Order of British Columbia*, a recipient of both *The Queen's Golden* and *Diamond Jubilee Medals*, and included in *Canadian Who's Who*. Yosef is a media commentator, public speaker and published author.