



BC FIRST NATIONS
JUSTICE COUNCIL



**First Nations
Leadership
Council**

CORRECTION: The BCFNJC and FNLC Congratulate Honourable Leonard Marchand, Jr.'s Appointment as **Chief Justice of British Columbia** and the Yukon Court of Appeal

For Immediate Release: December 11, 2023

Okanagan Sylix Territory, Westbank BC: The BC First Nations Justice Council (BCFNJC) and the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) celebrate the Honourable Leonard Marchand, Jr.'s appointment as **Chief Justice of British Columbia** and the Chief Justice of the Yukon Court of Appeal.

Chief Justice Marchand is Sylix, specifically a member of the Okanagan Indian Band. His appointment is another milestone in a trailblazing career that has consistently demonstrated his expertise, integrity, compassion, and commitment to reconciliation and justice.

In 2021 Chief Justice Marchand became the first First Nations person appointed to the B.C. Court of Appeal and only the second Indigenous Court of Appeal justice to be appointed nationally. Prior to his appointment to the B.C. Court of Appeal, in 2017 Chief Justice Marchand was appointed as the first First Nations Justice to the B.C. Supreme Court, and in 2013 Chief Justice Marchand was first appointed to the B.C. Provincial Court.

Chief Justice Marchand's career encompasses years of service as a highly dedicated trial lawyer and judge. As a lawyer, he has worked on cases critical to achieving reconciliation and bringing healing to communities and families. He has advanced civil claims on behalf of residential school survivors and has served on the Oversight Committee for the Independent Assessment Process and the Selection Committee for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In 2014 Chief Justice Marchand was awarded the CBABC Aboriginal Lawyers Forum's Special Contribution Award in recognition of his dedication to Indigenous people and the law.

Chief Justice Marchand is the son of Leonard Marchand, Sr., the first First Nations person elected to Parliament in 1968 and first Indigenous person to serve in the Federal Cabinet. Chief Justice Marchand is a trailblazer who will continue to serve the people of British Columbia with vision and sound judgement.

The BCFNJC and the FNLC applauds Chief Justice Marchand's appointment as it is consistent with the Strategy 23 of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy which called

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for the development of a coordinated strategy to increase the number of First Nations people serving as judges in British Columbia. The BCFNJC and the FNLC celebrate Chief Justice Marchand's appointment and hold it up to be the first of many more appointments of First Nations judiciary in B.C.

Chief Justices in Canada are responsible for the leadership and administration of the court they preside over and are appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister and advice of the Cabinet.

ABOUT THE BCFNJC

In 2016, the BC First Nations Justice Council (BCFNJC) was created by the BC Assembly of First Nations, the First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs who together form the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC). Guided by a six-person Council, BCFNJC is implementing the unique and comprehensive BC First Nations Justice Strategy (the Strategy) that outlines 25 individual strategies and 43 lines of action. The organization works in tandem along two tracks of change: reforming the current criminal justice system and restoring traditional Indigenous laws, structures, and healing.

BCFNJC employs 100+ people, has assumed responsibility for Gladue services, expanded a network of nine Indigenous Justice Centres (IJC) across the province and developed a governance structure that can support the work.

ABOUT THE FNLC

The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) work together to represent the interests of First Nations in BC and develop coordinated approaches to issues relevant to First Nations communities throughout the province.

The FNLC are comprised of the political executives of the First Nations Summit, BC Assembly of First Nations, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. In 2016, the FNLC created the BC First Nations Justice Council (BCFNJC) and are responsible for electing the BCFNJC's Council Members.

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