



Cherie Brant

Partner and National Leader, Indigenous Law

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[Indigenous Law](#)

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Cherie has an Indigenous law and commercial practice across a wide variety of sectors, including energy and transmission, land development and financing on First Nations lands, franchising, cannabis, and economic development. She also provides strategic policy and governance counsel to Indigenous groups seeking to exercise their jurisdiction and authority.

Industry clients in the natural resource, energy and infrastructure sectors will seek Cherie's counsel when developing projects or partnerships with Indigenous groups and addressing constitutionally protected interests of the Indigenous nations with which Canada shares its land and jurisdiction.

In 2012, Cherie completed the first 100 per cent First-Nation-owned wind power project in Ontario and the first Aboriginal loan guarantee offered by the Province of Ontario to enable First Nations to develop energy projects.

As lead counsel to the First Nations Energy Alliance (a consortium of twenty First Nations) on the Integrated Power System Plan review before the Ontario Energy Board, her counsel was instrumental in raising Crown consultation requirements on the provincial energy plan and promoting Aboriginal participation models for renewable energy procurement.

In 2016, Cherie was retained as lead counsel by the regional government for all First Nations in Ontario to lead on multiple transactions arising out of the privatization of Hydro One Limited. One of the largest limited partnerships among First Nations in Canada was created in 2018 and the entity, through its subsidiary is still considered one of the top shareholders to the company.

She is both Mohawk from Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte and Ojibway from Wikwemkoong Unceded Indian Reserve.

In 2017, Cherie received the Lexpert Zenith Award, a national award recognizing women's contributions in the law. In 2012, she was named one of Lexpert's "Rising Stars: Leading Lawyers Under 40."

Cherie is a member of the firm's [Environmental, Social and Governance \(ESG\)](#) initiative.

Experience

- The Ontario Chiefs-in-Assembly on the creation of the Ontario First Nation Sovereign Wealth LP, a partnership among 129 First Nations in Ontario.
- The Ontario Chiefs-in-Assembly on negotiating a significant seed capital contribution for long-term wealth creation in connection with the privatization of Hydro One limited and the creation of the OFN Capital Wealth LP a limited partnership wholly owned by the Ontario First Nation Sovereign Wealth LP.
- Led the development of the lending program for the Indigenous Community Infrastructure Initiative (ICII) with the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) and have since completed due diligence and duty to consult advisory on multiple projects in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Québec, Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Special Counsel to a major transmission developer in the U.S. on a proposed 1000 MW transmission line for Canada/U.S. on all aspects of the duty to consult process including equity participation and financing.
- Completed more than 2400 MW of limited partnerships for or on behalf of First Nations in Ontario and Alberta and more than 680 MW of installed capacity for First Nations.
- Acting for a leading Canadian power producer on Canada's largest battery storage project (250MW/10000 MWh lithium- ion) currently under construction, involving a First Nation in southern Ontario and other commercial partners.
- Acting on behalf of a commercial partnership involving up to 7 First Nations on equity participation for Ontario's first small modular reactor project proposed to be located in southern Ontario.
- Counsel to developers and Indigenous groups across Canada on renewable energy, electricity and transmission projects to advise on duty to consult matters as well as transactional advice and strategic partnerships.
- Lead Counsel to Ontario Chiefs-in-Assembly on the creation of Ontario First Nation Sovereign Wealth LP, a partnership among 129 First Nations in Ontario, on the negotiation to acquire 2.4 per cent of Hydro One Limited from the Province of Ontario and obtain a significant seed capital contribution for long-term wealth creation.
- Completed more than 1000 MW of commercial partnerships involving First Nations and more than 300 MW of installed capacity for First Nations.
- Special Counsel to 1000 MW merchant transmission line project that is proposed to connect Canada/US through the IESO and PJM networks.
- Counsel to First Nations Energy Alliance (representing 16 First Nations) on the Integrated Power System Plan proceedings at the Ontario Energy Board.
- Counsel to First Nations intervenors on East-West Tie proceeding to develop a 450 km transmission line in Northern Ontario.
- Counsel to several First Nation Development Corporations established to attract own source revenues for First Nations and lead to long-term economic sustainability.
- Counsel on joint venture agreements among Indigenous groups and infrastructure companies for competitive procurement processes in mining and infrastructure.
- Counsel to national retailer developing franchises on First Nations lands.

- Counsel to First Nations on land and retail development projects involving leasing, financing and establishing franchises on First Nations lands.
- Counsel to a First Nation for a large impact benefit agreement in the Ring of Fire in northern Ontario.
- Counsel to an Aboriginal Housing Fund that administers multi-residential development loans for Indigenous projects in the Greater Toronto Area.
- Counsel to several First Nations and industry/government groups on the development of consultation policies and frameworks for Indigenous engagement.
- Counsel to First Nations on the establishment of cannabis laws on First Nations.
- Counsel to First Nations cannabis producers and retailers on licence and project development on Indigenous lands.
- Counsel on several commercial financings for multi-residential, industrial and commercial properties (\$5M to \$50M).
- Borrower counsel on several loan refinancing ranging for industrial and commercial properties across Ontario (\$5M to \$80M).
- General counsel to several First Nations, First Nation Tribal Organizations and community based renewable energy association (Ontario Sustainable Energy Association).

Insights & Events

- Author, "ESG at BLG: Lessons learned from inside the ESG journey at Canada's law firm", BLG Article, April 2024
- Author, "Energy planning and energy transition: 5 perspectives on Ontario's clean energy opportunity", BLG Article, February 2024
- Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Trends: Why it's important and what you need to know, BLG Perspective, June 2023
- Author, "Leading at the crossroads: Indigenous women leaders on the fight for an equitable future", BLG Article, May 2022
- Author, "Indigenous-led Clean Fuels Program", BLG Article, April 2022
- Co-presenter, "Practical Insights on Indigenous Law & Integrating Indigenous Matters into ESG", May 2021.
- Speaker, "Perspectives on First Nations Issues and Canadian Energy Projects," BLG presentation, April 2, 2020.
- Presenter, "Building Blocks for Establishing Governance, Jurisdiction and Band Policy," National Indigenous Cannabis & Hemp Conference, November 2019.
- Presenter, "Preparing for Economic Development & Renewable Energy," G4 Stoney-Nakoda & Tsuut-ina Tribal Council, October 2019.
- Presenter, "Catalyst 20/20 Legal Aspects of Project Financing For Aboriginal Groups," July 2019.
- Moderator, "Managing Community Policy, Removing Risk," National Indigenous Cannabis and Hemp Conference, February 2019
- Presenter, "Creating Lasting Working Relationships with Indigenous People," Wadell Phillips CLE 2019, February, 2019
- Presenter, "Preparing First Nations lands for Energy Development," Energizing Atlantic First Nations Clean Energy Conference, February 2019
- Presenter, "Preparing for Energy Partnerships," Integrated Electricity System Operator (IESO) annual conference, October 2018
- Presenter, Legal Aspects of Project Financing for Indigenous groups, Catalyst 20/20, July 2018
- Presenter, "First Nations Land Tenure Matters," Ontario Bar Association, Indigenous Law Issues Conference, November 2017

- Presenter, “Legal Aspects of Project Financing for Indigenous groups,” Catalyst 20/20, July 2017
- Presenter, “Commercial Development and Financing Projects on First Nations Lands,” CANDO 2016 Conference, October 2016
- Presenter, “Economic Development Corporations Legal Review,” Iroquois Caucus Economic Summit, October 2016
- Presenter, “Legal Aspects of Project Financing for Indigenous Groups,” Catalyst 20/20, September 2016
- Presenter, “Franchise Opportunities on First Nations Lands,” Canadian Franchise Association Conference, April 2016
- Presenter, “Nipissing First Nation Energy Development,” AFOA Canada Nation Conference, February 2016

Beyond Our Walls

Professional Involvement

- Board Member, Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB)
- Member, Canadian Bar Association
- Independent Director of Hydro One Limited/Hydro One Networks Inc.
- Independent Director of TD Toronto-Dominion Bank (TD Bank)

Community Involvement

- Board Member, Anishnawbe Health Foundation
- Member, Indigenous Advisory Board, Centennial College

Awards & Recognitions

- *Chambers Global – The World's Leading Lawyers for Business 2024* (Aboriginal Law).
- Selected as an "Excellence Awardee" for Female Trailblazer of the Year (Private Practice) at the 2023 Canadian Law Awards
- *The Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory* for Indigenous Law and Corporate Commercial Law (since 2021)
- *The Best Lawyers in Canada* for Aboriginal Law/Indigenous Practice and Real Estate Law (since 2021)
- *Lexpert Special Edition: Infrastructure* (since 2022)
- *Lexpert Special Edition: Energy*, (since 2022)
- *Lexpert Special Edition: Agribusiness and Cannabis 2020*
- *Lexpert Special Edition: Energy 2020*
- *Lexpert Leading Lawyer for Aboriginal Law* (since 2013)
- *Lexpert Leading Lawyer for Energy Law* (since 2015)
- *Lexpert Zenith Award Winner*, 2017
- *Lexpert Rising Stars*, Leading Lawyers Under 40, 2012

Bar Admission & Education

- Ontario, 2003
- JD, University of Toronto, 2002
- BA, Environmental Studies, Urban and Regional Planning Program, University of Waterloo, 1998



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