



pro bono | réseau national
students | d'étudiant(e)s
canada | pro bono



“ My experience as a PBSC Coordinator shaped my career. It allowed me to learn about the challenges facing vulnerable members of the community and connect to local issues. I wouldn't have gotten elected as a Member of Parliament in 2008 if I didn't have such a strong connection to the community. ”

Megan Leslie – the bright and progressive rookie NDP MP from Halifax, who rose to the ranks of deputy party leader before losing her seat last fall in the Liberal tide – started on her path to Parliament as a law student at Dalhousie. There, Leslie joined PBSC in her first year and worked as a student coordinator for the next two. During that time, participation in the program ballooned. With Leslie's dedication and commitment, one thing literally led to another. It wasn't too long before she landed in Ottawa.

“As a PBSC coordinator I was incredibly connected with what was happening in the community,” she says. “That work led me to a career as a community legal worker at Dalhousie Legal Aid. I was really embedded in the legal issues in our community and would not have gotten elected in 2008 without the community connections I developed first at PBSC.”

Every year since law school - except for one, when she just couldn't get to Halifax - Leslie has returned to Dalhousie to speak on behalf of PBSC at the start of the school year. She even showed up last year, in the heat of her campaign for re-election.

“I talk about PBSC as a way to give back,” she says. Leslie shares real stories of how community action - no matter how seemingly insignificant - can snowball and lead to meaningful change.

“When I meet with PBSC students I make a point of describing examples where groups have done incredible things to make the law better for people,” she says. “And it wasn't that 'aha' moment or the smoking gun. It was because we put up some posters and encouraged people to come to a meeting.”

Leslie is proud of her longstanding connection to PBSC and PBSC, in turn, was delighted to welcome her as a guest at a celebration of the program's 20 years in Toronto, that was held in May 2016. “PBSC was an opportunity for me to put theory into practice in a way I have since tried to do in every job I've had since. It was for me the launching pad to a career dedicated to public service, and I'm grateful for the leadership skills and opportunities it gave me as a young law student.”

Megan Leslie, Senior Advisor, WWF Canada,
Former Member of Parliament for Halifax & Former PBSC Program Coordinator