

Professional Biography

STEVEN C. GAON, B.A., J.D., C. Med.

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EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

2008	Chartered Mediator designation, ADR Institute of Canada
2007	Arbitrator Certification under the (Ontario) <i>Arbitration Act</i>
2006	Collaborative Family Law Certification
2001	Advanced Mediation Certification, Osgoode Hall/Law Society of Upper Canada
2001	Mediation Certification, University of Windsor/Stitt, Feld, Handy Group
1998-2002	Adjudication training, Employment and Social Development Canada
1989	Ontario Bar Admissions - Called to the Bar of Ontario
1987	J.D. (LL.B.), University of Ottawa
1984	B.A., Concordia University

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Law Society of Upper Canada
- County of Carleton Law Association
- Canadian Academy of Distinguished Neutrals
- ADR Institute of Canada
- ADR Institute of Ontario

PROFESSIONAL OVERVIEW

Mr. Gaon is a bilingual mediator and arbitrator with an extensive legal background, primarily as a civil and family law litigator, but also including administrative law, provincial offences and solicitor's work. He has provided legal and strategic advice to clients since 1989, ensuring compliance with legal obligations, regulatory regimes and policy frameworks.

Since 1998, Mr. Gaon developed an expertise in alternative dispute resolution (ADR), acting as an independent and impartial mediator, arbitrator, investigator and adjudicator. In 2003, he founded his dispute resolution organization, ADR Ottawa Inc., providing an array of ADR services. Mr. Gaon has mediated thousands of cases under the Ontario Attorney General's Mandatory Mediation Program. In 2008, Mr. Gaon was awarded a Chartered Mediator designation by the ADR Institute of Canada.

Mr. Gaon is also an experienced arbitrator, having arbitrated and adjudicated a variety of legal disputes. Additionally, he is a recognized and trusted workplace investigator, conducting administrative investigations into alleged harassment, breach of ethics, conflict of interest, regulatory violations, privacy and security matters, and other forms of misconduct.

Mr. Gaon is also a leader in Ottawa's legal community, serving as an elected member of the Board of Trustees of the County of Carleton Law Association (CCLA) since 2009, as CCLA President in 2015-2016, and as an Adjunct Law Professor at the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Common Law since 2018.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Mediation, arbitration and facilitation involving:

- employment law and workplace conflict
- personal injury, disability cases and all other insurance-related matters
- corporate and commercial disputes
- professional malpractice: including medical, dental, legal and financial services
- real estate-related disputes: including construction matters and leasing
- family law: property valuation and division, support and parenting issues
- wills/estate disputes and testamentary issues
- sport disputes: including national team selection, carding (funding) and doping matters
- policing: internal and external conflicts involving police officers
- environmental matters involving TransCanada and Natural Resources Canada

Investigation and fact-finding

Mr. Gaon has performed an array of investigations and fact-finding examinations within federal government departments and agencies, Canadian military bases, private-sector organizations and major educational institutions. He specializes in human rights legislation and in policies designed to prevent harassment and discrimination. Mr. Gaon has also investigated other forms of alleged misconduct, including breaches of ethics, conflicts of interest, regulatory violations, and privacy and security matters. He has investigated individuals at every level, including Deputy Head (Deputy Minister), as well as senior Governor-in-Council appointees, military personnel, RCMP and police officers.

Adjudication

In 1998, Mr. Gaon was named by Governor-in-Council appointment as the Chair of the federal Employment Insurance Board of Referees, where he adjudicated appeals under the *Employment Insurance Act* and Regulations. He presided over more than several hundred hearings from 1998 to 2002. As chair of this 3-member tribunal, Mr. Gaon provided fair and impartial hearings for appellants, sought consensus between Board members, dealt with all hearing-related procedural matters and wrote all Board decisions in both official languages.

Chief Returning Officer

Since 2016, Mr. Gaon has been serving as Chief Returning Officer for the Canadian Federation of Students ("CFS"). In this bilingual position, the Chief Returning Officer oversees referendum campaigns in which Canadian university and college students vote to certify or decertify membership in the CFS. Mr. Gaon's role includes approving all campaign materials, interpreting and ensuring compliance with the CFS Bylaws and Referendum Protocols, and ensuring the propriety of the voting process, among other duties.

Administrative law, privacy and regulatory compliance

Mr. Gaon has acted as general counsel and advisor to a Board of Arbitration hearing cross-border commercial disputes; conciliated disputes under the *National Energy Board Act*; and advised clients on a variety of administrative law and regulatory matters. He has also acted as counsel for a national industry organization, advising on compliance with the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* and authored a comprehensive industry publication on the topic.

BRIEF EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

2005-present	Founder and principal of ADR Ottawa Inc.
1998-2005	Civil and family litigation lawyer (including a solicitor's practice) – Goldberg, Kronick & Stroud (Ottawa, Ontario)
1996-1998	Public Policy Advisor – Gowlings (Ottawa, Ontario)
1995	Chief Consultant retained by United Nations Association of Canada, responsible for key aspects of the state visit of United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali
1994-1995	Chief of Staff to the Speaker of the House of Commons
1990-1993	Civil and family litigation lawyer – Bulger, Young (Ottawa, Ontario)
1989-1990	Civil litigation lawyer – Canadian Pacific (Toronto, Ontario)

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Mr. Gaon's *pro bono* activities include:

- Secretary (2016-2020), Ottawa Civil Bench & Bar Committee (composed of Superior Court Judges, Masters and senior members of the Ottawa Bar)
- Chair (2016-2019) CCLA Renovation Fundraising Committee (raising funds for renovation of the Law Library and Barrister's Lounge situated in the Ottawa Courthouse)
- Judged mediation/negotiation competition of Common Law students at the University of Ottawa (November 2018)
- CCLA President (2015-2016); member of the Executive Committee since 2012 (first elected to the Board of Trustees in 2009)
- ADR Institute of Canada – member of Qualified Mediator ("Q. Med.") Selection Committee since 2010; formerly a member of Government Relations Committee
- *Reach Canada* volunteer, assisting people with disabilities with legal and ADR needs
- Executive Member, Canadian Bar Association, ADR Section (elected 2007-2008)
- Seminar instructor Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa (workplace investigation – 2004)
- Mediation coach and mentor to Common Law students, Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa (2003-present); providing job shadowing and mentoring for law students
- Director, Board of Directors, Kidney Foundation of Canada, Eastern Ontario (1997-1999)
- Director & Legal Counsel, Canada 125 Committee, United Way (1992)

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS AND TEACHING

Teaching/Speaking Engagements

- 2018 – Present: Adjunct law professor, Faculty of Common Law, University of Ottawa, teaching *Dispute Resolution and Professional Responsibility* (CML 1106) and *Mediation Theory and Practice* (CML 2320)
- 2022: Co-presented Canadian Bar Association webinar, *Mediating Complaints Prior to Investigations*
- 2018: Co-presented Canadian Bar Association webinar, *Effective Advocacy in Mediations*
- March 2019: Conference Chair and keynote speaker, ADR Institute of Ontario's annual *ADR in the Capital* conference (presented *Investigating Harassment in the Age of Me-Too*), Ottawa, ON
- 2018: Co-presented *Is an Agreement to Participate Necessary in Mandatory Resolution Facilitation?* at Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) National Conference, Winnipeg, MB
- 2018: Panelist at New Lawyers & Articling Students Summit (re: arbitration process) Ottawa, ON
- 2017: Presented *Informal Conflict Resolution* seminar for the National Research Council

- 2016: Co-Presented *Use of Technology in ADR* at Court of Arbitration for Sport / SDRCC National Conference, Vancouver, BC
- 2014: Panelist at CCLA *Technology and the Law* program
- 2014: Panelist/presenter at CCLA *New Lawyers & Articling Students Summit*
- 2013 & 2014: Presented (in consecutive years) *Procedural Fairness in Administrative Investigations* seminar, INFONEX Conducting Regulatory Investigations Program, Ottawa, ON
- 2013: Co-Chair of CCLA *Technology in Discoveries* program
- 2012 (winter semester): Adjunct Law Professor, *Introduction to Technical and Legal Aspects of Conflict Resolution*, St. Paul University, Ottawa, ON
- 2012: Presented *Workplace Investigations: Where They Go Wrong and How to Make Them Right* seminar, ADR Institute of Canada Annual Conference, Halifax, NS
- 2011 & 2012 (September): Presented (in consecutive years) *An Investigator's Guide: Standing up to Scrutiny* seminar, INFONEX Conducting Regulatory Investigations Program, Ottawa, ON
- 2012: Panelist at Workplace Harassment Investigation conference organized by Jewitt McLuckie /CUPE 503, Ottawa, ON
- 2010: Presented *Winning at Mediation* to CBA Young Lawyer's Division, Ottawa, ON.
- 2009: Presented *ADR and Accommodation in the Workplace* seminar to Health Canada employees, Ottawa, ON
- 2009: Presentation to Serbian judges on Mandatory Mediation program, Ottawa, ON
- 2008: Presented *Effective Mediation* to CCLA New Lawyers & Articling Students.
- 2004: Guest Lecturer on fact-finding and decision-making, Faculty of Common Law (first year class), University of Ottawa
- 2003: Presented *Legal Considerations in Estate Planning* seminar to Royal Bank of Canada Financial Group, Ottawa ON
- 2002: Conducted several seminars across Canada, instructing on compliance with the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*
- Multiple years: Presentations to delegation of judges from China on the Ontario Mandatory Mediation Program, Ottawa, ON

Expert Witness Appearances

- October 23, 2012 – Appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women, which was examining sexual harassment in federal workplaces; co-authored written recommendations to the Committee
- December 4, 2008 – Appeared at the Cornwall Public Inquiry as a panelist on the issue of *Confidentiality in Civil Settlements* in historic sexual abuse cases