

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

FOUNDING HEAD OFFICE
209 - 345 Chief Alex Thomas Way
Kamloops, B.C. V2H 1H1
Tel: 250-828-9746
Fax: 250-828-0319



VANCOUVER OFFICE
401 - 312 Main Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6A 2T2
Tel: 604-684-0231
Fax: 604-684-5726
1-800-793-9701
Email: ubcic@ubcic.bc.ca
Web: www.ubcic.bc.ca

News Release

December 14, 2020

UBCIC Congratulates Ardith (Walpetko We'dalx) Walkem on Appointment to the British Columbia Supreme Court

(X^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk^wxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C. – December 14, 2020) The Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) offers deeply heartfelt congratulations to our friend and former long-time legal counsel and colleague, Ardith (Welpetko We'dalx) Walkem, on her appointment as Judge on the Supreme Court of British Columbia.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC President, stated “Over the past three decades, Ardith has made immeasurable contributions to our organization and member nations. We know her for her legal rigor, brilliant mind, warm sense of humour, and principled commitment to supporting Indigenous peoples and families and to the full and fair enactment of Indigenous Title and Rights. As a BC Supreme Court judge, she will be a shining light of justice – richly insightful, deeply knowledgeable, and strong in advancing what is right. We celebrate with Ardith this tremendous achievement, recognizing that her appointment makes her the first First Nations woman in this role in British Columbia.”

Ardith grew up in Spences Bridge, BC, and is a member of the Nlaka'pamux Nation. She articulated with Mandell Pinder (and UBCIC) and McDonald and Associates before being called to the Bar in 1996. Ardith has owned and operated her own law firm for decades and is a partner at Cedar and Sage Law. She has acted at all levels of court, including the BC Supreme Court, the BC Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court of Canada. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from McGill University and Bachelor of Laws and Master of Laws degrees from the University of British Columbia, where she has taught in the Faculty of Law. At the UBCIC, we are extremely proud and grateful to have had Ardith work as our legal counsel, overseeing many essential aspects of our Chiefs' Councils and electoral processes for over 20 years.

“Ardith is a brave and bold thinker who challenges those around her to understand the law and different legal traditions in innovative, transformative ways,” stated Chief Don Tom, UBCIC Vice-

President. “Her research, work, and teaching have often focused extensively on the application and elevation of Indigenous laws, including in areas of child welfare and specific claims, and have undoubtably changed the field.”

Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, UBCIC Secretary-Treasurer concluded, “Ardith is a leader in reconciliation initiatives, including work with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission advisory committees of the Law Society of BC and the Continuing Legal Education Society of BC. In her new role, Madam Justice Walkem will be a formidable force for justice. We are proud to call her our friend and we wish her all the best in the work ahead. On behalf of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, we are honoured and thrilled to celebrate Ardith’s successes today.”

-30-

For further information, contact:

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President (250-490-5314)
Chief Don Tom, Vice-President (250-813-3315)
Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer (via 604-842-2977)

UBCIC is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

For more information please visit www.ubcic.bc.ca

