

## Doctor of Laws for renowned accessibility rights advocate @davidlepofsky

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Renowned accessibility rights advocate David Lepofsky was awarded the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa* (LLD), by the Law Society on June 21 at its afternoon Call to the Bar ceremony in Toronto.

As part of its Call ceremonies each year, the Law Society awards honorary doctorates to distinguished people in recognition of outstanding achievements in the legal profession, the rule of law or the cause of justice. Recipients serve as inspirational keynote speakers for the new lawyers attending the ceremonies.

“I challenge you to take on just one issue each year, outside your regular practice, to leave behind a trail of progress in your wake,” he said. “The cause to which I have devoted volunteer effort since I started at Osgoode Hall Law School 40 years ago is the non-partisan campaign to make our society one in which people with a physical, mental, sensory, learning or intellectual disability can fully participate.”

Among his many achievements, he personally fought two human rights cases against the Toronto Transit Commission to require it to announce all subway and bus stops for the benefit of passengers with vision loss.

Called to the Ontario Bar in 1981, David Lepofsky is chair of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance, and a founding member and co-chair of Barrier-Free Canada. He is also the chair of the Toronto District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee and a visiting professor at Osgoode Hall Law School. *Read the full biography on David Lepofsky.*

“When it comes to educating kids with disabilities, we are decades behind the U.S.,” he said. “On accepting this honour today, I pledge to fight as hard as I can to get Ontario’s premier and Government to agree to develop an Education Accessibility Standard,” he said.



Law Society Treasurer Janet E. Minor awarded the honorary LL.Ds to Lepofsky, who delivered the keynote address to the Call candidates, their family, friends, members of the Bar and the judiciary.

“I challenge each of you to do the same, in your own way, on an issue of your choosing. If you don’t take on tackling accessibility barriers in our school system, you could tackle other disability barriers in our society. If you want to find out how, just tweet me at @davidlepofsky or email me at aodafeedback@gmail.com and I am happy to give you ideas,” he offered.

“Some see the world as it is, and ask 'Why?'. I dream of the accessible education system, the accessible province that could be, and ask 'Why not?'," he concluded.

The Law Society called almost 1,600 new lawyers to the Bar of Ontario at ceremonies in Ottawa, London and four Calls in Toronto between June 15 and June 21.

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