

**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 amended *Arbitration Act*  
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 & Houston  
1998 to 2002 – Adjudication training provided by Human Resources 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 OVERVIEW**

Mr. Gaon is a bilingual lawyer 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 been providing legal and strategic advice to clients since 1989, ensuring compliance with legal obligations, regulatory regimes and policy frameworks.

Over the last 20 years, Mr. Gaon developed an expertise in alternative dispute resolution ("ADR"), acting as an independent and impartial mediator, arbitrator, investigator and adjudicator. In 2005, he founded his dispute resolution organization, ADR Ottawa, which provides an array of ADR services. As part of his practice, Mr. Gaon has mediated hundreds 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 and trusted workplace investigator, conducting and managing administrative investigations into alleged harassment, breach of ethics, conflict of interest, regulatory violations, privacy and security matters, and other forms of misconduct.

Throughout his career, Mr. Gaon has been called upon to provide advice or render decisions on sensitive legal and non-legal issues, and to interpret, analyze and apply legislation, regulations, policy provisions and rules relating to professional conduct.

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 a part-time Law Professor at the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Common Law (2018-present).

## **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 almost every level, including Deputy Minister, as well as senior Governor-in-Council appointees, military personnel 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. Mr. Gaon has overseen referenda at La Cité collégiale (Ottawa) in 2016, Dalhousie University (Halifax) in 2017, l'Université de Hearst in 2018 and Carleton University (Ottawa) in 2018.

### **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)

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Law Society of Upper Canada
- County of Carleton Law Association
- ADR Institute of Canada
- ADR Institute of Ontario

## VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

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

- Chair, CCLA Renovation Fundraising Committee (raising funds for renovation of the Law Library and Barrister's Lounge situated in the Ottawa Courthouse)
- Secretary, Ottawa Civil Litigation Bench & Bar Committee (composed of Superior Court Judges, Masters and senior members of the Ottawa Bar)
- 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 – Part-time law professor, Faculty of Common Law, University of Ottawa (*Dispute Resolution and Professional Responsibility* – CML 1106)
- 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 - Co-presented *Tips for Effective Advocacy in Mediations* webinar for the Canadian Bar Association
- 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 *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) – Part-time 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 Ontario 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