



# Stephanie Willsey

## Associate

Toronto

[swillsey@mccarthy.ca](mailto:swillsey@mccarthy.ca)

t. +1 416-601-8962

## Bar Admission

Ontario 2019

## Law School

University of British Columbia

## Practices

Litigation and Dispute Resolution  
Environmental, Regulatory & Aboriginal (ERA)  
Class Actions  
Cyber/Data

## Industries

Communications

**A member of the Chippewas of Rama First Nation, Stephanie is a trusted advisor to First Nations communities, organizations, and individuals. She provides skilled legal and strategic advice to resolve complex disputes and leverage negotiations.**

Stephanie is an associate in our Litigation group. She works predominantly on behalf of First Nations communities, organizations, and individuals in large-scale class actions, representative actions, and commercial matters. She also maintains a communications practice, with extensive experience in Indigenous broadcasting and privacy disputes. Stephanie has appeared as counsel in all levels of court, including the Court of Appeal of Ontario and Supreme Court of Canada.

Stephanie successfully represented First Nations communities and their members in a historic class proceeding against the federal government regarding the drinking water crisis on reserves. This resulted in one of the largest settlements in Canadian history, valued at more than \$8 billion dollars. This ground-breaking agreement provided compensation to hundreds of First Nations and their members, together with commitments going forward to build the water infrastructure that communities require.

Stephanie is currently representing Indigenous communities and individuals in claims related to [housing deficits](#), [child welfare](#), [treaty annuities](#), agricultural benefits, and [police carding practices](#).

Stephanie completed a secondment as Senior Legal Counsel at the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. In this role, she worked on a variety of mandates, including a public policy hearing regarding connectivity and infrastructure deficits in First Nations in northern Canada. Stephanie is a leader in the Indigenous telecommunications and broadcasting spaces, with extensive experience working with regulatory bodies and media platforms. She also has experience representing parties in appeals from regulatory decisions. Stephanie serves on the Board of Directors of Aboriginal Peoples' Television Network and the Steering

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Committee for the Digital Media at the Crossroads Conference.

Stephanie is a proud member of the Chippewas of Rama First Nation and sits in the marten clan. She commits significant time to both local and global Indigenous initiatives. Stephanie serves on the Board of the Indigenous Bar Association and is actively involved in increasing Indigenous representation in the legal profession. Stephanie also provides pro bono legal advice at the PBSC Indigenous Human Rights Clinic and mentors Indigenous high school students through the firm's Indigenous Mentoring Program. Stephanie has served as a delegate at the United Nations' Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and EU Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

Stephanie obtained her Bachelor of Arts from McGill University in 2015 and her Juris Doctor from the University of British Columbia in 2018, where she received a specialization in Indigenous Legal Studies. Stephanie won numerous awards due to her academic success and community involvement, including the Indigenous Law Student Award, Indspire Building Brighter Futures Award, and Irving K. Barber Award. While in law school, Stephanie was Co-President of Indigenous Law Students' Association and was a member of the Women's Caucus and the Equity and Diversity Committee.

Stephanie was called to the Ontario bar in 2019. She is a member of the Law Society of Ontario, Advocates' Society, Canadian Bar Association, Ontario Bar Association, and Indigenous Bar Association.

In 2022, Stephanie was named one of WXN's Top 100 Most Powerful Women in the Professionals category and Corporate Knights' Top 30 Under 30.

## Awards & Rankings

### **WXN's Most Powerful Women: Top 100™ Awards - 2022**

Professionals Category

### **Corporate Knights' Top 30 Under 30 - 2022**

Canada's Top Sustainability Leaders