



BAYVIEW GLEN

Distinguished Alumnus Award 2017



The 2017 Bayview Glen
Distinguished Alumnus Award
is presented to:

SUNIL GURMUKH '01

The 2017 Bayview Glen Distinguished Alumnus Award is presented to Sunil Gurmukh '01, a prominent Toronto lawyer. Through this award, the Bayview Glen Alumni Association honours and acknowledges the contribution, passion and impact that he has made on his profession and the community.

Sunil Gurmukh was the top student in Grade 12 and graduated from Bayview Glen in 2001. Sunil's extracurricular activities clearly demonstrated his bright future. He advanced to the National Debating finals in the bilingual category, and also served as the Head of Finance on the Student Executive Council. Sunil pursued his Bachelor of Commerce at Queen's University, and graduated with First Class Honours in 2005. After the completion of his Bachelor of Commerce degree, Sunil pursued his Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) degree at the University of Western Ontario. Sunil was awarded a Dean's Academic Admission Scholarship and completed his degree in 2008.

Sunil launched his career with Hicks Morley Hamilton Stewart Storie LLP, Canada's largest management-side labour, employment and human rights law firm. His experience helping represent respondents in human rights cases set the stage for his development as a leading human rights advocate. Sunil completed his articles with Hicks Morley, and was called to the Ontario Bar as a Barrister and Solicitor in 2009.

Upon the completion of his articles, Sunil switched sides and joined the African Canadian Legal Clinic (ACLC) as a Staff Lawyer. The ACLC is a specialty legal clinic of Legal Aid Ontario that fights anti-Black racism. Sunil made waves upon his arrival. He successfully litigated a racial profiling claim against the Toronto Police Services Board involving a takedown at gunpoint. Sunil's zealous advocacy resulted in a decision that set an important precedent on the discriminatory use of race in suspect selection. In addition, his client was

awarded \$40,000 – the highest amount the Human Rights Tribunal Ontario has ever awarded in a racial profiling case. Further, within a few years of being called to the bar, Sunil prepared submissions for the Supreme Court on behalf of the ACLC arguing in favour of hate speech legislation. The Supreme Court's decision upheld the prohibition on hate propaganda in the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code and recognized the harmful effects and social costs of hate speech.

Sunil continued to advance his career and joined the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) as Counsel. The OHRC is an agency of the Ontario Government that works to advance human rights and eliminate systemic discrimination. Sunil successfully represented the OHRC as an intervener in *Peel Law Association v. Pieters*, a seminal racial profiling case at the Ontario Court of Appeal. The Court of Appeal's decision illustrates racial profiling as a form of everyday racism. Sunil has also built a reputation as a skilled negotiator who thrives on complicated situations. He represented the OHRC in negotiating a landmark settlement with the Ottawa Police Services Board, which requires officers to collect race-based on traffic stops to address racial profiling.

Sunil's advocacy extends beyond the court room. His leadership in the fight to end carding, a form of racial profiling, is commendable. He also frequently educates racialized youth on their rights.

Sunil has been quoted in the *Toronto Star*, *Calgary Herald* and local newspapers. He is an invited lecturer at Ryerson University, York University, and the University of Western Ontario. He was the winner of the 2016 Precedent Setter Award and Hennessy V.S.O.P. Privilège Award. Sunil was featured in *Bay Street Bull's* 2017 Power 50 Guide, *Western Law's* 2016 Alumni Magazine and *South Asian Generation Next*.