

May 1, 2017

Mr. Keshen is pleased that the Law Society's case is resolved and the charges against him dismissed with no findings.

There have been rumours that Mr. Keshen was a dishonest lawyer who exploited Residential School survivors and stole their money. Those rumours need to end. As the Law Society prosecutor himself told the Tribunal last Tuesday, those rumours were untrue.

This is the second investigation into the same rumours. The first investigation, which concluded with last summer's ruling by Justice Perrell of the Superior Court, also showed that the suspicions that Mr. Keshen had victimized Residential School survivors were wrong.

We sincerely hope the communities in northwestern Ontario will accept these decisions. Mr. Keshen is not an exploiter of Residential School survivors. Just the opposite. As the Tribunal recognized in its ruling Tuesday, he is "deeply committed to the First Nations communities and individuals he serves and helps with their lives and issues in a way that goes beyond the specific legal problems they retain him for." He has been working on behalf of these communities for the past 40 years.

It is unfortunate that it took so long for Mr. Keshen to clear his name. But now that that has happened, he is eager to get back to his life's work of serving the Indigenous communities of northwestern Ontario.

As part of the resolution of this case, Mr. Keshen met Tuesday with two Elders and the members of the Tribunal hearing panel to receive advice, which he found valuable. He is grateful to the Elders and the panel for making the effort to provide it to him.

Mr. Keshen also looks forward to the opportunity to take part in community circles that the Law Society has offered to fund, to listen and to speak in an open and honest way with any who are interested in participating.

In the coming weeks, he will meet with Chiefs and Band Councils to answer any questions they might have.

It has been an honour for us as counsel to participate in a case that takes a small step towards honouring Indigenous culture and practices as part of our justice system.