



AN EVALUATION OF THE ASPIRE LEGAL ACCESS INITIATIVE

Submitted to:

Alberta Law Foundation

Submitted by:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

It is widely recognized that there are not enough family law lawyers in Alberta, in part because the law schools in Alberta tend to emphasize the oil and gas sector in their curricula and in part because of the lack of tenured faculty focusing on family law in Canadian law schools in general. This shortage of family law lawyers creates an access to justice problem even for Albertans who are able to pay the rates family law lawyers usually command. Further, the lack of meaningful competition weakens the market forces that would normally encourage some lawyers to charge out at rates more affordable to middle-income earners.

The undersupply of family law lawyers is exacerbated by the lack of focused articles in family law for law school graduates in Calgary and Edmonton. Unlike the large firms providing corporate and commercial services, family law firms tend to be smaller, boutique firms which have neither the time nor the money, and often not even the office space, to take on articling students; fewer articling positions in family law necessarily results in fewer lawyers practicing family law.

As matters stand, there is a significant access to family justice problem for low- and middle-income Albertans who earn too much to qualify for legal aid yet earn too little to retain private counsel.

The first legal incubator program affiliated with a law school was launched by City University of New York School of Law (CUNY) in 2007 (Rooney, 2015). It was developed to improve access to justice by providing a wide range of affordable legal services to underserved communities in New York City, while giving newly-called lawyers practical training in the business of law. Designed to resemble a fully-functioning law firm, CUNY's incubator provided new lawyers with the professional and business skills necessary to make their own practices economically sustainable. The model was adapted over the next few years at several other law schools and was recognized as a powerful tool to provide practical and experiential training to law school graduates, enhance the economic viability of solo and small firm practices, and increase access to justice among traditionally underserved populations (Herrera, 2015; Rooney, 2015).

The American Bar Association Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services now lists over 60 incubator programs in 33 states and 3 international locations. As evidence of the rapid growth of the incubator movement, over 90% of these programs were established in a four-year period. Since these programs are so new, little evaluation data are available, and it is important for incubator programs to have an evaluation plan in place to measure program outcomes to identify best practices and ensure program goals are being met.

The University of Calgary's Aspire Legal Access Initiative (ALAI), the first Canadian incubator project, was developed to provide its law school graduates with intensive articles in family law while improving access to family justice. Special project funding to operate the incubator was originally requested from the Alberta Law Foundation and other sources of potential funding, but the application was turned down. The University of Calgary agreed to support the initial startup of the program, and the project was able to move forward. An Executive Director, lawyer Kyla Sandwith, was hired in the summer of 2017, the necessary articles of incorporation were prepared, and the first cohort of four articulated students was selected shortly thereafter.

1.2 Program Description

ALAI was modelled after similar incubator programs in the United States, adapted to suit Canada's articling requirement, and is designed to pair a senior lawyer with four to six students to give them practical training in the business of law, client management and the practice of family law. Students are invited to continue their participation in the incubator for up to one year after being called to the bar, to receive further experience and continue a high-quality education in family law.

ALAI is intended to be a centre of excellence in family law, teaching students new and innovative business models, including operating a paperless practice and adopting new client service and client billing models. Incubator participants undertake pro bono and "low bono" work to help fill the gap in legal aid funding, and thereby increase access to justice for low- and middle-income earners. It is expected that ALAI graduates will be appealing to family law firms looking to hire junior associates, failing which program graduates will have the experience and skills necessary to open their own practices. Ultimately, ALAI is intended to increase the number of lawyers practicing family law in Calgary, thereby increasing access to justice for Albertans and introducing market pressure to lower some lawyers' rates. Access to justice will also be increased when these lawyers enter the market and deliver legal services in an affordable, sustainable way.

While incubator programs are becoming increasingly popular in the United States, they are new to Canada, and this incubator project is certainly unique in Calgary. It has the support of the University of Calgary's Faculty of Law, as well as that of prominent, senior members of the family law bar in Calgary. Community support is important for the project's success. The program is working with organizations such as Student Legal Assistance, Calgary Legal Guidance, Legal Aid Alberta and Pro Bono Law Alberta to ensure that the services provided by ALAI do not unnecessarily duplicate the services they provide.

An "Incubator Guide" produced by the California Commission on Access to Justice (2014, p. 2) states that the "best programs will be self-sustaining, provide excellent and affordable legal services, and will produce lawyers who are skilled and committed to representing low and moderate income clients, and are able to establish and maintain successful law practices." The Calgary incubator project has adapted the American model to suit Canada's practice requirements, but has retained the key aspects recommended by the California Commission: training new lawyers; being financially self-sustaining; and, increasing access to justice for low- and middle-income persons. If proven successful, the model could be exported to Edmonton as well as other jurisdictions in Canada. The model could also be used for other underserved areas of the law, such as immigration law, where similar practical experience would be very beneficial.

The logic model for the Aspire Legal Access Initiative is shown in Table 1.1. The model outlines the program's inputs, activities, and outputs, as well as anticipated short-term and long-term outcomes. There is little, if any, research on the model of subject-specific incubator programs, and none on incubators which accommodate the Canadian articling requirement. This evaluation will focus on the short-term outcomes.

Students are required to apply for the articling positions by submitting a cover letter, résumé, transcripts, and a statement of interest regarding practicing family law and contributing to the improvement of access to justice in Alberta. Promising candidates are interviewed, and factors such as clinic and volunteer experience are considered in choosing students.

For the first year, the Calgary incubator project accepted four students to receive the tutelage of a senior lawyer. In its second year, the incubator was expected to accept four new students, while the original four students were to be offered the opportunity to continue at the incubator during their first year of being called to the Alberta bar.

The target client population consists of individuals who are not currently able to obtain legal services because they earn too much to qualify for legal aid, but not enough to afford a lawyer. Referrals will come from organizations such as Legal Aid Alberta, Calgary Legal Guidance, and Student Legal Assistance. The volume of clients served will increase with the students' experience and, in the second year, by the total number of participants in the program. All levels of service will be provided, including summary advice, limited scope retainers and full representation, variables that will impact the number of active files each student is capable of carrying. Clients' needs will be identified and assessed by the senior supervising lawyer and the articling students, in consultation with the client.

For the first several months of the program, no billings are expected as students' time will be spent on training and CPLED activities; for the following months, it is expected that each student will begin to bill. Fees will be determined on a sliding scale, such that clients' incomes will determine the amount they will pay for legal services.

1.2.1 Subsequent Events

Due to financial difficulties, the Aspire Legal Access Initiative suspended operations in April 2018. It continues as an incorporated entity and has retained its Board of Directors. The Board is currently seeking funding which, if successful, will lead to the resumption of operations.

It was decided that it was vitally important that this evaluation continue in order to identify the successes and failings of the program, not just for the sake of ALAI itself, but also for potential funders and for organizations in other provinces that may be considering establishing incubators in family law, immigration law, and other underserved areas of law.

1.3 Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to conduct an evaluation of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative to determine if it is successfully meeting its short-term objectives and to offer recommendations for improvement. While it is difficult to assess whether access to justice is increasing for Albertans as a whole, there are several indicators that can be used to evaluate ALAI's success, including:

- whether the number of law students being trained meet the targeted number;

- whether articulated students stay with the program for the full period of their articles;
- whether students continue to work in the area of family law after being called to the bar;
- whether the number of clients being served meets the targeted number set by the program;
- whether the model is financially viable, for example whether case inflows are increasing to offset and eventually match cash outflows; and
- ultimately, whether the number of family law lawyers in Calgary is increasing.

In addition, the evaluation included an exit survey to measure client satisfaction and case outcomes, as well as key stakeholder surveys.

Table 1.1
Aspire Legal Access Initiative Logic Model

Aspire Legal Access Initiative will provide law school graduates with intensive training in family law and practice management. Program participants will undertake pro bono and low bono work to help fill the gap in legal aid funding and thereby increase access to justice for low- and middle-income earners.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - financial resources from grants to provide staff, operational expenses and equipment - client fees - space donated by the University of Calgary (no charge for first year; reduced rate in subsequent years) - time donated by volunteer Board members - time donated by members of the Calgary family law bar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - student recruitment - student training and tutelage in family law - student training and tutelage in business and client management - client intake - legal services - community outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number of law students trained - number of students who remain with program for the full period of their articles - number of students who remain with program for one year following completion of their articles - number of students who continue to work in the area of family law after being called to the bar - number of clients served 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - articles are provided for students wishing to practice family law in Calgary - access to legal services for low- and middle-income Albertans who earn too much to qualify for legal aid is increased - clients gain knowledge of their legal rights and responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the number of lawyers practicing family law in Calgary is increased - the introduction of market pressure lowers some lawyers' rates - Albertans' access to family law justice is increased - the incubator is a centre of excellence and innovation in family law practice management and client relations - the incubator is a hub of learning for the family law bar in Calgary

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The Institute conducted this evaluation of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative to determine if it is successfully meeting its objectives and to offer recommendations for improvement. The evaluation included: a review of program data; a client exit survey; and a survey of key stakeholders who have had contact with the initiative. The data sources and data analysis strategy are presented below.

2.1 Data Sources

2.1.1 Program Data

Program data were obtained and reviewed, and included the following information:

- program policies and procedures;
- training materials;
- the number of students trained;
- the number of clients served;
- volunteer lawyer activity;
- revenue generated; and
- community outreach activities.

2.1.2 Client Exit Survey

With the assistance of ALAI, the Institute administered an electronic exit survey to clients who had finished receiving legal services and who had consented to be contacted for research purposes. Clients were asked about the nature of their case, the services they were seeking from ALAI's lawyers, the services they actually received, the outcome of their involvement with the program, the cost of the services they received, and their satisfaction with the services received. A copy of the client exit survey is contained in Appendix A.

2.1.3 Key Stakeholders Survey

In April 2018, the Institute surveyed key stakeholders involved with the program, including staff, lawyers, and community partners, to obtain information regarding their level of knowledge of and involvement with the program, their perceptions of the program's effectiveness, and their perceptions of the adequacy of ALAI's criteria for and training of articulated students. Key stakeholders were also asked if they think any changes should be made to the program and whether they think the program should be expanded; see Appendix B. The individuals to be surveyed were determined in consultation with ALAI's executive director.

2.2 Data Analysis

Information collected from each of the data sources was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively to assess the effectiveness of the program in meeting its objectives. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, software produced by IBM, was used to enter and analyze data from the two surveys identified in Section 2.1. Qualitative data, including comments provided by survey participants, were coded and analyzed thematically to identify points of consensus among the respondents.

2.2.1 Response Rate, Client Survey

The client exit survey was administered to clients who had finished receiving legal services and who had consented to be contacted for research purposes. A total of 26 surveys were distributed, and 9 completed surveys were returned, resulting in a response rate of 34.6%.

2.2.2 Response Rate, Stakeholder Survey

The key stakeholder survey was administered to 30 individuals and 21 surveys were completed, resulting in a response rate of 70%.

2.3 Limitations

Due to the interruption in the program's services, the number of clients served was very low. In addition, only one-half of the clients consented to release their contact information for research purposes. Consequently, only nine completed client exit surveys were

returned, limiting the generalizability of the findings to all clients of the program. Nevertheless, the information obtained from the client surveys was important, and will help to shape future program developments.

3.0 REVIEW OF PROGRAM DATA

The evaluators requested the following information from the program: program policies and procedures; training materials; the number of students trained; the number of clients served; volunteer lawyer activity; revenue generated; and community outreach activities. The information provided is reviewed in this chapter.

3.1 Program Policies and Procedures

According to ALAI's website (www.aspirelegal.ca), the mandate of the program is to address the growing unmet needs of self-represented litigants in the area of family law in an innovative way. The goals of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative are:

1. Leverage technology to develop and deliver innovative legal services to self-represented litigants in the area of family law. Focus on unbundled, sliding scale flat fee services that empower clients to manage their own case.
2. Provide a forward looking articling experience that better prepares students to deliver legal services in the 21st century.
3. Share data, experience, and lessons learned with the broader profession to support a data-driven, objective discussion around access to legal services and innovation in the legal profession.

While ALAI's website includes a frequently asked questions page, no formal policies and procedures were in place at the time of this evaluation.

3.2 Training Materials

Activities identified in ALAI's logic model include student training and tutelage in family law, and student training and tutelage in business and client management. The program's education framework is based on the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education's course for family law articling students and includes the following five key competency areas:

1. Ethics and professionalism: confidentiality; conflicts of interest; independent legal advice; personal competency.
2. Practice management: opening a law office; file management; financing/billing models; trust accounts; licensing/insurance/memberships; delegation and liability; alternative business models; data tracking, mining and review processes; technology; business identity; marketing; client accessibility; taking care of employees; managing workplace relationships; civility; personal health/wellness and support services; risk management.
3. Client relationship management: managing client expectations; maintaining professional boundaries; issues of diversity; communication skills and procedures; documentation; managing conflict and dissatisfaction; roles of counsel; withdrawing.
4. Conducting matters: interviewing; advising clients; relevant legislation; legal research/analysis; case strategy; choosing dispute resolution models; drafting documents; trust conditions/undertakings; notarization/commissioning; negotiating; financial documents/disclosure; court; oral advocacy; substantive knowledge.
5. Adjudication and alternative dispute resolution: options and strategies; defining the role of lawyer/client; the role of the courts; understanding judges.

In addition, ALAI has an account with Thinkific, an online course platform, and had started to develop content in that format as well.

3.3 Number of Students Trained

It was intended that four articling students would be hired in the first year, and four articling students were hired. Two students received nine months' training, and two students received six months' training. The students joined the program at different times over the summer and fall of 2017, and left the program at different times during the winter of 2018.

3.4 Number of Clients Served

The target client population consists of individuals who are not currently able to obtain legal services because they earn too much to qualify for legal aid, but not enough to afford a lawyer. Limited services are offered, and clients are considered to be self-represented and remain in charge of their own case.

It was expected that the volume of clients served would increase with the students' experience. The total number of clients served between October 2017 and the suspension of operations in April 2018 was 50 clients.

3.5 Volunteer Lawyer Activity

ALAI's Board of Directors was appointed on 20 December 2017, following their first general meeting on 1 December 2017, and is composed of a number of Calgarians, each of whom are committed to promoting the program's innovation, efficiency, sustainability and accessibility:

- Anthony Young, QC, chair of the Board and past president of the Law Society of Alberta;
- Martine Boucher, secretary of the Board and the founder of Simplex Legal;
- Ian Holloway, QC, dean of the University of Calgary Faculty of Law;
- Lisa Lindquist, acting manager of the Court of Queen's Bench in Calgary;
- John-Paul Boyd, executive director of the Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family; and
- Josh Malate, co-founder of Fresh Angles Inc.

ALAI has a Professional Development Advisory Committee that consists of one provincial court judge and four well-known Calgary family law lawyers and other professionals:

- Judge Victor Tousignant;
- Lonny Balbi, QC;

- Gay Benms;
- Tara Tiefenbach; and
- Raelene Noti.

Committee members volunteer their time to provide training to the articulated students, as well as to review the program's questionnaires, workflows, and templates.

3.6 Revenue Generated

According to its website, ALAI is a not-for-profit organization that relies heavily on technology in the delivery of legal services "to be efficient, keep quality high, and costs low." Rather than the hourly fees charged by traditional law firms, ALAI charges flat fees on a sliding scale, making services more accessible to all income levels. Fees are based on the complexity and work involved in each service they provide. Each service has a maximum fee, but clients may be eligible for a discount based on their income. To receive the discount, clients are required to provide acceptable proof of income at their first meeting.

It was intended that for the first several months of the program, no billings would be expected as students' time would be spent on training and CPLED (Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education) activities. For the period between October 2017 and the suspension of operations in April 2018, \$4,056 in revenue was generated.

3.7 Community Outreach Activities

Although community outreach is an activity included in ALAI's logic model, according to ALAI's founding Executive Director, no community outreach activities have taken place. However, ALAI has engaged in social media, including its website (www.aspirelegal.ca) and blog (www.aspirelegal.ca/members), and Twitter (@Aspire_Legal), LinkedIn and Facebook accounts.

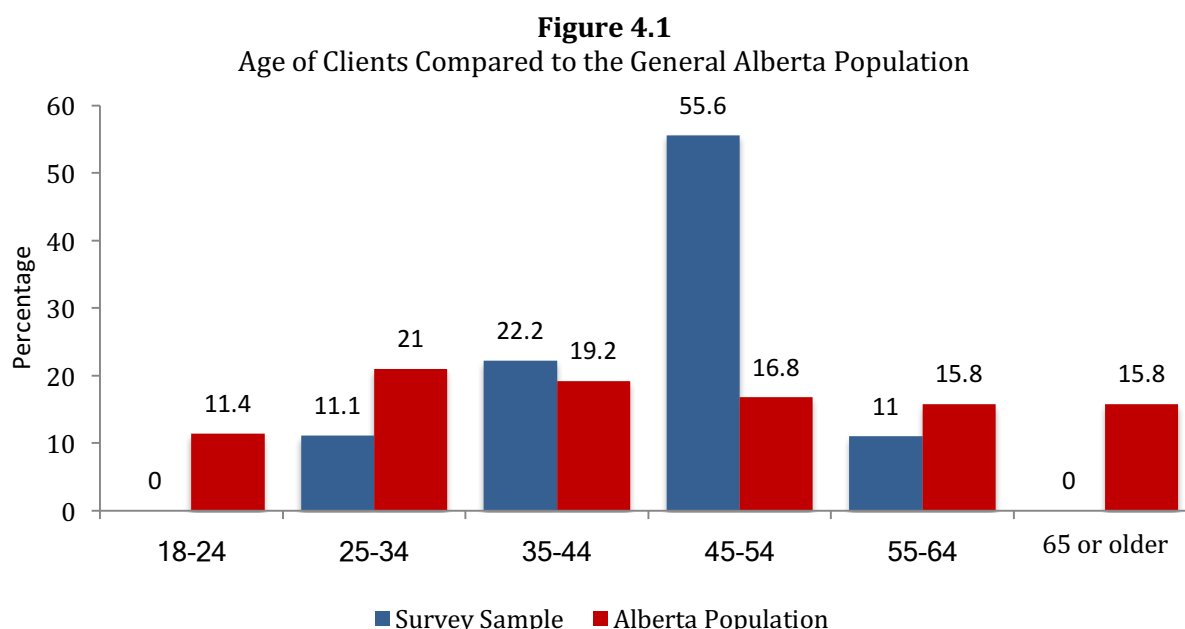
4.0 RESULTS FROM THE CLIENT EXIT SURVEY

This chapter presents the results from the Client Exit Survey, which was administered electronically to clients who had finished receiving legal services and who had consented to be contacted for research purposes. In addition to asking clients demographic questions about characteristics such as age, gender, education, employment status, and income, the survey asked clients about the nature of their case, the services they were seeking from ALAI, the services they actually received, the outcome of their involvement with the program, the cost of the services they received, and their satisfaction with the services received. A copy of the client exit survey is contained in Appendix A.

4.1 Demographic Information

Over three-quarters of the clients were female (77.8%) and 22.2% were male. The sample had a much higher proportion of females than the general Alberta population (49.4%) (Statistics Canada, 2017b).

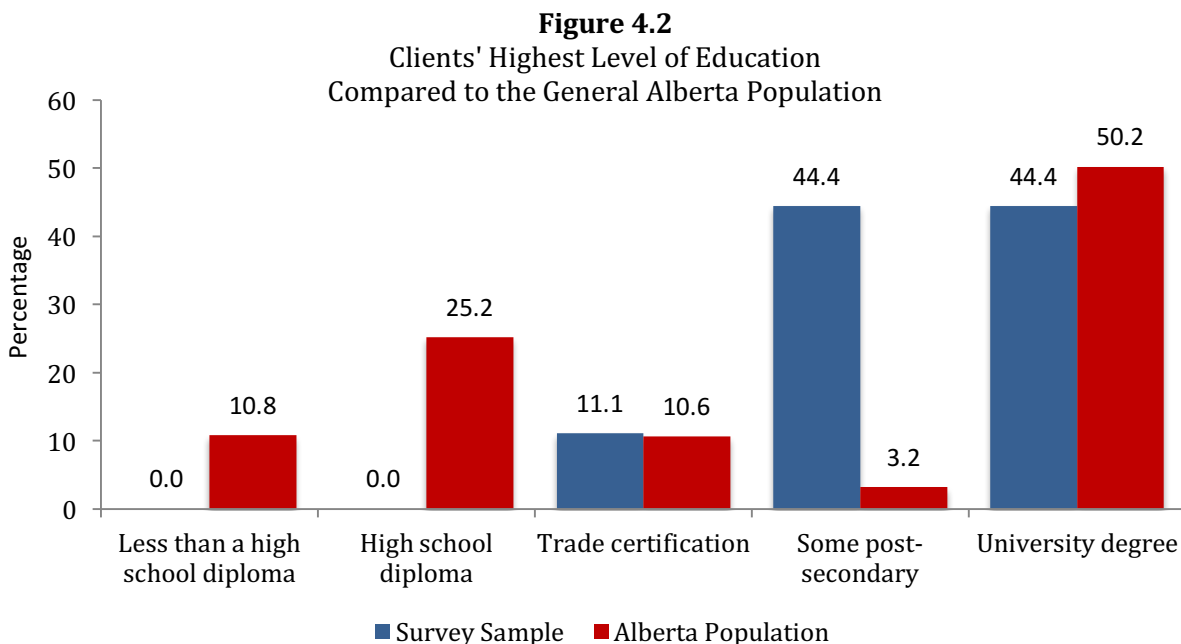
Clients were asked their age at the time of the survey in pre-determined categories, and these results are presented in Figure 4.1.



Sources of Data: Client Exit Survey and Statistics Canada, 2017c
Survey sample N=9

The sample had a disproportionately higher number of individuals in the 45-54 age category than the general population of Albertans (Statistics Canada, 2017c). Over one-half of clients fell into the 45-54 age group (55.6%), compared to 16.8% in this age group in Alberta. Further, none of the clients in the survey sample fell into the youngest (18-24 years) or oldest (65 or older) age categories.

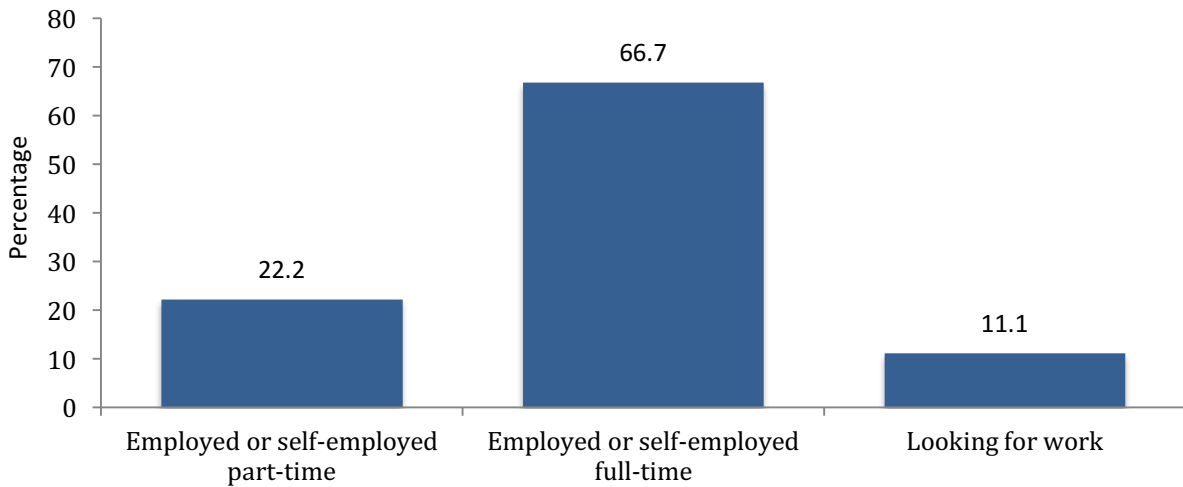
Clients were asked to indicate the highest level of education they finished, and the results are presented in Figure 4.2. Overall, the sample is very well educated, with 88.8% reporting that they have at least some post-secondary education, compared to 53.4% in the general Alberta population (Statistics Canada, 2017a). Similar proportions of the survey sample (11.1%) and the general Alberta population (10.6%) reported having attained trade certification.



Sources of Data: Client Exit Survey and Statistics Canada, 2017a
Survey sample N=9

The survey also asked clients about their employment status at the time of the survey (see Figure 4.3). The majority of clients were employed, either full-time (66.7%) or part-time (22.2%), and 11.1% indicated that they were currently looking for work. No clients reported being a student, retired, or on disability or government benefits.

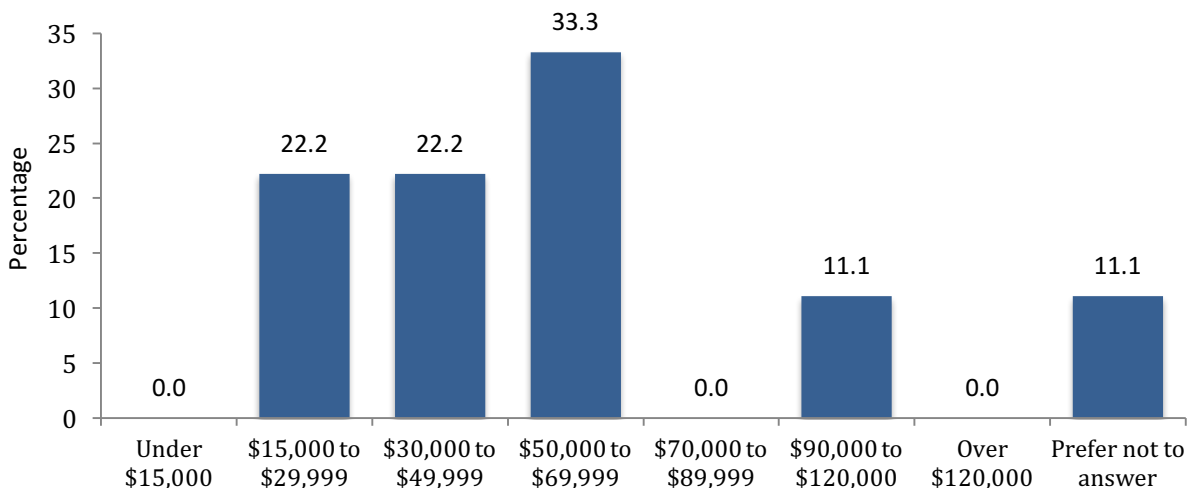
Figure 4.3
Clients' Employment Status



Source of Data: Client Exit Survey
N=9

Clients were asked to indicate their income at the time of the survey in pre-determined categories. As shown in Figure 4.4, one-third of the sample (33.3%) earned \$50,000 to \$69,999, 22.2% earned \$30,000 to \$49,999, and 22.2% earned \$15,000 to \$29,999. One individual (11.1%) reported earning \$90,000 to \$120,000, and one individual chose not to answer the question.

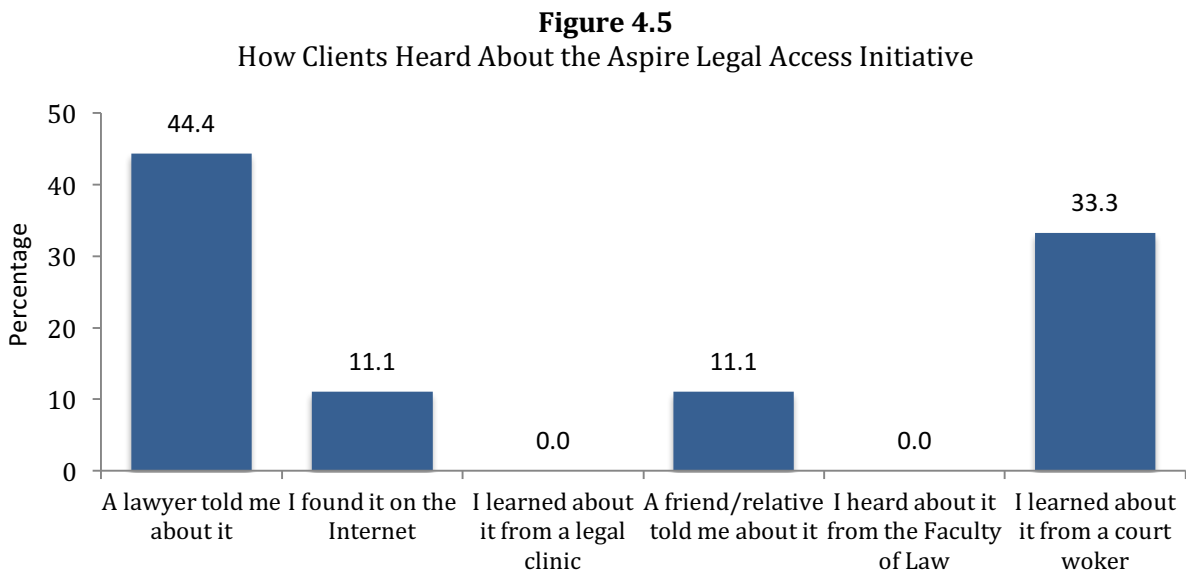
Figure 4.4
Clients' Present Income



Source of Data: Client Exit Survey
N=9

4.2 Clients' Experiences with the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

The survey asked clients how they heard about the Aspire Legal Access Initiative, and the results are presented in Figure 4.5. The most common response was “A lawyer told me about it” (44.4%), followed by “I learned about it from a court worker” (33.3%). One individual found ALAI on the Internet (11.1%), and one individual heard about it from a friend or relative (11.1%). No clients reported hearing about ALAI from a legal clinic or from the Faculty of Law at the University of Calgary.



Source of Data: Client Exit Survey
N=9

Almost all clients (88.9%) said that it took them less than one week to get an appointment at ALAI, and one client (11.1%) said it took one to two weeks to get an appointment. When asked how many times they met with the lawyer or articulated student, almost all clients (88.9%) said once, and one client (11.1%) said they had three meetings with the lawyer or articulated student.

Clients were asked about the nature of their legal problem and had the option of choosing more than one response; see Table 4.1. Two-thirds of the sample (66.7%) said their legal problem was divorce or separation, and one-third (33.3%) reported child support issues. Two clients (22.2%) indicated that their legal problem was division of property, and one client each reported issues with parenting (11.1%) and guardianship (11.1%).

Table 4.1
Nature of Clients' Legal Problem

Legal Problem	n	%
Divorce/separation	6	66.7
Child support	3	33.3
Spousal support	0	0.0
Parenting	1	11.1
Guardianship	1	11.1
Division of property	2	22.2
Possession of home	0	0.0
Protection order	0	0.0
Maintenance enforcement	0	0.0

Source of Data: Client Exit Survey; N=9

Multiple Response Question

When asked what services they received from ALAI, all nine clients said they received legal advice and information (100%), and five clients (55.6%) said that documents were also reviewed.

The survey asked clients about how much they paid for the legal services they received from ALAI. Over one-half of the clients (55.6%) reported paying between \$1 to \$249, and one-third (33.3%) said they didn't pay anything. One client (11.1%) reported paying between \$250 to \$499.

Two-thirds of the clients (66.7%) said their legal problem was not resolved at the time of the survey. One client (11.1%) said their problem was resolved, and two clients (22.2%) said their legal problem was partially resolved. The client whose legal problem was resolved said it took about eight weeks to resolve their issues.

4.3 Clients' Overall Perceptions of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

Based on their experience, clients were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with a series of outcome statements, and the results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2
Extent to Which Clients Agreed with Various Statements
Regarding the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Unsure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I have a better understanding of my legal rights and responsibilities now than before going to ALAI.	3	33.3	3	33.3	1	11.1	2	22.2	0	0.0
I have a better understanding of my legal options now than before going to ALAI.	3	33.3	3	33.3	2	22.2	1	11.1	0	0.0
I have a better understanding of the pros and cons of my options now than before going to ALAI.	3	33.3	4	44.4	2	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
I felt more confident about interacting with the court and other lawyers after receiving services from ALAI.	3	33.3	1	11.1	3	33.3	2	22.2	0	0.0
I felt better prepared to interact with the court and other lawyers after receiving services from ALAI.	2	22.2	3	33.3	3	33.3	1	11.1	0	0.0
I am satisfied with the services I received from ALAI.	3	33.3	5	55.6	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
The services I received were affordable for me.	5	55.6	4	44.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
The services I received were good value for the money I paid for them.	6	66.7	2	22.2	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
I would recommend ALAI to my friends or family in need of family law services.	6	66.7	2	22.2	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
I would use ALAI in the future if I have another family law problem.	6	66.7	1	11.1	2	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0

Source of Data: Client Exit Survey; N=9

Two-thirds of the clients (66.7%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they have a better understanding of their legal rights and responsibilities now than before going to ALAI. One client (11.1%) was *unsure* of this outcome, and two clients (22.2%) *disagreed*. Similarly, two-thirds of the clients (66.7%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they have a better understanding of their legal options now than before going to ALAI, two clients (22.2%) were *unsure*, and one client (11.1%) *disagreed* with this statement. Over three-quarters of the clients (77.8%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they have a better understanding of the pros and cons of their options now than before going to ALAI, and two clients (22.2%) said they were *unsure* that they did.

When asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that they felt more confident about interacting with the court and other lawyers after receiving services from ALAI, less than one-half of the clients (44.4%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed*. Three clients (33.3%) said they were *unsure*, and two clients (22.2%) *disagreed*. Over one-half of the clients (55.6%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they felt better prepared to interact with the court and other lawyers after receiving services from ALAI, while 33.3% were *unsure*, and one client *disagreed*.

Overall, clients were very positive about the satisfaction outcome statements. Almost all clients (88.9%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they were satisfied with the services they received from ALAI, and one client (11.1%) was *unsure*. All clients *strongly agreed* (55.6%) or *agreed* (44.4%) that the services they received were affordable for them. Almost all clients (88.9%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that the services they received were good value for the money they paid for them; one client (11.1%) said they were *unsure*.

Clients were asked if they would recommend ALAI to their friends or family in need of family law services, and all but one client (88.9%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with this statement, and one client (11.1%) was *unsure*. Regarding the statement, “I would use ALAI in the future if I have another family law problem,” over three-quarters of the clients *strongly agreed* (66.7%) or *agreed* (11.1%), and 22.2% were *unsure*.

The survey concluded with an open-ended question asking clients if they have any additional comments about the Initiative, and seven of the nine respondents provided comments. Two clients commented on issues regarding the advice they received. One client said they struggled with “*which form was required*,” and another client said:

My initial impression of the service was excellent. However, after finding myself in court without some VERY basic pertinent information – like they cannot hear a support case without DRO – I am unsure of my initial impression....

Five comments were extremely positive:

I was very impressed with how the entire process went and it has brought calming and peace to me as I go through the process.

ALAI is a great resource for people who discover that the legal system is ambiguous and self-serving.

ALAI explained my rights in detail, which really helped me with my decisions. I had a lawyer previous to this and I feel I did not get the detail that I received from ALAI and at a fraction of the cost. The definitions from my agreement were explained in terms that I could understand and I did not feel as lost as I did previous to our meetings. It really helped us resolve our legal matter because I was able to move forward with a decision that was right for me. I have already referred this service to friends. It helped me feel in control of the situation and ease a lot of stress during this difficult situation. Don't think I would have been this far if I hadn't talked to ALAI! So grateful for this option and this great service! ...was amazing and so helpful! I got in to see her right away, which really helped with a time-sensitive situation that I had to work with!

I think that it is an extremely valuable service and we have a large void for help for mid-income families in Calgary. I found the Court system extremely convoluted here and even at the Court House no one knows where to direct people. This has been an ongoing issue for me for 6 years and it is literally sucking the life out of me. There is no help for mid-income families; you either need to be low income or struggle to afford outrageous legal fees. There should be a cap on lawyer fees and a definite amount to achieve a resolution. They say the Courts' interests are for the best interests of the children but I can tell you that the stress and anxiety that this has put on me has not made me the best parent or able to be the best to achieve my career goals. Something needs to change. I sincerely hope that the service is brought back as it is very much needed.

I am very sad to hear that the services have been suspended but I am quite hopeful that they will be opening their doors again. I would definitely recommend this to anyone I know who cannot afford the high cost of long practicing lawyers. I am confident that the services provided are valuable and sufficient. Thank you!

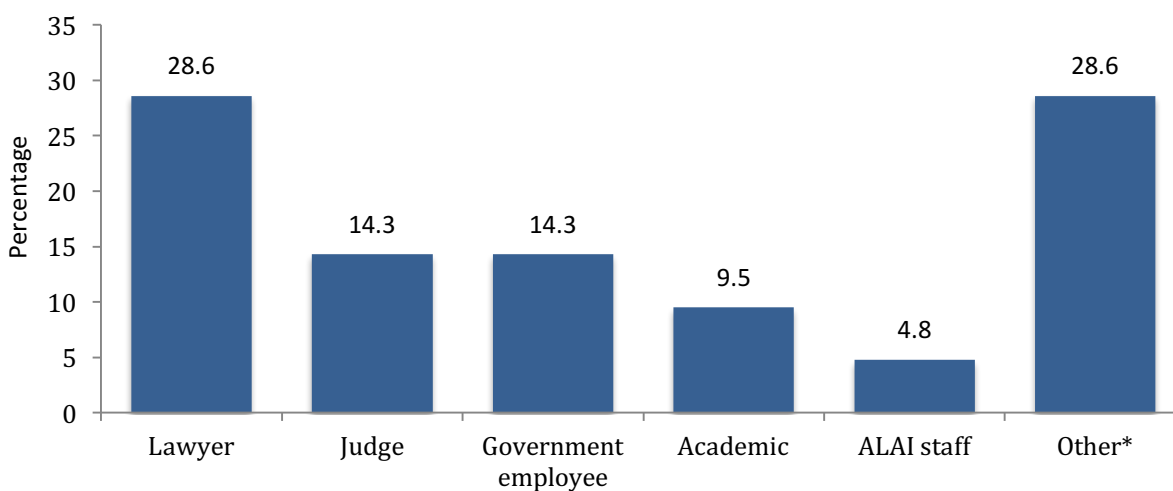
5.0 RESULTS FROM THE KEY STAKEHOLDERS SURVEY

This chapter presents the results from the Stakeholder Survey, which was administered electronically to individuals involved with the program, including staff, lawyers, board members and community partners but excluding ALAI board member and Institute executive director John-Paul Boyd. The survey was designed to obtain information regarding stakeholders' level of knowledge of and involvement with the program, their perceptions of the program's effectiveness, and their perceptions of the adequacy of ALAI's criteria for and training of articulated students. Key stakeholders were also asked if they think any changes should be made to the program and whether they think the program should be expanded; see Appendix B for a copy of the survey.

5.1 Background Information

The stakeholders were comprised primarily of lawyers (28.6%), judges (14.3%) and government employees (14.3%); 9.5% were academics, 4.8% were ALAI staff, and 28.6% specified another profession. These results are reported in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1
Stakeholders' Profession



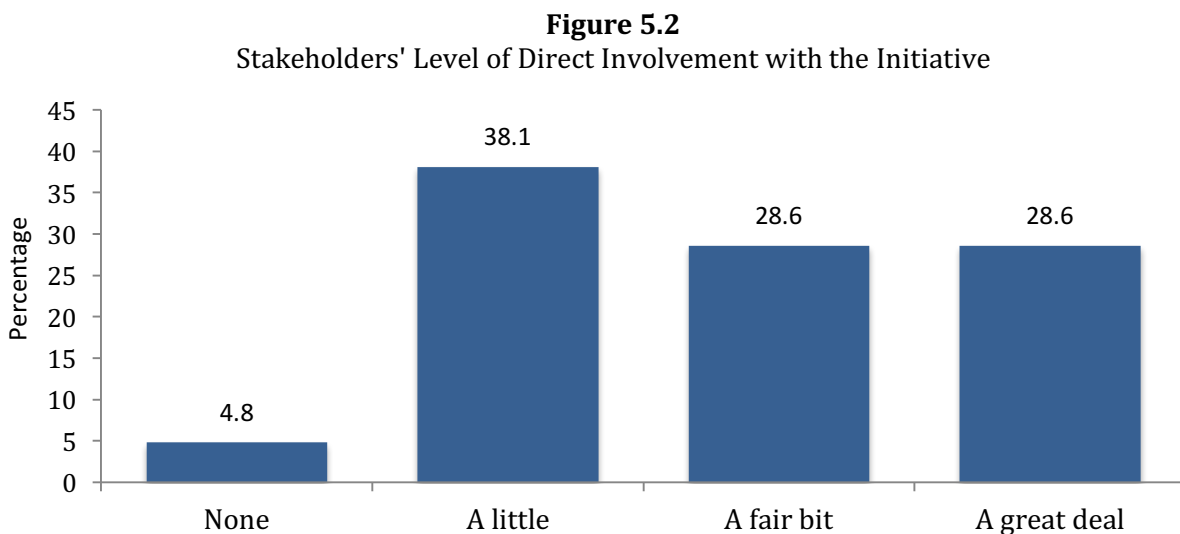
Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

* Other includes: entrepreneur; Law Society of Alberta; Manager – non-profit legal services; pro bono legal services executive; public law librarian; and student-at-law.

All 21 respondents to the survey indicated that they were aware of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative. Stakeholders were asked how they found out about the Initiative, and

11 stakeholders responded. Four respondents said they were a founder, or were aware of the Initiative through a founder. Four respondents said they found out about ALAI through its Executive Director, and one respondent said they worked there. One respondent said they found out about the Initiative through the University of Calgary's Faculty of Law and the QB Case Management Counsel, and one said it was via Law Society volunteer activities.

Stakeholders were then asked how much direct involvement they've had with the Initiative; see Figure 5.2. Over one-quarter (28.6%) said they've had *a great deal* of direct involvement, and over one-quarter (28.6%) said they've had *a fair bit* of direct involvement; 38.1% said their level of direct involvement was *a little*, and 4.8% said they had no direct involvement with the Initiative.



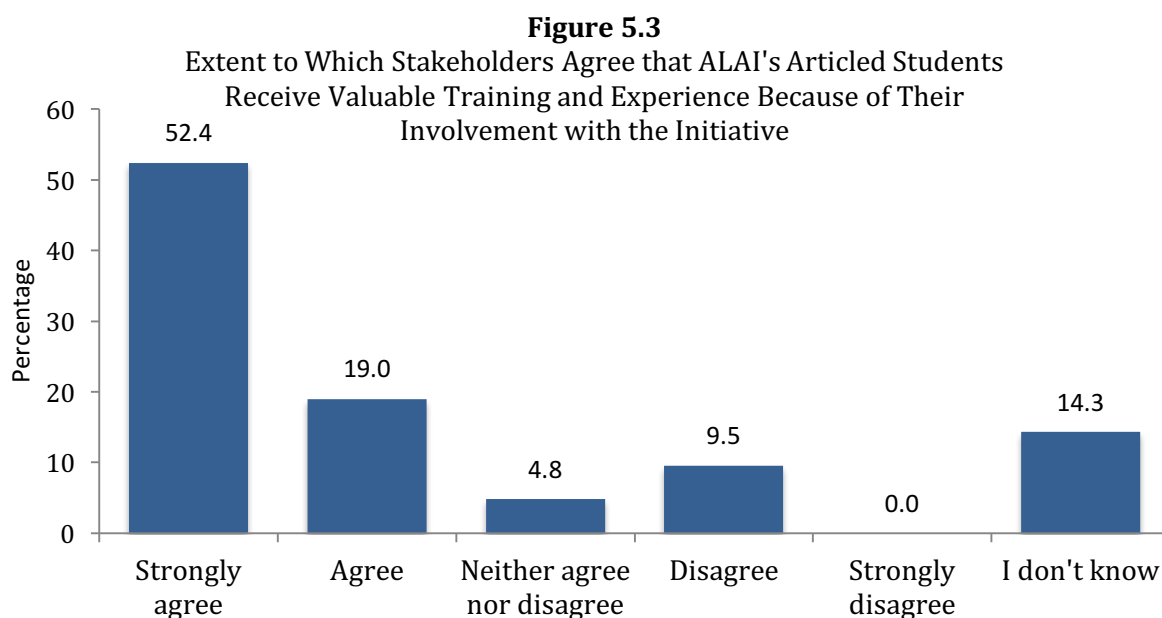
Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

Stakeholders who reporting having direct involvement with the Initiative were asked to describe the nature of their involvement, and 15 stakeholders provided comments. Five respondents said they helped develop the Initiative, and an additional three respondents said they were directors of ALAI. Five respondents represented community groups and other legal service providers. As one respondent said, *"I represent a stakeholder which may have significant interaction with Aspire in the provision of certain legal services."* The direct involvement of two stakeholders consisted of student education. For example:

I provided the opportunity for the students to brief and then observe judicial dispute resolution sessions, the opportunity to observe in provincial court family docket court, and then ask questions about what they had observed, and a tour of the courthouse. I also presented to the students on good advocacy.

5.2 Stakeholders' Overall Perceptions of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

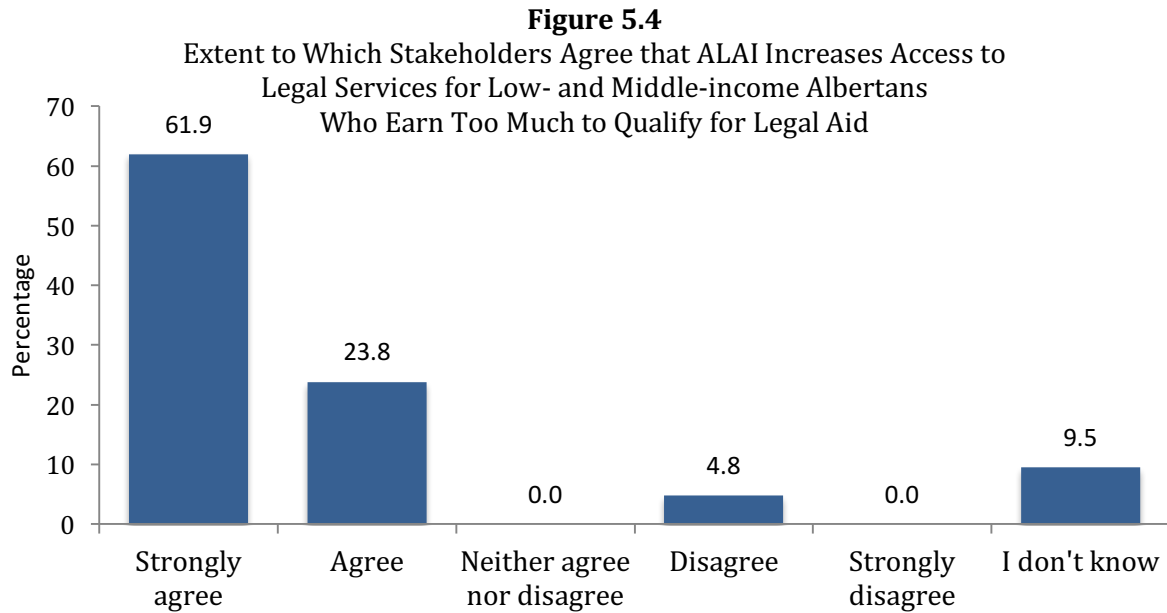
Based on their experience and understanding of ALAI, stakeholders were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with three outcome statements. The first statement was: *ALAI's articulated students receive valuable training and experience because of their involvement with the Initiative*. As shown in Figure 5.3, almost three-quarters of the stakeholders (71.4%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with this statement; 9.5% *disagreed*, 4.8% *neither agreed nor disagreed*, and 14.3% said they *don't know*.



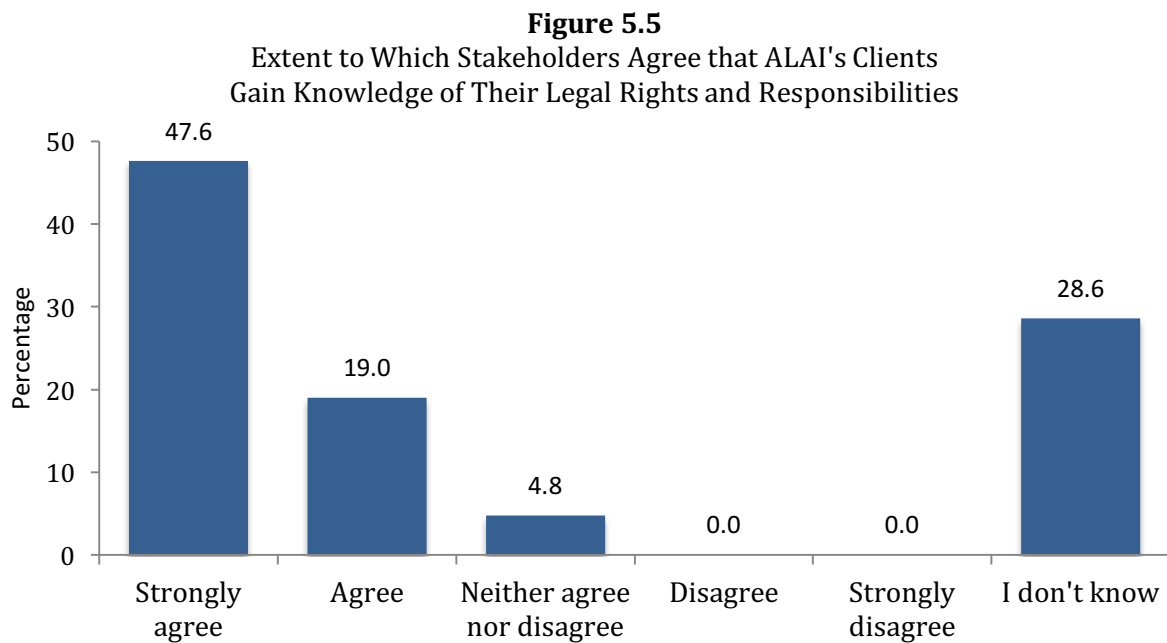
Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

The second outcome statement was: *ALAI increases access to legal services for low- and middle-income Albertans who earn too much to qualify for legal aid*. Most stakeholders (85.7%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with this statement. Only 4.8% of stakeholders *disagreed*, and 9.5% said they *don't know*; see Figure 5.4.

As shown in Figure 5.5, two-thirds of the stakeholders (66.7%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with the third outcome statement: *ALAI's clients gain knowledge of their legal rights and responsibilities*. A small proportion (4.8%) said they *neither agreed nor disagreed*, and 28.6% said they *don't know*.



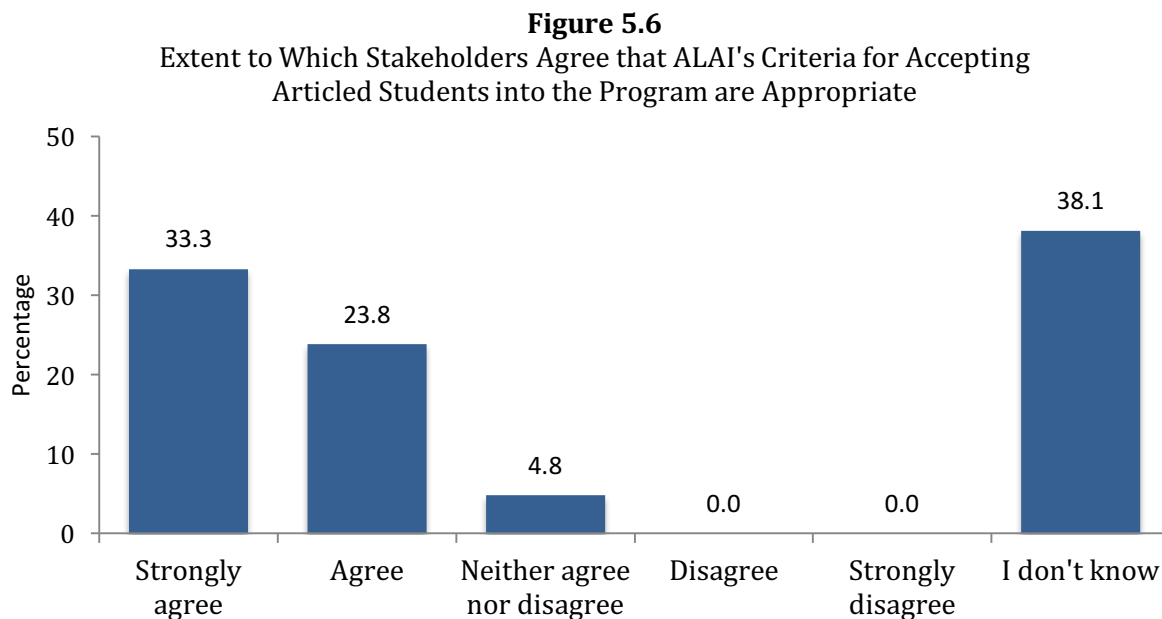
Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21



Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

Stakeholders were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that the clients accepted into the program are appropriate for the Initiative. Two-thirds of the respondents either *strongly agreed* (42.9%) or *agreed* (23.8%), and one-third said they *don't know*.

When asked the extent to which they agreed that ALAI's criteria for accepting articulated students into the program are appropriate, 57.1% either *strongly agreed* or *agreed*, and 4.8% *neither agree nor disagreed*; see Figure 5.6. A large proportion of respondents (38.1%) said they *don't know*.



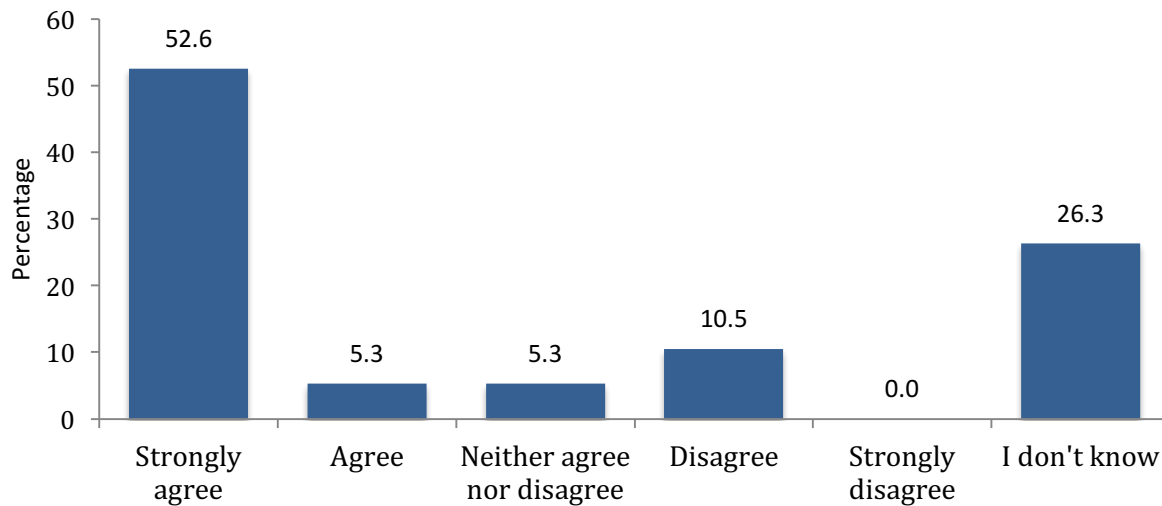
Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

Stakeholders were also asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that the training provided to articulated students is adequate, and the results are presented in Figure 5.7. While 52.6% *strongly agreed* and 5.3% *agreed*, 5.3% *neither agreed nor disagreed*, and 10.5% *disagreed* with the statement. Over one-quarter of stakeholders said they don't know.

Stakeholders who disagreed that the training provided to articulated students is adequate were asked to explain why. One respondent said:

Students in a family law office should be trained by lawyers who are experienced in family law. I do not believe this was the case.

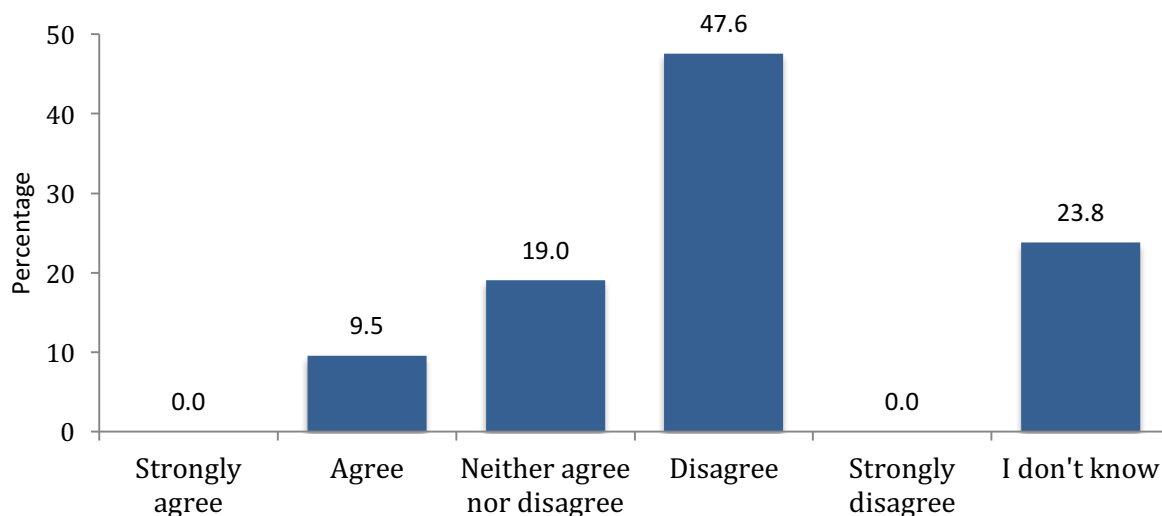
Figure 5.7
Extent to Which Stakeholders Agree that ALAI's the Training
Provided to Articled Students is Adequate



Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

To examine community awareness, stakeholders were asked to what extent they agreed that the legal community is aware of the Initiative. As shown in Figure 5.8, almost one-half of the respondents (47.6%) *disagreed* with this statement, and 19% *neither agreed nor disagreed*. Only 9.5% *agreed*, and 23.8% said they *don't know*.

Figure 5.8
Extent to Which Stakeholders Agree that the Legal Community
is Aware of the Initiative



Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

Stakeholders who disagreed that the legal community is aware of the Initiative were asked what should be done to increase awareness of the program, and seven stakeholders provided comments. Four stakeholders offered practical suggestions:

Continual profiling in social media and professional associations (CBA, LSA, CLG, Legal Aid, and judge professional development workshops).

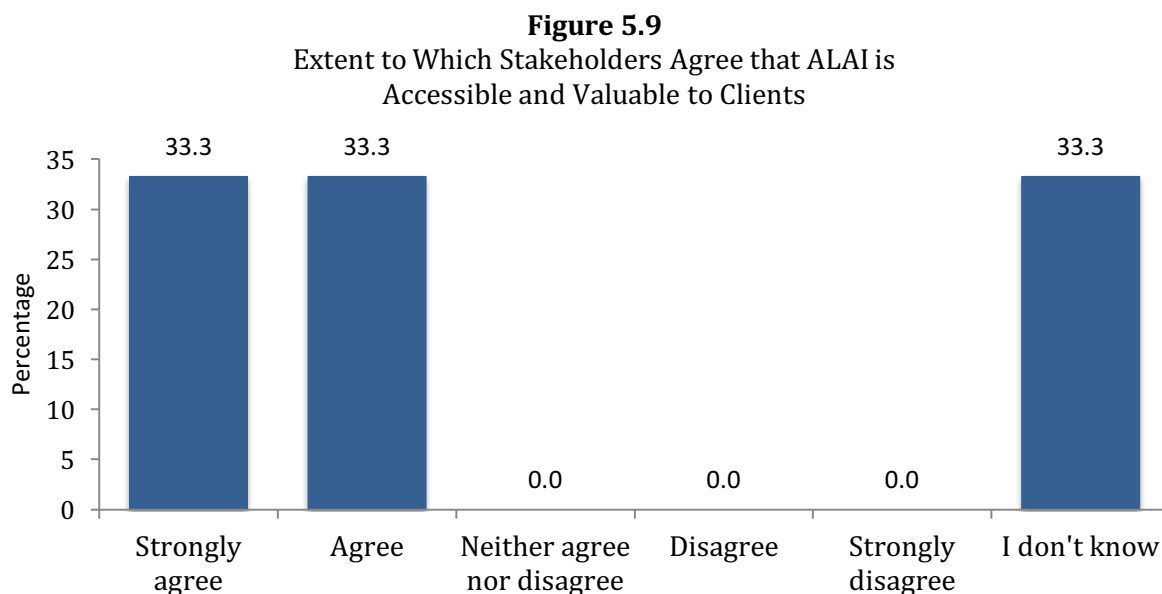
More involvement with members of the family bar and the pro bono bar.

There needs to be on-site (Court House) awareness coupled with a media campaign to raise Aspire's profile.

The name is odd, so many lawyers do not know what it is about. Also, need more education to other lawyers on how Aspire operates.

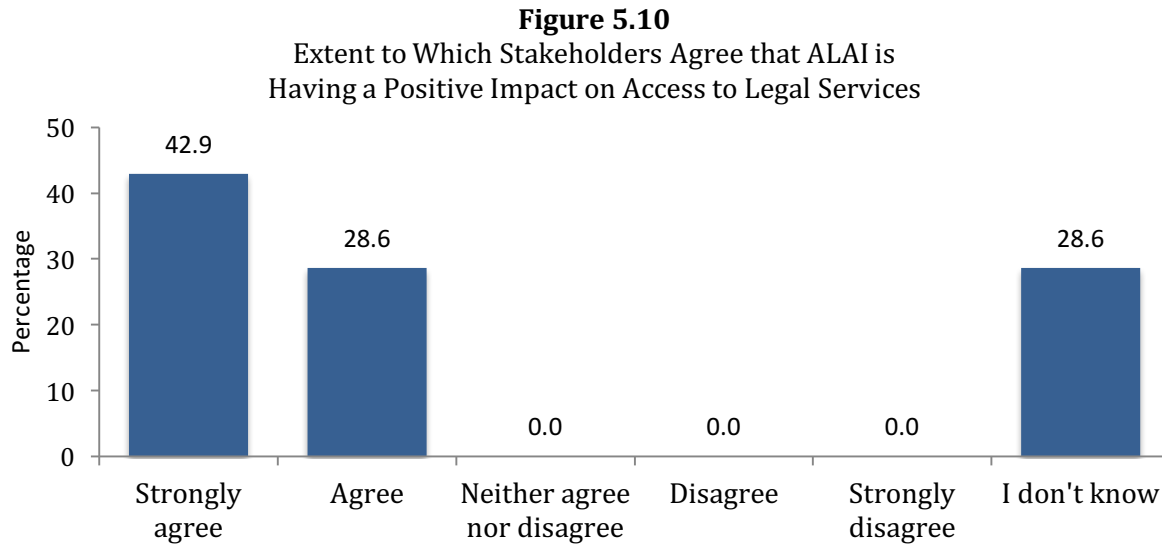
Two stakeholders commented that “it is far too soon in the existence of Aspire to assume that the legal community is aware of it,” and that “we are still working to engage the appropriate channels to build awareness of the initiative and the offering to society.”

The next three statements in the survey explored stakeholders’ opinions about outcomes for clients. Figure 5.9 presents the results of the extent to which stakeholders agreed that ALAI is accessible and valuable to clients. Two-thirds of stakeholders (66.7%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with this statement, and one-third said they *don't know*.



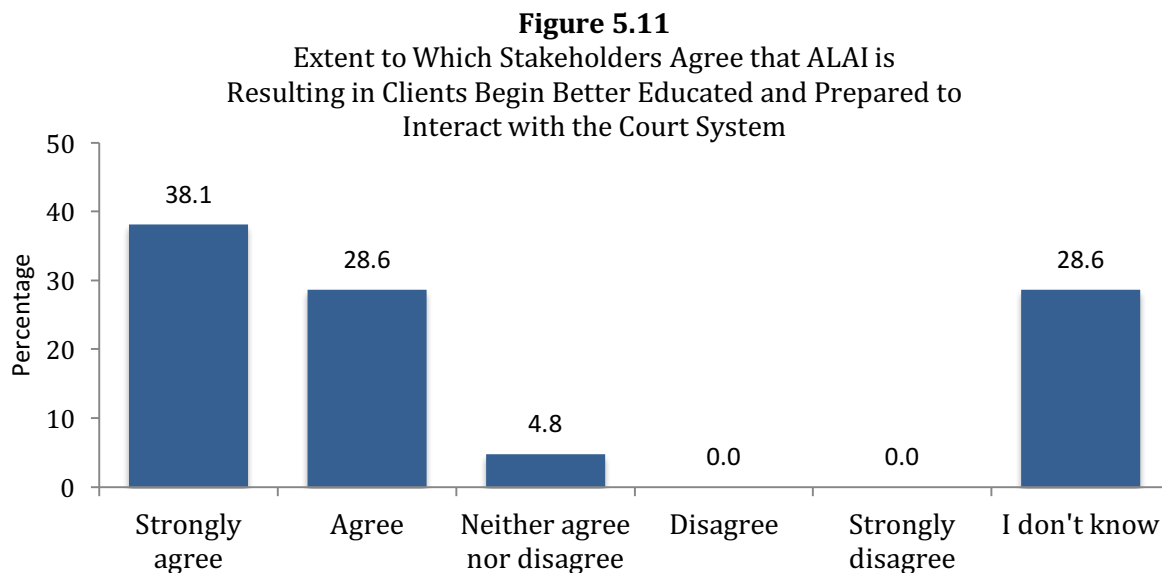
Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

When asked the extent to which they agreed that ALAI is having a positive impact on access to legal services, 71.5% *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with this statement, and 28.6% said they *don't know*; see Figure 5.10.



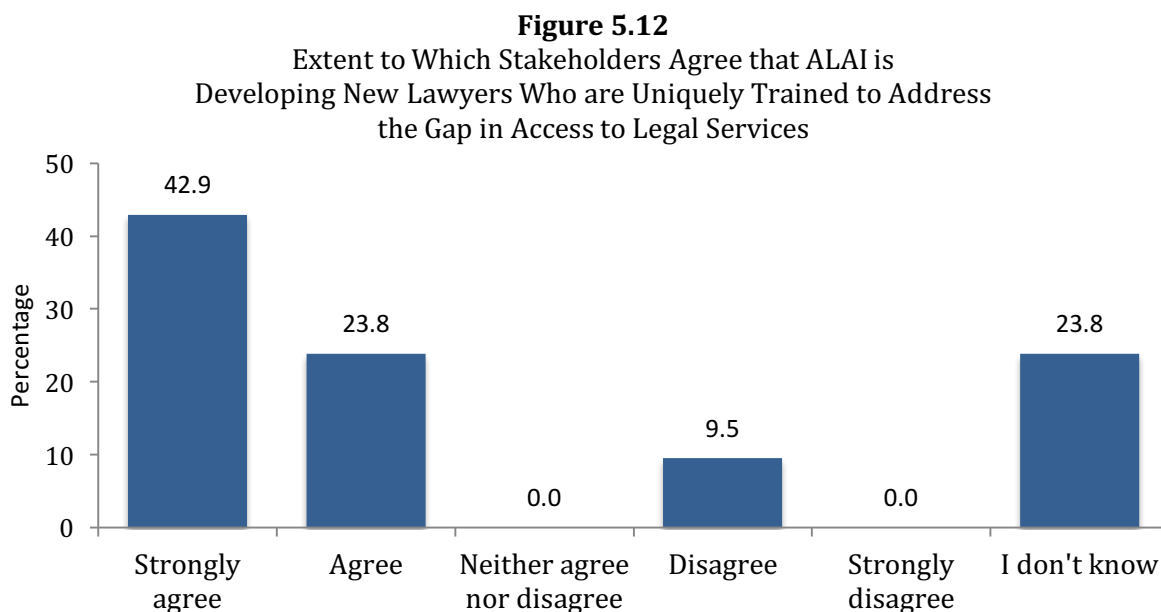
Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

Similar results were obtained when stakeholders were asked the extent to which they agreed that ALAI is resulting in clients being better educated and prepared to interact with the court system; see Figure 5.11. Two-thirds of respondents (66.7%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed*, 4.8% *neither agreed nor disagreed*, and 28.6% said they *don't know*.



Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

The last outcome statement asked stakeholders to what extent they agreed that ALAI is developing new lawyers who are uniquely trained to address the gap in access to legal services. As shown in Figure 5.12, two-thirds of stakeholders (66.7%) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, and 9.5% disagreed. Almost one-quarter of stakeholders (23.8%) said they don't know.



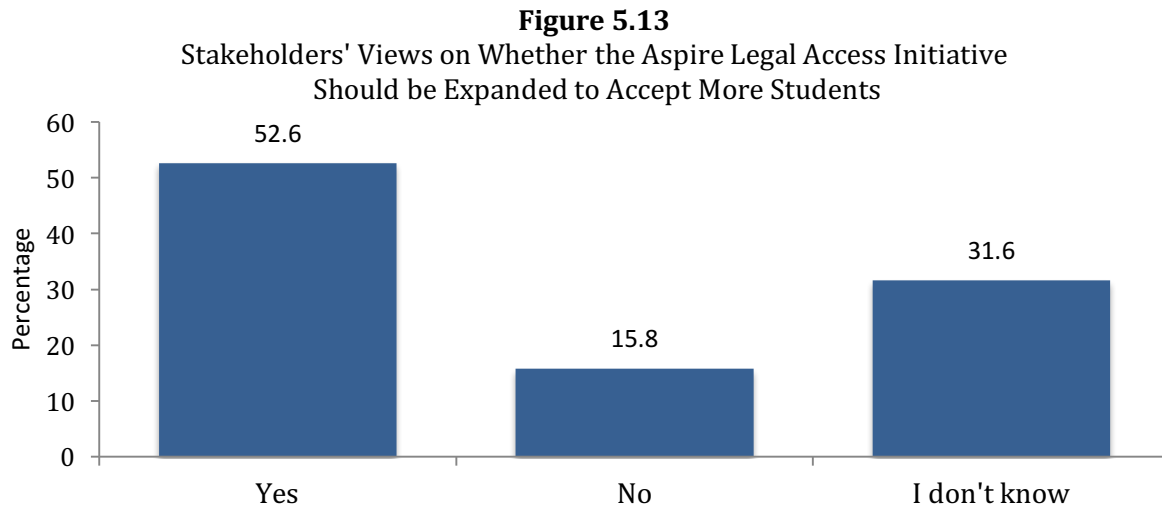
Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey; N=21

5.3 Stakeholders' Perceptions About Future Directions

The last section of the survey explored stakeholders' opinions about future directions for ALAI. When asked if they think the Aspire Legal Access Initiative should be expanded to accept more students, just over one-half of respondents (52.6%) said *yes*, 15.8% said *no*, and 31.6% said they *don't know*; see Figure 5.13. Stakeholders who said *no* were asked why not, and two stakeholders provided comments:

Need one or more experienced family practitioners to succeed here. Students cannot be trained in family law without family law practitioners.

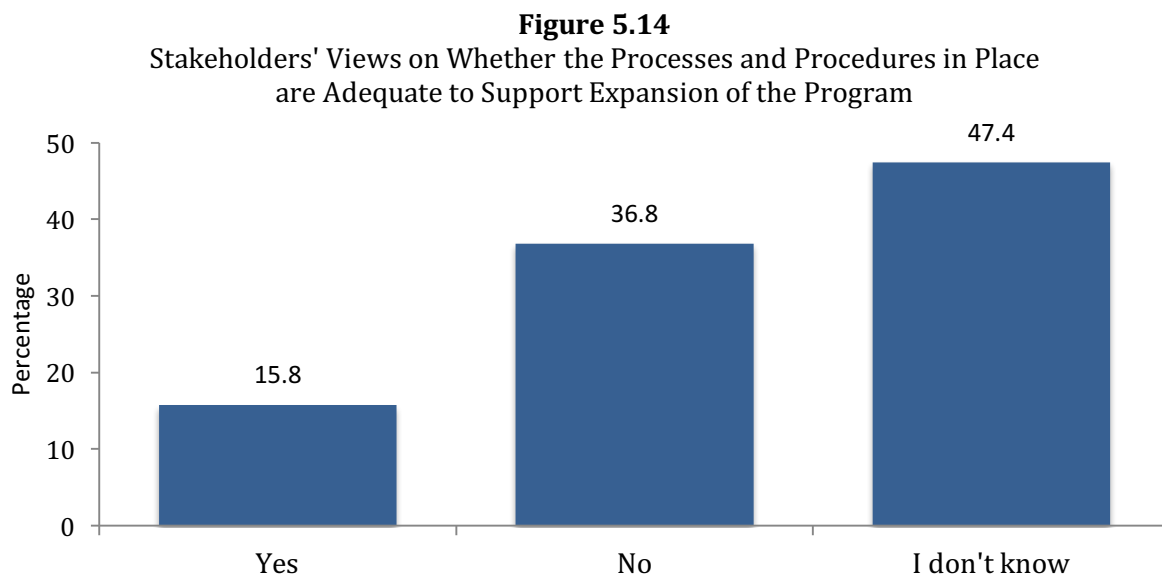
Not at this time. I think that possibility exists in the future but the model needs to be more fully tested first.



Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey
N=21; Missing cases=2

Stakeholders were also asked if the Aspire Legal Access Initiative should be expanded to serve more clients. Almost two-thirds of respondents (63.2%) said *yes*, over one-third (36.8%) said they *don't know*, and two cases were missing.

Figure 5.14 presents the stakeholders' views on whether the processes and procedures in place are adequate to support expansion of the program. Only 15.8% of stakeholders said *yes*, 36.8% said *no*, and 47.4% said they *don't know*.



Source of Data: Stakeholder Survey
N=21; Missing cases=2

Stakeholders who said no were asked why not, and five respondents provided comments. Three stakeholders referred to Aspire's funding issues and the need for sustainability, one stakeholder thought service offerings and options needed to be broadened to allow a larger number of clients, and one stakeholder said:

Too much emphasis on things other than legal service delivery. Before expanding, there should be a clear idea of what the desired outcomes are, and how to measure impact based on input and output re: legal service delivery to the target demographic.

When asked if there are any changes they would recommend for improving the program, seven stakeholders provided comments. Three stakeholders mentioned the need for adequate funding, three stakeholders stressed the need for continued promotion, and one stakeholder suggested opening up device offerings to include both full and limited scope retainers. For example:

Realistic financial forecasting is important. The project is still in its early development, so continued promotion of the services to the general public and referring agencies would also be important.

Hire a family law lawyer to be the ED and/or principal to the students. Engage the family bar to build the book of business on referrals/conflicts. Work with pro bono counterparts to identify gaps in service delivery and develop partnerships with family bar and pro bono sector. Network with CBA family bar section.

We need to take a more market oriented approach for serving our clients. It is a challenge to steer away from the traditional lawyer centered model to a client centered model, but we are making progress.

The final survey question asked stakeholders if they had any additional comments about the Initiative, and 12 stakeholders provided comments. Eight stakeholders commented on the innovative nature of the program and the gap it addresses. For example:

...I think it addresses a crucial service gap and is vital to providing access to justice and helping to address clogged dockets in the courts.

I think it's an innovative way to provide legal services to Albertans and increase the possibility of people being able to obtain legal advice.

The number of self-represented clients will only increase, and these people desperately need this sort of assistance the program can provide. The number of self-represented clients will only increase, and these people desperately need the sort of assistance this program can provide.

This is an incredibly innovative initiative that is very much otherwise missing in our judicial system. There has been a lot of great work accomplished in a short time and I hope very much that it succeeds.

...It is critical to have a range of legal advice options: from full-service firms to legal coaching, limited-scope retainers or free advice clinics. Access to a choice of legal advice options facilitates access to justice.

One stakeholder commented on the commitment exhibited by the articulated students working for the Initiative:

...I am also impressed with the commitment and support by articulated students working with Aspire Legal, which seems to indicate a very positive learning environment for these students.

Two stakeholders noted the need for continued financial support until the Initiative is self-sustaining. For example:

I am a huge supporter of the program.... The initiative needs solid financial support in order to truly test the model and see how it can best serve family law clients. I believe that once up and running, it has tremendous potential to expand. It just needs to be up and running for a period of time first.

This is an innovative project which can have a major impact on our justice system. Continued financial support as the incubator is in the development stages is still very important in order to achieve the goal of supporting increased access to justice.

Two stakeholders offered suggestions for improving the program, such as the need for better public and lawyer education and the need for a family law practitioner to serve as Executive Director. As one stakeholder said:

...Need a family practitioner to build the book of business to be self-sustaining. The idea is to train these young lawyers and build capacity but there is no funding so the operation has to have clients and bring in the clients through business

development. This can't just be another publicly funded version of a legal aid program. The best technology won't pay the bills. Clients will.

6.0 SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary of Program Data

- During the period between May 2017 and the suspension of operations in April 2018, four articulated students were hired and began training, and 50 clients were served.
- The revenue generated during this period was \$4,056.
- No formal policies and procedures are in place.
- The program's education framework is based on the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education's course for family law articling students and includes the following five key competency areas: ethics and professionalism; practice management; client relationship management; conducting matters; and adjudication and alternative dispute resolution.
- Volunteer lawyer activity includes participation on ALAI's Board of Directors, and its Professional Development Advisory Committee.
- No community outreach activities have taken place, although ALAI has engaged in social media.

6.2 Summary of Client Exit Survey Findings

6.2.1 Demographic Information

- Over three-quarters of the clients were female (77.8%), and 22.2% were male, and the majority of clients (55.6%) were in the 45-54 age category.
- The sample was very well educated, with 88.8% reporting that they have at least some post-secondary education, and most clients (88.9%) were employed, either full-time or part-time.

- One-third of the sample (33.3%) earned \$50,000 to \$69,999, 22.2% earned \$30,000 to \$49,999, and 22.2% earned \$15,000 to \$29,999. One individual reported earning \$90,000 to \$120,000.

6.2.2 Clients' Experiences with the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

- Most clients heard about ALAI from either a lawyer (44.4%) or a court worker (33.3%).
- Almost all clients (88.9%) said it took them less than one week to get an appointment at ALAI, and one client said it took one to two weeks to get an appointment. Most clients (88.9%) had one meeting with the lawyer or articulated student, and one client had three meetings.
- The most common legal problems reported by clients were divorce or separation issues, followed by child support and division of property issues.
- All clients reported receiving legal advice and information, and over half of the clients also had documents reviewed.
- Over one-half of the clients (55.6%) paid \$1 to \$249 for the legal services they received from ALAI, and one-third (33.3%) didn't pay anything. One client paid \$250 to \$499.
- Two-thirds of the clients (66.7%) said their legal problem is not resolved and two clients said their legal problem is partially resolved. One client said their problem is resolved, and it took about eight weeks to reach resolution.

6.2.3 Clients' Overall Perceptions of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

- Two-thirds of the clients (66.7%) agreed that they have a better understanding of their legal rights and responsibilities now than before going to ALAI, as well as a better understanding of their legal options.
- Over three-quarters of the clients (77.8%) agreed that they have a better understanding of the pros and cons of their options now than before going to ALAI.

- Less than one-half of the clients (44.4%) agreed that they felt more confident about interacting with the court and other lawyers after receiving services from ALAI. One-third (33.3%) said they were unsure, and two clients (22.2%) disagreed.
- Over one-half of the clients (55.6%) agreed that they felt better prepared to interact with the court and other lawyers after receiving services from ALAI, while 33.3% were unsure, and one client disagreed.
- Overall, clients were very positive about the satisfaction outcome statements. Almost all clients (88.9%) agreed that they were satisfied with the services they received from ALAI.
- All clients agreed that the services they received were affordable for them, and almost all clients (88.9%) agreed that the services they received were good value for the money they paid for them.
- Almost all clients (88.9%) said they would recommend ALAI to their friends or family in need of family law services, and 77.7% said they would use ALAI in the future if they had another family law problem.

6.3 Summary of Stakeholder Survey Findings

6.3.1 Background Information

- The stakeholders surveyed consisted primarily of lawyers (28.6%), judges (14.3%), government employees (14.3%), and academics (9.5%).
- Over one-quarter of stakeholders (28.6%) said they've had *a great deal* of direct involvement with the Initiative, and over one-quarter (28.6%) said they've had *a fair bit* of direct involvement; 38.1% said their level of direct involvement was *a little*, and 4.8% said they had no direct involvement with the Initiative.

6.3.2 Stakeholders' Overall Perceptions of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

- Almost three-quarters of the stakeholders (71.4%) agreed that ALAI's articulated students receive valuable training and experience because of their involvement with the Initiative; 9.5% disagreed, 4.8% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 14.3% said they don't know.

- Most stakeholders (85.7%) agreed that ALAI increases access to legal services for low- and middle-income Albertans who earn too much to qualify for legal aid; only 4.8% of stakeholders disagreed, and 9.5% said they don't know.
- Two-thirds of the stakeholders (66.7%) agreed that ALAI's clients gain knowledge of their legal rights and responsibilities. A small proportion (4.8%) said they neither agreed nor disagreed, and 28.6% said they don't know.
- Two-thirds of the stakeholders (66.7%) agreed that the clients accepted into the program are appropriate for the Initiative, and one-third (33.3%) said they don't know.
- The majority of respondents (57.1%) agreed that ALAI's criteria for accepting articulated students into the program are appropriate; a large proportion of respondents (38.1%) said they don't know.
- Just over one-half of stakeholders agreed that the training provided to articulated students is adequate, while 5.3% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 10.5% disagreed. Over one-quarter of stakeholders said they don't know.
- Almost one-half of the stakeholders (47.6%) disagreed that the legal community is aware of the Initiative, and 19% neither agreed nor disagreed. Only 9.5% agreed, and 23.8% said they don't know. Stakeholders commented that there needed to be more involvement with the family bar, pro bono bar, the court house, and professional associations, as well as a greater social media presence.
- Two-thirds of stakeholders (66.7%) agreed that ALAI is accessible and valuable to clients, and one-third said they don't know.
- Almost three-quarters of stakeholders (71.5%) agreed that ALAI is having a positive impact on access to legal services, and 28.6% said they don't know.
- Two-thirds of respondents (66.7%) agreed that ALAI is resulting in clients being better educated and prepared to interact with the court system; 4.8% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 28.6% said they don't know.

- Two-thirds of stakeholders (66.7%) agreed that ALAI is developing new lawyers who are uniquely trained to address the gap in access to legal services, and 9.5% disagreed. Almost one-quarter of stakeholders (23.8%) said they don't know.

6.3.3 Stakeholders' Perceptions About Future Directions

- When asked if they think the Aspire Legal Access Initiative should be expanded to accept more students, just over one-half of respondents (52.6%) said yes, 15.8% said no, and 31.6% said they don't know.
- When asked if the Aspire Legal Access Initiative should be expanded to serve more clients, almost two-thirds of stakeholders (63.2%) said yes and over one-third (36.8%) said they don't know.
- Only 15.8% of stakeholders thought that the processes and procedures in place are adequate to support expansion of the program, 36.8% said no, and 47.4% said they don't know.
- Stakeholders commented on the innovative nature of the program and the gap in service delivery that it addresses. Stakeholders also commented on the need for adequate funding and continued promotion, as well as the need for a family practitioner at the helm.

6.4 Discussion

The purpose of this project was to examine the implementation of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative (ALAI) in Calgary and to assess the extent to which the ALAI achieved its short-term goals. Due to lack of funds, operations of ALAI were suspended towards the end of this evaluation; however, the Initiative's Board of Directors is seeking alternative sources of funding, and the hope is to resume operations in the near future. For this reason, the decision was made to continue with the evaluation as any lessons learned should prove invaluable when ALAI is reinstated.

Relatively little program data were available for the evaluation, but the information that was available indicated that the target goal of hiring four articulated students during the first year of the program was achieved, and at the time the Initiative suspended operations, 50 clients had been served. It was anticipated that for the first several months

of the Initiative, no billings would be generated as the students' focus would be on training, developing ALAI's business model and processes, and CPLED activities; this likely accounts for the relatively low revenue generated by the Initiative during the period that it was operational.

It was reported that no formal policies and procedures had been established for ALAI by the time operations were suspended; if the Initiative is reinstated, the development of a policies and procedures manual should be a priority in order to ensure consistency in the Initiative's implementation and day-to-day activities. It was also reported that, although the Initiative developed a social media presence, no community outreach activities had taken place. Since a common comment from stakeholders was that awareness of ALAI is not high within the legal community, outreach activities to raise awareness should also be a priority. A recent article by Duncan (2015) discusses the design and implementation of Louisiana's first legal incubator – "Legal Innovators for Tomorrow" – and provides a useful step-by-step startup guide for incubators.

The nine clients of ALAI who completed an exit survey after receiving services from the Initiative were generally very pleased with their experience: almost all said that they were satisfied with the services they received; all said that the services were affordable for them; almost all clients said that the services they received represented good value for the money they paid for them; and almost all clients said that they would recommend ALAI to friends or family in need of family law services and that they would use the Initiative again in the future if the need arose.

Clients also indicated that receiving services from ALAI was a learning experience for them. The majority of clients said that: they have a better understanding of their legal rights, responsibilities and options after attending ALAI; they have a better understanding of the pros and cons of their options; and they felt better prepared to interact with the court and other lawyers, although a smaller number said that they felt more confident about interacting with the court and other lawyers.

The 21 professionals who completed the stakeholder survey were also very positive about ALAI. The majority of stakeholders agreed that: ALAI increases access to legal services for low- and medium-income Albertans who earn too much to qualify for legal aid; ALAI is accessible and valuable to clients; the Initiative's clients gain knowledge of their legal rights and responsibilities; ALAI is resulting in clients being better educated and prepared to interact with the court system; the clients taken on by the program are appropriate; and ALAI is having a positive impact on legal services.

With regard to the articulated students hired by the Initiative, the majority of stakeholders agreed that: ALAI's articulated students receive valuable training and experience; ALAI's criteria for accepting articulated students into the program are appropriate; the training provided to the students is adequate; and the Initiative is developing new lawyers who are uniquely trained to address the gap in access to legal services.

Stakeholders were less positive when asked if the legal community is aware of ALAI: almost one-half disagreed with this statement. This suggests that if the Initiative is reinstated, greater education efforts are needed in the legal community. The majority of stakeholders said that the Initiative should be expanded to take on more clients as well as more articulated students; however, few respondents thought that the policies and procedures that are in place are adequate to support expansion of the program. Several stakeholders stressed the need to seek out adequate and stable funding if the Initiative is to succeed, as well as the importance of having an executive director who is trained in family law.

6.5 Recommendations

The findings from this evaluation of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative lead to several recommendations for the program upon its re-establishment. Given that a policies and procedures manual for the Initiative has not been developed, and that some stakeholders said that the policies and procedures currently in place are not adequate to support expansion of the program, one of the first tasks of the executive director and Board of Directors should be to develop a manual. This would help to ensure that the program is implemented as intended and that the functioning of the program is as streamlined and consistent as possible.

Several stakeholders commented that for articulated students participating in a family law incubator to receive the best education and training possible, the executive director should be an individual with significant experience practicing family law. While it is recognized that the executive director of a law incubator program requires many other skills as well, when the Board of Directors undertakes a search for an executive director, every effort should be made to recruit someone with a family law background as well as the entrepreneurial spirit necessary to develop and advance the Incubator.

The Board of Directors is crucial to the success of a legal incubator project. As noted by Duncan (2015, p. 248), developers of incubators need to "determine what will be expected of board members early on and ensure that you meet and communicate goals with board

members on a regular basis. It is extremely difficult to run a program entirely on the shoulders of the program director. Setting expectations early will decrease the likelihood of this happening.” The board members of ALAI should maintain a close working relationship with, and oversight of, the executive director, especially in the period immediately following the appointment of this individual.

Given that several stakeholders did not think that awareness of the existence of the Initiative is high among members of the legal community, extensive efforts need to be made to increase awareness of ALAI and the services it offers among members of this community. This should be a priority for the executive director and board members.

Since identifying sustainable funding for ALAI was a difficulty and led to suspension of the Initiative, ongoing efforts need to be made to identify alternative sources of sustainable funds if the program is to succeed on a long-term basis. This is currently ongoing and should be a continuing priority for both the executive director and board members.

Finally, plans for ongoing program monitoring and evaluation need to be developed and detailed in the policies and procedures manual. As noted by the California Commission on Access to Justice (2014, p. 16):

It is important for incubator programs to have an evaluation plan in place to measure progress towards the goals of the program. Regular evaluation will help programs identify best practices and practices that should be changed. Number of clients served, outcomes for clients, number of incubator participants launched into self-supporting law practices, quality of services provided, and sustainability of both the incubator program and its graduates should be measured, at a minimum.

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GLOSSARY

Coding: Analytic process in which qualitative data are categorized into common themes to facilitate analysis.

Missing Cases: The number of responses on individual questions that are not available. The most common reason for missing cases in survey data is that the respondent chose not to answer a particular question.

Multiple response data: Multiple response data refers to questions in which respondents are allowed to choose more than one answer. In tables where multiple response data are presented, the percentages presented for individual items will total more than 100.

N and n: N refers to the total number of responses received to a survey while n refers to a subset of the total responses that may be selected for specific data analyses. For example, if 100 men and women respond to a survey, then $N = 100$. If 30 of those respondents identify as women, then $n = 30$ women and $n = 70$ men.

Qualitative data: Refers to data that are descriptive rather than numeric in nature. Asking survey respondents to provide their opinion in their own words is an example of a qualitative question. Qualitative data can frequently be coded into quantitative data by identifying common themes across respondents' answers, and assigning numbers to each of the themes.

Quantitative data: Refers to data that can be quantified using numbers that can then be manipulated mathematically or statistically. Asking survey respondents the extent to which they agree with a statement on a scale with the potential responses being *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* is an example of a quantitative question. The responses can be assigned numbers ranging from 1 through 5 which can then be averaged across respondents to provide a mean score for the question.

Representativeness: The extent to which the responses to a survey are likely to reflect the responses that would be given if every potential respondent could be surveyed.

Response rate: The percentage of completed surveys returned out of the total number distributed to potential respondents.

APPENDIX A

CLIENT EXIT SURVEY

EVALUATION OF ASPIRE LEGAL ACCESS INITIATIVE CLIENT EXIT SURVEY

The Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family is conducting an evaluation of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative (ALAI). We would like to know about the legal services you received from ALAI and whether you were satisfied with the services received. The information we collect will be used to improve the services that ALAI offers.

It is important that you know that:

- Your participation is voluntary, and will not affect the services you receive from ALAI.*
- You don't have to answer any questions that you don't want to answer.*
- The information you provide in this questionnaire will only be presented in aggregate form, and individual respondents will not be identified.*

Background Information

1. How old are you?

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 or older |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer | | |

2. What is your gender identity?

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer | | |

3. What is the highest level of education you have finished?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than a high school diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> Some post-secondary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High school diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> Completed post-secondary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade certification | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |

4. What is your employment status?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employed Part-Time | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employed Full-Time | <input type="checkbox"/> On disability/ government benefits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Looking for work | <input type="checkbox"/> Not working, not looking for work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |

5. What is your present income?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under \$15,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$70,000 to \$89,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000 to \$29,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$90,000 to \$120,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000 to \$49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$120,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 to \$69,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |

About the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

5. How did you hear about the Aspire Legal Access Initiative?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A lawyer told me about it | <input type="checkbox"/> A friend/relative told me about it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I found it on the Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> I heard about it from the Faculty of Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I learned about it from a legal clinic | <input type="checkbox"/> I learned about it from a court worker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ | |

6. How long did it take to get an appointment at ALAI?

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 week | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 weeks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 weeks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | |

7. How many times did you meet with the lawyer? _____

8. What was the nature of your legal problem? (please check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce / separation | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardianship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child support | <input type="checkbox"/> Division of property |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spousal support | <input type="checkbox"/> Possession of home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting | <input type="checkbox"/> Protection order |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance enforcement |

9. What services did you receive from ALAI? (please check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal advice and information | <input type="checkbox"/> Child/spousal support calculations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Documents were reviewed | <input type="checkbox"/> Property calculations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Documents were drafted | <input type="checkbox"/> Representation in court |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Documents were filed | <input type="checkbox"/> Enforcement of agreements/orders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | |

10. About how much did you pay for the legal services you received from ALAI?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't pay anything | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2,000 to \$4,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1 to \$249 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 to \$9,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 to \$499 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 to \$19,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 to \$999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 to \$39,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 to \$1,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 or more |

11. Is your legal problem(s) resolved?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially

12. If your legal problem is resolved, about how long (in weeks) did it take to resolve your issues? _____

Overall Perceptions of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

13. Based on your experience, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have a better understanding of my legal rights and responsibilities now than before going to ALAI.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a better understanding of my legal options now than before going to ALAI.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a better understanding of the pros and cons of my options now than before going to ALAI.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with the services I received from ALAI.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The services I received were affordable for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would recommend ALAI to my friends or family in need of family law services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would use ALAI in the future if I have another family law problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Do you have any additional comments about the Initiative? _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

APPENDIX B

KEY STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

EVALUATION OF ASPIRE LEGAL ACCESS INITIATIVE STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

The Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family is conducting an evaluation of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the program's effectiveness in providing innovative legal services to self-represented litigants, as well as providing valuable training and experience for articulated law students. Please note that the information you provide in this questionnaire will only be presented in aggregate form, and individual respondents will not be identified.

Background Information

1. Which of the following best describes your profession?

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ALAI staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Judge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lawyer | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | |

2. Are you aware of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No (Please do not complete the remainder of this survey – thank you for your time)

If yes, how did you find out about the Initiative? _____

3. Have you had any direct involvement with the Initiative?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe the nature of your involvement. _____

Overall Perceptions of the Aspire Legal Access Initiative

4. Based on your experience, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
ALAI's articulated students receive valuable training and experience because of their involvement with the Initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ALAI increases access to legal services for low- and middle-income Albertans who earn too much to qualify for legal aid.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ALAI's clients gain knowledge of their legal rights and responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Are the clients accepted into the program appropriate for the Initiative?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know
If no, why not? _____
6. Are ALAI's criteria for accepting articulated students into the program appropriate?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know
If no, why not? _____
7. Is the training provided to articulated students adequate for the program?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know
If no, why not? _____
8. Is the legal community aware of the Initiative?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know
If no, what should be done to increase awareness of the program? _____

Future Directions

9. Are there any changes you would recommend for improving the program? _____
10. Do you think the Aspire Legal Access Initiative should be expanded to accept more students?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know
If no, why not? _____
11. Do you think the Aspire Legal Access Initiative should be expanded to serve more clients?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know
If no, why not? _____
12. Do you think the processes and procedures in place are adequate to support expansion of the program?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know
If no, why not? _____
13. Do you have any additional comments about the Initiative? _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey

