Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin has presided over thousands of cases in a 30-year career on the bench. Interestingly, she presides over a court where four of the nine seats are occupied by women. As the Globe and Mail reported: “In her early years, Chief Justice McLachlin often found herself wondering whether colleagues were parsing her statements with the subconscious thought, ‘Is that her hormones—or her women-ness—talking.’ That is no longer the case, she said. ‘We just don’t think in terms of gender on this court. I don’t think it is for the men on the court, either.’”

Rather, the challenge has become leading nine independent, brilliant minds in pursuit of making the best legal decisions possible. As she tackles this challenge, Chief Justice McLauchlin moves closer to becoming the longest-serving chief justice in the 135-year history of the court (she is two years away).

In addition to her judicial duties at the Supreme Court, the chief justice chairs the Canadian Judicial Council, the Advisory Council of the Order of Canada, and the Board of Governors of the National Judicial Institute. She also serves on the selection committee of the Vimy Award.

The chief justice has written many articles and publications and is the author of two books. She is the recipient of 29 honorary degrees and was named Commander of the French Legion of Honour in 2007. She was presented with the Queen’s Jubilee medal and the International Jurists award in 2008 and is an honorary member of the American College of Trial Lawyers. In 2010, she was named Canadian of the Year by the Canadian Club of Toronto and was inducted into the International Hall of Fame by the International Women’s Forum.

Chief Justice McLachlin is married to Frank McArdele and has a son, Angus.