

**Vanessa A. Racehorse**  
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University of New Mexico School of Law  
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## CURRICULUM VITAE

### EDUCATION

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#### **Columbia Law School**, New York, NY

Juris Doctor, received May 2017

Activities: *Columbia Law Review*, Bluebook Editor  
Native American Law Students Association (NALSA) Executive Board, President  
National NALSA Moot Court Participant  
National NALSA Board, Area 2 Representative

Awards: Parker School Recognition of Achievement in International and Comparative Law

#### **University of Amsterdam**, Amsterdam, Netherlands

LL.M in International Criminal Law, received May 2017

#### **University of Denver**, Denver, CO

Bachelor of Arts, received June 2013

Major: Psychology  
Minors: Leadership and Art  
Honors: Psychology Department Awards for Research & Citizenship, Dean's List 2009  
Activities: Pioneer Leadership Program, Native Student Alliance, Psychology Club  
Study Abroad: University of Western Australia, July 2011-June 2012

### ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

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#### **University of New Mexico School of Law**, Albuquerque, NM

*Assistant Professor of Law* May 2022-Present

- Affiliations: Law and Indigenous Peoples Program
- Courses: Indian Law (Spring 2024); Indigenous Peoples & International Law (Fall 2023); Tribal Law Journal Writing Seminar (Fall 2023); American Indian Children, Youth & Families Law (Spring 2023); Law of Indigenous Peoples (Fall 2022); Indian Law Appellate Advocacy (Fall 2022); Southwest Indian Law Clinic (Summer 2022)
- Faculty Advisor for the Tribal Law Journal (2023-2024; 2022-2023)
- Service: Academic Success Committee (2023-2024; 2022-2023); Student Retention, Suspension and Readmission Committee (2022-2023); Honors and Awards Committee (2023-2024)

#### **University of San Diego School of Law**, San Diego, CA

*Adjunct Law Professor* January 2022-May 2022

- Course: Native American Law

### TEACHING AND RESEARCH INTERESTS

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American Indian & Indigenous Peoples Law, International Law, Human Rights Law, Environmental Justice, Constitutional Law, Race and the Law, Administrative Law

### PUBLICATIONS

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*Tribal Health Self-Determination: The Role of Tribal Health Systems in Actualizing the Highest Attainable Standard of Health for American Indians and Alaska Natives*, 55 COLUM. HUM. RTS. L. REV. \_\_ (forthcoming 2024).

*Achieving Climate Justice Through Land Back: An Overview of Tribal Dispossession, Land Return Efforts, and Practical Mechanisms for #LandBack*, 34 COLO. ENV'T L.J. 175 (2023) (co-authored with Anna Hohag).

## **WORKING PAPERS**

*Chaco Canyon: Connecting Cultural Resources Protection with Environmental Justice* (Article)

*Indigenous Currents within the Rights of Nature Movement* (Article)

*Advancing Water Equity in Indian Country* (Article)

## **BAR PUBLICATIONS**

*Indigenous Influence on the Rights of Nature Movement*, 38:3 NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT (ABA SECTION OF ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, AND RESOURCES) (Fall 2023).

## **MEDIA INTERVIEWS**

*SCOTUS Ruling on ICWA a victory for welfare of Native American children*, SOURCE NM (June 15, 2023), <https://sourcenm.com/2023/06/15/scotus-ruling-on-icwa-a-victory-for-welfare-of-native-american-children/>.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

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*A Year After Dobbs: Women's Health in Indian Country*, Federal Bar Association, CLE Event, 49th Annual Indian Law Conference, Albuquerque, NM (April 5, 2024).

*Reflections on the History and Future of Tribal Self-Governance*, American Indian Law Review's 50th Anniversary Symposium, University of Oklahoma College of Law, Norman, Oklahoma (March 8, 2024).

*Chaco Canyon: Connecting Cultural Resources Protection with Environmental Justice*, presented at Natural Resources and Energy Law Works-in-Progress, Association of American Law Schools 2024 Annual Meeting (January 5, 2024).

*Tribal Health Self-Determination: The Role of Tribal Health Systems in Actualizing the Highest Attainable Standard of Health for American Indians and Alaska Natives*, presented at

New Voices in International Human Rights panel, Association of American Law Schools 2024 Annual Meeting (January 3, 2024).

Gathering of Indigenous Legal Scholars, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law (September 14, 2023).

Faculty Colloquium, UNM School of Law, CLE event (September 6, 2023).

*Indian Law 101*, State Bar of New Mexico, CLE Event, 2023 Annual Meeting, Santa Ana Pueblo, NM (July 27, 2023).

*Human Rights in the Supreme Court: Haaland v. Brackeen*, co-panelist, University of Iowa Center for Human Rights, Zoom event (July 12, 2023).

*Constitutional and Administrative Legal Matters in Indian Country*, co-panelist, Hot Topics in Indian Law Symposium, University of Idaho College of Law, Zoom event (February 17, 2023).

*Ethical Lawyering when Confronted with Legal Quandaries*, UNM Law Recent Graduate Chapter, Ethics CLE, Zoom event (December 9, 2022).

*Two Years Under the Haaland Administration: Tribal Co-Stewardship of Public Lands and Waters*, co-panelist, California Indian Law Association, 2022 California Indian Law Conference, Cabazon, CA (October 3, 2022).

*Advancing Water Equity in Indian Country*, California Indian Law Association, CLE Event, 2022 Spring Indian Law Speaker Series, Zoom event (April 28, 2022).

*The Contemporary Fight for Tribal Sovereignty*, University of San Diego School of Law speaker series, Perspectives on Justice, Equity, and the Law, San Diego, CA (November 30, 2021).

*A.B. 658 and its Ramifications for Tribes*, Law Seminars International, Seventh Annual Advanced Conference on Tribal Water in California, Zoom event (October 19, 2020).

*Tribal Sovereignty*, Arizona Tribal Gaming Regulators Alliance Training Academy, Parker, AZ (May 6, 2019).

## **OTHER LEGAL EXPERIENCE**

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### **Native American Heritage Commission**, Sacramento, CA

*CalNAGPRA Attorney*

April 2021-March 2022

Managed implementation of the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (CalNAGPRA). Drafted regulations for CalNAGPRA and provided legal research for issues impacting the Native American Heritage Commission.

### **Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP**, San Diego, CA

*Associate Attorney*

August 2019-November 2020

Worked in all areas of the firm's practice. Conducted research and wrote memoranda on a wide array of legal issues, including property law, environmental law, tax law, employment law, gaming and child welfare law. Drafted and revised pleadings for litigation matters.

### **Colorado River Indian Tribes**, Parker, AZ

*Deputy Attorney General*

May 2018-July 2019

Provided legal representation to the Colorado River Indian Tribes, its Tribal Council, Departments and enterprises. Drafted and reviewed contracts, leases, tribal policies, legislation and court pleadings. Represented the Tribe in Indian Child Welfare Act proceedings. Provided legal opinions on various matters, including environmental law, property law, criminal law, law enforcement, human resources, and business law.

### **Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP**, Washington, D.C.

*Summer Associate*

May 2016-August 2016

Researched and drafted memoranda on a wide range of issues relevant to Native American law, including Native American land claims, treaty interpretation and water rights settlements. Researched tribal constitutional matters at the National Archives and the Library of Congress. Also attended legislative hearings at the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and wrote memoranda analyzing the impact of proposed legislation on tribal entities.

### **Professor Amal Clooney, Columbia Law School**, New York, NY

*Research Assistant*

January 2016-June 2016

Researched the right to a fair trial under international legal instruments, specifically the right not to be compelled to testify against oneself. This research was ultimately used for the leading treatise on fair trials, "The Right to a Fair Trial in International Law".

### **Human Rights Clinic, Columbia Law School**, New York, NY

*Student Participant*

September 2015-May 2016

Supported the advocacy efforts of a coalition of social organizations in the Cajamarca region of Peru that opposed a proposed gold and copper mining project. Assisted in the editing and completion of a report analyzing the environmental and social risks posed by the mining project.

### **Anishinabe Legal Services**, Cass Lake, MN

*Pro Bono Caravan Leader, Participant*

March 2016 and March 2015

Participated in pro bono trips during two separate spring breaks. Organized a group of law students to work with staff attorneys and provide legal clinics for Indigenous peoples of the Leech Lake, Red Lake and White Earth Reservations. Assisted in a diverse range of legal issues from seeking child support to accessing public benefits.

### **Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights**, Harare, Zimbabwe

*Legal Intern, Human Rights Internship Program Fellow*

June 2015-July 2015

Researched and drafted memoranda to support the organization's work on a variety of cases, including a memorandum on international legal principles relevant to arbitrary detention and conditions during detainment, a report on the

requirements for a rescission of a default judgment against indigent clients, and a memorandum comparing Zimbabwe's Immigration Act to international humanitarian principles applicable to non-nationals.

**Native Vote and Four Directions, Pine Ridge, SD**

*Volunteer Non-partisan Election Monitor*

November 2014

Part of a cohort of Columbia Law School students volunteering on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations in South Dakota during the November 2014 elections. Worked as a non-partisan election monitor to help register voters and ensure voters without IDs were still able to participate in the electoral process.

**BAR ADMISSIONS**

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California (Bar No. 317737)

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

U.S. District Court, Central District of California

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

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Member, Association for American Law Schools

Member, Clinical Legal Education Association

Member, American Bar Association

Member, California Indian Law Association