

**Vanessa Ann Racehorse**  
Associate Professor of Law  
University of Colorado Law School  
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## CURRICULUM VITAE

### ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

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#### **University of Colorado Law School, Boulder, CO**

*Associate Professor of Law*

June 2024-Present

*Dean's Faculty Fellow*

August 2024-Present

- Affiliations: American Indian Law Program, Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies
- Courses: Tribal Law, American Indian Law II
- Service: Board member of the Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy, and the Environment; Public Service and Diversity Committee (Spring 2026); LILAC Committee (Spring 2026); Colloquium Committee (2024-2025); Moot Court Coach, National Native American Law Students Association Moot Court (2024-2025)
- Awards: Outstanding New Faculty Member (2025)

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

*Assistant Professor of Law*

May 2022-May 2024

- Affiliations: Law and Indigenous Peoples Program
- Courses: Indian Law; Indigenous Peoples & International Law; Tribal Law Journal Writing Seminar; American Indian Children, Youth & Families Law; Law of Indigenous Peoples; Indian Law Appellate Advocacy; Southwest Indian Law Clinic
- 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); Moot Court Judge, National Native American Law Students Association Moot Court (2023-2024; 2022-2023)

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

*Adjunct Law Professor*

January 2022-May 2022

- Course: Native American Law

### 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  
Human Rights Clinic  
Research Assistant to Professor Amal Clooney

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

Activities: Native Student Alliance, Leadership Program, Psychology Club

Study Abroad: University of Western Australia, July 2011-June 2012

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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### **ARTICLES**

*Chaco Roads: Connecting Cultural Resources Protection with Environmental Justice*, 97 COLORADO LAW REVIEW \_\_ (forthcoming 2026).

*Tribal Health Self-Determination: The Role of Tribal Health Systems in Actualizing the Highest Attainable Standard of Health for American Indians and Alaska Natives*, 56 COLUMBIA HUMAN RIGHTS LAW REVIEW 183 (2025).

- Reviewed by Ezra Rosser, *Improving Health Services for Tribal Communities*, JOTWELL (July 1, 2024).
- Highly recommended by Matthew L.M. Fletcher, *Vanessa Racehorse on Tribal Health Self-Determination*, TURTLE TALK (Apr. 10, 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) (invited contribution).

### **WORKS IN PROGRESS**

*Alaska Native Rights in a Changing Climate* (Article)

*Urban Indian Healthcare* (Article)

*Internet Gaming: The New "Casino Compromise" in Indian Country* (Article)

### **BOOK CHAPTERS**

*Rematriation and Restoration of Ancestral Homelands*, in LAND BACK: RESTORING NATIVE CONTROL OF LAND IN THE UNITED STATES (forthcoming 2026).

### **SYMPOSIA, INVITED ESSAYS, AND BAR PUBLICATIONS**

*Cultivating Hope: A Future with Ethics Towards People and Places*, 96(3) COLORADO LAW REVIEW 594 (2025) (invited contribution) (foreword for the natural resources issue).

*Teaching at the Intersection of Federal Indian Law and Environmental Law Courses*, 49 VERMONT LAW REVIEW 202 (2025) (with Mia Montoya Hammersley, Heather Tanana, Nadine Padilla, and Gerald Torres) (conference transcript).

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

### **MEDIA INTERVIEWS**

*What is the Land Back Movement?*, BBC NEWS, WHAT IN THE WORLD PODCAST (June 30, 2025), <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct73p2>.

*Ute Mountain Ute Tribe joins lawsuit against Colorado over sports betting*, COLORADO PUBLIC RADIO NEWS (Sept. 27, 2024), <https://www.cpr.org/2024/09/27/colorado-sports-betting-lawsuit-ute-mountain-ute-tribe/>.

*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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*Indigenous Resilience through Tribal Self-Determination*, panelist, Indian Nations and Indigenous Peoples Section, Association of American Law Schools 2026 Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA (January 9, 2026).

*Alaska Native Rights in a Changing Climate*, presented at Emerging Climate Law Workshop, University of San Diego School of Law, San Diego, CA (December 5, 2025).

*The Land Back Movement and Federal Public Lands*, Moderator, Martz Symposium, Getches-Wilkinson Center, University of Colorado Law School, Boulder, CO (Oct. 23, 2025).

*Rematriation and Restoration of Ancestral Homelands*, presented at Land Back Workshop, University of Colorado Law School, Boulder, CO (October 17, 2025).

*Land Back and the Environmental Justice Movement in Indian Country*, Guest lecturer, Advanced Federal Indian Law: Contemporary Issues course (Prof. Stephen Pevar), Yale Law School (August 27, 2025).

*Reparations from Below*, panelist, University of Oxford Department of International Development, Oxford, England (June 16, 2025).

*Chaco Roads: Connecting Cultural Resources Protection with Environmental Justice*, presented at

Rocky Mountain Junior Environmental Law Scholars Summer Workshop, Zoom (July 7, 2025).

Conference of Asian Pacific American Law Faculty and Western Law Teachers of Color Joint Conference, William S. Richardson School of Law, Honolulu, Hawai'i (June 26, 2025).

Gathering of Indigenous Legal Scholars, UCLA School of Law, Los Angeles, CA (August 8, 2024).

Natural Resources and Energy Law Works-in-Progress session, Association of American Law Schools 2024 Annual Meeting (January 5, 2024).

*The Constitutional Status of Tribal Nations*, Guest lecturer,

Constitutional Law course (Prof. Deep Gulasekaram and Prof. Doug Spencer), University of Colorado Law School (April 3, 2025).

Constitutional Law course (Prof. George Bach and Prof. Vinay Harpalani), University of New Mexico School of Law (February 2023).

*Becerra v. San Carlos Apache Tribe*, panelist, Byron White Center for the Study of American Constitutional Law, University of Colorado Law School, 2024 Supreme Court Review, Boulder, Colorado (September 18, 2024).

*Teaching at the Intersection of Federal Indian Law and Environmental Law Courses*, panelist, Vermont Law & Graduate School Environmental Law Center, Emerging Environmental Law Curriculum Conference, South Royalton, VT (June 21, 2024).

*The Trust Relationship*, panelist, Cornell Law School, Indigenous Law Summit, Ithaca, NY (April 13, 2024).

*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).

*Healthcare in Indian Country*, Guest lecturer, Health Law course (Prof. Thomas Williams), American University Washington College of Law (February 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*, 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 Lanyering 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*, 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).

## **OTHER LEGAL EXPERIENCE**

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**Native American Heritage Commission**, Sacramento, CA  
*CalNAGPRA Attorney*

April 2021-March 2022

**Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP**, San Diego, CA  
*Associate Attorney*  
*Summer Associate*

August 2019-November 2020  
May 2016-August 2016

**Colorado River Indian Tribes**, Parker, AZ  
*Deputy Attorney General*

May 2018-July 2019

**Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights**, Harare, Zimbabwe  
*Legal Intern, Human Rights Internship Program Fellow*

June 2015-July 2015

**Anishinabe Legal Services**, Cass Lake, MN  
*Pro Bono Caravan Leader, Participant*

March 2016 and March 2015

**Native Vote and Four Directions**, Pine Ridge, SD  
*Volunteer Non-partisan Election Monitor*

November 2014 and November 2024

#### **SERVICE**

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Peer Reviewer for the *Yale Law Journal*  
Attorney Mentor for the California Indian Law Association

#### **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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Vice-Chair, Association for American Law Schools Indian Nations and Indigenous Peoples Section  
Member, Association for American Law Schools  
Member, American Bar Association  
Member, Native American Bar Association  
Member, California Indian Law Association