

# Danika Watson

## Associate

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Anchorage – 907.257.7820



A fourth-generation Alaskan championing clients with empathy, integrity, and perseverance.

Danika is an experienced Alaska commercial litigation and intellectual property attorney.

As a litigator Danika represents commercial clients before Alaska agencies and courts, seeking fair resolutions from negotiations to administrative proceedings to trial courts to appeals. In her national intellectual property practice, she spearheads intellectual property litigation, dispute resolution, and strategic counsel to trademark and copyright owners, spanning the technology, outdoor, arts, Alaska Native Corporation, science, and nonprofit sectors. Additionally, Danika advises Alaska Native Corporations, Alaska municipalities, and state agency clients, primarily on issues of governance and litigation risk management under Alaska and federal law, and serves as a parliamentarian to Alaska Native Corporations.

Before joining Dorsey, Danika clerked for the Hon. Jennifer S. Henderson of the Alaska Supreme Court and the Hon. Timothy M. Burgess of the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska. She completed internships at the Alaska Department of Law's Labor & State Affairs Section and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Alaska. Additionally, she was a summer associate at an international law firm. She is an avid legal writer with scholarship published in the Fordham Law Review, American Indian Law Journal, and Alaska Law Review.

Before law school, Danika performed and toured internationally as a career classical musician and Juilliard graduate. She brings her clients the same commitment to the pursuit of excellence, exceptional performance, rapid learning, and positive human connection.

## Education

- Fordham University School of Law (J.D., 2022)
- The Juilliard School (M.M., 2017)
- Northwestern University (B.M., 2015)

## Bar Admissions

- Alaska

## Select Experience

- Conversion claims defense for public entity: Successfully defended public entity against conversion claims arising from a port located in Southeast Alaska.
- First Amendment counseling for public entity: Advised public entity regarding business licensing issues implicating First Amendment rights, including strategic recommendations to mitigate potential litigation risks.
- Investigation for nonprofit board: Launched and led sensitive investigation for board of directors into C-suite executive misconduct allegations, producing findings and recommendations and scaffolding executive transition teams with best practices and policy change.
- Alaska Public Records Act compliance for public entity: Advised public entity regarding obligations under the Alaska Public Records Act and prepared comprehensive responses to outstanding public records requests.

## Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska
- U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado

## Clerkships

- Alaska Supreme Court, Justice Jennifer S. Henderson, 2022–2023
- U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska, Judge Timothy M. Burgess, 2023–2024

## Charitable & Civic Involvement

- First Violinist, Anchorage Symphony Orchestra
- Board Member, Anchorage Chamber Music Festival

## Accolades

- Consistently providing pro bono legal assistance to those in need through Dorsey's Pro Bono program

## Additional Information

- Issues in Implementing Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction in Alaska's Tribal Courts, 40 ALASKA L. REV. 1 (2023).
- Polarizing Impact: Indigenous Labor Consultation under the International Labor Organization Convention 169 and the Emerging Polar Shipping Industry, 90 FORDHAM L. REV. ONLINE 165 (May 2022).
- Healthcare Self-Governance, 10 AM. INDIAN L. J. 1 (Dec. 2021).
- Note, Free and Fair: A Novel Threshold Test for Equal Protection Election Law Claims, 90 FORDHAM L. REV. 991 (Nov. 2021).
- Joseph Palandrani & Danika Watson, Comment, Systemic Racism and Voting Rights in 2021, 89 FORDHAM L. REV. ONLINE 124 (May 2021).

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## Insights

July 13, 2026

**Alaska HB 126: What Changes for Alaska Native Corporations, Proxy Filings, and**

## **Annual Reports**

August 5, 2025

**Bonnie Paskvan and Danika Watson Featured in Alaska Business on the Role of Litigators in Alaska**

February 10, 2025

**What Companies and Higher Education Institutions Need to Know Regarding DOJ's New Memoranda to Enforce the Administration's Directive to "End Illegal DEI" Practices and for the "Total Elimination of Cartels and Transnational Criminal Organizations"**

January 27, 2025

**ANC Shareholder Preferences Should Continue Despite Executive Order Revoking Affirmative Action and DEI Initiatives in Federal Contracting**

December 13, 2024

**Danika Watson Highlighted in The Alaska Bar Rag**