

Nazune Menka

(Denaakke'e & Lumbee)

2024-25 Obama USA Leader

Assistant Professor of Law | Faculty Director of the Northwest Center for Indigenous Law
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EDUCATION

University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law, Tucson, AZ

Juris Doctorate, 2016 to 2018 (transferred from Seattle University)

Honors: Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program Certificate; Williams Achievement Scholar;
Northwest Indian Bar Association Scholar; Dean's List Fall 2017

Leadership: Staff Editor, ARIZONA JOURNAL ON ENVIRONMENTAL LAW & POLICY; Research Assistant
for Regents Professor Robert Williams; NALSA Leader; Law Faculty Executive Committee Member;
ABA Law Student Division Program & Communications Committee Member; International Human
Rights Clinic

University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

Master of Science in Soil, Water & Environmental Science, 2012 to 2014

North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC

Bachelor of Arts, Public Relations, 1997 to 2002

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS & TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor of Law, Seattle University School of Law, Environmental Law and Indigenous Peoples
Law & the U.S. (Fall 2024 & 2027; Spring 2026); Constitutional Law I (Spring 2025 & 2027).

Pre-Law Summer Institute Professor, American Indian Law Center at the University of New Mexico
(Summer 2025 (Advocacy); Summer 2026 (Constitutional Law)).

Lecturer & Course Designer, University of California, Berkeley, Legal Studies undergraduate course
“Decolonizing UC Berkeley” (Spring 2023).

Clinical Supervising Attorney, University of California, Berkeley School of Law, Environmental Law Clinic
& Seminar (Fall 2022 & Spring 2023).

Lecturer, University of California, Berkeley School of Law, “Indigenous Peoples, Law, and the United
States” (Spring 2022).

Lecturer & Course Designer, University of California, Berkeley, Legal Studies undergraduate course “Racial
and Colonial Foundations of UC Berkeley” (Fall 2021) (created in collaboration with Truth and Justice
Project).

PUBLICATIONS

Indigenous Justice as Ecological Justice (work in progress)

The Other Constitutional Avoidance (work in progress)

The Corpus Juris of (Alaska Native) Inherent Tribal Sovereignty, 42 Alaska L. Rev. 1, 1-42 (2026).

The Reparative Return of Treaty-making? Native Nations, Legal Norms, & the U.S., 30 TEX. J. C.L.C.R. 2, 213-69

(2025).

Native Nation Resistance to the Machinations of Settler Colonial Democracy, 59 HARV. C.R.-C.L. L. REV. 2, 141-74 (2024).

Decolonizing the Legal Academy, in INTEGRATING DOCTRINE & DIVERSITY: INCLUSION & EQUITY BEYOND THE FIRST YEAR (Nicole P. Dyszlewski et al. eds., 2024).

Nazune Menka & Laura Spitz, *Using Vulnerability Theory to Reconceive the Relationships Between the Native Nations, the United States, and the States*, in LAW, VULNERABILITY, AND THE RESPONSIVE STATE: BEYOND EQUALITY AND LIBERTY (Martha Fineman & Laura Spitz eds., 2023).

Overturning Roe: The Supreme(ly colonial) Court, CAL. INDIAN L. ASS'N LEGAL J., 21-23 (Fall 2022).

Federal Courts, Tribal Sovereign Immunity, & Tribally Owned Businesses, CAL. INDIAN L. ASS'N LEGAL J., 38-40 (Summer 2020).

Bioaccessibility, Release Kinetics, and Molecular Speciation of Arsenic and Lead in Geo-Dusts from the Iron King Mine Federal Superfund Site in Humboldt, Arizona, 29 REV. ENV'T HEALTH 23 (2014).

LEGAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Seattle University School of Law, Seattle, WA

Assistant Professor of Law, Faculty Director Northwest Center for Indigenous Law Curriculum & Pedagogy Committee (2024-25); *Budget Committee* (2025-26)
Faculty Advisor, American Indian Law Journal & Native American Law Student Association
Moot Court Coach, Seattle U Law NALSA, National NALSA (2026)

University of California, Berkeley School of Law, Berkeley, CA

Executive Director, Center for Indigenous Law & Justice (December 2023- June 2024)
Environmental Law Clinic Supervising Attorney (June 2022 – October 2023)
Lecturer (August 2021 – Spring 2023)
Tribal Cultural Resources Project Policy Fellow (September 2020 - June 2022)

Rosette, LLP, Grand Rapids, MI

Of Counsel, September 2020 - 2024
Associate Attorney, May 2019 - September 2020
Law Clerk, October 2018 - May 2019
Law Clerk, Summer 2017

First Alaskans Institute Public Policy Fellow-Extern, Juneau, AK

Special Assistant to Tribal Relations Senior Policy Adviser for Governor Walker, Spring 2022

Native American Rights Fund, Anchorage, AK

Law Clerk, Summer 2016

COMMENTARY & MEDIA APPEARANCES

Justin Boro, *Carrying Wisdom Forward: IPLP's Lasting Impact on Indigenous Legal Education*, U of A James E. Rogers College of Law News (Nov. 3, 2025).

Dave Miller, *Trump administration attempts to use 19th century Native American case to overturn birthright citizenship*, OREGON PUBLIC BROADCASTING: THINK OUT LOUD (Apr. 07, 2025) (Podcast guest)

Nazune Menka, *The LandBack Movement: Native Nations and the Reclamation of Ancestral Lands*, 39 AM. BAR ASS'N NAT. RES. & ENV'T 3 (Mar. 07 2025).

Art Hughes, *Trump 2025 How It Started How It's Going*, NATIVE AMERICA CALLING (Jan. 23, 2025) (national radio broadcast and Podcast guest).

Anna V. Smith, *What a second Trump term could mean for tribes*, HIGH COUNTRY NEWS 14-15 (Jan. 2025).

Angela Gonzalez, *Nazune Menka – Koyukon Athabascan Lanyer and Professor*, ATHABASCAN WOMAN BLOG (Sept. 03, 2024).

Nazune Menka, *Financial Self-Determination for Native Nations Assuming Federal Programming*, in THE REGULATORY REVIEW, The Supreme Court's 2023-2024 Regulatory Term (July 25, 2024) (online essay).

Tyler Walicek, *UC Berkeley Holds Thousands of Native Remains Despite Repatriation Requests*, TRUTHOUT (June 25, 2023).

Lucia Umeki-Martinez, *'Decolonizing UC Berkeley': Professor Nazune Menka creates course on settler colonialism*, THE DAILY CALIFORNIAN (March 20, 2023).

Be the Change Podcast, *Nazune Menka*, THELTON E. HENDERSON CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AT BERKELEY LAW (March 2023).

Chrissa Olson, *Study finds Indigenous land tenure improves environmental outcomes in Atlantic Forest*, THE DAILY CALIFORNIAN (January 20, 2023).

Exhibiting Kinship Podcast, *Episode 7 with Nazune Menka*, (July 29, 2022).

Nazune Menka, *Righting the Relationships: Embracing an Indigenous worldview of climate change*, UU WORLD (Winter 2022).

Sherry Karabin, *The unique mission of law schools at land-grant universities*, PRELAW, at 20-21 (January 28, 2022).

Nazune Menka, *Honoring Our History: Truth, Healing, Reconciliation, Reparation*, CAL ATHLETICS BELONGING BLOG (Nov. 29, 2021).

Nazune Menka, *Why Deb Haaland's confirmation as interior secretary is so important to Indigenous communities*, BERKELEY BLOG (Mar. 15, 2021).

Nazune Menka, *A call to action on National Native American Heritage Day*, BERKELEY BLOG (Nov. 25, 2020).

PRESENTATIONS (selected)

- University of Michigan, Indian Law Workshop, Guest Presenter *Indigenous Justice as Ecological Justice*,

Ann Arbor, MI (Apr. 2026)

- Washington State Senate Democratic Caucus, *Tribal Sovereignty 101*, Presenter, Olympia, WA (Jan. 2026)
- Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology's India Trek with Seattle University, *Tribal Nations: Land & Law*, Guest Lecturer, Bhubaneswar, India (Dec. 2026)
- Stanford Humanities Center, Marta Weeks Workshop, *Alaska Native Resistance to Settler Colonial Visions of Sovereignty*, Guest Speaker (Nov. 2026)
- AALS, *The Rule of Law, Lawyers, and Indigenous Rights*, Webinar Panel Presenter (Oct. 2025)
- Law & Society Association, *Writing the U.S. Empire Whole*, Panel Presenter Chicago, IL (May 2025)
- Western Law Teachers of Color, *Liberation from the Rule of Law: Indigenous Futures, Transgressing Colonial Borders, Worker Resistance, and the Possibility of Justice*, Panel Organizer & Presenter Honolulu, HI (June 2025)
- Seattle U, Social Justice Monday, *Executive Power as a Tool of Inclusion & Exclusion*, Presenter (April 2025)
- Seattle U, Racial Equity Summit Futures Lab, *Liberation From or Through the Law*, Presenter (April 2025)
- University of Texas, Texas Journal on Civil Rights Civil Liberties Symposium, *Indigenous Rights in 2025*, Global Indigeneity and Author Panel Presenter, Austin TX (March 2025)
- Women in Ranching, Rooted in the Land, *The Confluence: Women and the Land: Legal, Cultural, and Environmental Leadership*, Presenter, Paicines, CA (March 2025)
- SU Law American Indian Law Journal Symposium, *Re-Indigenizing the Law: Indigenous Law in the Pacific Northwest*, Presenter (March 2025)
- Berlin Museum of Natural History, Center for Humanities of Nature, Heritage and Justice: Unpacking Legal Narratives in Natural History Lecture Series, *Mitigating Colonialism: Indigenous Peoples, Legal Pluralism, & Restitution*, Presenter (Jan. 2025)
- KUPU, Obama Foundation Programs Information Session, Presenter, Honolulu, HI (Dec. 2024)
- SU Law Center for Indian Law & Policy, UC Berkeley Center for Indigenous Law & Justice, *New Voices in Citizenship, Democracy & Indigeneity Workshop*, Organizer/Moderator/Presenter, *Indigenous Diplomacies in Alaska* Berkeley, CA (Nov. 2024).
- Native Action Network, Women's Leadership Forum Keynote, *Reclaiming Indigenous Land, Language & Law*, Auburn, WA (Oct. 2024)
- Indigi-Grad FEWS, Indigenous Excellence Speaker Series Presenter, *Re-Indigenizing Land, Language & Law* Berkeley, CA (Sept. 2024)
- ASU-UCLA Gathering of Indigenous Legal Scholars, *Indigenous Diplomacies in Alaska*, Presenter Los Angeles, CA (Aug. 2024)
- California Indian Law Association, *Introduction to Indian Law*, Moderator (May 2024)
- Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review Symposium Presenter, Cambridge, MA (April 2024)
- UC Berkeley School of Law, *Justice, the Law, and Storytelling: A Conversation with Yurok Chief Judge Abby Abinanti and New Yorker Journalist Sarah Stillman*, Organizer/Moderator (March 2024)
- UC Berkeley School of Law, *The Scandal of Cal: A Book Talk with Author Tony Platt*, Presenter (November 2023)
- UC Berkeley Manager's Forum, Native American Heritage Month, Presenter (November 2023)
- UC Berkeley, OLLI Townhall, *Addressing Berkeley's History*, Presenter (September 2023)
- ASU-UCLA Gathering of Indigenous Legal Scholars, Presenting *Native Nations & Diplomacy*, Phoenix, AZ (September 2023)
- Western People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference, *Critical Mobilization*, Plenary Presenter, Los Angeles, CA (June 2023)

- Law and Society Association, *Exceptional Imperialism: Native Nations, Indigenous Peoples & the U.S. Constitution*, Session Organizer and Presenter, San Juan, PR (June 2023)
- AALS, Conference on Clinical Legal Education, Clinicians of Color Workshop, *Navigating Clinical Work with Communities of Color through Predominantly White Law Schools*, Presenter (May 2023)
- Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice at Berkeley Law, Ruth Chance Lecture, *An Indigenous Worldview: Connections between Land, Language, Liberation, and the Law* (February 2023)
- California Indian Law Association, Annual Conference, *Indigenous Futurism: Beyond the Self-Determination Era*, Panel Organizer & Presenter, Cabazon, CA (October 2022)
- SACNAS, Annual Conference, *Borderless Indigeneity*, Panel Organizer & Presenter, San Juan, PR (October 2022)
- NYU-Yale American Indian Sovereignty Project & Institute for Constitutional History, “*Native Peoples, American Colonialism, and the U.S. Constitution*” Seminar Participant, Yale Law, CT (June 19-24, 2022).
- UC Berkeley School of Law, National Park Service National NAGPRA Program, UC Berkeley Libraries, *NAGPRA and the Indian Claims Commission: Can the ICC's Findings be Reclaimed by Native Nations to Achieve Repatriation?*, Organizer & Presenter, (January 2021)
- UC Berkeley School of Law, *Indigenous People & The Struggle to Access Water*, Moderator, (November 2021)
- UCSF, Native Retreat Workshop, *Why an Indigenous Worldview is the Future: Land, Community, Connectedness, and the Need for Sovereignty*, Presenter (November 2021)
- UC Berkeley Graduate Programs & Cal Athletics, *Indigenous Peoples Day Panel* (October 2021)
- UC Berkeley School of Law, *Tribal Advocacy: Comment Writing* (May 2021)
- NATHPO, Annual Summit, Tribal Cultural Resources Project, Presenter (January 2021)
- SACNAS, Annual Conference, Opening Ceremonies and Award MC, (2020 & 2021)
- SACNAS, Annual Conference, *International Indigenous Rights*, Panel Organizer & Presenter, Honolulu, HI (2019)
- Women Empowering Women in Indigenous Nations, *Tribal Sovereignty & Tribal Businesses: Best Practices*, Panel Presenter, Alpine, CA (2019)
- Chief Seattle Club, Annual Fundraiser, MC (2016)
- Or. State Univ. Superfund Rsch. Program, *Tribes' Unique Political, Legal and Historical Circumstances: Implications for Research*, (2016) (online open access lecture co-authored with Professor Catherine O'Neill).
- SACNAS Annual Conference, *Science & Policy Panel*, Presenter, Los Angeles, CA (2015)
- Pacific Basin Consortium on Environment & Health, *Bioavailability, release kinetics, and molecular speciation of arsenic and lead in geo-dusts from the Iron King Mine Federal Superfund Site in Humboldt, Arizona*, Presenter, Honolulu, HI (2012)
- Northeastern State University Symposium on the American Indian, *Giving Back and Moving Forward: Utilizing Traditional Ways of Knowing in Research*, Keynote, Tahlequah, OK (2011)
- International Arctic Science Committee, Arctic Science Summit Week, *Risks to Human Health from a Changing Arctic*, Session Convenor, Bergen, Norway (2009)

ADVOCACY & RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Hawai'i State Senate Ways and Means Committee, Honolulu, HI
Bills Analyst, January 2015 - May 2015

Department of Energy, Grand Junction, CO
Legacy Management Intern, Summer 2014

University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

Superfund Program Trainee & Graduate Research Assistant, January 2011 - May 2014

University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK

Resilience and Adaptation Fellow IGERT-NSF, August 2009 - December 2010

Center for International Climate and Environmental Research Oslo, Oslo, Norway

Graduate Research Assistant, Summer 2010

U. S. House of Representatives, Office of Natural Resources, Washington DC

Congressional Intern, Native American Affairs, January 2009 - May 2009

Hawaii Maoli, Honolulu, HI

Grant Writer & Administrator, March 2008 - August 2009

National Park Service: Gates of the Arctic National Park, Fairbanks, AK

Community Outreach Assistant & Report Editor, Summer 2008

Arizona State University, Department of Environmental Technology Management, Mesa, AZ

Environmental Law Writer, Fall 2007

Rio Salado & CompuGirls, Phoenix, AZ

Science Club & STEM Teacher, 2006 - 2007

McDaniel Lambert, Inc. Environmental & Health Relations (now Intrinsic), Venice, CA

Research Assistant, 2004 - 2005

Four Directions Summer Research Program, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA

Research Assistant, Summer 2003

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Department of Environmental Health and Engineering: Communication Division, Anchorage, AK

Extern Communications Writer, Summer 2002

Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Air and Radiation, Policy Analysis and Communication Department, Raleigh, NC

Extern Editor & Writer, Spring 2002

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: National Immunization Program: Education, Information and Partnership Branch, Atlanta, GA

Extern Communications Writer & Research Assistant, Summer 2001

AMICUS CURIAE BRIEFS

Brief for Legal Scholars as Amici Curiae in Support of Respondents, *Becerra v. San Carlos Apache Tribe*, *Becerra v. Northern Arapaho Tribe*, 144 S. Ct. 1428 (Nos. 23-250 & 23-253).

Brief for Indian Law Professors as Amici Curiae in Support of Federal and Tribal Defendants, *Haaland v. Brackeen*, 142 S. Ct. 1205 (2022) (Nos. 21-376, 21-377, 21-380).

Brief for Seth Davis and Nazune Menka as Amici Curiae in Support of Respondents, Ruegg & Ellsworth v. City of Berkeley, (Cal. App. 1st Dist. 2021), *reh'g denied* (May 19, 2021), *rev. denied* (July 28, 2021) (No. S269012).

AWARDS (selected)

Seattle University Center for Environmental Justice & Sustainability Faculty Fellow Award (2025-26)
Obama Leaders USA (2024-25)
UC Berkeley American Cultures Engaged Scholarship Grant (2022-23)
UC Berkeley Professional Development Grant (2022-23)
Williams Achievement Full-Tuition Scholarship, University of Arizona (2016-18)
Perkins Coie North Star Award, Anchorage, AK (2016)
Public Interest Law Foundation Competitive Grant Award, Seattle, WA (2016)
University of Arizona Superfund Research Center, Fellow, Tucson, AZ (2012-14)
National Science Foundation-IGERT, Fellow, Fairbanks, AK (2009-11)
Arctic Monitoring Assessment Program, Travel Scholarship, Copenhagen, Denmark (2011)
SACNAS, Best Oral Presentation Award for Environmental Science, Anaheim, CA (2010)
Arctic Frontiers Ph.D. Young Scientist Forum Scholarship, Tromsø, Norway (2008)
Arctic Research Consortium of the United States, Travel Awardee & Presenter, Washington D.C. (2007)
ANZACC Global Initiatives Scholarship University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand (2007)
Indian Health Service Full-Tuition Scholarship (2002-03)
American Indian Science and Engineering Society, EPA Tribal Lands Scholarship (2001-02)

BAR, PROFESSIONAL, & VOLUNTEER MEMBERSHIPS

State Bar of Michigan (P83436, admitted May 2019)
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Tribal Court (admitted July 2019)
W.D. Michigan Federal District Court (admitted May 2019)
AALS, Indian Nations and Indigenous Peoples Section, Treasurer (2025-Present)
Law & Society Association, Member (2020-Present)
Californian Indian Law Association, Board Treasurer (2022-2024)
UC Berkeley Truth and Justice Project (2020-2024)
National Native American Law Student Association, Moot Court Judge (2021 & 2022) Coach (2026)
Water Protector Legal Collective, Board Treasurer (2020- April 2023)
SACNAS, Board Secretary, Treasurer, Finance and Native Affairs Committee Chair (2020-2022)
American Bar Association; Environment, Energy, and Resources Section Member (2020-2022; 2024)
State Bar of Michigan American Indian Law Section Board Member (2019-2022)