

MARK A. VEZZOLA

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EDUCATION

- 2015 Seattle University School of Law, Seattle, Washington
(Certificate in Indian Law, “Building Business in Indian Country”)
- 2001-2005 UCLA School of Law, Los Angeles, California
(Juris Doctorate, 2005)
- 2002-2006 UCLA Graduate School, Los Angeles, California
(Master of Arts, American Indian Studies, Summa Cum Laude, 2006)
- 1996-2000 University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts
(Bachelor of Arts, History, Summa Cum Laude, 2000)
- Minor in Anthropology (2000), Certificate in International Relations (2000),
Certificate in Native American Studies (2000)

COURT ADMISSIONS

Supreme Court of California
United States District Court, Eastern District of California
United States District Court, Southern District of California
Inter-Tribal Court of Southern California
Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians Tribal Court
Chemehuevi Tribal Court

AWARDS & HONORS

Community College Teacher Grant, National Endowment for Humanities (2010)
Wiley S Manuel Award for Pro Bono Work, San Diego County Bar Association (2008)
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, U.S. Department of Education (2003)
UCLA School of Law David Simon Scholarship (2002)
UMass Senior Leadership Award (2000)
Honors Research Fellowship, UMass (2000)
Cardinal John Henry Newman Award, UMass (2000)
Phi Beta Kappa, UMass (1999)

EXPERIENCE

Chief Judge, Pala Band of Mission Indians Tribal Court, Pala, CA, 2019-present

Preside over family law, child welfare, and civil infraction matters under Tribal jurisdiction, interpret and apply Tribal law as applicable, issue written orders, manage court staff.

Associate Judge, Chemehuevi Tribal Court, Havasu Lake, California, 2018-present

Preside over civil and family law cases under Tribal jurisdiction including but not limited to restraining orders, child welfare matters, contract and land disputes, while applying Tribal law, manage Court staff.

Directing Attorney, California Indian Legal Services, Escondido, CA 2011-present

Maintain a person caseload of 70 cases and handle the same substantive work as a staff attorney (see below) with the following managerial duties:

- Manage a staff of seven, including three attorneys and support staff, handle disciplinary matters, personnel decisions and work assignments;
- Oversee weekly case acceptance meetings to determine which cases to accept based on capacity, funding, and meritorious issues, assign to attorneys;
- Supervise attorney work product and conduct quarterly case reviews and annual performance evaluations;
- Conduct outreach to past and potential clients through electronic means, participating in work groups and presenting at statewide conferences;
- Manage a Domestic Violence attorney and legal advocate funded by a Legal Assistance for Victims grant; obtain briefing regarding client services, trainings and outreach to tribal communities and state and local government agencies, biannual grant reporting;
- Ensure compliance with a variety of grants requiring different deliverables in various areas of law on a quarterly and annual basis;
- Manage field office intake program, including supervising the work of intake advocates.

Treasurer, California Indian Law Association, Escondido, CA, 2010-2012

- Managed the income and expenses for a state non-profit organization made up of Indian law practitioners to educate the public on federal Indian law;
- Assisted in planning and organizing annual conferences and issuing news blasts and materials;
- Oversaw and make decisions associated with issuing a scholarship.

Staff Attorney, California Indian Legal Services, Escondido, CA, 2009-11

Maintained a caseload of 70 cases involving tribal, individual and organization clients in the following areas:

- Drafted tribal codes and accompanying judicial forms for tribes and tribal courts;
- Represent and advise tribal gaming appellate boards overseeing hearings on gaming license appeals and suspensions;
- Litigated and defended tort claims against tribal casinos by conducting written discovery, depositions, settlement negotiations and participating in arbitration;
- Appealed state income tax assessments and liens issued by the California Franchise Tax Board to tax exempt individuals;
- Administered tribal government elections in accordance with tribal election ordinances and laws, advise tribal election committees;
- Advised clients on estate planning issues and drafting Will and trust documents for Native Americans;
- Advocated on behalf of Indian tribes in state court proceedings implicating Indian child welfare, including dependency and probate guardianships;
- Negotiated and drafting vendor contracts and leases on behalf of corporate and individual clients;
- Protected cultural resources by commenting on projects, negotiating tribal monitoring with private companies.

Associate, Callahan, McCune & Willis, APLC, San Diego, CA, 2007-09

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Specialized in civil litigation representing individual and corporate clients in personal injury, consumer rights actions, class action suits and insurance defense work and regularly undertook the following tasks for this Orange County based firm expert in civil litigation and construction defect:

- Conducted intensive discovery including taking and defending percipient and expert witness depositions, form and special interrogatories, special interrogatories and requests for admissions;
- Drafted pleadings and motions such as those contesting good faith settlement, seeking summary judgment, compelling arbitration, motions to bifurcate demurrers;
- Engaged in settlement negotiations with opposing counsel, corporate clients and insurers with minimal supervision.
- Mediated lawsuits and draft settlement agreements as part of out of court settlement negotiations.

Member, Client Relations Committee, San Diego County Bar Association, 2008-09

- Conducted intake with members of the public dissatisfied with their legal representation, collect facts and information about grievance;
- Issued recommendations about attorney conduct based on information collected.

Adjunct Professor of U.S. History, San Diego Mesa College, San Diego, CA, 2007-2018

- Taught eight week evening sections of History 150, U.S. History to 1865 and History 151, U.S. History from 1865 to Present, to classes of 30-45 students;
- Discussed theories of populating the Americas;
- Compared and contrast motivations, approaches and outcomes of various European colonizers;
- Explained in detail the development of the United States Republic, the U.S. Constitution and its separation of powers and system of checks and balances;
- Provided examples of motivations and consequences of American westward migration;
- Lectured extensively on evolving federal Indian policy U.S. foreign policy and trade relationships, relationships with Native American tribal governments, civil and foreign wars.

Legal Assistant/Attorney, Law Offices of Ron Mix, San Diego, CA, 2005-2007

- Researched and drafted pleadings, motions and appellate briefs for worker compensation and disability cases filed on behalf of retired professional athletes;
- Defended discovery including defending clients' depositions;
- Participated in settlement negotiations and represented clients before workers' compensation appeal board and other administrative bodies;
- Prepared pleadings for family law and civil cases.

Intern, Office of Tribal Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington DC, Spring 2004

- Researched and prepared legal briefs for DOJ attorneys religious rights and land use;
- Reviewed proposed congressional legislation for potential legal impacts on public;
- Attended congressional hearings, including the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs;
- Participated in discussions, work groups and forums on drafting and accepting international human rights documents.

PUBLICATIONS

Contributing Author, California Juvenile Dependency Practice, Chapter 9: The Indian Child Welfare Act, Continuing Education of the Bar, 2018 and 2019.

Author, “Indian Tribes: Governments, Cultures...Coin Producers?” *The California Numismatist*, Spring 2017, Vol. 14, No. 1.

Guest Column, “Balancing Tribal Sovereignty and the Rights of Workers,” *The Daily Journal*, Vol. 128, No. 180, September 17, 2015.

Contributing Author, “Will Writing after AIPRA: An Overview,” available at www.educationalfamilyestateapp.com, July 2015.

Contributing Author, “Little Big Man,” *Movies in American History: An Encyclopedia*, ABC-CLIO Publishing, 2011.

Author, “A Decade in Review: Developments in Indian Trust Land,” *News from Native California*, Vol. 23, No. 4, Summer 2010.

Author, “Harmony Behind Bars: Native American Religion in Prison,” *The Prison Journal*, Vol. 87, Issue 2, page 195, 2007.

Contributing Author, “Speak Now or Forever Hold Your Peace: Same Sex Marriage in Native Communities,” *Defending Same Sex Marriage*, vol. III, Praeger’s Greenwood Publishing, 2006.

PRESENTATIONS (partial list)

Estate Planning and End of Life Decisions for Tribal Elders, presented to the National Indian Council on Aging Conference, Pechanga Reservation, Temecula, California, September 12-13, 2018.

Estate Planning and the AIPRA, presented to the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians’ Elders Group, Santa Ynez, California, March 28, 2018.

The American Indian Probate Reform Act and Estate Planning, presented to the Pechanga Silver Feathers, Pechanga Reservation, California, Temecula, September 14, 2017.

The 2016 BLA ICWA Regulations, The California Department of Social Services, Dehesa, California, April 19, 2017, Bishop, California, May 1, 2017, and Lincoln, California June 19, 2017,

Negotiating Leases on Tribal Land, National Business Institute, Palm Desert, California, January 26, 2017.

Estate Planning and the American Indian Probate Reform Act, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Palm Springs, California, January 18, 2017.

Introduction to California’s Tribal Governments, American Red Cross, San Diego, California, May 20, 2016.

Unmet Needs in Indian Country, Los Angeles Housing Rights Summit, Los Angeles, California, April 21, 2016.

Updates in Federal Indian Law, San Diego Law Library, San Diego, California, December 16, 2015.

Careers in Law Presentation and Discussion, Sherman Indian High School, Riverside, California, November 6, 2015.

Federal Indian Law Updates, San Diego Law Library, San Diego, California, March 25, 2014 and December 17, 2014.

Crash Course in Federal Indian Law, Miramar College Paralegal Association, San Diego, California, October 13, 2012.

Lay Advocate Training, Statewide ICWA Conference, Blue Lake Casino, Eureka, California, June 20, 2012.

Cultural Resource Protection, Tom-Kov Teach-In, Palomar College, San Marcos, California, April 25, 2012.

Federal Indian Law in Honor of Native American Heritage Month, San Diego City Attorney's Office, San Diego, California, November 17, 2011.

The Nuts and Bolts of Tribal Court Development, Fourth Annual Tribal Courts Conference, Rincon Reservation, Valley Center, California, May 18, 2011.

Estate Planning for Seniors, Quechan Indian Reservation, Winterhaven, California, December 15, 2010.

Lay Advocate Training in Child Welfare Context, Bishop-Paiute Reservation, Bishop, California, November 1, 2010.

The State of Legal Services in California, Nation Legal Aid Defender Association Conference, Chicago, Illinois, July 24, 2010.

The American Indian Probate Reform Act and Estate Planning, United American Indian Involvement, Inc., Los Angeles, California, May 25, 2010.

The Power of Words: How the Constitution Eroded Native American Sovereignty, Occasional Lecture Series, San Diego Mesa College, San Diego, California, September 19, 2008.