

ELENA L. BRYANT

EMPLOYMENT

Earthjustice, Mid-Pacific Office

Senior Associate Attorney, October 2020 – Present

Represent client groups and community organizations in complex litigation on issues of Native Hawaiian and Environmental legal issues before all the state and federal courts in the State of Hawai‘i. Perform case development and litigation-related tasks including factual and legal research, development of strategy and legal theories, gathering of evidence, drafting pleadings and briefs. Attend client meetings, settlement conferences, dispositions, and court proceedings, and testify before state boards and commissions.

Hartley & McGehee, LLP

Associate Attorney, May 2016 – October 2020

Met with potential clients to consult regarding needs and to perform case assessment and strategic planning; performed factual and legal research; drafted legal documents including pleadings, discovery-related documents, settlement, and mediation documents, and simple to complex pre-trial and trial-related motions, etc. Regularly represented clients in Family Court and Hawai‘i State Appellate Courts; reviewed and assessed assets and liabilities of clients to develop settlement proposals, agreements and/or trial strategy; managed multiple family law matters at any one time.

U.S. District Court, District of Hawai‘i

Law Clerk for Magistrate Judge Barry M. Kurren, September 2014 – March 2016

Performed legal research concerning Federal and State legal issues in criminal and civil cases, drafted bench memoranda, opinions, and orders regarding the same; assisted Judge Kurren in preparing for hearings; administered all civil consent cases from first hearing through trial; aided in settlement conferences; managed a complex three-week civil trial, involving multiple parties; prepared trial-related orders. Performed courtroom manager tasks for civil and miscellaneous cases including overseeing the daily operation of Judge Kurren’s chambers, interacting with chamber and court personnel, managing the court calendar, scheduling hearings, managing courtroom proceedings; managing proceedings for Naturalization Ceremonies, and docketing minute orders.

Intermediate Court of Appeals, Hawai‘i State Judiciary

Administrative Law Clerk for Chief Judge Craig H. Nakamura, September 2013-September 2014

Conducted legal research concerning complex civil and criminal cases involving a variety of difficult issues of State law; reviewed lower court records; analyzed and interpreted legal data; prepared bench memoranda; drafted and edited summary dispositional orders, memorandum opinions, and published opinions.

Also served as Judge Nakamura’s Administrative Law Clerk and performed additional administrative responsibilities including training of incoming law clerks, organizing, and assigning tasks and responsibilities to law clerks, conducting appellate court hearings, and working with the University of Hawai‘i Law School to host court proceedings in the community.

Intermediate Court of Appeals, Hawai‘i State Judiciary

Law Clerk for Associate Judge Katherine G. Leonard, August 2011 – August 2013

Conducted legal research concerning complex civil and criminal cases involving a variety of difficult issues of State law; reviewed lower court records; analyzed and interpreted legal data; prepared bench memoranda, summary dispositional orders, memorandum opinions, and published opinions on a variety of civil and criminal legal issues.

Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law

Research Assistant to Professor Melody MacKenzie, Spring 2010 – August 2011

Assisted with the legal research of State and Federal statutory and case law, rules, and regulations in order to edit and update the Center’s publication, Native Hawaiian Law: A Treatise, published in 2015.

Circuit Court of the First Circuit, Hawai‘i State Judiciary

Legal Extern for Circuit Court Judge Edward H. Kubo, Jr., Spring 2010

Assisted in the administration of judicial proceedings on the criminal calendar, attended pretrial conferences, conducted legal research and review on a variety of State criminal law issues, and drafted/edited legal memoranda and court orders.

Earthjustice, Mid-Pacific Office

Summer Associate, Summer 2010

Participated in every aspect of Earthjustice’s litigation and environmental advocacy program. Performed case development and litigation-related tasks including factual and legal research, development of strategy and legal theories, gathering of evidence, drafting pleadings and briefs. Attended client meetings, settlement conferences, dispositions, and court proceedings.

Office of Hawaiian Affairs

Legal Intern, Summer 2009

Worked directly with stakeholders in the taro-growing community across the State of Hawai‘i to formulate and draft portions of a Legislative Report outlining various issues affecting the taro-growing community, including land and water issues, policy, and regulation. Wrote memoranda, drafted bill proposals and proposed administrative rule changes; assisted community stakeholders with identifying and implementing legal solutions and strategies.

Ku‘iwalu

Legal Researcher, December 2008 – January 2009

Assisted consulting company that specializes in building community support for economic development projects in Hawai‘i with legal research on land, water, and resource management cases to update a Hawai‘i land use law seminar presentation.

PUBLICATIONS

Elena Bryant, *Innovation or Degradation? An Analysis of Hawai‘i’s Cultural Impact Assessment Process as a Vehicle of Environmental Justice for Kānaka Maoli*, 13 ASIAN-PAC. L. & POL’Y J. 231 (2011).

EDUCATION

University of Hawai‘i, William S. Richardson School of Law

Juris Doctor, Cum Laude, May 2011

Honors:

- Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law, Fellow – Summer 2009
- George C. Munro Award for Environmental Law – Fall 2010
- CALI Excellence for the Future Award Recipient – 2008, 2009 & 2010 for Environmental Law, Administrative Law, Contracts I, Legal Practice II, and Trust & Estates

Affiliations/Activities:

- University of Hawai‘i Law Review, Staff Writer
- Environmental Law Moot Court, 2010 & 2011 Team Captain
- Environmental Law Society & ‘Ahahui o Hawai‘i, Member
- Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law, Tutor
- American Inns of Court, Aloha Chapter Member

University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa

Bachelor of Arts, with Distinction in Hawaiian Studies with a focus on Cultural Perspectives in Resource Management, June 2008

Kamehameha Schools, Kapālama Campus

Honors Graduate, National Honor Society Member, May 2004

COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS, SKILLS

Hawai‘i State Bar Association (HSBA) – Juris Doctor No. 9548

Member of the HSBA in good standing, admitted on November 4, 2011

Member of the Appellate and Natural Resources Sections of the HSBA

Member of the Native Hawaiian Bar Association

Kāne‘ohe Neighborhood Board District 30, Subdistrict 6 Rep. (June 2019 –Present)

Environmental Committee Chair; Planning Committee Co-Chair

Kāne‘ohe Bay Regional Council (July 2022 – Present)

Voting Member; Legislative Chair

Ko‘olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club (January 2023 – Present)

Member

Language and Specialty Education

Certificate in Environmental & Native Hawaiian Law, William S. Richardson School of Law

Proficient in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian Language)