

Navajo Nation Law 2013
CLE

Section 1

Conference Faculty
Biographies

Navajo Nation Law CLE Conference

Sponsored by:
Indian Legal Program at Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at ASU & NABA-AZ

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Speaker Biographies



Raymond D. Austin

Distinguished Jurist in Residence, Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program, James E. Rogers College of Law

University of Arizona, Ph.D (American Indian Studies, Law and Policy Concentration) (2007)

University of New Mexico Law School, J.D. (1983)

Arizona State University, B.S. (1979)

Justice Austin is Diné (Navajo) from northeastern Arizona. While serving on the Navajo Nation Supreme Court from 1985 to 2001, Justice Austin and his colleagues on the Court took the lead on using American Indian customary law in tribal court decision-making and in tribal government operations. Justice Austin wrote several Navajo Nation Supreme Court decisions that helped establish frameworks for incorporating Navajo common law into Navajo jurisprudence. Justice Austin was the Herman Phleger Distinguished Visiting Professor of Law at the Stanford Law School in the spring semester of 1995. He has also taught short courses at the Harvard Law School, Arizona State University College of Law, University of Utah College of Law, and in Italy and Spain. Justice Austin also served as a judge pro tempore on the Arizona Court of Appeals, Division I (1993-1994).

Justice Austin's book, *Navajo Courts and Navajo Common Law, A Tradition of Tribal Self-Governance* (University of Minnesota Press, 2009), is the only book available on the Navajo Nation Courts and Navajo Common law. Justice Austin's other writings include: *The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Navajo Preference in Employment Act: A Quarter-Century of Evolution, Interpretation, and Application of the Navajo Nation's Employment Preference Laws*, 40 *New Mexico Law Review* 17 (Winter 2010) (with co-author Howard Brown), and *American Indian Customary Law in the Modern Courts of American Indian Nations*, 11 *Wyoming Law Review* 351 (2011). Justice Austin teaches Tribal Courts Clinic in the fall semester and Tribal Courts and Tribal Law in the spring semester.



Kathleen Bowman

Director, Navajo Nation Public Defender's Office

Anderson School of Management, University of New Mexico (1976)
Arizona State University, J.D. (1986) with Indian Law Certificate

Kathleen Bowman, a Navajo attorney, is the Director of the Office of Navajo Public Defender. Born in Rehoboth, New Mexico, Ms. Bowman has lived in Fort Defiance, Arizona for most of her life. Ms. Bowman graduated from Anderson School of Management, University of New Mexico in 1976 and was employed by Navajo Area IHS as Deputy Personnel Officer when she entered Arizona State University College of Law in 1983. She obtained her J.D. in 1986 and was admitted to the State Bar of Arizona in 1986; Navajo Nation Bar in 1987; and State Bar of New Mexico in 1988. Before her appointment as Director, Ms. Bowman's previous employment included Attorney, Navajo Nation Department of Justice; Director, Navajo Legal Aid and Defender Office; Executive Director, DNA- People's Legal Services, Inc.; and Assistant Attorney General, Navajo Nation Department of Justice. Ms. Bowman was honored as Legal Counsel of the Year 1998 by the Chinle District and as Outstanding Alumna 1990, Arizona State University for achievement in her community and profession. Ms. Bowman is on the Indian Affairs Committee of NACDL; member of NMCDLA and on the Board of Directors, Arizona Public Defender Association.



Loretta J. Danzuka

Tribal Court Advocate, DNA-People's Legal Services, Inc., Shiprock, NM

Loretta is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, born and raised in Tsaille, Arizona. Her clans are Salt Water born for Big Water, her maternal grandfathers are Redhouse and her paternal grandfathers are Coyote Pass.

Loretta J. Danzuka is a Tribal Court Advocate employed with DNA-People's Legal Services, Inc., Shiprock, New Mexico office since 1997. Loretta attended college at Mesa Community College and is a graduate of Diné College's, tribal court advocate training program. Loretta has been licensed to practice before the Navajo Tribal Courts since 1987. Loretta has worked for DNA-People's Legal Services a total of 22 years. Loretta has 24 years of experience in tribal court with an emphasis in Indian Law, tribal law and traditional law and teachings. Loretta is bi-lingual and practices before the Navajo Nation Supreme court, Family and District court and administrative proceedings.

Loretta's primarily practice of law are divorces, guardianship, termination of parental rights, adoption, paternity, protection orders for domestic violence, elderly protection law, Consumer law, public benefits, validation of marriages, denial of social security benefits, Alchini Bi Beehaz Act and employment law.



Judith M. Dworkin

Managing Partner, Sacks Tierney P.A.

M.A. and Ph.D., Clark University
J.D., Arizona State University

Judith Dworkin is the managing partner of the Scottsdale law firm of Sacks Tierney P.A. Her practice is devoted primarily to Indian law and water resources law issues. Ms. Dworkin has been selected for inclusion in Best Lawyers of America in the fields of water law and Native American law and selected among Arizona's "50 Most Influential Women in Business" by *AzBusiness* magazine. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in geography from Clark University and her J.D. degree, cum laude, from Arizona State University. She clerked for the Honorable William C. Canby, Jr. of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. She is admitted to the Arizona and Navajo Nation bars and is admitted to practice in the courts of the Tohono O'odham Nation, Gila River Indian Community, Hopi Tribe and Hualapai Tribe. Ms. Dworkin lectures regularly and publishes on topics relating to water resource management and economic development on Indian Reservations. Ms. Dworkin is an adjunct professor in the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law and the School of Urban Planning at Arizona State University where she teaches graduate courses in water and natural resources law and planning.



Raymond C. Etcitty

Chief Operating Officer, Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise

University of New Mexico, B.A.
University of New Mexico School of Law, J.D.

Raymond C. Etcitty is Chief Operating Officer and was General Counsel for the Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise. The Enterprise is a Navajo Nation business entity designated to conduct gaming operations. The Enterprise has 4 casinos in operations (Fire Rock Navajo Casino, Flowing Water Navajo Casino, and Northern Edge Navajo Casino, Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort). Mr. Etcitty is experienced in casino start-ups, operations and development which includes obtaining business site leases, permits, and right-of-way; participated in placing the Twin Arrows lands into trust; participated in the gaming compact negotiations. He also has extensive experience in Navajo government legislative procedures, including all federal and state government offices, and dealing with tribal relationships.

Prior to his current position, he was Chief Legislative Counsel for the Navajo Nation Council. In this position, he was the chief attorney who provided legal advice to the Navajo Nation Council and legislative branch for 5 years. He was a member of Navajo-Hopi Negotiating Team which negotiated the Navajo-Hopi Intergovernmental Compact that eliminated "Bennett Freeze." His office oversaw the publication of the 2005 Navajo Nation Code, the codified laws of the Navajo Nation.

Mr. Etcitty was Executive Director for the Office of the Navajo Tax Commission. In this position; Mr. Etcitty put in place the Navajo Fuel Excise Tax and Navajo Sales Tax; and administered the 5 Navajo taxes (Possessory Interest Tax, Business Activity Tax, Oil and Gas Severance Tax, Tobacco Products Tax, and Hotel Occupancy Tax). He negotiated numerous state/tribal tax credits and intergovernmental tax agreements with the surrounding states.

In the area of economic development, he was an attorney for the Nation's Division of Economic Development; attorney for the Division of Community Development; and attorney in the Navajo

Nation Department of Justice. In these positions, he was involved in drafting and negotiating business site leases, contracts, regulations, policies, etc.

Mr. Etcitty has taught Federal Indian Law at the University of Phoenix and taught Indian Taxation at the University of New Mexico School of Law. He served on the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Advisory Committee on Tax-Exempt and Government Entities. He continues to teach Navajo Property Law, Navajo Government, Jurisdiction and Navajo Sovereign Immunity to applicants for the Navajo Bar Review Course of the Navajo Nation Bar Association.

Mr. Etcitty is Navajo, from the Big Water Clan born for the Red Running into Water Clan. He received his B.A. in Political Science from the University of New Mexico and J.D. from the University of New Mexico School of Law. He has two daughters Hannah, and Grace.



Brian L. Lewis

Attorney, Navajo Nation Dept of Justice

Washington State University, M.A.
Arizona State University, J.D. (2009)

Brian Lewis is an Attorney with the Navajo Nation Office of the Attorney General in Window Rock, Navajo Nation; he handles special matters for the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General. His practice is focused in the areas of Energy, Intellectual Property, Commercial & Regulatory Litigation, and Economic Development & Growth. Mr. Lewis serves and has served on various teams, commissions, and task forces; including Governor Susana Martinez's Transition Team (with the Indian Affairs Department Review Committee), the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council's Energy Task Force, and the President of the Navajo Nation's Project Negotiating Team (for large-scale economic development).

Mr. Lewis teaches and presents on topics including Business Organizations, Navajo Nation Commercial Law, Intellectual Property, and Ethics. He also regularly volunteers his time to programs such as the American Indian Law Center's Pre-Law Summer Institute for American Indians (which he attended in 2006), and the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University Indian Legal Program's Tribal Court Skills College.

Mr. Lewis is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. He earned his Master's Degree, with emphases in Political Economy and Economic Development & Growth, at Washington State University; and his Juris Doctor from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University, with an Indian Law Certificate.



Rodrique Morris

Presenting Officer, The Ethics and Rules Office, Navajo Nation

University of New Mexico, A.A. (Criminal Justice) 2000

Mr. Rodrique Morris is the Presenting Officer for the Navajo Nation Ethics & Rules Office in Window Rock, AZ. Prior to returning to the Navajo Nation Mr. Morris served as an Adjudicator for the State of New Mexico Unemployment Insurance in Albuquerque, New Mexico and also worked for the Eastern New Mexico University/ New Mexico Work Force Solutions in Alamogordo, New Mexico. Mr. Morris also served as the Chief Prosecutor for the Mescalero Apache Tribe from 2010-2012. Prior to his appointment as Chief Prosecutor Mr. Morris served 5 years as Special Prosecutor for the Mescalero Apache Tribe from 2005 to 2010. Mr. Morris also served as an Independent Consultant for the State of New Mexico; Teen Court, LC 15, Albuquerque, NM in 2007-2008. Mr. Morris also worked for the Navajo Nation Department of Justice, Office of the Prosecutor for 2 years as a Juvenile Presenting Officer and an Assistant Prosecutor for the Canoncito/Alamo District Court and for the Office of the Chief Prosecutor for Navajo Nation Supreme Court on appellant cases for the Navajo Nation, Office of the Prosecutor. Mr. Morris is also a certified Navajo Nation Peacemaker (Mediator) for the Ramah/Alamo/Canoncito and Crownpoint Courts for the Coyote Canyon Chapter. Mr. Morris has also served as a Legal Specialist in the United States Army for the 515th CSSB, Socorro, New Mexico and Santa Fe, New Mexico from March 2004 to October 2007, and provided sustainment and support for J1 Legal Support for Operation Joint Thunder for 2006 and 2007. Mr. Morris was honorably discharged from service October 2007 after 6 years of service. Mr. Morris also completed Police Academy with the State of New Mexico as a Patrol Officer in May of 1999 and received his Associate of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of New Mexico in 2000 and is currently pursuing his Bachelors of University Studies in Indian Jurisprudence Pre Law with focused minors in Native American Studies, Anthropology, Political Science and History.

Richie Nez, Sr.

Chief Hearing Officer, Office of Hearings and Appeals, Navajo Nation

University of Denver Law School, J.D.

Richie Nez, Sr. is the Chief Hearing Officer for the Office of Hearings and Appeals, an Administrative Court of the Navajo Nation. He is a former Chief of Staff for a Tribal Chairman. He has held other positions such as the Executive Director of the Navajo Division of Labor, Executive Director of the Navajo Election Administration and a staff attorney of the Navajo-Hopi Legal Services Program. Mr. Nez has practiced exclusively on the Navajo Nation, operating his own legal office as well as being an entrepreneur in the restaurant business called Capitol Café and now the owner of the Precious Life Home Care, LLC and Precious Life Transportation Company. Mr. Nez has held numerous public offices. He is now a Farm Board Member of the Ganado Chapter in Ganado, AZ, his home town. He was the former Chapter Secretary-Treasurer and Chapter President of the Ganado Chapter. He recently was a School Board President of the Rough Rock Community School in Rough Rock, AZ. He is a past President of the Navajo Nation Bar Association. He is a graduate of the University of Denver Law School.



Vernon J. Roanhorse, Sr.

Executive Director, The Ethics and Rules Office, Navajo Nation

Mr. Roanhorse has been practicing law for since 1987 with the Navajo Nation Bar Association Inc. and is currently the Executive Director for the Navajo Nation Ethics and Rules Office since August 2012. Mr. Roanhorse was born and raised in New Mexico for the majority of his life. Mr. Roanhorse attended colleges at University of Colorado, ASU and UNM receiving a bachelor's degree focusing on pre-law studies. Mr. Roanhorse previously lived on the Cañoncito Band of Navajo Reservation and lives with his wife Regina and 2 girls and 2 boys. They have 2 huskies and 3 cats. One of his daughters attends UNM as a senior in the Nursing Program this fall. His children all attend Albuquerque Public Schools. At this point in his career he enjoys teaching Navajo law and trial techniques for young lawyers. Mr. Roanhorse served as the Senior Prosecutor for the Alamo/To'hajiilee District Office and was involved in numerous appellate cases before the Navajo Nation Supreme Court for the past 21 years while prosecuting cases for the Navajo Nation. His previous positions included District Prosecutor, Prosecutor III, Prosecutor II for the Ramah District, Cañoncito District and Alamo District and The White Collar Crime Office. Mr. Roanhorse has also worked for the Navajo Legal Aid Office, New Mexico Legal Aid, Private Practice with Hale and Denetsosie Law Office P.C. and DNA Peoples Legal Services, Window Rock, Arizona. In addition Mr. Roanhorse is a certified trainer for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy, Boulder Colorado, The Federal Law Training Center specializing in Domestic Violence, a Certified Instructor in Navajo Indian Law, and Ethics for the New Mexico State Police Academy, a member of the Board of Directors for New Mexico Legal Aid and serves on the Rules Committee for the Navajo Nation Bar Association Inc.



Eunice L. Tso

Owner and President, ETD, Inc.

Northern Arizona University, B. Sc, M.A.,

Eunice L. Tso is a Navajo consultant specializing in projects that benefit Indian Country. For the past 18 years she's managed large and small scale development projects, facilitated community-wide land use planning projects; conducted environmental impact analysis; and, assisted in obtaining right-of-ways and business-site leases for a variety of clients.

She has exceptional knowledge of laws and rules that relate environment and development in Indian Country, which is complemented by her strong understanding of Tribal resources, and social/economic conditions. She's skilled at facilitating and moderating discussions for large and small groups and communicates ideas clearly and effectively

Eunice was raised in the northwest corner of the Navajo Nation near Page Arizona. She received Bachelor of Science and Master's Degrees in Geology from Northern Arizona University (NAU). She worked later worked for NAU's Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals before becoming a full-time consultant in 1997.