



# *Pontious Law Offices, LLC*

Senator Lisa Murkowski  
[REDACTED]

February 5, 2025

RE: Federal District Court Judge Vacancy

Dear Senator Murkowski:

It is with honor and humility that I submit this letter of interest for the United States District Court Judgeship. I have had the privilege of practicing before the United States District Court for the District of Alaska since 2010, at which time I was accepted as a member of the Criminal Justice Act Panel. For the past 15 years, I have been representing court-appointed criminal defendants in cases arising from a variety of felony and misdemeanor charges. While it is in this capacity that I regularly interface with the Federal District Court, I have a unique legal background and practice that distinctly qualifies me for the District Court Judge position.

As my resumé indicates, I have been a law clerk, a public defender, an associate at a medical malpractice firm, and a sole practitioner. My experience in criminal law has afforded me the opportunity to appear regularly in court, conduct jury trials, and litigate complex motions to suppress and dismiss in Municipal, State, and Federal Court. As an associate at Dillon & Findley, I regularly deposed medical professionals and worked on issues critical to local and statewide government, such as the value of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (“TAPS”) for tax assessment purposes. In my role as a sole practitioner, I learned how to manage a business and mentor an associate, expanded my areas of practice, and took on new challenges that brought me into quasi-judicial roles. The breadth of my practice reflects my ability to educate myself quickly and proficiently in new areas of the law, a quality which is integral to the District Court Judge position.

I have been involved with a number of professional organizations associated with federal practice. In March of 2018, I spoke at a combined Federal Bar Association and Anchorage Association of Women Lawyers event aimed at recruiting practitioners from diverse backgrounds to federal criminal practice. As a result of my involvement in that event, I became a member of the Board of Directors of the Anchorage Association of Women Lawyers in August 2018. I termed off that Board after 6 years in December of 2024. I was a member of the Executive Committee for the Alaska Chapter of the Federal Bar Association from December 2021 to September 2024. I served two 3-year terms as a Lawyer’s Representative to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference. As a member of the Advisory Committee for the Criminal Justice Act Panel, I assisted in the vetting of applicants interested in performing court-appointed federal criminal defense work.

I believe my multi-faceted experience as an attorney and my commitment to the quality and integrity of the Federal Bench and Bar make me well-qualified to restore the confidence in the District of Alaska's bench that has been undermined by recent events. If I were chosen, I would enthusiastically accept the professional and moral responsibilities associated with this role. I would be dedicated to dispensing firm, fair, and consistent justice to our public in an empathetic manner. If you have any additional questions or requirements, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Danée Pontious".

Danée Pontious  
Pontious Law Offices, LLC

**EXPERIENCE**

**Pontious Law Offices, LLC**  
**Anchorage, AK**

**April 2017 - Present**

*Owner*

- Currently maintain a diverse caseload consisting primarily of Federal Criminal Defense cases and Civil Family Law cases.
- Represent clients in a variety of civil matters including Family Law, Hostile Work Environment Investigations, and Administrative Law.
- Serve in a quasi-judicial capacity as an Appeal Authority for an institutional client in Title IX appeals.
- Perform complex investigations into Title IX complaints and Hostile Work Environment complaints for public and private organizations.

**Law Office of Dattan Scott Dattan**  
**Anchorage, Alaska**

**October 2012 - March 2017**

*Associate*

- Managed a caseload consisting of Federal and State Criminal Defense, Family Law, Contract Law, and Personal Injury.
- Represented clients with a variety of legal issues, including Probate, Adoption, and Small Business Contracts.

**Law Office of Danée L. Pontious**  
**Anchorage, Alaska**

**February 2010 - June 2012**

*Owner*

- Practiced in numerous areas of law including, but not limited to, State, Municipal, and Federal Criminal Defense and Personal Injury.
- Represented a state entity on a contract basis in the area of administrative law defending appeals brought before the Superior Court.
- Managed the daily business activities of a law firm, including marketing, management of client funds, accounting, billing, and paralegal and legal secretary work.

**Dillon & Findley, P.C.**  
**Anchorage, Alaska**

**August 2006 - September 2009**

*Associate*

- Developed, strategized, and managed numerous Medical Malpractice cases.
- Produced initial complaints, discovery requests, and discovery responses for Personal Injury cases.
- Conducted and defended numerous depositions, primarily of health care professionals, experts in the medical field, and clients.

- Supported the partners by drafting legal memoranda on complicated issues arising during the litigation of claims, as well as the viability of potential Medical Malpractice claims, including drafting briefing related to two issues before the Alaska Supreme Court.

## **Public Defender Agency**

**Anchorage, Alaska**

**September 2005 - August 2006**

*Assistant Public Defender*

- Represented parents in Child in Need of Aid proceedings.
- Managed over one hundred Criminal Misdemeanor cases in Anchorage District Court at a given time.
- Wrote numerous motions, as well as attended evidentiary hearings regarding those motions.
- Tried two criminal misdemeanor assault/domestic violence cases resulting in an acquittal and a suspended imposition of sentence.

## **The Honorable Philip R. Volland**

**Anchorage Superior Court**

**August 2004 - August 2005**

*Law Clerk*

- Wrote memoranda on complex Federal and State Constitutional issues, including the constitutionality of the Alaska Insanity Defense and the constitutionality of pretextual investigative stops.
- Prepared Judge Volland for evidentiary hearings regarding Motions to Suppress, Motions to Dismiss the Indictment, and Motions to Preclude by drafting memoranda.
- Attended multiple high-profile criminal trials in an effort to hone and enhance trial skills.
- Drafted Administrative Appeal decisions and decisions on appeal from District Court.

## **Student Law Office, Criminal Defense Clinic**

**University of Denver, College of Law**

**August 2003 - January 2004**

*Student Attorney*

- Prepared for an Assault and Battery/ Domestic Violence jury trial in Aurora Municipal Court.
- Engaged regularly with clients during client intakes, client interviews, and pre-trial conferences.

## **The Honorable Herbert Walker Stern, III**

**Denver District Court, Courtroom 3**

**January 2003 - June 2003**

*Intern*

- Drafted dozens of the Judge's Orders regarding Motions for Summary Judgment, Motions to Dismiss, Motions to Compel, and Appeals from County Court.
- Wrote legal memoranda advising the Judge on how to rule on complicated legal issues.
- Attended multiple personal injury trials, advising the Judge when legal issues arose.

**Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.**  
**Glendale, Colorado**

**November 2000 - May 2001**

*Licensed Broker*

- After graduating with an education in English Literature, studied for and passed the investment licensing exams, the Series 7 and Series 63, and obtained a license as a stockbroker.
- Spoke daily with Schwab customers to provide them with accurate, complete, and enlightened investment information.
- Within three months, ranked second on the Signature Series team in Business Development.

## **EDUCATION**

**University of Denver, College of Law**  
Juris Doctorate

**August 2001 - May 2004**

- **Accomplishments:**
  - *Daniel S. Hoffman Trial Advocacy Competition, Finalist, 2003:* Placed second out of thirty-four teams in Trial Advocacy.

**University of Colorado at Boulder**  
Bachelor of Arts with an emphasis in English Literature.

**August 1996 - May 2000**

- **Additional Certifications:**
  - *University of Colorado Intensive Business Certification, 2000.* Following graduation, engaged in a three-week intensive study aimed at education in finance, accounting, and marketing.

## **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

- *Member of the Alaska Bar Association*
  - Admitted: November 2004
- *Member of the Criminal Justice Act Panel*
  - Admitted: 2010

- *Member of the Criminal Justice Act Panel's Advisory Committee*
  - August 2014 to May 2023
- *Member of the Federal Bar Association*
  - Active since 2019
- *Former Member of the Board of Directors of the Anchorage Association of Women Lawyers*
  - August 2018 to December 2024
- *Lawyer's Representative to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference*
  - Active for October 2018 to October 2021 Term
  - Served a Second Term from October 2021 to 2024
- *Member of the Executive Committee of the Alaska Chapter of the Federal Bar Association*
  - December 2021 to September 2024
- *Co-Chair of the Solo and Small Firms Section, Alaska Bar Association*
  - January 2025 to Present