

April 12, 2023

Danielle Bailey
Executive Director
Alaska Bar Association

Via E-mail

Re: Judicial Vacancy on U.S. District Court

Director Bailey:

I would like to be considered for the judicial vacancy on the U.S. District Court. I am a graduate of Duke University School of Law and am an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Alaska. I would be honored to serve our state from the bench. I am deeply committed to serving all corners of our unique state. I am married to a lifelong Alaskan who has worked on the North Slope and commercial fished in Bristol Bay, who currently prosecutes violent crime in rural Alaska.

In my role in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District Alaska, I have conducted jury trials, including securing a guilty verdict as lead counsel in a double homicide trial in summer 2022. I have briefed and argued cases before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, including a victory resulting in a published opinion in *United States v. Jones*, 951 F.3d 1138 (9th Cir. 2020). I was also interviewed by the *New York Times* when the publication reported on a financial fraud case I prosecuted from initiation to sentencing.

I was selected to facilitate at national trainings at ATF's National Center for Explosives Training and Research and DOJ's National Advocacy Center. I also am our district's Project Safe Neighborhood Coordinator. Project Safe Neighborhood is national initiative aimed at reducing violent crime. In my role, I coordinate with federal, state, and local law enforcement, prosecution, and community partners to prevent and target violent crime in Alaska.

Prior to joining the U.S. Attorneys Office, I practiced death penalty defense at the third largest public defense agency in the country for Maricopa County in Phoenix, Arizona. There, I worked as a felony trial attorney, team leader, and extern supervisor before being promoted to a capital trial attorney in February 2017. While in capital, it was also my duty to assist less experienced felony attorneys who were assigned homicide and serious sex crime cases. I mentored those attorneys, and developed case strategies and conducted those trials as a supervisory second chair. I conducted over 30 legal trainings in-office and at statewide conferences for attorneys. In 2016, I won the Rising Star Award – one of two awarded that year – at the statewide criminal defense attorney conference, attended by over 1,200 attorneys.

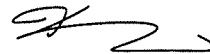
During my attendance at Duke University School of Law, I served as the Executive

Technical Editor for the Duke Law & Technology Review. This journal published my article analyzing a constitutional issue in criminal law affecting forensic science.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would greatly appreciate any opportunity to discuss this judicial vacancy. Please do not hesitate to contact me for additional information. I can be reached at [REDACTED]

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Vandergaw', with a stylized flourish at the end.

KAREN VANDERGAW

KAREN E. VANDERGAW

Career Summary

- Conducted 17 felony jury trials
- Briefed, argued, and prevailed on two Ninth Circuit appeals with one published opinion
- Received Rising Star award at an Arizona conference with over 1200 attorney attendees June 23, 2016

Admissions & Associations

Alaska Bar Association active
Arizona Bar Association inactive
Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals
Member of the Alaska Bar Association Discipline Committee

Education

Duke University School of Law, Durham, NC

Juris Doctor, May 2012

Activities: Executive Technical Editor on the *Duke Law & Technology Review* 2011-2012
Staff Editor on the *Duke Law & Technology Review* 2010-2011

Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism & Mass Communication, *magna cum laude*, May 2007

Honors: Provost scholarship

Activities: Research assistant for Dr. Douglas Kenrick

Work Experience

United States Attorney's Office District of Alaska, Anchorage, AK

Assistant United States Attorney, September 2018 – Present

Prepare cases for trial, brief appeals, and defend against collateral attacks on convictions. Assist federal law enforcement agents in structuring and implementing criminal investigative plans and strategies; actively participate in grand jury proceedings, including the presentation of witnesses before the grand jury; and litigate cases.

Alaska Public Defense Agency, Anchorage, AK

Attorney IV, July 2018 – September 2018

Provided competent representation to indigent criminal defendants for their felony and misdemeanor cases. First-chaired one jury trial, resulting in acquittal on all felony charges. Negotiated plea agreements, investigated facts, and researched legal issues.

Maricopa County Office of the Public Defender, Phoenix, AZ

Death Penalty Trial Attorney, February 2017 – June 2018

Felony Trial Attorney, February 2013 – February 2017

Law clerk, December 2012 – February 2013

Represented indigent criminal defendants for their felony trial cases. Negotiated plea agreements, investigated facts, and researched legal issues. Completed evidentiary hearings and trials. Served as team leader and extern supervisor for my trial group. As of February 2017, I only handled death penalty eligible cases.

Legal Publication

Neville, Karen E. *Programmers and Forensic Analyses: Accusers under the Confrontation Clause*, 2011 Duke L. & Tech. Rev. 10 (2011).