

## Samantha Skenandore

### *Of Counsel*

Samantha Skenandore focuses her practice on both federal Indian law and tribal law, advising tribal and corporate clients in tribal governance, governmental affairs, corporate transactions, real estate, labor issues and litigation. Her extensive multijurisdictional experience with tribal law includes representation of corporate entities, both tribal and nontribal, in matters involving financing, minority or women-owned certification, labor relations, complex commercial real estate matters and government relations. She also advises corporate clients on developing successful strategies to launch their businesses, seek and secure business certifications, build capacity and prosper.

She has secured favorable results in state and federal legislation, SBA, 8(a) and minority business certifications and appeals, labor and employment, cultural resources preservation, complex real estate transactions, including fee to trust conversions, development of tribal commercial districts, zoning disputes and appeals, acquisition of federal surplus property, intergovernmental agreements and contracts. Her experience extends to representing clients before members of Congress, congressional committees and agencies through federal lobbying services.

Samantha previously served as a Tribal Attorney for the Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Justice, where she presided over 150+ employment grievances as chair of the administrative grievance review board, secured tribal land acquisitions and fee to trust conversions. Early in her career, she clerked for the United States Department of Justice, Indian Resources Section and focused on water rights litigation and for the State of Colorado Division of Administrative Hearings as a judicial clerk, both in Denver, Colorado.

Her experience includes:

- Analyzing a tribal client's full code, revising portions of the code and drafting new tribal legislation to launch a multi-million dollar federally-chartered tribal corporation;
- Securing tribal interests and rights throughout the Section 106 federal tribal consultation process, including early consultation, ensuring proper insight in assessing adverse impacts, securing resolutions of the same, and related litigation;
- Successfully representing a tribe seeking recovery of ceded treaty land through the federal surplus real property disposal process;
- Drafting and defending tribal fee-to-trust applications resulting in



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**Madison Office**

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- thousands of acres of tribal trust land conversions; and
- Representation of a tribe in all aspects of negotiating, securing, interpreting and enforcing intergovernmental agreements and transportation law concerning a multi-million dollar bypass project near the tribe's flagship casino; successfully avoiding condemnation of tribe's fee land. Also secured optimal casino enterprise signage, cost-share agreements with a state cabinet agency to minimize costs to client, design modifications to improve access, lighting and safety to tribal residential community, utility infrastructure for future development of tribal land, and aesthetics design reflective of tribal culture and the tribe's enterprises.

## Legal Services

- Real Estate
  - Indian Law and Policy

## Education and Honors

- Northwestern University, Kellogg School of Management, Certificate, Quarles & Brady Leadership Program (2018)
- University of Denver, Sturm College of Law (J.D., 2005)
- University of Tulsa, Comparative and International Law Center, Geneva Institute on Indigenous Peoples Law, Geneva, Switzerland (2003)
  - Completed international law coursework including observation of United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples
- University of New Mexico, American Indian Pre-law Summer Institute, Albuquerque, NM (2002)
  - Certificate of Completion
- University of Wisconsin - Madison (B.A., 2001)
  - Behavioral Sciences & Law, Certificate in American Indian Studies

## Bar Admissions

- Wisconsin
- Arizona
- Ho-Chunk Nation
- Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation
- Tohono O'odham Nation
- Oneida Nation of Wisconsin
- Winnebago Tribal Court

- Lac du Flambeau Tribal Court
- Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin

### **Professional and Civic Activities**

- Wisconsin Law Foundation, Board of Directors (2020-present)
- American Bar Association (2006-present)
- Federal Bar Association (2006-present)
- Member of the Ho-Chunk Nation and former elected Associate Justice of the Ho-Chunk Supreme Court
- State Bar of Wisconsin, Board of Directors for Indian Law Section (2008-2011, 2016-2019)
- Federal Circuit Bar Association, Chair, Indian Law Committee (2009-2012)
- Wisconsin Academy of Trial Lawyers (2006-present)
- Indian Land Tenure Foundation, Chair of the Board of Directors (2018-present), previous Board of Directors Member (2016-2018)
- Spirit of a Woman/Indigenous Girls Rock Camp, Board of Directors (2016-present)
- Gila River Indian Community Boys and Girls Clubs, Auxiliary Board of Directors (2012-present)
- Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Historic Preservation, Board of Directors (2006-2011)
- Madison Children's Museum, Board of Directors (2009-2011)
- Dane County United Way, Account Executive (2008, 2009)

### **Professional Recognition**

- Madison365, Wisconsin's 38 Most Influential Native Americans (2020)
- Fellow of the Wisconsin Law Foundation
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation Tribal Excellence Award (2012)
- Wisconsin Law Journal, Wisconsin Up and Coming Lawyer (2011)
- Business Watch Magazine, "Amazing Women in Business" (2008)
- Josephine P. White Eagle Fellow, Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Education (2002-2005)