

Katherine E. Merck

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EDUCATION

Gonzaga University School of Law

Spokane, WA

Juris Doctor, December 2017 *Magna Cum Laude*

- Dean's Academic Honor List, Fall 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2017, Fall 2018.
- President's Scholar: merit-based academic scholarship recognizing academic excellence and service to the community.
- CALI Award for Excellence (highest grade), Litigation Skills & Professionalism Lab, Fall 2013; Perspectives on the Law, Spring 2014.
- Focused on tax and estate planning for agricultural interests, environmental regulations, and public land use.
- Studied International Human Rights in Florence, Italy in 2017, and competed in international mediation competition.
- Pro Bono Distinction 2014 (30+ hours of volunteer service).
- Property Course Tutor for Professor Megan Ballard Fall 2014, Spring 2017.
- Major research papers: *Home on the Range: How Professional Rodeo Contestants Should be Treated Under Section 162 of the Internal Revenue Code* (directed research with Professor Ann Murphy); *Losing the Battle but Winning the War: How Antitrust Challenges Helped Insulate the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association Against Potential Antitrust Liability* (Sports Law, Professor Patrick Charles).
- Rod & Gun Club, Co-Founder, Vice President 2013-2015, Treasurer 2017.
- Armed Forces Law Club, Treasurer 2017.

University of Notre Dame

Notre Dame, IN

Bachelor of Business Administration: Double Major in Finance and Medieval Studies, May 2012

- Study Abroad at University of Saint Andrews, Scotland: *International Economics and Monetary Policy*.
- Acquired proficiency in Microsoft Office, Excel, Word, Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, PowerPoint, iMovie, and QuickBooks.
- Division I Women's Rugby Team.
- Badin Hall Junior of the Year 2010-2011, voted by peers for outstanding character and leadership in the residence hall community.
- Net Impact Club, Chartering Co-President of student non-profit group promoting business ethics, spoke at national conference with Dean Carolyn Woo of the Mendoza College of Business (rated as #1 undergraduate business school in the country at the time).

EXPERIENCE

Budd-Falen Law Offices

Cheyenne, WY

Associate Attorney, September 2020 - present

- Provide legal representation regarding estate planning, endangered species, clean water, private property rights and use, federal lands, local government involvement, zoning and property rights, and other areas of law affecting ranchers, farmers, and landowners.
- Represent clients in litigation arising under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Clean Water Act (CWA) and other environmental statutes.
- Represent landowners with issues related to oil and gas, wind energy, solar energy, pipelines, eminent domain and condemnation.

Lake City Law Group

Coeur d'Alene, ID

Associate Attorney, March 2019 – August 2020

- Extensive courtroom experience in criminal defense and family law as well as a focus on employment and insurance defense.
- Represented public entities including local governments, first responders, and educational institutions as well as businesses throughout Idaho and Montana in various areas including business planning, insurance and employment defense, negotiations, and mediations.
- Drafted comprehensive estate plans for clients varying from basic to complex depending on client needs.
- Public Defender contract work for Shoshone County and Benewah County.

Gonzaga University School of Law Federal Tax Clinic

Spokane, WA

Clinic Member, August 2017 – December 2017

- Represented low-income clients in IRS examination and collection matters including audits, offers in compromise, penalty abatements, innocent spouse claims, appeals, and cases in the United States Tax Court.
- Argued case of significant wage garnishment in front of the United States Tax Court in Spokane.

Wyoming Stock Growers Association

Cheyenne, WY

Legal Intern, June-August 2017

- Worked on issues facing Wyoming cattle producers including public land use, Bureau of Land Management grazing permits, oil and gas drilling permits, and the delisting of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem of Grizzly Bears from the Endangered Species Act
- Drafted and proposed statutory changes to the Wyoming brand inspection laws.
- Worked with policymakers and legislature to further the interests of Wyoming farmers and ranchers.

Miss Rodeo America 2016—Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association

Colorado Springs, CO

- Travelled over 120,000 miles as the official spokesperson of the PRCA.
- Extensive speaking and teaching experience throughout the United States, Canada, and Australia.
- First Miss Rodeo America to manage social media platforms for the Miss Rodeo America, Inc. organization.
- Worked closely with major sponsors including Justin Boots, Las Vegas Events, Montana Silversmiths, and Wrangler.

Old World Christmas

Spokane, WA

Marketing and Public Relations, 2013

- Visited company showrooms, worked in print media and electronic media on national advertising campaigns, managed website and social media networks; managed marketing and advertising budget.
- Managed employee payroll for the entire company and prepared financial documents for accountants.
- Worked closely with the head of graphic design as production design assistant and assisted in the hiring process for new artists.

Design and Marketing Intern, Summer 2011

- Worked closely with the head of graphic design, assisting in the design process using Photoshop and InDesign.

Retail Sales Clerk and Display Manager, Summer 2010

- Performed sales clerk duties, working directly with customers and gaining valuable experience in sales.

Management Intern, Summer 2009

- Learned basic company management, learning and assisting with employee payroll.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Gem State Stampede

Coeur d’Alene, ID

Rodeo Committee Member, 2019-present

Miss Rodeo America National Advisory Council

Colorado Springs, CO

Co-Chair of Media Committee and Rodeo Royalty Seminar, 2017-present

PRODIGY Northwest - Providing Resources and Opportunities Designed to Inspire Gifted Youth

Spokane, WA

Board of Directors, 2014 to present

Provides students, parents and educators access and awareness to a broad assortment of learning topics relating to giftedness in youth.

Columbia River Circuit Finals Rodeo

Yakima, WA

Committee Member, 2017-present

Miss Rodeo Idaho, Inc.

Nampa, ID

Board Member, 2019-present

Rotaract Club of Spokane

Spokane, WA

Board Member and Public Relations Chair, 2012-2014

Organize and host Spokane Junior Lilac Parade and other volunteer, service, and leadership activities.

Net Impact Undergrad – Notre Dame Mendoza College of Business

Spokane, WA

Co-Chair and Founder, 2009-2012

Nonprofit membership organization for students and professionals interested in using business skills in support of social and environmental causes.

BAR ADMISSIONS

Idaho, 2018

U.S. District Court, District of Idaho, 2018

Montana, 2018

U.S. District Court, District of Montana, 2018

Wyoming, 2018

U.S. District Court, District of Wyoming, 2018

Washington, 2021 (transfer pending)

CERTIFICATIONS

University of Texas at Austin, Bankruptcy Law Specialist Certificate

2020

RECOGNITION AND HONORS

- Domer Dozen – Nominated** 2021
University of Notre Dame young alumni who have shown extraordinary dedication to making a difference and have made significant contributions in at least one of the four core tenets of the Alumni Association’s mission statement — faith, service, learning, or work.
- Cowgirl Magazine's 30 Under 30** 2020
Recognized as a leader who has shown significant dedication to the Western industry.
- RockN W Report Girl Boss Awards** 2019
Nominated in four categories and voted winner of Cowgirl CEO by an open vote of peers within the Western industry.
- Washington State House of Representatives Resolution 2016-4659** 2016
Recognized by the Washington State House of Representatives for achievement as first Miss Rodeo America from Washington State and role educating others about the sport of rodeo and the Western Industry.
- United States House of Representative Congressional Recognition** 2015
Recognized by the United States House of Representatives on recommendation from Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers for excellent representation of the State of Washington and dedication to its agricultural industry as Miss Rodeo Washington 2015. Presented by the Honorable George Nethercutt.
- Spokane, Washington: An America’s Promise “100 Best Communities for Young People”** 2007
Asked by Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers to write a statement for her to read into the congressional record; quoted in the congressional record from Tuesday, January 30, 2007.