

CURRICULUM VITAE  
**DOLORES S. ATENCIO, ESQ.**  
**DULCCES VISITING SCHOLAR**  
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER  
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## EDUCATION & LICENSURE

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|------|--|
| 1977 | Bachelor of Arts, Colorado College, Major Political Science  |
| 1980 | Juris Doctorate, University of Denver College of Law         |
| 1981 | Admitted to the Colorado Bar - Active                        |
| 1982 | Admitted Federal District Court for the District of Colorado |
| 2002 | Admitted 10 <sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals           |
| 2017 | Inactive Status (no longer actively practicing law)          |

## ACADEMIC & TEACHING EXPERIENCE

*Visiting Scholar, University of Denver Latino Center for Community Engagement & Scholarship (DULCCES), February 2015 – Present. Created *Luminarias de la Ley* | *Luminaries of the Law*<sup>TM</sup> the national legal history project that identifies the first Latina law graduates and lawyers in the United States over 100 years, 1880 – 1980 (“*Luminarias*”), and documents their contributions to society and U.S. jurisprudence. *Luminarias* are the first **Latina** | **Hispanic female** judges, elected public officials, highest level governmental appointees, law firm partners, law professors, district attorneys, public defenders and civil rights litigators.*

- Created first exhibit on Latina lawyers shown at law schools throughout the country
- Created *Luminarias* digital exhibit; release date Fall 2019
- In progress, law review article on research results, projected publication date Spring 2019

*Scholar in Residence, University of Denver Colorado Women’s College, Community Based Research Honors Program, June 2013 – June 2014. Courses taught:*

- Introduction to Community-Based Research
- Community-Based Research Project Development
- Community-Based Research in Action
- Community –Based Research Culminating Project

*Adjunct Professor, University of Denver Colorado Women’s College, March – June 2013 COURSE TAUGHT: Law & Society Research Practicum, “*Finding the Latina Margaret Brent.*”*

## PUBLISHED WORKS & PROJECTS

*Luminarias de la Ley* | *Luminaries of the Law Exhibit*<sup>TM</sup>, consists of 55 panels that conveys the history of women in the law with individual vignettes of 32 select *Luminarias* that provide the missing *Latina chapter*. The exhibit starts with the 1873 case of *Bradwell v. U.S.* in which the U.S. Supreme Court upheld state law prohibiting women from practicing law and ends in 1980 with the confirmation of the first Hispanic U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor. Decade Panels (1900 – 1980) includes statistical data on the small, then increasing number of women lawyers per decade, while describing the cultural and professional barriers they endured:

Early 1900's, *Emerging Portias*  
1920's, *Women's Liberation*  
1930's, *Crash of Feminist Ideals*  
1940's, *War Time Opportunities*  
1950's, *Homeward Bound*  
1960's, *Second Wave of Feminism*  
1970's, *Exploding onto the Legal Landscape*  
1980's, "You've Come A Long Way, Baby"

## EXHIBITIONS

### *Upcoming*

Rutgers Law School, New Jersey | Sponsor: Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey | October 2019

Hogan Lovells | Washington, D.C. Office | October

### *Past Showings*

Center for Women in the Law (CWIL), University of Texas Law at Austin | CWIL Women's Power Summit, April 10-22, 2019, Austin Four Seasons Hotel

Arnold & Porter | Washington D.C. Office, October 2018

Loyola Law School - Los Angeles, August 19 - September 1, 2017, Burns Building

Host: Loyola Law Latino Alumni Chapter | Sponsors: Entravision, Garcia Hernandez Sawney, LLP, Law Firm of Felipe Plascencia and HNBA Latina Commission.

George Washington University Law | Washington, D.C., October 2017

Brooklyn Law School | Brooklyn, New York, November 18 - December 16, 2016

Sponsors: Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) Latina Commission & HNBA Region II (New York), Puerto Rican Bar Association, Dominican Bar Association

HNBA Annual Convention | Chicago, Illinois, September 2016

University of San Francisco Law & Center for Latino/a Studies of the Americas | San Francisco, California, October 13 - November 11, 2016, Kalmanovitz Hall | Sponsors: Garcia Hernandez Sahwney, LLP and HNBA Latina Commission

University of Denver Inaugural Showing, Anderson Commons | Denver, Colorado, November 2015 - February 2016 | Sponsor, Mass Mutual Financial Group

**Atencio, D.**, “*The Super Minority: The Status of Latina Lawyers in the United States*,” National Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession, IILP Review 2014: The State of Diversity and Inclusion in the Legal Profession, released March 2015

**Atencio, D.**, *Las Primeras Abogadas Un Legado (The First Latina Lawyers – A Legacy)*, *Saluting Hispanic Women Lawyers in the 50 States*, presented at Hispanic National Bar Association September 2014 Annual Convention, Washington, D.C. (second published work on Latina lawyers)

**Atencio, D.**, *Las Primeras Abogadas – Una Historia*, a timeline of Latina lawyer accomplishments 1929 to 2013, completed for and presented at Hispanic National Bar Association 2013 Annual Convention, Denver, Colorado, September 6, 2013 | 1<sup>st</sup> published work on U.S. Latina lawyers

**Atencio, D.**, 22-minute video on the earliest Latina Lawyers presented at HNBA 2013 Annual Convention, Latina Commission Awards Luncheon, September 6, 2013

**Atencio, D.**, “*The Making of An American Justice: The HNBA’s Quest for the First Hispanic Supreme Court Justice*,” Hispanic National Bar Association Journal of Law & Policy, Vol.2:1, Summer 2010

“*Windows into Denver’s Women and Girls*,” Denver Women’s Commission, released March 11, 2014. As DWC Chair, initiated and completed this assessment of critical issues facing Denver’s women and girls; [www.denvergov.org/women](http://www.denvergov.org/women)

“*La Voz de la Abogada Latina: Challenges and Rewards in Serving the Public Interest*,” Chaired second national study and report on Latina lawyers in the public sector for the Hispanic National Bar Association Latina Commission, released September 2010, Minneapolis, Minnesota; [www.hnba.com](http://www.hnba.com) | 2<sup>nd</sup> national study on U.S. Latina lawyers

“*Few and Far Between: The Reality of Latina Lawyers*,” Chaired and organized first national study and report on Latina lawyers in the private sector for the Hispanic National Bar Association Latina Commission, released September 2009, Albuquerque, New Mexico; [www.hnba.com](http://www.hnba.com) | 1<sup>st</sup> national study on U.S. Latina lawyers

**Atencio, D. & Hernandez M.**, “*Las Primeras*,” 50-minute documentary on 21 of the country’s first Latina lawyers, based on original research and 1993 presentation by Atencio, D., writer, co-director; converted into VHS with funding from Loyola Law School – Los Angeles, ©1994

*Imagenes*, Chaired and organized the first statewide juried art show of Hispanic artists for KUVO Public Radio Station, Arvada Center for the Arts, March 8-14, 1985

## LEGAL AND MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

PRIVATE PRACTICE, 2000-2011; 1992-1995. Practiced primarily as Plaintiffs' counsel (Atencio Law Firm) in employment cases from 1992-1995 (part time practice) and 2000 to 2008 (full time practice), representing city and state public employees and college/university teachers and administrators before administrative tribunals and in federal court. Recruited in 2008 by GCR, LLP (now Garcia Hernandez & Sawhney, LLP), expanding practice to General Counsel and work place investigations for public educational institutions and non-profit organizations.

### *Sampling of Cases*

*Bonnie Freeman v. Denver Department of Human Services*, Appeal Nos. 40-04, 75-04 (March 3, 2005), hearing before Denver Career Services Hearings Judge; decision overturned termination, reinstated client and all benefits with modification of discipline to one-day suspension.

*Carol J. Crumley v. University of Southern Colorado*, Federal District Court, District of Colorado (May 7, 2002), jury verdict finding university retaliated against client for filing Title VII case; damages and attorneys' fees awarded.

*Professor David E. Sandoval v. University of Southern Colorado*, CSA No. AGB 94-01 (1995), trial conducted before state Administrative Law Judge (ALJ). ALJ ordered reinstatement of tenure finding university terminated without cause.

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE (AJL) & DIRECTOR COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS, 1996-1999. Presided over hearings and managed cases through each phase of the litigation process; issued summary and substantive orders and final decisions in hundreds of cases in diverse areas of the law, including workers' compensation, civil rights, employment, regulatory (professional licensure cases), human services and election law cases, including issuing order declaring rights of undocumented workers to receive workers compensation benefits in Colorado. As Division Director, managed budget of approximately \$500,000 and a statewide staff of 40, including 18 ALJs, clerks and administrative staff, in four offices: Denver, Colorado Springs, Grand Junction and Pueblo. Implemented significant changes mandated by a statewide audit.

HEARINGS OFFICER, CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER CAREER SERVICES HEARINGS OFFICE, 1993-1996. Conducted hearings on employment complaints by Denver City employees, including classification matters, disciplinary actions, lay-offs, all types of discrimination and retaliation cases, disqualifications, terminations, failing performance reviews and grievances alleging violations of Career Services Rules. Reduced backlog of cases; significantly reduced the time

between filing and hearing by implementing expedited motions practice; and changed the abbreviated decision format by issuing detailed findings of fact, a format still in use today.

### *MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE*

VICE PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS & GENERAL COUNSEL, DENVER GRAND PRIX AUTO RACE, INC., 1990-1991. Responsible for the legal and certain business matters for the CART company. Three months before the inaugural race, amidst much public controversy and intense media scrutiny, negotiated 100 contracts with private business owners and public employers (city and state) around the race perimeter. One of three managers given ultimate authority to start and stop the Indy car race and first Latina lawyer to hold position and authority in the CART racing industry. In year two, managed and negotiated all vendor and other race agreements. Due to the expense associated with the inaugural race and the City's unwillingness to allow the race to move, the racing company filed bankruptcy. Returned to private practice.

COLORADO BAR ASSOCIATION (CBA), DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND PUBLIC SERVICES, 1988-1990. Senior staff support to CBA elected leadership and liaison to state's minority bar associations and pro bono offices. Organized the first two minority women lawyer's statewide conferences.

KUVO PUBLIC RADIO STATION, 89.3 FM, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, 1985-1987. In May 1985, joined two other Latinas in premiering KUVO 89.3 as Denver's first public bilingual jazz radio station on August 25, 1985. Created and supervised all of the station's fundraising units, including individual membership, membership drives, corporate and foundation grants and business sponsorships. Conducted the station's first on-air fundraising drive from an egg-shelled lined studio to an unknown audience and had to convince many (individuals, businesses and funders) to invest in an unknown radio product. After two years, generated over \$400,000 in revenue and in-kind contributions. Received the American Express "*Most Interesting Lives*" Award and a prestigious three-year W.K. Kellogg Leadership Fellowship. Served KUVO 20 years later as a member and president of the Board of Directors.

### *EARLY LEGAL EXPERIENCE*

ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, COLORADO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, CRIMINAL APPELLATE UNIT, 1982-1985. Represented the State of Colorado in criminal cases when convictions appealed to the Colorado Court of Appeals and Colorado Supreme Court. Researched, wrote and submitted appellate briefs and presented oral argument before both Courts; prepared petitions for rehearing and certiorari; and reviewed and rendered opinion on the constitutionality of Attorney General opinions, state agency rule opinions and legislative bills. Forty-six (46) cases were published opinions.

### *Sampling of Cases*

*People v. Milton*, No. 85SA26, Supreme Court of Colorado, 732 P.2d 1199; 1987 Colo. LEXIS 497, February 23, 1987

*People v. Gray*, No. 83CA1361, Court of Appeals of Colorado, Division Three, 710 P.2d 1149; 1985 LEXIS 1220, date Rehearing Denied July 25, 1985; Certiorari Denied December 16, 1985

*People v. Schoondermark*, No. 84SA99, Supreme Court of Colorado, 699 P.2d 411; 1985 Colo. LEXIS 435, May 6, 1985, Rehearing Denied May 28, 1985

*People v. White*, No. 82CA0582, Court of Appeals of Colorado, Division One, 680 P.2d 1318; 1984 Colo. App. LEXIS 1017, February 9, 1984, Rehearing Denied March 8, 1984

*People v. Oliver*, No. 81CA1015, Court of Appeals of Colorado, Division Three, 665 P.2d 152; 1983 Colo. App. LEXIS 866, March 3, 1983, Rehearing Denied March 24, 1983; Review Denied June 6, 1983

*People v. Schneckloth*, No. 82SA56, Supreme Court of Colorado, 660 P.2d 1293; 1983 Colo. App. LEXIS 518, April 4, 1983

REGINALD HEBER SMITH COMMUNITY LAWYER FELLOWSHIP, 1980-1981. As a Reggie lawyer assigned to Colorado Rural Legal Services, represented low-income clients throughout Colorado. Significant case was the ouster, on residency grounds, of a non-Hispanic school board member on behalf of the Hispanic community (Carmen Graham, lead plaintiff) in Trinidad, Colorado. As a Reggie, required to expend 20% time to community legal issues; worked with passed State Representative Richard Castro on the state's reapportionment. That experience resulted in significant reapportionment involvement from 1981-2011:

- 1981, law clerk for Denver MALDEF Office; tutored by Director Joaquin Avila to create districts through laborious hand calculations as software had yet to be developed; later assisted with the MALDEF brief submitted to the Colorado Supreme Court.
- 1993, Colorado Hispanic Bar Association (CHBA) *pro bono* co-counsel to the Pueblo Chicano Democratic Caucus. Resulted in adoption by Pueblo City Council of two historic majority-Hispanic city council districts that led to the election of Pueblo's first Chicano city councilman and later, at-large city council seats won by Hispanics.
- 2000-2001, CHBA *pro bono* co-counsel to the Colorado Hispanic community in the congressional redistricting litigation resulting in the CHBA's *Outstanding Corporate Commitment Award* (2001) to her law firm.

- May 2011, Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice appointee to the Colorado Reapportionment Commission. One of 11 Commissioners charged with redrawing the state's 35 senate and 65 house seats. Created 24 Hispanic influence seats (30% or more): 15 house and 9 Hispanic influence senate seats. Plan upheld by the Colorado Supreme Court, *In Re Reapportionment of the Colorado General Assembly*, Case No. 2011SA282 (December 12, 2011).

### *Select Articles*

*Colorado Republicans fear loss of legislative seats held by women from redistricting*, Denver Post, December 18, 2011

*Colorado Republicans start to warm up to new legislative boundaries*, Denver Post, December 24, 2011

*Population changes will make redrawing Colo. Legislative districts a challenge*, Denver Post, May 17, 2011

## **PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE**

### *SELECT ACTIVITIES - CURRENT*

#### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS (NAWL)

- Member, Supreme Court Committee 2016 – Present. Chair of Coordination Committee Responsible for vetting and conducting due diligence on nominees to the U.S. Supreme Court.

#### CENTER FOR WOMEN IN THE LAW (CWIL), UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS LAW – AUSTIN

- Member, CWIL Consortium, 2016 - Present

#### UNIVERSITY OF DENVER STURM COLLEGE OF LAW

- Alumni Council Chair, September 2020 – August 2021
- Alumni Council Vice Chair, September 2018 – August 2019
- Alumni Council Member since 2012
- Chair, Latino Law Alumni Chapter, December 2010 - present. Chaired two MALSA Reunion Committee events (2012 and 2017) reunions (held every five years) of DU Law Latino graduates to raise scholarship monies benefitting the *Robert Yegge Hispanic Scholarship Fund*; total raised \$250,000.

## SELECT ACTIVITIES – PAST SERVICE

### AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

- HNBA Delegate to Board of Governors, 2010-2011
- Commissioner, Commission on Women in the Profession, 1993-1996
- Chair of Commission’s Minority Women’s Attorney Network (MWAN) which produced the first national study on women lawyers of color, “*Burdens of Both, Privileges of Neither*” 1996.

### HISPANIC NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION

- Member since 1989
- Life-long member of Latina Commission (2008-present)
- Latina Commission Co-Chair, 2008-2010. Inspired by her tenure on the ABA’s Commission on Women and with support of the Latina Commission, Dolores:
  - Chaired and organized two national studies on the status of Latinas in the legal profession: *Few and Far Between: The Reality of Latina Lawyers* (2009), *La Voz de la Abogada Latina: Challenges and Rewards in Serving the Public Interest* (2010). Article: *Latina Style Magazine*, “Looking for Latina Lawyers,” Vol. 15, No. 1, 2009.
  - Created the Commission’s annual *Las Primeras Award* honoring Latina lawyers with 30+ years in the profession at the Annual Commission luncheon; and
  - Revived the *Las Primeras* research (started in 1993) that evolved into *Luminarias de la Ley* national legal research project.
  - September 2018 awarded Commission’s *Las Primeras Award* on its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as the “*mother who raised the Commission*,” (former HNBA President Ramona Romero under whose tenure the Commission was created).
- Member: first U.S. Supreme Court Due Diligence Committees (1992-1993), and (2009) on the Nomination of Federal Judge Sonia Sotomayor, 2009.
- National President, 1991-1992  
As President, lobbied Congress and the White House for the appointment of Latinos to the federal bench, including the first Hispanic female judges (mainland): Sonia Sotomayor (NY), Lourdes Baird (Los Angeles) and Irma Gonzales (San Diego); and appointment of two Hispanic US Attorneys: John Mendez (San Francisco) and Roberto Martinez (Miami); established the HNBA’s judicial due diligence process and vetting process; served on HNBA’s first Supreme Court Committee that produced the “*Magnificent Seven*” list of



Supreme Court (potential) nominees; and led first-time HNBA delegation to Mexico to meet with Mexican President and dignitaries regarding cross-border relations and NAFTA that resulted in the HNBA's first Mexican conference held in Mexico City.

- 1992, one of four female national leaders who formed a coalition of bars of color (now called) CBAC – Coalition of Bar Associations of Color. First time in profession's history that all national bar associations were led by women. In March 2016, honored with past presidents Peggy Nagae, past president, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association; Trisha Tingle, Native American Bar Association and Paulette Brown, National Bar Association.
- President-Elect, 1990-1991, at White House request, led delegation of Latino bar leaders to meet with Chief of Staff and Legal Counsel on the eve of Clarence Thomas' Senate Judiciary confirmation hearings.
- National Convention Chair, 1989-1990, Denver Convention September 1990

#### COLORADO HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION

- Member since 1981
- President 1991-1992
- President-Elect 1990-1991
- Nominations & Endorsements Committee, 2005-2013, 2015-2017
- Recipient of three CHBA awards: *Lifetime Achievement Award* (2016), *Outstanding Corporate Award* (2001) and *Outstanding Attorney Award* (1992).

#### CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

- Denver Commission on Women, July 2011- June 2015  
Chair, August 2012 - August 2013. Initiated and completed citywide assessment on the status of Denver women and girls, "*Windows into Denver's Women and Girls*," released March 2014; serves as blueprint for Commission's current work.
- Denver Judicial Nominating Commission, Mayoral Appointee, 1994-2001; Chair, 2001  
During tenure, the Commission forwarded names of first African American woman (Claudia Jordan), first Asian American (Mel Okamoto) and first openly gay woman (Mary Celeste), appointed to Denver County Court bench by Denver Mayor Wellington Webb.

#### WOMEN'S FOUNDATION OF COLORADO

- Board of Directors, January 2015 – January 2019

GIRL SCOUTS OF COLORADO, INC.

- Board of Directors, 2011 - 2015

MI CASA RESOURCE CENTER FOR WOMEN

- Board of Directors 1983 – 1985
- Chair, 1984 - 1985

## HONORS | SELECT

HNBA Latina Commission's *Las Primeras Award*, September 2018, on its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*Founders Honor*, March 2, 2016, Washington, D.C. Coalition of Bar Associations of Color (CBAC) honored as one of four women bar leaders who founded CBAC in 1992

*Lifetime Achievement Award*, Colorado Hispanic Bar Association, January 23, 2016

*Ohtli Award*, Mexican Government, Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (IME), Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE), presented at the Organization of American States, Washington, D.C., September 11, 2014

*Outstanding Corporate Commitment Law Firm Award*, Colorado Hispanic Bar Association, January 2001 for pro bono redistricting representation of the Latino community

*Featured in book History of Colorado's Women for Young People* by Vivian Sheldon Epstein, 1998

*Hispanic American Women Making History Day by Day*, 1 of 12 featured in Hispanic Women National Calendar, 1993

*100 Influentials List*, Hispanic Business Magazine, 1991 and 1993

*Outstanding Attorney of the Year*, Colorado Hispanic Bar Association, 1992

W.K. Kellogg National Leadership Fellowship Fellow, 1986-1989

*Most Interesting Lives Award*, American Express, 1986

*Outstanding Young Woman Award*, Mile High United Way, 1983

*Reggie Fellow*, Reginald Heber Smith Community Lawyer Fellowship, 1981 & 1982