

People



Kanika D. Corley

Team Leader, Sports and Entertainment Sector Team
Partner, Litigation

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vCard

With more than 20 years of experience, Kanika Corley has developed a thriving practice in broad-based, complex commercial and intellectual property litigation with a focus on the sports, entertainment, and media industries.

She has worked with and provided legal assistance for a wide array of clients, including print, digital, and broadcast media companies; advertising companies; footwear and apparel designers and manufacturers; and institutions and entities in professional sports and entertainment, among others.

An experienced courtroom strategist and advocate, clients turn to Kanika for strategic counsel and risk assessment when contemplating major business decisions, including protecting their assets and brand, anticipated litigation, and intellectual property issues. Her clients have ranged from startups to mid-cap businesses with global reach, and beyond. Her practice also includes resolving all aspects of soft intellectual property issues, privacy rights, and general business disputes.

Much more than a counselor, Kanika is a valued business partner to her clients when it comes to strategic business decisions. Recently, Kanika represented multiple broadcasting companies in a variety of matters, including a dispute over the scope of rights attendant to the production of a television series; she advised a broadcasting client regarding the right to publish certain newsworthy information that carried implications in the U.S. and abroad; and, she recently defended a mass-media news company in an action implicating First Amendment rights.

Over the past several years, Kanika has represented multiple endurance sports companies in connection with mergers and acquisitions, business disputes, and corporate governance matters. She has represented a professional soccer team in multiple disputes regarding licenses to use certain intellectual property assets, as well as matters concerning rights of publicity. She has litigated federal claims concerning the alleged infringing use of intellectual property

Areas of Experience

Litigation
Sports and Entertainment Law
Intellectual Property Litigation
Commercial Disputes
Professional Liability

Education

Graduate Certificate in Business Law, University of Southern California Gould School of Law, 2015
J.D., University of San Diego School of Law, 2002
B.S., University of Southern California, Public Administration, 1999

Admissions

Bars

California

Courts

U.S. District Court, Northern District of California
U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California
U.S. District Court, Southern District of California
U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit

Related Content

Akerman Partners Kanika Corley and Marissa Alguire Named *LA Times Studios*: 2025 Law Firm Visionaries
April 21, 2025

Kanika Corley Explores Free Speech and Sporting Events in *Sports Business Journal* Article
March 27, 2025

Akerman Partners Named 2025 *Lawdragon* 500 Leading Global Entertainment, Sports & Media Lawyers
March 20, 2025

in response to challenges by competitors in the fields of volleyball and skateboarding. She has also represented companies owned and controlled by high-profile professional athletes in connection with business consolidations, partnerships, licenses, endorsements, and related litigation.

In addition, Kanika has provided strategic counsel to corporate rights holders in the areas of live events, including award shows and competitions, as well as other television and theatrical rights.

She has extensive experience advocating for the rights of her clients through arbitration and trial, litigating appeals, advising on best methods for dispute resolution, advising on deal terms and business structures, managing rights acquisitions, and advising senior management of both public and privately held companies.

Kanika enjoys being involved in thought leadership. To that end, she is active in the legal community as a frequent author and speaker.

Notable Work

Commercial Dispute: Obtained dismissal of federal action brought against international tech industry client alleged to have breached a high-value contract.

Data Privacy and Security: Under anti-SLAPP statute, successfully represented publisher client in defense of claims that client violated California's Data Breach Law and engaged in public disclosure of private facts.

Commercial Privacy Rights: Represented an international media outlet in defense of a breach of privacy claim by a business that was to be profiled in an upcoming report.

Documentary Film Defamation Suit: Served as lead trial counsel for a documentary film company in a contentious case alleging 11 causes of action, including misappropriation of likeness, invasion of privacy, intentional misrepresentation, breach of contract, and defamation. Successfully obtained dismissal of all claims.

First Amendment Challenge in Soft IP Case: Represented a greeting card designer and manufacturer in a trademark infringement and unfair competition case. Obtained summary judgment, finding that the defendants' greeting cards are expressive works entitled to First Amendment protection. As a result, the Court found that the clients were entitled summary judgment.

Lack of Jurisdiction: Represented a wine import and distribution company and its owner, in obtaining a dismissal of all claims in an alleged trademark infringement case.

Anti-SLAPP: Represented a TV news station, its on-air talent, and executive producer, in obtaining a dismissal following consideration of our anti-SLAPP motion and motion to strike punitive damages.

Published Works and Lectures

- Sports Lawyers Association 2024 Fall Symposium: Tech and Sports, Speaker, "Latest Developments in Global Sports Broadcasting," November 7, 2024
- *Sports Business Journal*, Author, "Diversity Riders: How a Paragraph of Legalese Is Opening the Door to Parity," February 6, 2023

- Corporate Counsel Business Journal's Legal Operations Conference, Panelist, "Recruiting, Retaining and Developing Talent – Diversity and Inclusion," March 2022
- Wells Bring Hope, Panelist, "Female Achievement & Gender Inequity, Through A Global Lens," September 1, 2020
- Pepperdine Caruso School of Law, Speaker, "Navigating an Uncertain Future in the Entertainment, Media, and Sports Industries," April 9, 2020
- *Copyright Docket Report*, Highlighted Case, *Zithromia Limited et al v. Gazeus Negocios De Internet SA et al.*, November 25, 2019
- Los Angeles General Assembly (GA), Speaker, "Capital Raising 101," August 27, 2019
- Motion Picture & Television Fund, Professional Advisory Network Luncheon, Speaker, "How Consumer Media Consumption is Changing Deal-making," May 23, 2019
- Orange County Bar Association Entertainment, Sports, and Marketing Section, "The Right of Publicity in Sports Marketing," December 19, 2018
- Sports Lawyers Association, "Ethics in Sports," November 13, 2018
- Women in Law Empowerment Forum, "Playing the Long Game: Positioning Yourself for Career Success," January 23, 2018
- Association of Corporate Counsel Sports & Entertainment Committee Legal Quick Hit, Presenter, "Rights of Publicity and Marketing Issues that Arise from Live Events," September 2017
- USC Gould School of Law, Guest Lecturer, "Practical Concepts in U.S. Litigation," March 2017
- USC Gould School of Law (LLM Program), Guest Lecturer, "Litigation and Transactional Issues in Intellectual Property," October 2016
- *Law360*, Co-Author, "Radio Frequency Identification: The Benefits + The Risks," July 12, 2016
- USC Gould School of Law (LLM Program), Guest Lecturer, "Practical Concepts in U.S. Litigation," February 2016
- *Law360*, Author, "Lights, Camera, Action, IP, Clearances," November 10, 2015
- *Law360*, Author, "Bad Sportsmanship or Breach of Duty to Disclose," May 2015
- Southwestern University Law School, Panelist, "Women of Color in Private Practice," October 7, 2014
- California Lawyers for the Arts Workshop, Speaker, "Getting It Right with Your Live Performance," October 2014
- California Lawyers for the Arts, Panelist, "Getting It Right with Your Live Performance Agreements & Copyright Law," October 2014
- Southwestern Law School, Panelist, "Cultural Norms and Networking," October 2014
- *The Hollywood Reporter*, Co-Author, "Why It's So Hard to Get the Law to Protect a Good Joke," June 2014
- *Los Angeles Lawyer Magazine*, Co-Author, "Defining Liability for the Use of a Comedian's Material," June 2014
- *Intellectual Property & Technology Law Journal*, Co-Author, "The Renaissance of Function and its Impact on Inspired Copying," October/November 2013
- The 2013 John Marshall Law School Fashion and Design Law Symposium, Panelist, "Likeness is in the Eye of the Beholder," April 2013

- Loyola Law School Entertainment & Media Law Institute's Entertainment Law and Litigation Symposium, Panelist, "Right of Publicity in the Context of *NCAA v. EA Sports*," November 2012
- The Real Athlete Blog, Co-Author, "The Battle for Linsanity - Lessons Learned from a Young Star's Rise and...Injury," April 2012

Affiliations

- *Professional Sports and the Law*, Editorial Board
- *Law360* Media & Entertainment Editorial Board, Board Member, 2022
- Black Entertainment & Sports Lawyers Association, Member
- Black Sports Professionals of SoCal, Member
- Women In Sports & Entertainment (WISE), Member
- Sports Law Association, Member
- American Bar Association, Forum on the Entertainment and Sports Industries, Member
- The National Black Lawyers, Member
- Female Executives in Media & Entertainment, Member

Honors and Distinctions

- *Super Lawyers* Magazine, 2023-2025, Listed in Southern California for Business Litigation, Entertainment & Sports, Intellectual Property
- *Benchmark Litigation*, 2022-2025, Listed in California as a "Future Star"
- *Lawdragon* 500, 2025, Listed as One of the Leading Global Entertainment, Sports & Media Lawyers for Litigation, IP - Sports, Entertainment, Media
- *Lawdragon* 500, 2025, Listed as One of the Leading Litigators in America for Sports & Entertainment Litigation, Intellectual Property
- *LA Times Studios*, 2025, Named as One of the "Law Firm Visionaries"
- *Los Angeles Business Journal*, 2025, "Leaders of Influence: Minority Attorneys," Honoree
- Attorney Intel, 2024, Listed as one of the "Top 25 Intellectual Property Attorneys"
- *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Listed as a "Top 100 Lawyer" in Los Angeles, 2022
- *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Named a Leader of Law, 2021
- *Daily Journal*, Named as one of the Top Women Lawyers in California, 2020
- *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Listed as one of the Top Women Attorneys in Los Angeles, 2020
- *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Listed as one of the Top Minority Attorneys in Los Angeles, 2020
- *The National Law Journal*, Named in the Sports/Entertainment Trailblazer List, 2019
- *Super Lawyers* Magazine, 2012 -2017, Listed in Southern California as a "Rising Star"
- The National Bar Association Top 40 Under 40, Named to the "Nation's Best Advocate's List," 2016-2017

Related Professional Experience

