

Jill Witkowski Heaps

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Earthjustice, New York, New York
Senior Attorney, 2020- Present

Litigating in federal and state courts under the Clean Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Federal-Aid Highway Act, and state environmental law. Advocate in various permitting and administrative processes to protect community health and the environment. Clients include grassroots environmental advocacy groups, NAACP, and a tribal Nation. Advise federal and state legislators seeking to achieve better regulation of PFAS.

Jill Witkowski Heaps Consulting, Buffalo, New York
Principal, 2019

Policy consulting. Clients included Earthjustice and the Cancer-Free Economy Coalition. Completed in-depth research on legal methods to reduce lead poisoning and created website and policy guides for communities to craft their own local policies to reduce lead poisoning. Advised cities across the country in methods to reduce lead poisoning.

National Wildlife Federation, Annapolis, Maryland
Director, Choose Clean Water Coalition, 2013-2017

Led coalition of more than 200 organizations from across the Mid-Atlantic working towards a clean Chesapeake Bay watershed. Developed multi-year strategic plan, while building relationships with EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program and key state government leaders, the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and other integral partners. Served as co-chair of Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement's environmental justice working group.

San Diego Coastkeeper, San Diego, California
Waterkeeper, 2012-13; Legal Director, 2011-13, Staff Attorney, 2010-11

Developed and executed strategic vision for the organization to achieve fishable, swimmable, drinkable San Diego waters. Served on Port of San Diego's Environmental Advisory Committee. Co-chaired Water Reliability Coalition, a diverse 20-member coalition of environmental groups, businesses, and labor focused on securing safe, local, reliable water supply. Litigated multi-year quasi-adjudicative process leading to clean-up of contaminated sediments in San Diego Bay.

Law Clerk to the Honorable Virginia M. Hernandez Covington,
U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida, 2004-05

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, New York, New York
Associate, 2002-04; Summer Associate, 2001

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C.
Intern, Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, 2000

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

University at Buffalo School of Law, Buffalo, New York

Assistant Director, Environmental Law Clinic, Fall 2019

Visiting Scholar, Spring 2019

Water Policy and Environmental Justice Consulting Expert, Fall 2018

Supervised law students representing community-based clients on environmental issues, provided testimony on Buffalo's proposed water affordability plan, served on African American Health Equity Task Force, and supported environmental moot court team.

Vermont Law School, South Royalton, Vermont

Assistant Professor, 2017 – 2019

Director, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic, 2017 –2018

Co-Director, Water and Justice Program, Fall 2018

Tenure-track appointment to direct the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic. Supervised a team of four attorneys and a paralegal in teaching and mentoring law students through federal and state litigation and policy advocacy. Taught companion seminar. Spearheaded the development of an environmental justice focus at Vermont Law School, including setting a vision for the program, hiring an environmental justice staff attorney, and supervising the environmental justice law society.

Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Wasserstein Public Interest Fellow, 2012-13

Tulane University School of Law, New Orleans, Louisiana

Professor of the Practice, 2008 –2009

Acting Director, Fall 2008

Deputy Director, Tulane Environmental Law Clinic, 2008 –2009

Clinic Instructor, 2005- 2008

Supervised law students in public interest environmental litigation in federal and state courts.

Attended National Institute for Trial Advocacy litigation boot camp.

EDUCATION

Washington University School of Law, St. Louis, Missouri

Juris Doctor, 2002, Order of the Coif

Judge Amandus Brackman Moot Court Prize

Law Review, Executive Notes & Projects Editor, WASH. UNIV. J. OF LAW & POL'Y

University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana

Bachelor of Arts, 1999; Magna Cum Laude

Double major: Environmental Science & Political Science

Concentration: Peace Studies

BAR AND COURT ADMISSIONS

Bar Admissions: New York Bar, 2003 (active) Louisiana Bar, 2005 (inactive)
 California Bar, 2010 (inactive) Vermont Bar, 2017 (inactive)

Court Admissions: D.C. Circuit, 5th Circuit, Eastern and Western Districts of Louisiana,
 Southern District of California, Western District of New York

FEDERAL AND INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

National Environmental Justice Advisory Council,

Member, 2013-2019, Vice Chair, 2016-2019

Appointed by EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. Served on a 30-person Federal Advisory Committee advising the U.S. EPA on environmental justice issues. Served as Chair of work groups on Water Infrastructure Financing and Communicating Monitoring Results to Impacted Communities. Primary author of formal recommendation papers on water infrastructure financing and community monitoring. Contributing author to recommendation paper on building community resiliency in industrial waterfront areas. Primary author of recommendation letters to Administrator McCarthy regarding the chemical spill in Elk River, West Virginia, the refinery rule, and the farmworker protection standards.

International Advisory Committee, Environmental Law Clinic,

Wuhan University School of Law, Wuhan, China

2018-2019

Served as sole American representative on the International Advisory Committee, which advises the professors and students of Wuhan University's Environmental Law Clinic on best practices for clinical education and public interest environmental law.

JUDICIAL EDUCATION

Judicial Remedies for Environmental Harms, Judicial Training for Judges from Supreme People's Court of China, Montpelier, VT, August 22, 2018.

CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund: How Federal Infrastructure Investment Can Help Communities Modernize Water Infrastructure and Address Affordability Challenges, U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Water Resources, March 7, 2019

PUBLICATIONS

The Establishment and Practice of Environmental Law Clinics: A Comparative Analysis of Clinical Models in the United States and Australia, (with Evan Hamman) in TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW: PEDAGOGY, METHODOLOGY AND BEST PRACTICE, (International Union for the Conservation of Nature, 2021)

EPA's Role in Addressing the Urgent Water Infrastructure Needs of Environmental Justice Communities, Primary Author and work group chair, National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, August 2018

Recommendations and Guidance for EPA to Develop Monitoring Programs in Communities, Primary Author and work group co-chair, National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, August 2017

Proposed Recommendations for Promoting Community Resilience in Industrial Waterfront Areas, Work group member, National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, May 2015

Holding Cigarette Manufacturers and Smokers Liable for Toxic Butts: Potential Litigation-Related Causes of Action for Environmental Injuries/Harm and Waste Cleanup, TULANE ENVTL. L. J., Vol. 28, Issue 1, Winter 2014

Can Juries Really Believe What They See? New Foundational Requirements for the Authentication of Digital Images, WASH. UNIV. J. LAW & POL'Y, Vol. 10 (2002)

Recent Developments in Environmental Law, Louisiana Bar Journal, June/July 2009, Vol. 57, No. 1

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIPS

Clean Air Coalition of Western New York, Board Member

American Bar Association, Member

Erie County Bar Association, Member

Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus, Member